



**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER**

General Order Number: 06-33	Effective Date: September 1, 2018
Division: Emergency Operations	
Chapter: Emergency Evacuation and Tactical Retreat Procedure	
By Order of the Fire Chief: Benjamin M. Barksdale	Issue Date: May 16, 2018

BB

POLICY

This General Order establishes a procedure for both an emergency evacuation and a tactical retreat for use by Department personnel operating at the scene of an emergency incident.

DEFINITIONS

All Clear – A term utilized by Division/Group supervisors and/or Officers in Charge (OICs) to indicate to the Incident Commander or other Division/Group supervisors and OICs that their assigned personnel have exited the structure or division.

Emergency Evacuation – When the Incident Commander has directed personnel to exit the structure or hazardous area immediately, abandoning all equipment that is not essential to facilitate immediate egress for life safety purposes.

Evacuation Alert Tone – A distinct audible warble tone broadcast over operational incident talk-group(s) by Public Safety Communications (PSC) to notify personnel that an evacuation has been ordered.

“Evacuate, Evacuate, Evacuate” – An announcement, initiated by the Incident Commander, that all personnel shall IMMEDIATELY evacuate a building or hazardous area.

Incident Action Plan (IAP) – A term used to describe the plan, tactics, and objectives of incident operation to mitigate the hazard through an organized course of events that addresses all phases of incident control within a specified time.

Incident Objectives - Describes the basic incident strategy, incident objectives, command emphasis/priorities, and safety considerations.

Long Tone – A distinct single audible signal broadcast over operational incident talk-group(s) by Public Safety Communications (PSC) to notify personnel of an important message.

Officer in Charge (OIC) – Unit Officer or Unit Leader.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) or Roll Call – A term used to track and report the location, status, and welfare of personnel.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) – A crew specifically designated by the Incident Commander at the scene of an emergency beyond the initial stages, consisting of a minimum of four (4) personnel, one preferably being a Company Officer. The RIC shall be available for the rescue of firefighters should the need arise. Depending on the size and complexity of the incident, the Incident Commander shall establish one or more RICs. The RIC normally replaces or enhances the initial 2-In/2-Out standby team, which was required during the initial stages of the incident.

Tactical Retreat – A term utilized by the Incident Commander directing personnel to exit the structure or hazardous area urgently through a coordinated effort to regroup, evaluation of tactical mode, and plan for redeployment.

PROCEDURES / RESPONSIBILITIES

I. Emergency Evacuation

- A. The Incident Commander identifies an **immediate** and time-sensitive life safety issue which requires all personnel to evacuate a structure or hazardous area to prevent loss of life. These situations include, but are not limited to:
 1. Imminent structural or roof collapse.
 2. Rapidly changing fire conditions/imminent flashover.
 3. Explosive combustibles/hazardous materials incident.
 4. Any other situation where the Incident Commander feels an extremely time-sensitive Emergency Evacuation is necessary.
- B. The Incident Commander repeats the word “EVACUATE” three (3) times in rapid succession.
 1. Example: “EVACUATE, EVACUATE, EVACUATE, Command to all personnel at 9201 Basil Court, evacuate the building IMMEDIATELY.”
 2. Refer to Command Action Guide, Emergency Evacuation (Attachment A).
- C. PSC sounds the Evacuation alert tones on all incident talk group channels and repeats the message as follows: “EVACUATE, EVACUATE, EVACUATE. All personnel operating at 9201 Basil Court, an evacuation has been ordered, evacuate the building immediately.”
- D. **ALL** personnel will **IMMEDIATELY** exit the building, abandoning all equipment except for the essential equipment necessary to complete IMMEDIATE egress. **EVACUATION MUST BE PERFORMED WITH ONLY THE BARE MINIMUM; GET OUT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.**
- E. Apparatus drivers activate their air horns with an uninterrupted blast for 30 seconds to alert personnel who may not have heard the radio message.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

- F. Hose lines and other equipment will not be removed until the Incident Commander deems the structure “safe” for re-entry.
 - 1. Deployed hose lines will be left in place to guide personnel out of the building/hazardous area, and/or used to assist the RIC in locating missing personnel, unless otherwise deemed unsafe by the Incident Commander.
- G. All personnel will immediately stage outside of the structure, outside of the collapse zone, and in an area designated by their supervisor.
 - 1. Division/Group supervisors will notify the IC that an “all clear” is complete with their respective divisions.
 - 2. OICs will account for their personnel, and will be ready to relay the results of the PAR upon request, in accordance with General Order 06-06, Personnel Accountability Procedures. OICs will keep all their personnel together until further direction of the IC.
- H. Individuals such as Chief Officers, Safety Officers, Investigators, etc. will physically report to the Command Post for PAR in order to reduce radio traffic.
- I. After an Emergency Evacuation, the IC will complete a PAR.
- J. At any point if there are missing crew member(s), personnel will declare a “Mayday” in accordance with *General Order 06-04, Mayday Procedure*.
- K. Upon completion of the PAR, the IC will relay the revised IAP to units to resume operations.
- L. **An emergency evacuation SHALL NEVER be used in an effort to “regroup” personnel.**

II. Tactical Retreat

- A. The Incident Commander identifies potential life safety threat or a change in the IAP requiring a need for personnel to retreat from the structure or hazardous area. These situations include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Potential threat of structural or roof collapse.
 - 2. Change of tactics (offensive to defensive).
 - 3. Change in IAP or incident objectives/regrouping.
 - 4. Any other situation where the Incident Commander deems a Tactical Retreat is necessary.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

- B. The Incident Commander will announce for personnel operating in the structure or specific area to perform a Tactical Retreat to a specific area.
 - 1. Example: “Command to all personnel at 9201 Basil Court, all personnel are ordered to perform a Tactical Retreat, report to side Alpha, Communications, repeat with a Long Tone.”
 - 2. Example: “Command to all units operating on Division 2 of 9201 Basil Court, all personnel are ordered to perform a Tactical Retreat from Division 2 and report to side Alpha, Communications, repeat with a Long Tone.”
 - 3. Refer to Command Action Guide, Tactical Retreat (Attachment B).
- C. PSC sounds a Long Tone on all incident talk group channels and repeats the message as follows: “Attention all personnel operating at 9201 Basil Court (*geographical area if indicated*), a Tactical Retreat has been ordered, (*specific retreat location*).”
- D. When a Tactical Retreat has been ordered, ALL assigned personnel will safely exit the building or hazardous area. Equipment that can be safely removed without delay will be removed during the retreat.
- E. Hose lines are to be used by interior crews to protect personnel during the retreat, including companies operating without hose lines, as well as Division/Group Supervisors.
 - 1. Hose line protection of the interior stairways shall be provided for companies retreating from the upper floors until an “all clear” has been declared by the upper floor Division Supervisor or OIC.
 - 2. Additional hose lines will be left in place to guide personnel out of the building/hazardous area, or used to assist the RIC in locating missing personnel.
- F. Division Supervisors or OICs that provide the protection of a hose line for retreating personnel at the lowest level of a structure will notify the IC that an “all clear” has been declared.
- G. Personnel will immediately report back to the designated area by the Incident Commander for PAR.
 - 1. OICs will account for their personnel, and will be ready to relay the results of the PAR upon request, in accordance with *General Order 06-06, Personnel Accountability Procedures*. OICs will keep all their personnel together until further direction of the IC.
- H. Individuals such as Chief Officers, Safety Officers, Fire Marshals, etc. will report to the Command Post for PAR to reduce radio traffic.
- I. After a Tactical Retreat, the IC will complete a PAR.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

- J. At any point if there are missing crew member(s), personnel will declare a Mayday in accordance to *General Order 06-04, Mayday Procedure*.

- K. Upon completion of the PAR, the IC will relay incident objectives to units to resume operations.

REFERENCES

General Order 06-04 Mayday Procedure

General Order 06-06 Personnel Accountability Procedures

FORMS / ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Command Action Guide – Emergency Evacuation

Attachment B – Command Action Guide – Tactical Retreat