**FORT MYERS SHORES FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**STRATEGIC OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Subject: May Day Procedures**

**Applies to: Suppression and Operations**

**S.O.G. # 18**

**Approval Date: May 15, 2014**

**Effective Date: May 16, 2014**

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**Fire Chief**

**PURPOSE:** To identify the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved at an emergency incident where a **“May- Day”** has been transmitted.

**SCOPE:** This procedure is to be utilized by Department members any time a Member is lost, missing, trapped, injured or in need of assistance at an incident in the Hot Zone or Unsafe Emergency Scene.

**DEFINITIONS:**

* **Emergency Identification Button** (EIB) – Orange button on top right side of portable radio.
* “**May-Day**” – Term used to report your status as lost, hurt, or trapped and needing rescue in the Hot Zone. Any member may use “**May-Day**” to report lost, hurt or trapped member.
* **Red Alert** – Term used to request priority radio traffic for all emergency transmissions that could affect a life safety issue. Any member may use the term “**Red Alert**” to request such traffic.

**“MAY DAY” RADIO MESSAGE:**

The radio message **“May-Day”** will be used by Emergency Personnel Member to report their status as being lost, trapped, or injured and needing rescue from the Hot Zone. This should be transmitted as **“May-Day, May-Day!”** followed, **L.U.N.A.R.** Any report of **“May-Day**” will receive priority radio traffic followed by the announcement on the TAC Channel that a **“May-Day”** has been sounded. The term **“May-Day”** will be reserved ONLY to report lost, trapped or injured Emergency Personnel that cannot remove themselves from the Hot Zone. The term “**RED ALERT**” will be used to report all other emergencies.

**Responsibilities of the Emergency worker(s) calling a “May-Day” at a Scene:**

* Transmit “May-Day” three times on the radio as soon possible: i.e. “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday”
* Followed by: the LUNAR acronym, which will provide useful information to the Incident Commander:
* L – Location
* U – Unit number
* N – Name
* A – Assignment – air remaining
* R – Resources needed
* Monitor radio/update Command
* Activate pass device, if you receive no acknowledgement on the radio. ” This may limit ability to communicate”
* Initiate EIB on portable radio, only if radio communications cannot be initiated or transmission is unclear. (When the EIB is activated, the portable radio sends a signal to Lee Control that there is a firefighter in distress. Stay on the channel you activated the EIB unless otherwise directed. When you change channels the EIB will send a signal to Lee Control again on the new channel. This may cause confusion at Lee Control and hamper on-scene rescue efforts. Therefore, attempt to stay on the initial channel you activated the EIB )
* Initiate Safety & Survival techniques while attempting to find a way out. See “Appendix B”

**INCIDENT COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Command shall maintain an awareness of the location of Emergency Personnel on the emergency scene by use of the passport accountability system and incident assignments. **Command and/or Operations, along with RIT and the Safety Officer, must monitor the assigned tactical channel crews are working on.**  In the event a member is missing in the Hot Zone, the Officer or any member should announce a “**May-Day”.** The term **“May-Day”** will indicate a lost, trapped or injured emergency worker in the Hot Zone that cannot remove themselves. Command/Operations shall respond to a **“May-Day”** by implementing a rescue plan for the Emergency Personnel.

Officers or members who suspect an emergency worker is missing shall notify the Incident Commander/Operations Officer immediately.

The Incident Commander/Operation Officer should ALWAYS assume that an Emergency Worker reported missing is lost in the Hot Zone until such time as that member can be accounted for. A rescue plan to find the lost member should be implemented and should include but not be limited to: See Appendix A

* Upon deploying the **RIT**, The Operations Officer, Safety Officer, RIT team, and the unit reporting **“May-Day”** will operate on originally assigned TAC Channel. The Incident Commander will move all other incident operations to the Emergency Operations Channel and assign a new Operations/Safety Officer for the initial incident operations.

**Responsibility of the Emergency Communications Center:**

Should Dispatch receive an emergency activation from a portable radio EIB (Orange button) or hear a **“May-Day”** transmission at an incident where Command has been established, Dispatch will first identify the company, which activated the alert. Dispatch will then go to that company's current radio channel for direct contact with the effected company and/or Dispatch will notify Command immediately.

* Dedicate one operator to MAY-DAY tactical channel.
* Monitor all available dispatch channels.
* If the emergency worker accidentally comes up on another tactical channel than the one

originally assigned, continue to monitor that channel and relay communications to the

Incident Commander.

* After one unsuccessful attempt to contact a unit or crew generating an EIB activation, immediately notify IC of activation and provide unit ID information.
* Monitor all tactical channels in case the unit activating EIB accidentally changed their radio channel.
* After an unconfirmed EIB activation and an unsuccessful attempt to contact the Incident Commander, immediately respond 2-Engines, 1 Ladder, 1-Ambulance, and 1 Chief Officer to assist.
* Be prepared to respond additional alarms at the Incident Commander’s request.
* Be prepared to respond additional ALS transport units at the Incident Commander’s request.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ONCE COMMUNICATION HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, IT NOT BE LOST!**

**Termination of Rescue Effort:**

The Incident Commander/Operations Officer must continually monitor and evaluate the degree of risk being encountered by rescue personnel. While every effort shall be made to rescue a fallen

Comrade, even at unusual or extraordinary risk, conditions may deteriorate to the point where a decision must be made to terminate a “**May-Day”** rescue effort. No decision ever made by an Incident Commander/Operation Officer throughout his/her career will ever bear equal weight, yet it is decisions of this nature that may ultimately determine the number of members lost or injured.

**Post Incident:**

Following all “**May-Day**” incidents or Rapid Intervention Team deployments at an incident, a formal Post Incident Analysis should be conducted to review, revise and/or update existing policies and procedures. Strong consideration should also be given to requesting assistance from a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) team to assist members with any emotional or psychological issues regarding the incident. Few situations in the fire service are as stressful as being involved in an attempted or successful Emergency Responder rescue. Every effort shall be made to take care of our own. Initiation of a CISD team can be a much needed step in the healing process after an emotionally traumatic incident.

Appendix A

MAY-DAY Checklist for Incident Commander

* + If appropriate, order emergency evacuation.
  + Request at least one additional alarm response (2 engines, 1 ladder, 1 ambulance, and 1 Chief Officer.
  + Clear TAC channel and conduct a “PAR” (personnel accountability report).
  + Assign RIT to respond to emergency worker trapped. S.O.G. 10
  + Assign additional unit(s) as support group for RIT operations.
  + Assign a secondary RIT to replace original RIT.
  + Ensure operations remain intact and are moved to the Emergency Operations Channel and a new Operations Chief and Safety Officer is assigned to the initial incident.
  + Expand command structure as needed.
  + Consider additional ALS transport unit(s).
  + Monitor the structure’s stability.
  + Consider request for specialized teams.
  + Consider request for additional resources/specialized equipment.
  + Open/unlock all doors and windows where appropriate.
  + Ventilate.
  + Provide lighting.
  + Control media.
  + Consider the need for CISM team activation.

Appendix B

**Standard self-survival actions should include but not be limited to:**

* Stay calm, conserve your air.
* Stay with your partner or crew if applicable.
* Use flashlight to signal.
* Use tools/debris to alert rescuers.
* Attempt to locate an exit or seek an area of refuge.
* Move toward visible light.
* Listen for sounds.
* Search walls for windows or doors.
* Search for hose line.
* Attempt to locate a life line.
* Assume a defensive posture: right lateral side, protect face piece with gloves.