

ROGUE VALLEY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Document:	Mayday Management Procedure
Section & #:	Organizational Policies #3.11
Adoption Date / Updated Date:	January 15, 2008 / May 2021
Developed / Updated By:	Chief Prince/
Review Date:	May 2026

Purpose

To provide a guideline for the effective, timely, and safe rescue management of one or more missing or downed firefighters at an incident scene. Taking into account, in situations where dedicated rescue teams (RIT) are not available, Command is required to ensure adequate 2-Out is maintained, and resources assigned to other operational functions can be readily assembled as needed to affect a rescue.

Safety

The safety of personnel operating on scene, and a successful outcome for the firefighter with the Mayday, depend on our ability to maintain discipline. Command must effectively display a strong presence, and crews must coordinate their change in assignment with their supervisor. Self-Deployment of adjacent crews that take calculated, independent action to affect a rescue may be inevitable. It is expected the Team Leader of the self-deployed adjacent crew become point-of-contact with Command for assignments and resources.

Uncommunicated self-deployment is not advised, as it threatens accountability, creates unnecessary confusion, and can potentially lead to injury or death. However, Command must be prepared to manage any course of action that is chosen.

Procedure

I. Initial actions

- Command responds to a MAYDAY or report of Firefighter Missing (see SOG #3.10)
- Command conducts a rapid Risk vs Benefit Analysis:
 1. Can the Firefighter be rescued immediately with adjacent crews, or will additional or separate rescue crews be required? (see SOG #3.12)
 2. If trapped, can the Firefighter be made safe and placed on air to provide more time for rescue?
 3. If trapped and not in a safe area, what actions are necessary to reduce risk to the greatest number of personnel?

4. If the Firefighter is not savable, can Command make the decision that prevents further loss?

NOTE: The IC shall consider conducting a roll call to determine if any other Firefighters are missing or in trouble. The benefit of conducting a roll call shall be weighed against the risk of the roll call disrupting Firefighter rescue operations and communication.

NOTE: Departments with a Firefighter-Down button on the portable radio that notifies their Dispatch Center: When the Firefighter activates the button; the dispatcher will acknowledge any alert by attempting to contact the portable radio that initiated the signal and Command immediately. The person pressing the button may not be the one who initiated the Mayday – Continue to assume each signal is an emergency, until proven otherwise. In remote locations, the Firefighter-Down signal may not reach Dispatch. It is imperative that Command (or designee) monitor State Fire Marshal (SFM) at all times.

II. Transitioning to a firefighter rescue strategy

NOTE: Command must ensure a “Rescue Group” is assembled and deployed. This may be accomplished with an established RIT crew, next available crew awaiting an assignment, assigned Back-Up Teams, or the assembly of any combination of available personnel, depending on when and where the Mayday occurs. Group size will be dependent on staffing levels and incident complexity.

- **Command**
 - Communicate with downed FF until Rescue Group Sup takes over.
 - Identify the Rescue Group Sup (This may be the existing Incident Safety Officer, other available Command Staff member, an Officer on a single-assigned RIT or Back-Up Team, or the RIT Leader when multiple RIT crews are assembled) – assign current RIT crews to this group when applicable.
 - Hold critical positions to provide protection from the fire.
 - Reassign available operational crews to the Rescue Group.
 - Broadcast the change in strategy to a “**Firefighter Rescue Strategy**”.
 - Secure a new Rapid Intervention Team.
 - Consider calling for additional alarms, on scene SCBA refilling, and additional staff.
 - Consider tactical frequencies for Rescue, Fire, etc...
 - Expand the Incident Command Team to include an incident information officer and a person to make contact with family members of firefighters.
- **Rescue Group Supervisor**
 - Take over communication with downed FF from Command.
 - Gather intelligence on the Firefighters situation.

- Establish rescue plan that meets these goals: (see SOG #3.12)
 - Locate the Firefighter.
 - Provide for air and fire protection.
 - Extract the Firefighter.
- Manage the safety and accountability of all crews assigned.
- Organize to manage Search, Air Support, Extraction, and Medical.
- Request additional resources as needed.
- **Crews assigned to Rescue Group**
 - Crews formed into teams to perform rescue, shall be identified using geographical or numerical RIT designators. Those crews already assigned to RIT will retain their call-sign (i.e.: "RIT 1"). (see SOG #3.12)
 - Reassigned crews must confirm assignment with Rescue and report air status.

III. Transitioning back to a normal strategy

- After the Firefighter rescue is complete, request a roll call from crews on scene. Command shall determine when the "Mayday" is over. This should be broadcast to all incident personnel and your dispatch center.
- A new assessment of the building condition should be made and a new strategy should be adopted. Available crews shall be reassigned to fire suppression activities based on the new strategy.
- Firefighters directly involved in the rescue effort should be rehabbed and provided with a debriefing appropriate for the situation.