

**MONTERERY COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION  
FIRE OPERATIONS MANUAL  
SECTION 8**

**Firefighter Lost/Trapped/Disoriented Command Policy**

**1. Purpose**

- A. The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard for all Monterey County incident command personnel to follow when a firefighter is determined to be lost/trapped/disoriented on the fire ground.

**2. Background**

- A. When a firefighter has declared a “Mayday” on the fire ground, the difference between life and death relies heavily on the management of the event by the Incident Commander. It is crucial that fire ground commanders are prepared through policies and training to manage this critical event. Incident Commanders need to know that it is not a matter of if a firefighter emergency will occur; it is a matter of when. Preparation is the key to success.

**3. Policy**

- A. Once command has determined that a firefighter is lost, missing, disoriented or in other peril, the following actions should be taken:
- B. Declare “Emergency Traffic” on all fire ground frequencies and advise all personnel of the situation to include information on the missing firefighter (if known);
- C. Change strategy to a Rescue Mode while continuing to address the fire threat if it will hinder the rescue effort;
- D. Deploy the IRIC/RIC team;
- E. Notify dispatch center of the emergency traffic declaration and request additional resources including truck companies, engine companies, and specialized resources, ambulances and overhead personnel.
- F. Additionally, advise Fire Comm if using VFire26.

**MONTERERY COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION**  
**FIRE OPERATIONS MANUAL**  
**SECTION 8**

- G. Dispatch center actions
  - I. If requested assign an alternate command and tactical frequency to the incident.
- H. Assign personnel to assist at the command post with monitoring radio traffic and resources tracking;
- I. Conduct a Personnel Accountability Report and transition all non-rescue personnel to a secondary tactical frequency;
- J. Ensure strong crew continuity and discipline to prevent freelancing and additional fire ground confusion;
- K. Establish a Medical Unit and consider an EMS helicopter;
- L. Do not abandon firefighting positions and provide reinforcements;
- M. Ensure regular reports from rescue crews to determine additional resource and incident needs;
- N. Assign a chief officer to the rescue effort;
- O. Assign an Incident Safety Officer;
- P. Expand the command organization as necessary;
- Q. Re-evaluate the plan and order additional resources as necessary;
- R. Consider Critical Incident Stress Management team deployment;
- S. Establish an Information Officer;
- T. Provide support functions to the rescue group to include, but not be limited to:
  - I. Hose line placement to protect rescue effort;
  - II. Structural stability/collapse hazard mitigation;
  - III. Spare SCBA cylinders for those needing rescue and the rescuers;
  - IV. Ventilation;

**MONTERERY COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION  
FIRE OPERATIONS MANUAL  
SECTION 8**

- V. Lighting;
- VI. Maintain regular communication with downed firefighter to provide support and determine location for rescuers;
- VII. Provide regular updates to the dispatch center and advise the center when the emergency traffic situation has been mitigated.