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CHAPTER 9 – EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

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CONTENTS	PAGE
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGES	3
9.1 INTRODUCTION	3
9.2 THE DISTRESS CALL (MAYDAY).....	4
9.2.1 Contents of a Distress Call (MAYDAY)	4
9.3 THE URGENCY CALL (PAN PAN).....	4
9.3.1 Contents of an Urgency Call (PAN).....	5

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGES

9.1 Introduction

Emergency communications for aircraft are divided into two main categories:

The aircraft is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance.

DISTRESS

Reporting:

- Engine failure
- Structural failure
- Fire on board
- Fuel exhausted
- Decompression
- Serious bird strike
- Hazardous weather

URGENCY

Reporting a:

- Motor car accident
- Sinking ship
- Derailed train
- Serious bush fire
- Passenger that is ill
- Pilot unsure of position

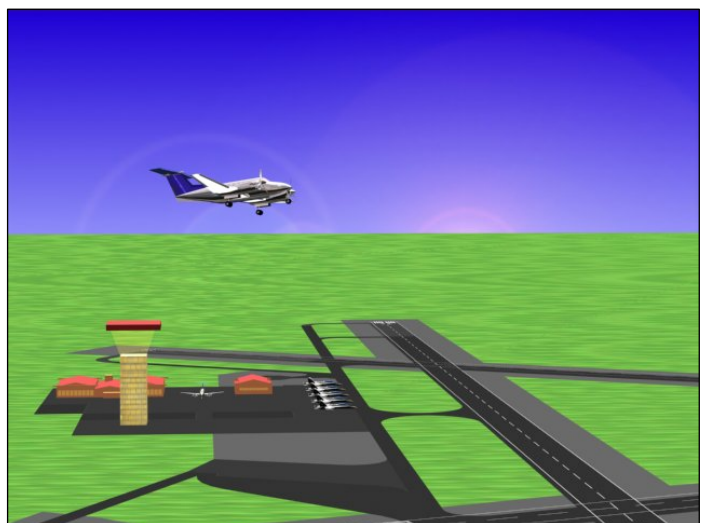
*The aircraft is experiencing difficulties or has other problems on board or
A very urgent message concerning the safety of another aircraft, ship, vehicle or some person on board or within sight and requires assistance but not immediately*

Any person speaking to an aircraft in a distress or urgency condition must keep the messages as short and to the point as possible. The number of messages must be the minimum amount that is necessary for the situation.

If the station that is addressed does not answer the emergency call, then any other station that is in a position to help may respond.

The distress and urgency traffic is to remain on the initial frequency on which contact was made until such time that better assistance could be provided on another frequency.

During emergency communications the radio work should be done slowly and distinctly, pronouncing each word clearly to avoid confusion.



9.2 The Distress Call (Mayday)

The distress call should be made on the frequency that is in use at the time.

Repeating the word MAYDAY three times, followed by the distress message (all in one transmission).

The distress call must contain as much information as possible in the following order:

9.2.1 Contents of a Distress Call (MAYDAY)

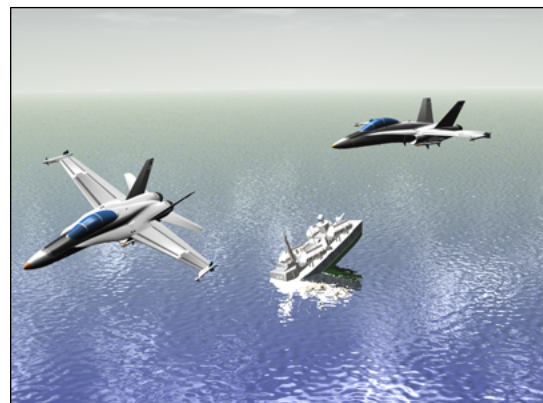
1. MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY
2. Name of station addressed**
3. Aircraft identification said three times
4. Type of aircraft
5. Nature of the emergency
6. Intention of the pilot-in-command
7. Present or last known position
8. Flight level or Altitude
9. Heading
10. Any other useful information if time permits i.e. people on board, endurance, dual or solo, etc.

Example:

1. MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
2. Adelaide Centre...
3. YNC, YNC, YNC...
4. Diamond 40
5. I have an engine failure....
6. And will attempt a forced landing at Edinburgh
7. Presently 5 miles west of Edinburgh..
8. 4000 ft
9. Currently heading east towards the airfield.
10. Two people on board

9.3 The Urgency Call (PAN PAN)

The procedures around this call are almost identical to the MAYDAY call except for the following:



9.3.1 Contents of an Urgency Call (PAN)

1. PAN PAN, PAN PAN, PAN PAN
2. Name of station addressed
3. Aircraft identification said three times
4. Nature of urgency
5. Intention of the pilot
6. Present position
7. Flight level/Altitude
8. A/C heading (if applicable)
9. Other useful info

Example:

1. PAN PAN, PAN PAN, PAN PAN
2. Adelaide Centre
3. YNC, YNC, YNC
4. Diamond 40
5. Reporting an incident where a boat is sinking in the Gulf.
6. I will remain circling the area until 0700 after which I will return to Parafield.
7. Presently 7 miles northwest of Outer Harbour
8. At 3000ft.
9. Please send the emergency services.

Note:

If you have declared a MAYDAY you are entitled to convert it to a PAN provided that the situation is not as serious as you previously considered it to be. (The reverse is also possible - a PAN can be converted to a MAYDAY)

An aircraft intercepting a Distress Call should not reply until there is no immediate reply from the addressed station, or another station, which is in a better position to assist.

*When the aircraft is no longer in distress, the pilot has to cancel the MAYDAY as follows:
"Adelaide Approach this is VTH, CANCEL MAYDAY the engine has restarted and I am returning to Parafield."*