



GLASTONBURY FIRE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES



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REVISION #: 2                                  REVISED DATE: 01-11-16                      EFFECTIVE DATE: 01-11-16  
CATEGORY: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS - GENERAL  
SUB-CATEGORY: ACCOUNTABILITY  
SUBJECT: MEMBERS IN DISTRESS  
RELATED GUIDELINES: FDO-301, FDO-302, FDO-303, FDO-304, FDO-305, FDO-306, FDO-308, FDO-309

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Section I -- Introduction

A. Objective

To protect members by ensuring that they promptly recognized when a member(s) is either in distress or have an emergency and that corrective/protective measures are immediately implemented.

B. Applicability

This guideline applies when a member(s) reports a "May Day".

C. References

None

Section II -- Distress Signals

As soon as it is realized that a member is lost, entrapped, out of air, or otherwise distressed one of the following distress signals is to be utilized.

Radio -                      Announce "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY" followed by your crew/officer identifier and brief situation report. (i.e., "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. Fire Attack to command, I have a report of an active pass device in the basement).

Only the highest level within the ICS operating on the transmitting channel, typically command, is to acknowledge a Mayday message. All other units are to stay off the air until otherwise notified.

A radio distress signal is to be issued immediately upon receipt and confirmation of any audible or visual distress signal.

Audible -                      Yell out the words "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY" periodically and await a reply or manually activate the SCBA's PASS device (do not shut-it off until rescued).

Visual - Visual signals that may be utilized are as follows:

- Waving both arms simultaneously in a continuous manner from shoulder height to directly above the head.
- The international sign for choking (hands on throat) if out of air.
- Waving a flashlight overhead in a continuous side to side motion.
- Waving any portion of the body or a tool continuously in a side-to-side manner from a window.

### Section III – Possible Lost Members

In the event that contact with a member/crew is lost or they cannot be accounted for following a PAR the following procedure should be followed:

- Immediate supervisor of the missing member/crew (crew leader, sector officer, or command) is to announce (in a manner similar to that which follows) three times via radio on the appropriate fire ground channel:

“All members check for (crew number/member name) in your area and report”

At this point, only members in direct contact with the possible lost members are to use the radio. All others are to remain off the air and await instructions.

- Command should ascertain the names of the members in the affected crew
- If no reply is received within 30 -45 seconds command should announce ( in a manner similar to that which follows) the names of those missing as follows:

“All members check for (crew member names) in your area and report”

At this point, only members in direct contact with the possibly lost members are to use the radio. All others are to remain off the air and await instructions.

- If no reply is received command will initiate the member in distress procedures.

### Section IV – Member in Distress Procedure

If a member, or crew(s), cannot be accounted for or a member is reported to be in distress command should initiate the following:

- A. Move all apparatus and crews to another radio channel as soon as possible. The original channel that the distressed member/crew was operating under is to be reserved for communications with him/her.
- B. Immediately initiate a search and rescue effort utilizing the rapid intervention team, if available. This effort should be aimed at the reported location of the member or the last known location based on the member's/crew's last assignment.

- C. Establish a search and rescue sector led by an officer to back up the RIT to locate and remove the members. This sector should go in service immediately and coordinate their efforts with the RIT. Once established the RIT will report to the search and rescue sector officer.
- D. All other crews should continue in their assigned function unless specifically directed by command. Command is to alter strategy to best protect the last known location of the lost/trapped members.
- \* Random abandonment of an assignment by personnel may result in an increase to those members(s) in distress \*
- E. Assign companies from staging or strike an additional alarm.
- F. Verify that EMS transport is immediately available and advise the dispatcher of the situation. Provide progress reports as the effort continues or comes to a conclusion.

If there is no acknowledgement to a firefighter's Mayday call, the firefighter shall activate the personal distress button (man down) on his/her radio to alert Command. Once the Mayday is acknowledged and communications occur between Command and the distress firefighter, the personal distress feature can be cleared for uninterrupted voice communications.

Section IV - Approval

Fire Chief



Date of Approval:

1/11/16