REGIONAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Communications and Deployment Procedures

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SCOPE:

This policy shall affect every member of any agency Dispatched by the Sierra Vista Dispatch Center and Ft. Huachuca Dispatch Center as well as all other agencies operating within, but not limited to the following response areas all of which have a standing automatic and mutual aid agreements:

City of Sierra Vista and associated ambulance Certificate of Necessity (CON)
Fry Fire District and associated ambulance Certificate of Necessity (CON)
Ft. Huachuca Fire Department (Ft. Huachuca Military Installation)
Palominas Fire District
Whetstone Fire District and associated ambulance Certificate of Necessity (CON)

This policy shall further affect and be adhered to for any call for service by an outside agency that is requesting a mutual aid response outside of the aforementioned areas in which the radio communications control and incident is retained with the Sierra Vista Dispatch Center and Ft. Huachuca Dispatch Centers respectively.

PURPOSE:

All agencies that fall under the Sierra Vista Dispatch Center and the Ft. Huachuca Dispatch center will respond to any emergency that threatens life, safety and/or property. Timely responses and effective management of any emergency operation requires proper communication and adequate deployment of resources to be able to mitigate the many situations found under an all hazards response.

The ability to communicate and deploy effectively and efficiently is of the utmost importance and is based on practice and refined through discipline. The purpose of this procedure is to provide direction pertinent to communications and deployment as well as guidelines for routine and emergency operations communications. The Dispatch Center will dispatch unit(s) with the required capabilities to control the emergency. The judgment of both Dispatch Center and emergency response personnel is an integral part of the decision making process, taking into consideration both the information received and the potential that exists.

SAFETY:

Efficient and effective communications with common terminology, knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of the various types of communications are a must to ensure the safety of all personnel on any emergency scene. It is important that any and all personnel on routine and emergency scenes understand how to communicate and activate the emergency response system as well as what their role is in the communications aspect of that response.

PROCEDURE:

Jurisdiction and Automatic Aid

Emergency incidents within the automatic aid boundaries served by the Sierra Vista and Fry Fire Departments will be dispatched without regard to jurisdiction. Units will also be dispatched to borderline locations when Dispatch personnel cannot make accurate determination of the jurisdiction (i.e. zones that include both portions of the Fry Fire District and Palominas Fire District).

The Fry Fire District provides primary EMS response and transport for Huachuca City and a portion of the Palominas Fire District; and provides automatic aid to the Palominas Fire District for fire response.

Calls for assistance from agencies outside of the Sierra Vista-Fry Fire Automatic Aid boundaries will be dispatched as mutual aid incidents with the approval of the individual jurisdiction providing mutual aid.

Determination of the nature of the problem may indicate that a caller does not have an emergency that requires a fire department response. The identification, prevention and reduction of unnecessary responses are basic parts of the Dispatch Center function. The call routing process must not delay response to valid emergency incidents but should attempt to verify the nature of questionable calls. When a positive determination of need for emergency response cannot be made the Fire Department or dispatch center, the policy is to Dispatch.

DEPLOYMENT:

Medical Calls

Per Spillman CAD, the closest ALS engine or ladder will be the primary unit dispatched to the majority of medical calls for service.

On Priority 1 calls, the closest medic unit will be dispatched initially with the ALS engine.

On Priority 2 calls, a medic unit from the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) will be dispatched secondarily, after the ALS engine on scene has determined the need for transport and has requested a medic unit be dispatched.

CAD will identify appropriate units for response based on location, unit status/availability, and when appropriate, by agency. Covering units are identified in CAD to allow for backup response when first-due units are unavailable.

For certain types of medical calls (i.e. motor vehicle accidents with entrapment) CAD response plans will include additional resources as part of the assignment.

Violent Medical Calls

The incident has been determined unsafe to respond directly to the scene. Units assigned to the incident shall stage until law enforcement until law enforcement advises that fire personnel can proceed to the scene. A Chief Officer will respond to violent Medical calls that include multiple patients, where patient(s) injuries are severe enough to require air medical transport for special resource needs, or where the complexity of the scene warrants the response.

Fire Incidents

Incidents that require or potentially require water capabilities to extinguish a fire.

Residential Fire Incidents (2 and 1's)

A "2 and 1" assignment will be dispatched for residential structure fires. A "2 and 1" assignment consists of two engines, a support unit (a ladder or a third engine, depending on the incident location), a medic unit, primary Chief Officer, and a water tender(s) (depending on the incident location). Upon declaration of a Working Fire an additional engine company and second Chief Officer will be dispatched; the balance of this response will constitute a 1st Alarm residential. In areas where an aerial is not practical or access is limited, the closest most appropriate Engine company will be sent.

Commercial Fire Incidents (3 and 1's)

A "3 and 1" assignment will be dispatched for commercial structure fires in sizable commercial occupancies and multi-family residential facilities. A "3 and 1" assignment consists of three engines, one ladders, a medic unit, primary Chief Officers, and a water tender (depending on the incident location). Upon declaration of a Working Fire an additional engine company, ladder company, and Chief Officer will be dispatched; the balance of this response will constitute a 1st Alarm Commercial. In areas where an aerial is not practical or access is limited, the closest most appropriate Engine company will be sent.

Brush Fires

Brush assignments will be dispatched for reported vegetation fires. A Still Brush assignment (one Engine) will be dispatched for vegetation fires that are small in nature. Still Brush assignments as scaleable to alarms by requesting the appropriate alarm. The balance of a 1st Alarm will include the addition of one Chief Officer, two Engine Companies and two type six brush trucks).

An upgraded brush assignment (one Chief Officer, one two Engine Companies, and two Brush trucks) will be dispatched for vegetation fires that are serious in nature, this initial response will be the 1st alarm.

A "Brush-Fire – Threatening" assignment will be dispatched for vegetation fires in established Wildland/urban interface zones that are and/or have the potential to involve structures. A Brush Fire Threatening initial dispatch will include components and apparatus from both Brush Fire response to address the wildland portion of the incident as well as Units to address structure protection and possible involvement to residences threatened by the wildland fire exposure. This response will vary depending on the area surrounding. Brush Fire Threatening can scaled by alarms both on the residential/commercial alarms as well as Brush Alarms.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous Materials assignments will be dispatched for incidents reported to involve hazardous materials. Hazardous Materials situations may include spills, transportation accidents, or similar events. Hazards may include toxicity, flammability, radiological hazards, chemical reactions and/or combinations of factors.

A Still HAZMAT assignment (one engine or ladder) will be dispatched on calls that involve hazardous materials of a minor nature i.e., carbon monoxide, smell of gas, etc….

An Upgraded HAZMAT assignment should be dispatched for situations involving significant potential danger by virtue of materials involved, quantities, location, fire or explosion danger and/or number of people exposed.

The Dispatch for Upgraded HAZMAT assignments will include a Chief/Command officer, (1) Engine, (1) Medic Unit, and Hazmat Specialty Unit (ladder). This will constitute a 1st Alarm Hazmat.

Special considerations for deployment on Hazardous Materials incidents include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sierra Vista Fire & Medical Special Response Team (SRT)
- Cochise County Hazardous Materials Response Team
- Regional MMRS (State asset available by contacting Tucson Fire Department Dispatch Center)
- Regional Rapid Response Team (State asset available by contacting Tucson Fire Department Dispatch Center)
- AZ ARNG 91st Civil Support Team (State asset available through the Cochise County Emergency Managers Office)

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Special Rescue

Special rescue assignments will be dispatched for incidents that may require specialized equipment and training to extricate patient(s). These incidents include confined space rescue, trench rescue, high angle or rope rescue, water rescue, structural collapse, mountain and communications tower rescues. Technical rescue calls will consist of the dispatching of (1) Chief/Command Officer, (1) Engine Company (1) Medic Unit, along with a Technical Rescue company response. This will constitute a 1st Alarm Technical Rescue.

Special Considerations for deployment on Technical Rescue incidents include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sierra Vista Fire & Medical Special Response Team (SRT)
- Fry Fire Technical Rescue Team (TRT)
- Cochise County Search and Rescue
- Regional Rapid Response Team (State asset available by contacting Tucson Fire Department Dispatch Center)
- DPS Ranger
- Cochise Air (Available through Cochise County Dispatch)

Service Calls and Other Miscellaneous Incidents

A single engine or ladder will be dispatched for non-emergency service calls. Dispatch will select the "Fire Assist" Nature Code. Examples include smoke detector checks or snake removal. While assigned to service calls, companies will remain available on radio (AVLOR) for dispatch and response to emergency calls.

Supplemental Dispatch

Depending on the resources required, additional units may be dispatched to an incident by several methods. Units can be Special Called, an assignment can be "Balanced", a 1st Alarm can be requested or a 2nd Alarm can be requested.

Special Call
A Special Call is a request for the dispatch of any combination of additional unit types, unit capabilities or specific units. The requestor must specify the desired quantity of unit types or capabilities or the specific units desired.

When formulating a recommendation for a special call, no consideration is given to the units already assigned to the incident.

Balance of Assignment
A balance of assignment is a request for the dispatch of the additional units necessary to fulfill a specific Alarm Level. That Alarm Level must be specified.

Example: A single engine may respond to residential fire alarm activation and upon arrival and further investigation discover a room-and-contents fire. Upon declaration of a working fire by the initial Engine Company and subsequently the incident commander, he or she should call for the balance of a 1st Alarm Residential. Dispatch would then balance the assignment to a 1st Alarm residential response by dispatching two Chief Officers, two additional engines, a ladder, and a Medic Unit.

Dispatch may determine, based off of information from callers or other non-fire units on the scene, that a greater Alarm level response is necessary. In such case, Dispatch will contact the responding Chief Officer and verify the balance to a greater Alarm level.

Greater Alarm
A Greater Alarm is a request for the dispatch of additional units using predefined requirement sets. A Greater Alarm request requires both a Greater Alarm Type and the Response Level.

When formulating a recommendation for a Greater Alarm, no consideration is given to the units already assigned to the incident. The Response Level indicated satisfies all response requirements for the Greater Alarm.   Assignments should be balanced up to and including the declaration of a working incident a subsequent First Alarm. When an assignment is Balanced, the system takes into consideration the units currently assigned to the incident. Therefore, an incident can go from a single engine response, such as a tree fire and be Balanced to a Working First Alarm, allowing the system to fulfill all requirements necessary for the Working First Alarm. This, however does not occur for Greater Alarms (Second Alarm and above). A 3-2 assignment that needs the resources of a Greater Alarm must first be Balanced to a Working Fire and then the Greater Alarm request must be generated.

Specific Types of Second Alarms

Second Alarms are dispatched at the request of command, when the need is indicated. Command should ask for the specific type alarm needed to continue managing the incident: The following are alarms types that include alarm levels:

BRUSH ASSIGNMENT
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ASSIGNMENT
MEDICAL ASSIGNMENT
TECHNICAL RESCUE RESCUE ASSIGNMENT
RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURAL ASSIGNMENT
COMMERCIAL STRUCTURAL ASSIGNMENT

Greater Alarms require a specific type of alarm to be requested; however the capabilities recommended may be generic and are the same for each Greater Alarm.

Greater Alarms will typically require that the Dispatch Center contact the outlying agencies that make up that Greater Alarm to formally request mutual aid.

Chief Officer Notification

In addition to receiving an ALL TONE, the incidents listed above will also prompt a Chief Officer notification via Spillman Rip and Run for the agencies that utilize that feature. For any nature that goes to a 2nd Alarm, the Fire Chief or designee of the authority having jurisdiction for Fire and EMS will be notified by Dispatch of the incident.

1st Alarm Residential

- 2 Chief Officers
- 3 Engines (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Ladder Company (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Medic Unit (2 Person Minimum)

2nd Alarm Residential

- 1 PD Mobile Command Unit
- 1 Engines (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Ladder Company (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Chief officer
- 1 Investigations Unit
- Air Unit
- All Call for back fill

1st Alarm Commercial

- 2 Chief Officers
- 4 Engine Companies (3 Person Minimum)
- 2 Ladder Companies (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Medic Unit
- Appropriate All Calls
- 2 Investigators (Upon declaration of working fire)

2nd Alarm Commercial

- 1 Chief Officer
- 1 Engine Company (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Ladder Company (3 Person Minimum)
- PD Mobile Command Unit
- Air Unit
- EOC Notification

1st Alarm Medical
- 2 Chief Officers
- 2 Engine or Truck Companies (One Extrication Capable)
- 2 Medic Units
- 1 Air Medical Helicopter

2nd Alarm Medical

- 1 PD Command Unit
- 1 Chief Officer
- 2 Engine or Truck Companies (One Extrication Capable)
- 2 Medic Units
- MMRS (SVF&MS SRT)
- Appropriate All Calls
- 2 Air Medical Helicopters

3rd Alarm Medical/Mass Casualty

- 1 Chief Officer
- 1 Engine Company
- 2 Medic Units
- MMRS (SVF&MS SRT)
- EOC Notification
- 3 Air Medical Helicopters

1st Alarm Brush

- 1 Chief Officer
- 2 Engine Companies
- 2 type 6 Brush Units

2nd Alarm Brush

- 1 PD Command Unit
- 1 Chief Officer
- 2 Engines/Tenders
- 4 type 6 Brush Units
- Mutual Aid Forest Service
- 1 Medic Unit

3rd Alarm Brush

- State Land/Mutual aid request
  - Order Specific to Command Request
- EOC Stood up

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1st Alarm Hazmat

- 1 Chief Officer
- 1 Ladder Company
- 1 Engine Company (1st Due Company)
- 1 Medic Unit
- AHJ Hazmat Team Call out

2nd Alarm Hazmat

- 1 PD Command Unit
- 1 Chief Officer
- 2 Engine Companies (3 Person Minimum)
- 1 Medic Unit
- Cochise County Hazmat Team
- EOC Notification
- Emergency Manager Notification
- All Call

3rd Alarm Hazmat

- 1 Chief Officer
- State RRT response (TFD, NWFD)
- 2 Engine Companies
- 91st CST

1st Alarm Rescue

- 1 Chief Officer
- 2 Engine Companies (1st Due and TRT Specialized)
- 1 Medic Unit
- TRT or SRT Callout
- CCSO Search and Rescue Standby

2nd Alarm Rescue

- PD Command Unit
- 1 Chief Officer
- 1 Medic Unit
- Additional TRT or SRT Support
- CCSO Search and Rescue
- Additional Resources as requested
    - RRT (Tucson, NWFD)
    - USAR Team (Phoenix Fire Department)
    - Federal Team Management (State Land Dispatch)
    - 91st CST (Phoenix)

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Dispatch Channel

The Dispatcher is responsible for reviewing the unit(s) suggested for dispatch by the CAD system. The dispatcher may modify the unit selection based on additional information or circumstantial factors.

The dispatcher transmits the call to the assigned units via "DC" function in Spillman CAD, simultaneously sending call information to the Mobile Data Computers (MDCs) in the field.

The voice dispatch message is broadcast over the Dispatch Channel giving:

• Station Specific Dispatch Tone(s)
• Companies Assigned
• Tactical Radio Channel (F1 or F2 or Ft. Huachuca Fire Frequencies/Talk Groups)
• Type and/or Nature of Incident
• Location
• Companies Assigned
• Tactical Radio Channel

Example dispatch message:

"Engine 362, Medic 361, respond on F1 for a patient with chest pain at 2305 East   Wilcox Drive, Engine 361, Medic 362, F1".

DURING PERIODS OF HIGH CALL ACTIVITY AND/OR WHEN THE DISPATCH CENTER IS SHORT-STAFFED, THE DISPATCH MESSAGE MAY BE MODIFIED (ABRIDGED) TO ADVISE UNITS TO CHECK MDC's FOR DISPATCH. THIS SHOULD BE AVOIDED UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

Example:

"Engine 361, Medic 362, respond on F1, Copy MDC".

Utilization of the ALL TONE

Dispatch will sound the ALL TONE for following incidents:
- Residential or commercial fire incidents
- Brush Fire - Threatening
- Upgraded HAZMAT assignments
- MVA with Entrapment
- Gunshot – Multiple Victims

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Move-Ups

Dispatch will relocate units as necessary to maintain the best available resource coverage.

Moved-up units retain their normal identity ("Medic 364 out of Station 362").

The need for move-ups will be evaluated whenever:
• A working fire is declared.
• Coverage in an area is compromised.

Change of Status

A unit's status refers to its availability to accept a dispatch. Units assigned to an incident are considered unavailable until released.

Units that are Available on Radio (AVLOR) shall monitor the Dispatch Channel.

Units shall update their status to ATSTN upon returning to quarters.

Units detailed to training shall change their status to TRNG and will report to Dispatch by Spillman IM or telephone to advise the length of time they will be unavailable. When becoming available again, units are responsible to report this status change to Dispatch.

CAD Status Procedures

If a unit fails to status as on-scene (ARRVD): Dispatch will perform a status check, note the reason for failure to status (if known) in the call narrative, and status the unit.

Units detailed to training will status themselves accordingly (TRNG) and contact Dispatch via Spillman IM or telephone to advise the length of time they will be in training (this pertains to organizational/scheduled training only, not company-level/unscheduled training).

AVLOR will be utilized for units that are available for dispatch but not in quarters (i.e. a unit that has cleared a call and is returning to the station).

Units will status as ATSTN upon returning to quarters.

Units without CAD capability (brush trucks, tenders, certain staff vehicles) will need to remind Dispatch upon responding that they will need Dispatch to status them.

Dispatch will status Medic units to the hospital (TOHOS) who indicate on radio they are transporting Code 3.

If a unit encounters a technical/MDC issue that cannot be resolved in two minutes, a request over the radio may be made for Dispatch to status the unit; Units will not request the Dispatch Center to update their status if a unit simply forgets to status.

Self Dispatch

A unit may add itself to an incident if it has determined that it is significantly closer to the scene than the unit(s) assigned to the call.

The substituting unit must advise Dispatch, on the assigned Tactical Channel, if they are substituting for another unit or responding in addition to the original assignment. The dispatcher will cancel the original unit dispatched if the substituting unit is closer to the scene.

Although the engine or ladder will often respond from quarters along with the medic unit to medical calls, it is not uncommon for split responses to occur. As such, the deployment goal for medical calls is to ensure the *primary* responding unit arrives on scene as quickly as possible. In the vast majority of instances it is not necessary for the second unit to arrive as quickly as the first; personnel must consider this as it applies to adding to calls/self-dispatching.

Responding

Fire and EMS responses will be Code 3 unless otherwise indicated by Dispatch, Command or another unit already on scene. The company officer may make the determination as to Code 3 or Code 1 response after reviewing the dispatch information.

While responding, companies may communicate with one another if radio traffic permits. When responding to structure fires effective communication during this period can set the stage for effective action and improve the overall rescue and fire attack effort. Factors such as occupancy hazards, access, traffic conditions and response routes may be communicated.

Company officers should review call information on their MDC, map books and any pre-fire plans.

Subsequent arriving units should monitor radio traffic to be fully informed of the situation based on reports of the first arriving units.

Additional Information / Subsequent Calls

The dispatcher will relay any additional information gained from subsequent calls as soon as possible. Additional information and updates will be transmitted to the MDCs of all responding units. Companies needing specific additional information shall request it from the dispatcher.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Tactical Radio Channels

Whenever possible, Dispatch will assign/isolate a tactical radio channel (typically F2 or F1) based on the following considerations:
- Hazardous incidents or those requiring a significant amount of radio traffic should receive a dedicated/isolated tactical channel separate from routine radio traffic (examples include structure fires, complex MVAs and MCIs).
- Periods of high activity should prompt Dispatch to begin assigning both channels to prevent the overloading of one.
- Communication with units might be better on one channel vs. the other based on the geographic location of the call.

Acknowledgement

Upon being dispatched, a unit responding shall acknowledge dispatch by responding on the assigned channel and by change of status on their Mobile Data Computer (MDC). If Dispatch does not receive an acknowledgement within two (2) minutes, the dispatcher will request acknowledgment by radio on all channels and via MDC.

Dispatch will send a cover assignment if no reply is received within a one (1) minute timeframe.

Dispatch will continue to attempt to make contact with the original unit(s) (to include by telephone if possible) while the cover units are responding. If unable to contact the original unit(s), the unit(s) will be placed unavailable and the appropriate Chief Officer will be notified of the circumstances.

On-scene Reports

The first unit or member to arrive at the scene of a multiple unit response (3 or more) shall assume Command of the incident. The initial IC shall remain in Command until Command is transferred or the incident is stabilized and Command is terminated. Examples would include:

1. Structure fires
2. Motor vehicle collisions requiring more than two units (this includes air medical resources)
3. Mass Casualty Incidents
4. Any incident requiring technical rescue
5. Hazardous materials incidents

One or two unit responses that are not going to escalate beyond the commitment of these resources do not require the first arriving officer to assume Command. The first arriving officer or unit will, however, remain responsible for any needed Command functions. Examples would include:

6. Single unit responses
7. Still alarms (single unit)

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8. Public Assists
9. EMS incidents requiring only one or two units

The first arriving unit initiates the Command process by performing a scene size-up and giving an initial radio report.

For structure fires, the standard **Initial Radio Report** includes:

1. Unit identification, location's address and on which side.
   - Building(s) will be labeled with the following designations (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta).

2. Building Occupancy / Number of Stories
   - Single Family Residence
   - Duplex / Quadplex
   - Apartment Building
   - Hotel
   - Strip Mall
   - Office Complex
   - Big Box Retail store
   - Specialized / Other

3. Construction
   - Block / Brick
   - Wood framed
   - Lightweight (stucco over wood frame)
   - Trailer / Mobile Home
   - Specialized / Other

4. Roof
   - Flat
   - Pitched
   - Other

5. Conditions
   - Nothing Showing
   - Smoke Showing
   - Smoke and Fire Showing

6. Assume Command
   - Name Command
   - Announce whether command will be forward or fixed
   - Declare strategy (Offensive or Defensive)
   - Indicate initial actions and assignments

- Once a fixed Command is established, announce the location of the Command Post

7. Water Supply

8. Accountability Location(s)

Follow-up Report
1. Any immediate safety concerns
2. Disposition of resources (hold/add/return)
3. IRIT - in place and identify or bypassing

Command

Once command has been established, all routine communication between Dispatch and the incident will be directed through Command.

Progress Reports

Command will provide Dispatch with regular progress reports during active firefighting operations, whenever significant tactical plans are changed, or when unusual situations are encountered. The first progress report should be given after initial action has been implemented and should include the correct address and an improved description of the building and fire conditions if the arrival report was incomplete. This assists Dispatch in making move-up decisions. The dispatcher will repeat significant facts from all progress reports for the information of monitoring units and document in the CAD call narrative. The IC should provide Dispatch with a strategic-level progress report at each elapsed time notification (see SOP 103.00).

Tactical-Level Progress Report:
- Identifier - Unit
- Conditions—where are you and what are the conditions.
- Actions—what actions are you taking and what affect are they having on the problem.
- Needs—resources or support.
- Personnel Accountability Report
- Air Level

The following items fall within the **Needs** category:

1. **Reinforcement;**
2. **Relief;**
3. **Support work (ventilation, forcible entry);**
4. **Tools or equipment;**
5. **Cover other areas; and**
6. **Urgent help.**

Working Fire

The term Working Fire indicates a situation that will require the commitment of all responding companies. This report advises Dispatch that the companies will be engaged in tactical activities and will be held at the scene for an extended period of time.

When notified of a Working Fire, Dispatch will:
1. Balance to a first alarm.
2. Isolate a tactical channel.
3. Address the need for a Fire Investigator.
4. Dispatch PD for traffic and crowd control.
5. Dispatch appropriate gas and electric companies.
6. Start elapsed time notifications in ten-minute intervals.
7. Initiate move-ups as needed.
8. Document progress reports, assignments, emergency traffic, and elapsed time notifications.

Staging

Units arriving in Staging will depress the "STAGE" quick button on their MDC. If assigned to a group, division or task the "ON-SCENE" key shall be depressed.

Units arriving in Level I Staging will report their identity and direction from the scene on the assigned Tactical Channel.

On a large-scale incident (MCI, commercial structure fire with mutual aid), Level II Staging may be identified by Command. Dispatch will announce the Level II staging location and the staging channel when the additional units are dispatched. Units responding should direct any staging inquiries to the Staging channel, rather than the Tactical channel assigned to the incident. Typically Staging will be assigned to F2.

The first-arriving Company Officer at the Level II Staging area shall assume the role of Staging Officer. This assignment may be transferred as the need dictates (i.e. upon the arrival of an additional Chief Officer). Units arriving at the Level II Staging Area will report in person to the Staging Officer. The Staging Officer will manage all radio communications to and from the Staging Area.

Incident Status & Benchmarks

The following are the different incident status changes that need to be acknowledged by Dispatch and annotated in the CAD call narrative section:

Working Fire (WF)
Working HAZMAT (WHZ)

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Working Technical Rescue (WTR)
Code (CE)

For Working Fire and Working HAZMAT incidents, this change in incident status will prompt ELAPSED TIME NOTIFICATIONS. The dispatcher will verbally provide command with elapsed time notifications until the situation is declared under control or Command requests to discontinue notifications. Elapsed Time Notifications will also be documented in the CAD call narrative.

The following are the definitions of the Incident Benchmarks:

Command Terminated (CT): There is no longer a single person in charge of the incident. Communications can be held with anyone still on the scene.

Customer Stable (CS): Customer's needs have been met and immediate detrimental incident impacts to the customer have been alleviated (examples: lodging has been arranged, occupancy secured, food and clothing needs met, etc.).

Defensive (DEF): Units operating in the defensive strategy.

Emergency Traffic (ETT): Emergency Traffic has been declared on an incident

Extrication Complete (EC): All patients extricated.

Immediate Patients Transported (IT): All patients triaged as an "immediate" have been transported.

Loss Stopped (LS): Salvage has been completed and there should be no more damage to the building involved.

Mayday (MAY): A Mayday has been declared on an incident.

Offensive (OFF): Units operating in the offensive strategy.

Patient Contact (PC): First unit has made contact with patient.

Personnel Accountability Report (PAR): All personnel assigned to a particular work area or task have been accounted for. It is used to confirm there are no missing fire personnel on the incident site.

Primary All Clear (PAC): Primary search has been completed. On fire calls an All Clear indicates the fire building and all exposures have been searched and all civilians evacuated. In the case of a building that is well involved in fire, the All Clear may be delayed and not come until the fire is out

Secondary All Clear (SAC): A more comprehensive search of the building has been completed.

Triage Complete (TC): All patients have been triaged.

Under Control (UC): The fire has been contained, and will not extend. It does not mean the fire is out. It may also be used during Haz Mat calls, indicating a leak has been secured.

Utilities Secured (US): Utilities (typically gas and electric) have been shut off to the occupancy.

Ventilation Complete (VC): The task of ventilation has been completed.

Customer Stable (CS): All the temporary needs of the occupant(s) have been addressed.

Divisions and Groups

Divisions are assigned by their geographic location (North Division). Groups are assigned by their function (Ventilation Group). Division or Group Supervisors should use face-to-face communications with assigned companies as much as possible, but should keep Command informed of progress via radio on any problems encountered and significant progress.

Order Model

Radio communications will be regulated by the following order model guidelines:

1. Sender will call the receiver by their unit ID and follow up with the sender unit ID (Hey you it's me model)
2. Receiver will give their ID to indicate they are ready to receive.
3. Sender will then extend message, order, etc.
4. Receiver will give ID and acknowledge receipt of message. A brief restatement of the message is the best acknowledgment.

Example: (Command talking to E362 via radio)

'E362 from Command'
'E362'
'E362 I'm going to assign you Fire Attack, Alpha Side Accountability will be at the command post, I want you to pull an attack line off your Engine through the front door for primary search and fire control.'
'E362 copies assigned Fire Attack, Accountability location at the command post, pulling an attack line through the front door for primary search and fire control.'

5. Dispatch will acknowledge all communications directed to it by a brief restatement of the message, with particular attention given to repeating the initial on-scene and progress reports, requests for additional resources and all Incident Status changes and benchmarks.

ROUTINE RADIO TRAFFIC-

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Routine radio reports should be the most common communication performed on the emergency scene. In most instances, routine radio traffic should only be initiated by the IC. Command must structure all routine radio traffic using the Order Model.

GOOD NEWS REPORTING-

Fire personnel should limit good news reporting as much as possible. Good news reporting is the practice of giving routine progress reports without being requested to do so. An example of good news reporting would be an engine company, working inside the IDLH, notifying command they're still trying to locate the fire prior to being prompted to provide a radio report. Fire crews operating on or en route to the incident scene should practice radio discipline with several exceptions to the rule. These several exceptions are listed below:

- When requested by Command to provide a progress report
- Encountering the need to utilize priority traffic/Mayday, or
- Communicating a status change (defined later in this procedure).

MAY DAY

"May Day" is a term to be used only in the event of a lost or trapped firefighter. A well-defined communications structure is essential in any rescue operation. Dispatch will play a crucial role in ensuring the effective rescue of firefighters.

EMERGENCY TRAFFIC

Emergency traffic receives the highest communication priority on scene and should only be used for true emergencies. The improper, over use of emergency traffic at incident scenes tends to diminish the overall effect it has on the operation. Units operating at the incident site must be able to differentiate the use of routine, priority, and emergency traffic radio reporting.

The use of emergency traffic is reserved for two critical emergencies on the fire ground, firefighter mayday and a change in strategy. This radio signal is made through dispatch requesting an emergency traffic tone (high-low tone) to alert all personnel working on that incident scene of the emergency. **Only the Incident Commander** can request the use of Emergency Traffic through dispatch. It is very important to get the emergency traffic tones transmitted as soon as possible. The sooner they are activated, the sooner the IC and all other affected units can initiate corrective action.

Example: 'Dispatch - Command, Emergency Traffic.' Dispatch will immediately activate the Emergency Traffic Tone. Command will transmit his/her message*, 'All units operating on the Main Street Fire, we are changing the strategy to defensive. I repeat all units operating on the Main Street Fire, we are changing to a defensive strategy. Evacuate the structure and report PARS upon exiting.'* Dispatch will repeat this message one time and document it in the MDC call log.

PRIORITY TRAFFIC

Priority Traffic is utilized on the incident scene by the tactical worker to notify Command of any critical hazard encountered. For example, priority traffic can be employed from the tactical

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worker describing a down power line and then it would be left up to the discretion of the Incident Commander to follow that priority traffic report with the use of emergency traffic. Listed below are some examples for the proper use of priority traffic:

- Unable to complete a critical assigned task/tactical objective
- Urgent need to be reinforced/backed-up to complete an assigned task/tactical objective
- Victim(s) encountered
- Working concealed space fires not easily controlled by the locating unit
- A roof report that includes: attic fire, untenable roof structure, eminent collapse threat
- Sudden, significant incident events (flashover, back draft, collapse, down power line)

All Priority traffic reports are to be directed to and acknowledged by the IC. Having the Alarm/Dispatch center acknowledge priority traffic reports will greatly slow down the IC's ability to quickly readjust their IAP and/or Strategy based on these reports.

Unit Designations

For radio communications, the following designations will be recognized as standard:

Dispatch	Dispatch
Officer of any unit	Unit ID (i.e. E365)
Engineer of any pumper	Pump
Engineer of any ladder Pump	
Firefighter on any unit E365, FF Smith	
Battalion Chief	Battalion
Administrative Chief	Chief
Prevention Unit	Prevention

Radio Code

"Plain language" radio messages should be used in preference to numerical codes to facilitate understanding. This is also in compliance with NIMS. The following code messages (from the Police radio code) may be used in sensitive situations, when a plain language message could cause a problem at the scene:

901 Dead body
999 Need Police assistance IMMEDIATELY

Radio Procedure

Short-specific
Before transmitting know what you are going to say. Choose precise terms to communicate the desired message as clearly and briefly as possible without wasting airtime.

Task Oriented/Company Oriented

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Command's orders to operating companies should indicate a specific task assigned to the company. They should be of a magnitude reasonably performed by a single company alone or in concert with other companies.

Indicate Objective
In addition to being task and company oriented, assignments should indicate an objective to the action. The company should know exactly where to go, to whom to report, what is the task and what is the objective of the task. Orders should tell what to do - not how to do it (unless Command wants something specific).

Clear Tone/Self Control Effective Rate
Speak clearly at a practiced rate. Not too fast and not too slow. Control your emotions and excitement deliberately. If you do not consciously control your voice, it will become garbled under stress.

Well Timed/Spaced
Prioritize your messages. Do not use valuable airtime with unimportant messages and insignificant details. Maintain an awareness of the overall situation and your role in it.
Do not interrupt conversations unless you have Emergency Traffic. Listen before transmitting and wait until a message transaction has been completed. Pause between consecutive messages. This will make it clear when one message has been completed and another started. It also allows other units to break in with urgent/emergent traffic if applicable. The following suggestions serve as a guideline for speaking into a microphone.

1. Listen to make sure the channel is clear before you get on the air. Do not interrupt.

2. Know what you are going to say and do not make it up as you go along.

3. Press the transmit key for at least 1 second before starting to talk to ensure that the beginning of your message will not be cut off.

4. Give the name of the unit or place being called first, then your own identification along with the message to be delivered. Example of : "Dispatch, Tower 137 is on scene"

5. Keep your mouth close to the microphone, about two to three inches away. It is better to speak across the microphone instead of directly into it.

6. Choose precise terms to communicate the desired message.

7. Prioritize the messages delivered and let critical messages be completed first.

8. Do not relay unimportant messages and insignificant details.

9. Speak clearly and distinctly, in a normal pitch. Do not shout.

10. Keep your voice free of emotion. This does not mean monotone, just a normal conversational tone. It takes conscious effort to keep control. Take a deep breath, relax and then speak.

11. Keep transmissions brief. If you have a long transmission, break up the message into 30-second segments, and check at the end of each message to ensure it was received.

12. When completing a transmission and immediately directing a transmission to another unit or place, use the terminology "break" in between transmissions to clearly identify the completion of one transmission and the beginning of another.

13. Use discretion. Many people have scanners in their homes so protect the privacy of the situation or incident.

14. Be professional. Do not use comedy and do not use profanity.

15. Avoid words that are difficult to hear. The word "yes" for instance, is easily cut off; use "affirmative" instead.

16. Repeat orders received to ensure understanding.

17. Maintain awareness of the overall situation and how you fit into it.