

# FIREHOUSE®

## Weekly Drill

### DRILL #120: THE MAYDAY

#### Introduction

Have you ever had to called a Mayday or been with a firefighter who has? Do you practice your department's procedure should you have to make this call? If not, why not? You need to be geared up because your life just might depend on it.

Many fire departments have policies in place for calling a Mayday so their firefighters know what criteria to use. Most policies read something like this: Firefighters will call a Mayday when they are Lost-Missing-Trapped and their life is in danger. Keep in mind, you might have to call the Mayday for another firefighter who is in trouble and is unable to make this call.

It's a known fact that firefighters do not like to think they'll have to call for help to be rescued, but it happens. Would you know what to do if you had to call a Mayday? Our training in the fire service started the first day we walked into rookie school. From that day forward we have been putting a ton of knowledge into our brains. However, training needs to be repetitive in our line of business to keep our skills where they need to be. Unlike the office environment, we cannot just go to the bookshelves and pull out the manual on Mayday procedures at an incident when you find yourself in trouble. The only way we are going to know what to do is through training, training, and then training some more.

The first thing a firefighter has to do in a Mayday situation is to remain calm. You want to remain calm to help preserve your air supply then get on your radio and announce "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday...." This is the notification avenue for letting the incident commander (IC) know that a firefighter is in need of assistance/rescue. The IC should note the time of the Mayday; the clock is now ticking.

Many departments are using the acronym LUNAR to gather in-

formation from the firefighter calling the Mayday. I personally think the IC should ask these question; thereby taking some pressure off the firefighter who has other things on his mind other than thinking about giving a LUNAR report.

The LUNAR report is:

- L – Location (where you are in the building or what your assignment was)
- U – Unit (apparatus you were assigned to)
- N – Name (give your name, take the guessing out of the game for Command)
- A – Air (what your heads-up display tells you)
- R – Resources (what you need or think you need)

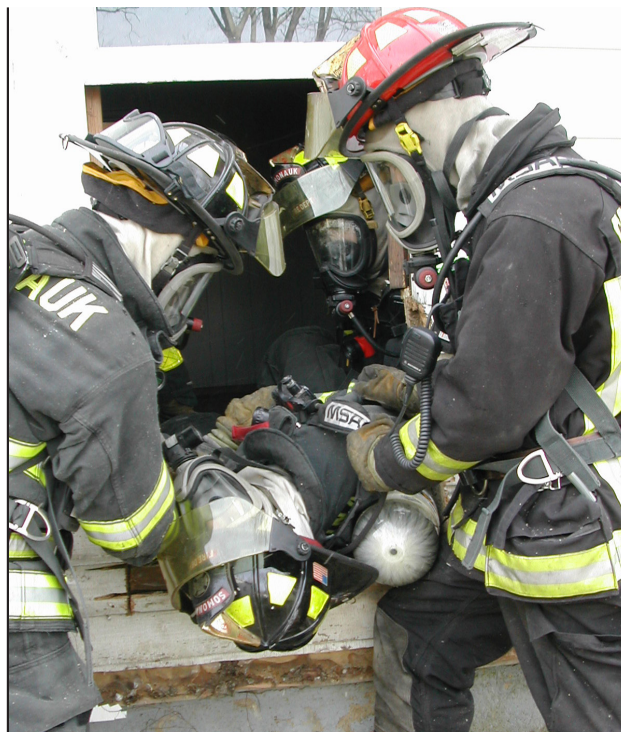
Once this information is gathered, the firefighter should activate his personal alert safety system (PASS) alarm and then begin to try and orientate himself. Communication is still very important, so communicate with your crew, the rapid intervention team (RIT) or Command using the CAN Report:

- C – Conditions (visibility, heat, structure)
- A – Actions (what you are doing, where you are going)
- N – Needs (what you need or think you may need; Air supply!!!)

Talk calmly and plainly on the radio so that command can understand what your needs are.

If your PASS interferes with radio use, turn it off while transmitting and turn it back on when done.

In any event, don't just sit around waiting for the RIT to come and rescue you! This is like waiting around to die! Do whatever you can to rescue yourself.



–Prepared by  
*Russell Merrick*