

Number: Title:

Page 1 of 2

**C-2.4 FIREFIGHTER DISTRESS CALL****INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedure to indicate a firefighter in distress or in need of rescue, and to outline the steps to follow in the event of this situation.

**POLICY**

Activation of the "Emergency Button" shall be the primary method of a firefighter in distress initiating a call for help. This will be the primary method used to notify the Incident Commander and the communications center of a firefighter emergency.

**PROCEDURES**

Each firefighter assigned to the hazard zone should carry an 800 mhz portable radio.

In the event a firefighter becomes separated from his/her crew, lost, trapped, caught and unable to self-extricate, incapacitated, or critically low on air, the firefighter should depress the "Emergency Button". If several crew members or the entire crew are in need of rescue, all members shall activate their emergency buttons.

When activated, the "Emergency Button" will emit a tone, and automatically change the radio frequency to the emergency default channel. The communications center, upon activation of the Emergency Button will receive an audible alarm notifying them of the activation. The dispatcher will attempt to contact the firefighter(s) who activated it on the Emergency Default Channel stating, "Engine position and unit number, are you declaring an emergency?" (i.e. "Engine 1 Captain, are you declaring an emergency?") and the dispatcher shall immediately notify the Incident Commander (I.C.) of the emergency button activation.

If the activation is accidental and there is no emergency, the firefighter shall notify dispatch of the inadvertent alarm, and depress the button to reset it and resume normal operations.

If in distress, the firefighter who activated the button shall reply, "Engine position and unit number, and name, and state either "FIREFIGHTER DOWN", "FIREFIGHTER LOST" or "FIREFIGHTER TRAPPED" (i.e. Engine 1 Firefighter Smith, FIREFIGHTER DOWN.) The firefighter shall proceed, if able, to give the following information:

- Location in the building
- Assignment
- Situation – lost, trapped, collapse, low air, incapacitated, fall etc.
- Resources needed for extrication

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Number: Title:

Page 2 of 2

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Once the initial contact between dispatch and the firefighter declaring the emergency occurs, subsequent radio communications shall take place between the members of the RIC and the firefighter(s) in distress on the Emergency Default Channel in order to facilitate the rescue effort.

If a firefighter becomes aware of an emergency situation involving a firefighter or crew that is unable to activate their Emergency Button to call for help, the following procedure should be followed:

- If in the same vicinity as the person in distress, direct that person to activate their Emergency Button to initiate a call for help.
- If unable to access or communicate with the person or crew in distress, declare "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" on the incident TAC channel, and state "FIREFIGHTER DOWN", "FIREFIGHTER MISSING" or "FIREFIGHTER TRAPPED". Give the pertinent information to the Incident Commander necessary to initiate a RIC activation.

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