

MAHANOY CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
Standard Operating Guidelines
#4810 – Radio Protocol

Effective: 1/01/06

Revised: 3/10/06, 11/01/07

1. Before speaking – Listen carefully to your in-coming transmissions. Listen for a size-up, orders from the IC or to receive more information from the Communications Center. After listening – Be Calm, Clear and Concise with your out-going transmissions.
2. When dispatched for a fire call in Mahanoy City, all primary apparatus must call in responding with their full apparatus unit number. All support vehicles must stay off the radio and should not call in responding at any time in town. The only exception for support vehicles would be if called on the radio specifically by the OIC for a special assignment/placement or the communications center. For all non-fire or other incidents where there is a limited response or a specific request for apparatus, all units involved should call in responding.
When dispatched to any out of town calls, all units regardless of primary or support must call in responding.
All responding apparatus (primary or support) will use the county radio channel #1 (46.500) and will remain on that channel. All apparatus and personnel will only switch to a secondary channel (46.320) when advised by to do so by the OIC.
3. First Unit or Officer to arrive reports “ON SCENE” followed by a SIZE UP of the incident. This report, given to the Comm. Center should be as follows:
 - a. WHAT DO I HAVE? [Nothing showing, working, etc.] Briefly describe the incident and special circumstances.
 - b. WHAT AM I DOING? [Describe action being taken.]
 - c. WHAT DO I NEED? [List assignments for in-coming units.]
 - d. WHO’S IN CHARGE? [Officer or most senior person assumes command until relieved by a Chief Officer.]
4. All other in-coming units it is not necessary to inform Comm. Center “ON SCENE”. Instead, contact the IC for assignment. Only the IC communicates with the Comm. Center on 46.500 frequency.
5. When Command established, command will appoint an Operations Officer and Sector Officers as needed and all radios will switch over to Channel 2 (46.320) for operations.
 - a. Personnel and apparatus should radio to respective Captains or the highest ranking officer. Captains or the highest ranking officer should radio to the Operations Officer. The Operations Officer and Assistant Chiefs should radio to the Incident Commander.
 - b. EXCEPTION: “MAYDAY” and “PRIORITY” messages.
6. Once an assignment is given, radio traffic is limited to:

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- a. Confirm the reception of the assignment.
 - b. Assignment completed.
 - c. Request another assignment or rehab.
 - d. Inform of problems completing the assignment [need additional manpower or resources, a delay, etc.]
 - e. Assignment can not be completed and why [changing conditions, safety.]
7. The term “MAYDAY” is to be used by any firefighting personnel who may find themselves trapped, disoriented or otherwise in imminent danger within the fire building or hazardous area. This signal will be recognized by the Schuylkill County Communications Center with the highest regard. **IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, TRANSMIT THE MESSAGE TWICE.** Personnel transmitting the “MAYDAY” signal should if at all possible include the following information:
- a. **LOCATION.** This should include the floor, room, location by direction, side of building (i.e. Side A, B, C, D), Etc. ****THIS IS THE MOST CRITICAL INFORMATION NEEDED FOR THE TELECOMMUNICATOR. ****
 - b. **SPECIAL TOOLS OR OTHER EQUIPMENT WHICH MAY BE NEEDED TO AFFECT A RESCUE.**
 - c. **ANY OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION WITH THE FIREFIGHTER MAY TRANSMIT.**

Schuylkill County Communications Center will acknowledge the “MAYDAY” transmission and IMMEDIATELY rebroadcast the transmission and require RADIO SILENCE. The Incident Commander will be contacted and all information from the mayday call will be given at that time. The Communications Center will maintain RADIO SILENCE on that frequency until instructed otherwise by the IC. If “MAYDAY” is broadcasted over a frequency that the Communications Center DOES NOT monitor, the IC should notify the Center ASAP. The Communications Center will then request RADIO SILENCE on ALL frequencies until instructed by the IC.

8. NOTE: “MAYDAY” is ONLY to be used to declare that FIRE PERSONNEL are in DISTRESS. The term “PRIORITY” is to be used for any other critical fire ground information.
9. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION: Due to the limitations of portable radios, the Communications Center may not be capable of hearing a firefighters MAYDAY” distress call. ALL personnel on-scene should be cognizant of his and in the event a “MAYDAY” is heard, notification to the IC must be made without delay and RADIO SILENCE must be maintained. The IC should then notify the Communications Center of the “MAYDAY” alert.
10. It shall be the responsibility of the Assistant Fire Chief to insure that all members are trained to this SOG.

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11. Any firefighter not adhering to this SOG shall be subject to Borough and Department disciplinary action.

Fire Chief

Author