

FF Actions and Reactions to Emergencies

Discussion

By now we should be well aware of the hazards associated with firefighting operations. Many hours of training have been conducted focusing on rescue procedures and skills necessary to escape and survive hostile situations. Prior to putting those skills to work, every firefighter **must** know what the definition of an emergency is. When to call MAYDAY, when to activate the PASS, when to take action against rapid changes in conditions such as heat or smoke build-up are some of these conditions. These are not all-inclusive lists or situations but will provide you with general guidelines. Officers should discuss situations, required actions, and responses from IC and other companies/ members operating at the incident.

When to Call a MAYDAY

"Firefighter in Distress"

- You are on a low air bell and at a distance to an exit greater than your air supply.
- You are lost or separated from your crew
- You are trapped under a collapse or have fallen through a floor or roof
- Fire or heat build-up overruns your position and you cannot back-out or retreat
- Firefighters are engaged in self-survival procedures (breach, bail-outs)
- You need the RIT to assist your escape
- Anytime you cannot locate an alternative exit and require immediate escape

When to Use "Emergency Traffic"

Hazard or Condition Noted

- A change in fireground conditions requiring IC or crew attention and actions
- Evacuation of structure condition has been noted (collapse eminent)
- Change in conditions or hazard identification (consider strategy change)
- Unexpected or severe change in fire conditions that could affect safety of personnel
- Violence directed at company members
- Situations that require control of communications channel; all other units should go silent upon this type of traffic

Emergency Actions

Self-Survival Principles

- Stay as calm as you can; conserve available air
- Stay with your crews, do not split up
- Call for help immediately, when you first sense trouble
- Activate your PASS after communicating your emergency to IC
- Follow hoseline (use couplings) or rope out
- Retreat to area of safe refuge (breach if necessary)
- Stay oriented to position in building at all times; distance inside, from doors, number of rooms



Situation or Conditions Encountered	List the Actions to be Taken by Firefighter(s) or Companies Involved	List the Response from IC or Crews Operating on the Fireground
Low pressure bells go off on SCBA of crew member while operating on deep inside the interior of building		
A crew member becomes separated from team		
Firefighters are overrun by fire in a hallway of a multi-family building		
A sector officer observes indications of possible collapse of building components with crews operating on the interior		
A collapse occurs (use interior and exterior scenarios)		