

RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

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Purpose: *The use of radios can make the fireground an efficient operation, as well as enhancing the safety of firefighters.*

Definitions:

Status-

Available – Unit is available to respond to any incident. The MDT tracks the location of the apparatus in Jefferson County.

In Quarters – Unit is available to respond to any incident. The MDT does NOT track the apparatus, the CAD shows the apparatus at its assigned station no matter where the apparatus is located.

Out of Service – Unit is NOT available to respond to any incident.

Resources-

Chief - an executive level position with authority to make departmental decisions.

Battalion - a leader of a group of resources capable of commanding an incident scene.

Safety - a member on the scene of an incident capable of acting as the safety officer.

Engine - a pumping apparatus with or without an elevating master stream

Quint - an aerial ladder apparatus with pumping capabilities of 1000 gpm or greater (NFPA 1901 - 9.2.1) and a ground ladder compliment of not less than 85' (NFPA 1901 - 9.8.1)

Tower - an aerial apparatus device with or without pumping capabilities which has a bucket capable of transporting FF's and civilians.

Haz-Mat - a company equipped with haz-mat equipment and personnel capable of performing at the technician level.

Rescue - a company equipped with equipment and personnel with one or more of the following technical rescue disciplines - water, rope, trench, confined space and structural collapse.

Marine - a water going vessel with or without firefighting capabilities.

Inspector- a fire prevention resource capable of completing regulatory inspections of commercial properties.

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MD - Medical Director/Medical Doctor

Med – A resource capable of providing medical care:

100 series – Advanced Life Support

200 series – EMT Advanced Life Support

300 series – Basic Life Support

400 series – ALS Fly Car / Non-Transport Unit

500 series – Advanced BLS Fly / Non-Transport Unit

600 series – BLS Fly Car / Non-Transport Unit

900 series – Community Medicine

A- Auxiliary Unit (use when the primary unit is in service) Ex 176A

Forestry - a resource used for grass, field, wildland firefighting.

Auxiliary - a resource not used as a first line piece of equipment or out of county resource. (100's series)

Support - a resource that may provide any number of services; PIO, Supply, ect.. (200's series number)

Service - a resource used for maintaining fleet or facility. (300's series number)

Utility - a transport vehicle for personnel or equipment not capable of providing fire or medical services. (500's series number)

ATV's – An ATV resource (700's series number)

Training – A member, usually within a supervisory rank, assigned to training within their agency. (800's series number)

Tanker - an apparatus with or without a pump which is designed to carry greater than 1500 gallons of water.

Truck - an aerial ladder apparatus without pumping capabilities which carries not less than 115' of ground ladders (NFPA 1901 - 8.8.1)

MCI - mass casualty unit

Vent - a resource specifically used for ventilation.

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Air Utility - a resource used to provide air cylinders and/or an air filling station.

Bike - A mobile unit used for medical personnel to reach areas difficult for vehicles to access.

Arson - a fire investigation resource

Capabilities - are what are assigned to apparatus / command vehicles that recommends them for incidents. Ex. Battalion Chief 76 has the dispatched capabilities, so that they can be dispatched.

Mixed Radio – Fire Personal talking on a med channel, MED Personal talking on the Fire Channels.

Voice Inflections - Voice inflection, or intonation, is when we change the tone or pitch of our voice when we are speaking to convey a more precise meaning for our words or provide insight into how we are feeling. It is the rise and fall of one's voice tone when speaking and serves as an indication of the emotions and expressions that are portrayed in their speech. Change the tone or pitch of our voice when we are speaking to convey a more precise meaning for our words or provide insight about how we are feeling.

Procedures:

1. The Suburban Fire Service Communications procedure shall be treated as if it was a part of this document.
2. All radio traffic should be restricted to fire department business or related emergencies.
3. All radio traffic should be as short as possible, being clear and concise.
4. No objectionable language shall be used on the radio.
5. Whenever possible, face-to-face communications shall be used, instead of radio communications.
6. Whenever instructions are given to someone over the radio, the receiver should repeat the gist of the instructions to ensure the proper message has been received.
7. When calling another unit on the radio, give the unit being called a reasonable amount of time to answer before making a second call.
8. After making three (3) unsuccessful attempts to call a unit, assume that one of the two radios is unattended or defective, and do not continue to call for the unit. Do the same if answering a call, and the unit initiating does not hear the response.
9. Listen before speaking on the radio to avoid interrupting conversation in progress.

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10. **All fireground communications should take place on the assigned operations channel**, unless the incident commander has directed otherwise, because of several fire departments on the scene. Avoid using multiple channels whenever practical to lessen confusion.
11. Fire companies shall signal "available" or "out of service" when leaving scene or being canceled.
12. If a distress call ("Mayday") goes out on the radio, radio silence on the channel the distress call was made shall be observed without fail unless necessary to rescue personnel. Other channels maybe be used, such as FIRE 6, for any other necessary conversation.
13. All firefighters, when on duty and away from their assigned station, shall have a portable radio with them. The radio shall be left on, and shall be in scan mode, listening to FIRE 5, JCF PAGE and FD TAC 80. If the radio cannot scan the radio shall be left on JCF PAGE.
14. When operating in conjunction with another fire department, do not use channels other than the assigned operations channel. This will avoid missed communications.
15. If a member should investigate a "Smoke in the Area" sighting and is unable to locate the smoke source, do NOT call Radio and advise them to disregard any calls. It is possible that there is a fire, but could not be found, and subsequent dispatches may direct the fire department to the proper location. If the smoke source is found (such as that from a permitted outside fire) then Radio may be informed on the specific locations.
16. When a unit is called while in route to an emergency, that unit will respond with the Unit number and location such as "Chief 77 to Engine 77". Engine 77 would answer "Engine 77 Blue Lick & South Park". If a unit is canceled, giving the unit's location is not desired, unless that unit is certain it is closer than the unit that is continuing its response.
18. If an apparatus begins its response to a fire run, and is not coming from its assigned station, it is to give the location when calling that they are responding. For example, "Engine 77 is responding from Blue Lick and South Park". The purpose of this is to assist chief officers in estimating which units will arrive before others. Giving the location is not necessary if chief officers already know the unit is coming from somewhere other than its assigned station (such as all units at Southern High School on training).
21. All apparatus portable radios shall be turned on while responding to an incident while taking caution to avoid feedback. The officer of each apparatus is responsible to ensure portable radios are turned on and have been switched to the operations channel assigned to the incident.
22. Portable radios have an "Out of Range" indicator which gives both audible and visual signal the radio is in a "dead spot". If, while at the scene of an incident, the "Out of Range" indicator activates, the firefighter shall move back to an area with satisfactory coverage and then inform the incident commander of the matter. The incident commander should consider the use of the SIMPLEX channel to ensure reliable communications.

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23. The first arriving unit to an incident shall verify the address over the radio and advise a size up.
24. When Battalion Chief 76 is on an incident and another incident happens within Okolona that requires a Battalion Chief an Okolona Chief will be dispatched. Battalion Chief 76 is the only Okolona Battalion Chief that has the dispatch capability.
25. All Chiefs and Battalions shall go “available” when leaving scenes.
26. 100’s Fire Apparatus – used for additional staffing, callbacks, storm events, outside county agencies etc.
27. On Mutual Aid Channels everyone must state whether they are Fire or EMS, unless Mutual Aid is being used for a specific purpose.
28. Mixed Radio use: From time to time a Fire unit may need to talk on the med channel to provide a Pt update or to provide a better location of the Pt. Whenever mix radio is being units personal must state their division, EX Fire Chief 76, Med Chief 78.
29. Follow all accountability practices while using a radio.
30. If a company is not dispatched on an incident which they are closer to, the closest company officer should cancel the furthest company and respond.

Notes:

- There is no need to “clear” the incident. The incident is completed when all units go available.
- Lap ins – Apparatus will move into the requesting fire department and will not be given a run number. They will how ever be given incident numbers for whatever event they respond to.
- When a Battalion Chief or higher responds to an incident, cancelling apparatus should be directed by the Battalion Chief or Chief Officer.

Example:

Engine 77, Quint 76, Engine 78, Engine 179, Quint 66 and Battalion 76 are dispatched on a Building fire.

Engine 77 – On scene at 1234 Main Street, no smoke or flames seen from a 1 story house.
Dispatch – Engine 77 on scene no smoke or flames seen from a 1 story house.

(Engine 77 investigates (no need to state that on the radio) During the investigation. E-77w notices it’s false and they can handle it.)

Engine 77 to Battalion 76 We can handle fire out on arrival.
State why you’re requesting to cancel everyone.

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Okolona Fire Protection District
Standard Operating Procedure

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Battalion 76 to Radio - Engine 77 can handle – put all companies back available.

-When a Battalion Chief isn't making an incident the first arriving company should state the following:

Example:

Engine 77 to radio we can handle put all companies available.