	Rogers Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures		
Policy Title:	Radio Communications		
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PURPOSE

A reliable and effective communications system is vitally important to the accomplishment of the department's mission. The objective of this procedure is to provide information, guidelines, and directives that will ensure rapid and efficient communications for the department.

POLICY

The manner in which radio operations are handled is often a measure of the efficiency of an organization and the attitude of its individuals. Observing simple basic rules will expedite message handling and improve working relationships among all concerned.

Application of general guidelines outlined here will lead to professional performance.

1. Listen before transmitting to make certain the channels are clear and organize your thoughts before transmitting.

2. Keep all transmissions brief and to the point. Avoid longwinded descriptions and unnecessary repetition. Accuracy, brevity, and speed are all important; however, they should be considered in that order.

3. Speak distinctly and pronounce words carefully. Speak at a moderate speed using your conversational tone of voice with emphasis and rhythm. A message should be spoken by phrases, not one word at a time.

4. When using a portable/mobile radio, hold the microphone about one inch from your lips, press the microphone button down firmly and then speak slowly and clearly across the mouthpiece in a normal voice.

5. From a cold start, different radios require varying amounts of warm up time. Be aware of this and allow for the radio to stabilize before attempting to transmit.

6. Avoid transmitting when audible emergency warning devices are operating.

7. Use official titles and authorized apparatus designations in all transmissions. Do not use nicknames or first names.

8. During all radio operations, remain cordial and calm. Words or voice inflections which reflect an individual's irritation, disgust or sarcasm are not to be used. Remember, your conduct on the radio reflects your entire company.

9. No one company or emergency should overrun the radio. Remember, there can be any number of emergencies going on at one time.

10. Do not monopolize the airtime with unnecessary transmissions.

11. Do not use preliminary calls simply to establish contact with dispatch. When advising that a unit is responding, at scene, or in service, identify yourself and give your message in a single transmission.

12. The use of thanks, please, and other expressions of courtesy are unnecessary and should not be used.

13. All communications shall be clear text.

14. Portable radios are issued for all front-line companies at every riding position. Members should carry their assigned portable radio at all times while operating at incidents.

Alarm Receiving Procedure

After an alert is received at a fire station from RCD, all personnel on requested apparatus shall respond based on normal protocol. Company officers in non-alerted stations shall remain diligent to listen to the incident in case the situation changes or circumstances necessitate additional apparatus to respond. Dispatched units shall be recommended based on call type and location of the incident. The RFD will respond to any emergency situation which threatens life, property or the environment.

In cases where the RFD is not the appropriate agency or is not capable of delivering the needed assistance, the company officer shall ensure the appropriate provider is notified. If circumstances cause the RFD to respond mistakenly into another fire department's jurisdiction, the RFD will send at least one fire apparatus until response by the appropriate agency is confirmed and our assistance is not needed.

Upon notification of an alarm by RCD, the company officer shall ensure all information is received and understood. If information is unclear, the company officer should clarify information with Dispatch.

Radio Procedures

Radio communication shall be received from sender using the following model:

1. Request to initiate communications and determine that the intended receiver is listening.

2. Transmit the message or order concisely in clear text.

3. Receive feedback from the receiver to ensure the message was received and understood.

4. Confirm that the message or order was understood; if not, correct and clarify the message.

Officers shall be responsible for normal communication on the radio and mobile data computer (MDC). If an apparatus is equipped with an MDC, status changes shall occur "silently". The following information shall be transmitted to dispatch on all incidents:

1. Status Changes
   a. Responding (MDC **only** on equipped units)
   b. On scene (MDC on equipped units and voice)
   c. In service (MDC on equipped units and voice)
   d. Transporting (MDC **only** on equipped units)
   e. At Destination (MDC **only** on equipped units)
   f. Out of Service with disposition (MDC on equipped units and voice)
      i. Include reason (Minimum Staffing, Administrative, Mechanical)
   g. On Air (MDC **only** on equipped units)

2. Progress Reports (If applicable, on fire and complex incidents)
   a. Scene size up
   b. Personnel Accountability Reports
   c. On-going scene evaluation (sustained incidents)

3. Notification of Additional Resources
   a. Activation of additional alarms
   b. Mutual aid
   c. Fire Investigators (Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Investigation Team)
   d. Utility representatives
   e. Law enforcement

4. Benchmarks
   a. Situation under control
   b. Fire out (fire incidents only)
   c. Patient(s) extricated

When receiving an alarm from RCD, the address and pertinent information will be provided two different times from dispatch. Because of the repetition of information, it is not necessary for units to copy or repeat the information once responding. Instead, units should only repeat information they need to clarify.

Initial Calls

When calling other units or RCD, the format "Me to You" should be used. This format identifies the calling party first and then the unit wishing to be contacted. For example, if Station 1 wanted to contact Medic 1 they would say:

STATION 1: "Station to Medic 1"
MEDIC 1: "Medic 1, go ahead"

Clear Text Terminology

Term or Phrase	Definition	Example
"Did Not Copy"	Used when signal received is not clear	*"Ladder 1 to Station 1, I DID NOT COPY?"*
"(Company or Unit) copies _____ "	Used to acknowledge message received	*"Engine 2 COPIES, cancel the call"*
"Affirmative"	Yes	*"Engine 3, AFFIRMATIVE"*
"Negative"	No	*"Engine 4 to Command, NEGATIVE"*
"Responding"	En route to assigned emergency	*"Rescue 5 is RESPONDING"*
"Out of Service, Administrative"	Indicates a unit or company is not able to respond for administrative reasons	*"Ladder 5 is OUT OF SERVICE, ADMINISTRATIVE"*
"Out of Service, Mechanical"	Indicates a unit or company is not able to respond for mechanical reasons	*"Engine 8 is OUT OF SERVICE, MECHANICAL"*
"Out of Service, MINIMUM STAFFING"	Indicates a unit or company is not able to respond because of lack of personnel.	*"Rescue 2 is OUT OF SERVICE, MINIMUM STAFFING"*
"On Air"	Indicates a unit is "In Service" but intends to be out of the station on official business, such as to the fuel pumps or grocery store	*"Medic 3 is ON AIR"*
"In Service"	Indicates a unit is able to respond to incidents	*"Battalion 1 IN SERVICE"*
"Stand-By"	Order for a unit or company to remain intact and ready for assignment	*"Engine 2 to Engine 7, STAND-BY for now"*
"On Scene"	Indicates a unit has arrived at an assigned incident	*"Engine 6 is ON SCENE…"*
"In Quarters"	Indicates a unit is back at the station	*"Engine 2 IN QUARTERS"*
"Primary All Clear"	Used to indicate initial search for victims inside structure is complete and no victims were located	*"Main Street Command to dispatch, we have a PRIMARY ALL CLEAR"*
"Secondary All Clear"	Used to indicate that a final, more thorough search for victims is complete and no victims were located	*"Main Street Command to dispatch, we have a SECONDARY ALL CLEAR"*
"Situation Under Control"	Indicates that incident stabilization has occurred	*"Main Street Command to dispatch, SITUATION UNDER CONTROL"*
"Fire Out"	Indicates final extinguishment of fire is complete and all operations, except	*"Main Street Command to dispatch, FIRE OUT"*

	investigation, are finished	
"Staging or Staged"	Placement of apparatus or personnel for deployment in either Level 1 or Level 2 fashion	*"Medic 7 is STAGED at 400 North D Street"*
"Return to Service"	Directed towards apparatus that are not needed at an incident scene and can return to quarters	*"Main Street Command to Engine 4, you can RETURN TO SERVICE"*

Dispatch Radio Policies

When dispatching units to emergency incidents, RCD will utilize a two tier approach to dispatching. The tiered approach will allow fire companies ample opportunity to copy and utilize the available information for any particular emergency incident.

The first phase of dispatching is the primary dispatch. The primary dispatch is handled through a computer generated voice system called *Locution.* Locution provides the initial dispatch and alert tones for apparatus. Locution will provide the following information

1. Alert tone specific with the classification of the emergency
2. Units dispatched to the call
3. Call type with emergency medical dispatch determinant code
4. Location of the emergency with the city or venue if it is outside of Rogers
5. The business name
6. Cross streets
7. Map Page

If Locution is inoperable, a dispatcher will conduct the primary dispatch by activating the alert #2 on the dispatch console for a total of five (5) consecutive "beeps". The primary dispatch should give the following information (in order):
- Unit(s) to respond
- Type of call (and medical subset, if applicable)
- Address of the emergency, repeated twice
- Map Page

The format for the dispatcher generated primary dispatch will be:

"(Unit), (calltype), (address), (address – repeated), Map Page (4-digit number)"

For example a medical emergency occurring at 101 South Main Street requiring the response of Medic 1 would receive a primary dispatch of:
"Medic 1, medical emergency – breathing problems, one-oh-one south Main Street, one-zero-one south Main Street, map page one-zero-zero-two"

The secondary dispatch is the final phase of the radio dispatch process. This occurs after all units recommended for the incident transmit that they are "responding" on the MDC or radio. The secondary dispatch provides the same information as the primary dispatch, with extra information on the call. The secondary dispatch should give the following information (in order):

- Unit(s) to respond
- Type of call (and medical subset, if applicable)
- Address of the emergency, repeated twice
- Patient information (Age, Sex, Chief Complaint, and whether the patient is conscious and breathing) or information on the emergency call
- Map Page

The format for the secondary dispatch will be:

"(Unit), (calltype), (address), (address – repeated),(additional information), Map Page (#)"

For example a medical emergency occurring at 101 South Main Street requiring the response of Medic 1 would receive a secondary dispatch of:

"Medic 1, medical emergency – breathing problems, one-oh-one south Main Street, one-zero-one south Main Street, eighty seven year old female, conscious and breathing, map page one-zero-zero-two"

For example a house fire occurring at 101 South Main Street requiring the response of Engine 2, Engine 7, Ladder 1, Medic 1 and Battalion 1 would receive a secondary dispatch of:

"Engine 2, Engine 7, Ladder 1, Medic 1, and Battalion 1, house fire, one-oh-one south Main Street, one-zero-one south main Street, fire in the kitchen, Map Page one-zero-zero-two"

Radio Channel Usage

The RFD uses a multi-site 700 and 800 MHz radio communications network called the Arkansas Wireless Information Network or AWIN. The city owns two transmission and receive sites which are located at South Park Road in Prairie Creek and the other at the Police Station. All department radios contain a wide variety of other channels for neighboring cities.

Companies should keep radios on their home channel called "FD MAIN", when they are in service and available for assignments. Companies may also use the other channels available as listed below:

9A FD Main	Main channel for dispatching, alerts, and status changes

9B FD B	Channel for longer transmissions between companies/units, non-emergency requests for information, or additional information on incident responses
9C Incident Ops 1	Regroup channel for first alarm or greater assignments
9D Incident Ops 2	Regroup channel for first alarm or greater assignments
9E Incident Ops 3	Regroup channel for first alarm or greater assignments
9F Regional Mutual Aid	Regroup channel for assignments outside of the city
9G City Special Event	Citywide channel used for special event assignments, accessible by PD and other city entities.
9H Training	Channel used for training purposes, not monitored by the dispatch center
9i Risk Reduction	Channel used for the Risk Reduction Division for fire alarm testing and other associated use
9J Special Operations	Channel used for special operations training and incidents

Medical Transport Communications

When transporting patients to emergency care facilities, ambulances will utilize the MDC for transmission of "transporting" and "at destination" status.

Incident Scene Communications

Because of the hazardous work that is done on emergency incident scenes, common terminology and standardized protocols are necessary to ensure operations run in an efficient and effective manner.

All fireground communications will conform to the latest NIMS recommendations, which include the following:

Geographical Designations:

Each exterior side of a structure should be given a designation:

> Side Alpha – Address side of the structure
>
> Side Bravo –Left side of the structure (clockwise from the Adam Side)
>
> Side Charlie – Rear of Structure (opposite of the Adam Side)
>
> Side Delta – Right side of the structure

Tactical efforts in or on a structure shall be designated by the location:

Division 1 – 1st Floor

Division 2, etc – 2nd Floor and above

Roof Division – Roof

Basement Division – Basement

Division Bravo – Baker Side of the Structure

Functional Designations:

Although there are endless varieties of functional designations for use on the fireground, the following are the most commonly assigned functional "groups":

Fire Attack / Investigation
Ventilation
Search and Rescue
Water Supply
Lobby Control
Rapid Intervention
Exposure Protection

Wildland Designations:

Flanks of the fire shall be referred to as divisions with the cardinal direction as the descriptor.

Example: West Division, East Division, etc