



RUSSELLVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT
POLICY MANUAL

Policy Number:
Section:
Original Date:
Revised Date:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create a standardized response to Emergency Traffic or a declared Mayday during emergency operations.

All personnel are responsible for understanding proper procedures for transmitting Emergency Traffic or Mayday Declarations during emergency operations.

POLICY

Defined Terms:

Mayday - The specific term used by a firefighter who is in need of immediate help. A Mayday is given the highest communications priority.

Emergency Traffic – A term used to clear designated radio channels used at an incident to make way for important radio traffic for a firefighter distress call or an immediate change in strategic or tactical operations. All non-essential radio traffic will cease until Command gives the All Clear for normal radio transmissions. Command will also use the term “Emergency Traffic” to clear radio frequencies for an Emergency Evacuation alert (See Emergency Evacuation) or a change in strategic fire ground operations.

Rapid Intervention Crew/Company (RIC) - A team consisting of a minimum of two (2) firefighters designated to standby in a state of readiness to perform a rescue of department members. RIC firefighters will monitor all communications channels in use during the incident.

AWIN CHANNELS (On SYSTEM) – All channels that utilize the trunked system. They include:

1. **Fire 1** – the dispatch channel. It is monitored and recorded by dispatch.
2. **Fire 2** – secondary dispatch channel. It is monitored and recorded by dispatch.
3. **Fire 3** – tertiary dispatch channel. It is monitored and recorded by dispatch.
4. **FD Administration, Event, RPD2, Street, Animal, and Water** – are all not monitored or recorded.
5. **MAC Channels**

Tac Channels (Radio to Radio) – Utilized during emergency incidents for direct radio to radio contact and to clear the dispatch channel traffic from emergency operations. They are not monitored or recorded and include:

1. **Tac 1** – the channel assigned by Incident Commander as needed
2. **Tac 2** – the channel assigned by Incident Commander as needed
3. **Tac 12** – dedicated for future use
4. **Tac 13** – dedicated for future use

Approved

Fire Chief

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Emergency Identifier Button (EIB) – The orange button located on the lapel mic and on top of the handheld radio that activates the emergency features of the radio.

1. If the radio is on any **AWIN Channel** (on the system) pressing the EIB will transmit ~~on that channel~~ only if it is Fire 1, Fire 2, or Fire 3.
2. If the radio is on any **Tac Channel** (radio to radio) it will send the emergency alarm ~~on that channel~~ only to all radios in the area.
3. Reset the radio by pressing and holding the EIB for two seconds. It will give an audible tone when reset.

Emergency Traffic

An Incident Commander, Division/Group Supervisor, or any member who is in trouble or subject to an emergency condition can declare emergency traffic.

Examples of Emergency Traffic include the following:

1. Responder Down
2. Responder Missing
3. Responder Trapped
4. Need to immediately evacuate the building or area
5. Wind direction shifts, such as north to south
6. Change from Offensive to Defensive operations

The Incident Commander should conduct a personnel accountability report (PAR) from each Division/Group Supervisor whenever a change in conditions could create unsafe operations.

Mayday Procedures

Emergency incidents in which a Mayday call would be declared over the radio include, but are not limited to:

1. Fireground Incidents
2. Motor Vehicle Accidents
3. Mass Casualty Incidents
4. Hazardous Materials Incidents
5. Special Operations Incidents
6. Emergency Medical Incidents

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There are special considerations that warrant a Mayday declaration such as

1. Firefighter is pinned or trapped
2. Structural Collapse with missing or injured firefighter
3. Any incapacitating firefighter injury
4. SCBA malfunction while in an IDLH atmosphere with no rapid means of egress
5. Firefighter is unaccounted for during a PAR report
6. Firefighter has fallen through a roof, floor, or down stairs
7. Firefighter cannot exit by door or window within sixty (60) seconds
8. Anytime a firefighter is in imminent danger and requires immediate rescue

Declaring a Mayday will begin with the firefighter pressing the **Emergency Identifier Button (EIB)**. The radio will clear the channel, give an audible tone, and allow the firefighter to communicate hands free for approximately ten seconds.

The firefighter(s) in distress should transmit the Mayday on the channel that is assigned to the incident two times. If there is no response from Command the firefighter(s) should reset the radio, switch to **Fire 1**, and transmit the Mayday again. All other assigned divisions and groups will continue with their assigned tasks unless redirected by Command to assist with rescue.

A firefighter declaring the Mayday will state *"Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, Emergency Traffic"* and advise Command of:

1. Their current assignment
2. The point they entered the structure and direction of travel inside the structure. Where they are? (If known)
3. How many firefighters need assistance?
4. The conditions in their area
5. Any needed equipment
6. Amount of air left

Note: Command may need to prompt the distressed firefighter for additional information in order to direct the rescue operation.

PASS Device

After giving all information the firefighter(s) in distress will activate their PASS device to assist the RIC in locating the firefighter(s). It may be necessary to silence PASS devices periodically to transmit and receive communications and listen for the RIC.

Approved

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