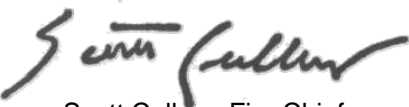




**City of Winchester
Fire and Rescue Department
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**



Section: Communications	SOP: 6.1
Subject: Dispatch Procedures and Radio Communications	Effective: September 27, 2010 Revised: April 11, 2011 July 23, 2011
Approved:  Scott Cullers, Fire Chief	

SCOPE

To establish guidelines for the effective voice dispatching and use of radio communications during emergency and non-emergency incidents.

PURPOSE

To ensure that all members understand dispatching procedures, radio communications, unit/officer designators, safety signals and common radio language. To encourage professional and efficient use of our radio system at all times.

RESPONSIBILITY

All members of the department are to understand and use this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for radio communications. The use of these guidelines is for the safety of all members of our department and our public safety team.

RADIO ETIQUETTE

When transmitting information over the radio, responders shall ensure that others are not transmitting prior to sending their message. The message shall be short and complete (i.e. Medic 1 is en-route to the hospital priority 3). To conserve time during incident response (from dispatch time to unit arrival time) it is not necessary to gain the attention of Emergency Communications Center (ECC) personnel prior to sending the message but will be the sender's responsibility to ensure the message has been acknowledged. If acknowledgement is not obtained, the sender shall repeat the message until this is satisfied.

DISPATCH PROCEDURES

The Winchester ECC radio designator shall be "Headquarters". Upon receipt of an emergency or non-emergency incident, the ECC will follow the algorithm for dispatching as described below:

DISPATCH ALGORITHM

Between 0700-2100

1, 2, or 3 Tone/Beep(s) (see below)

Identify Units to Respond

City Page

Initial G.A.

Identify Units to Respond

Units mark-up

Enhanced G.A.

Between 2100-0700

1, 2, or 3 Tone/Beep(s) (see below)

Identify Units to Respond

House Alarm(s)

City Page (All multi unit responses)

Initial G.A.

Identify Units to Respond

Units mark-up

Enhanced G.A.

*****Note*** Responding units do not have to acknowledge the enhanced GA.**

- 1. One tone/beep** - will be for all **EMS Responses including Motor Vehicle Accidents**. The unit dispatched is to mark responding and operate on channel one (1). Any unit(s) requested to assist after the original dispatch, shall also remain on channel one (1) unless advised to change channels by ECC. Note: the city page will not be activated for this type of incident after 2100 hours. ECC will notify the Battalion Officer when a unit is sent out of the jurisdiction.
- 2. Two tone/beep** - will be for all **responses not covered in number 1 above or number 3 below**. Units dispatched to these types of incidents are to mark responding and operate on channel one (1) unless directed otherwise by ECC.
- 3. Three tone/beep** - will be for **THREE or MORE ENGINE** fire responses. Units dispatched to these types of incidents are to mark responding and operate on channel two (2) unless directed otherwise by ECC.
4. When responding and regardless of incident type, all units shall announce their unit manpower totals when marking en-route with ECC. All non-operational personnel shall be counted and announced as a plus. (i.e. Wagon 5 responding with 2 plus 1). Non-operational personnel shall include red hats, preceptees and ride-alongs.
5. If a unit is out of the station and available for service or have the ability to clear a previous incident, during an incident dispatch, they should maintain radio silence until the initial G.A. is complete. After that time the unit can announce their intentions.
- 6. When multiple units are responding from the same station or location it is acceptable and preferred for a single unit to mark all responding apparatus en-route with the total manpower for all units they are marking up for.**

7. Emergency scene communications/operations can be switched to an alternate channel by ECC or the Incident Commander as necessary through an announcement from ECC. ECC will change operational channels through a long tone/beep and then announce "All units switch your traffic to channel X".
8. Marking available after an incident shall be completed on the operating channel of the incident. If marking available from any other operational channel than channel one (1), units are not to repeat this information on channel one (1). Once ECC has acknowledged that the unit is available the unit shall switch to channel one (1) and monitor channel one (1).

RESPONDER SAFETY PROCEDURES

For responder safety, personnel will utilize a series of signal codes and ECC will provide welfare checks at time intervals. These signal codes are used to get attention and to summon law enforcement. Personnel shall have complete memorization of these signals in order to readily recognize their meaning and provide the highest level of service/safety.

Signal 1 – Responder in immediate danger (WPD and WFRD use)

Signal 2 – Responder needs backup/assistance (WPD and WFRD use)

Signal 3 – Responder taking subject into custody (WPD only)

Signal 4 – Holding transmission of sensitive information (WPD and WFRD use)

1. Signal 1 will have the police department respond emergent. No other radio communication will be necessary to validate this. ECC shall dispatch an additional engine, medic and command officer to the incident location. Units shall stage until given the all-clear by the police department.
2. Signal 2 will be used to have the police respond in a non-emergency mode to assist in a non-threatening situation. No other radio communication will be necessary to validate this.
3. Signal 3 is reserved for the police department use only.
4. Signal 4 alerts responders that ECC is holding transmission of sensitive information until the responder goes to a secure location (non-emergency) to transmit private/confidential information.
5. ECC personnel shall contact on-scene personnel on **every incident** at 10 minute intervals to check on the welfare of the responders
 - a. If no response is received within 15 seconds, ECC personnel will reattempt to contact responders.
 - b. If no response is received within three (3) attempts, law enforcement and the Battalion Officer shall be dispatched as an emergency incident to locate and determine the condition of Fire and Rescue Personnel.

- c. After law enforcement and the Battalion Officer are dispatched, ECC shall make an attempt to contact the responders via all available radio channels and/or call the phone number of incident if available.

PLAIN LANGUAGE WORD ASSOCIATIONS

When transmitting a letter of the alphabet; Fire and Rescue and ECC should use the following word associations in compliance with NIMS nomenclature.

A – ALPHA	H – HOTEL	O – OSCAR	V – VICTOR
B – BRAVO	I – INDIA	P – PAPA	W – WHISKEY
C – CHARLIE	J – JULIET	Q – QUEBEC	X – X-RAY
D – DELTA	K – KILO	R – ROMEO	Y – YANKEE
E – ECHO	L – LIMA	S – SIERRA	Z – ZULU
F – FOXTROT	M – MIKE	T – TANGO	
G – GOLF	N – NOVEMBER	U – UNIFORM	

PRIORITY/EMERGENCY RADIO TRAFFIC PROCEDURES

At any time deemed necessary, responders may announce that they have priority or emergency traffic to transmit. Some examples could include a unit on scene trying to give pertinent size-up information while others are marking up and still en-route, a Mayday situation, a building collapse or any time responders need to interrupt radio communications to announce emergency/priority information.

Priority Traffic – communication is urgent in nature but can wait for ECC to acknowledge and answer.

Emergency Traffic – communication to ECC is of utmost priority. It may involve requesting additional resources, witnessing a serious event or firefighter safety may be in jeopardy. ECC will announce for “All units to hold their traffic” and then communicate with the unit declaring the emergency traffic. The following procedure shall be used:

1. Units with priority/emergency traffic should announce their unit/portable designator and then transmit their message. This information should be repeated a second time. At this time all other radio communication shall cease and only the unit transmitting, incident commander, ECC or others pertinent to the priority/emergency traffic should use the radio communication system.
2. A decision will be made by the Incident Commander to move this traffic to an alternate channel.
3. At the conclusion of the radio traffic event, the incident commander or ECC shall announce to all that radio communications can resume to normal operations.

OPEN MIC PROCEDURES

In the event that a radio microphone is inadvertently open to radio traffic, ECC will make an announcement “All units check for an open mic”. If the situation does not clear in a

timely fashion, ECC shall set off the city page and transmit a long tone and announce the message again until the open mic is cleared.

If an open mic situation occurs after 2100 hours, all stations are to be toned through the station alerting system and then the above message sent. If at 90 seconds the situation is not cleared, then ECC shall notify the Battalion Officer to investigate.

PORTABLE DESIGNATORS

Fire and Rescue crew/portable designators will be as follows when multiple crews from one piece of apparatus are not assigned another unit designator:

Apparatus	=	Wagon 1 Driver
First Crew Portable	=	Wagon 1
Second Crew Portable	=	Wagon 1 XRAY
Third Crew Portable	=	Wagon 1 YANKEE

***** This would also pertain to medic, and truck crews *****

OFFICER DESIGNATORS

The following list of Officer designators is to be used by personnel when conducting all radio communications with ECC and other emergency or non-emergency units. As of the date of this SOP, all previous radio designators will cease to be used. If an officer designation has not been assigned, you will use your rank and name (i.e. Sgt. Smith, FF Jones). All command staff serving as the Battalion Officer will use their officer designator (Battalion 6, Chief 6, OPS 6) when communicating. All officers working mutual aid, in another jurisdiction, will communicate with "Winchester" prior to their designator (i.e. Winchester Battalion 6 to Frederick). All officers not assigned as the battalion officer shall be designated as listed in the chart below:

Radio / Officer Designator	Description	ECC CAD Code
Headquarters	Winchester ECC	-
Chief 1	Friendship Fire Chief 1	FC1
Deputy Chief 1	Friendship Deputy Chief 1	DC1
Chief 2	Rouss Fire Chief 2	FC2
Deputy Chief 2	Rouss Deputy Chief 2	DC2
Chief 4	Shawnee Fire Chief 4	FC4
Deputy Chief 4	Shawnee Deputy Chief 4	DC4
Chief 5	South End Fire Chief 5	FC5
Deputy Chief 5	South End Deputy Chief 5	DC5
Chief 6	WFRD Fire Chief 6	FC6
Deputy Chief 6	Deputy Chief 6 (Future)	DC6
Assistant Chief 6	Assistant Chief 6 (Future)	AC6
OPS 6	Operations Captain	OPS6
EMS 6	EMS Captain	EMS6
FM 6-1	Fire Marshal	FM61
FM 6-2	Assistant Fire Marshal	FM62
Battalion 6	Duty Officer	BAT6
Battalion 6-1	WFRD Station 1 Lieutenant	BAT61

Battalion 6-2	WFRD Station 2 Lieutenant	BAT62
Battalion 6-4	WFRD Station 4 Lieutenant	BAT64
Battalion 6-5	WFRD Station 5 Lieutenant	BAT65
Training 6	Training Officer (Future)	TRG6
Safety 6	Safety Officer (Future)	SAF6
Chaplain 6-1	Chaplain Team Leader	CHP61
Chaplain 6-2	Chaplain	CHP62
Chaplain 6-3	Chaplain	CHP63
Chaplain 6-4	Chaplain	CHP64
City Manager 6	City Manager	CM6
PIO 6	Public Information Officer 6	PIO6
OMD 6	Operational Medical Director	OMD6

UNIT DESIGNATORS

The following list of unit designators shall be used when conducting all radio communications with ECC or other emergency or non-emergency units. All units working mutual aid, in another jurisdiction, will communicate with "Winchester" prior to their unit designator (i.e. Winchester Engine 1 to Frederick).

Radio/Unit Designator	Description	ECC CAD/ Firehouse Code
Ambulance 1	Friendship Ambulance 1	A1
Ambulance 1-2	Friendship Ambulance 1-2	A12
Medic 1	Friendship Medic 1	M1
Medic 1-2	Friendship Medic 1-2	M12
Engine 1	Friendship Engine 1	E1
Wagon 1	Friendship Wagon 1	W1
Utility 1	Friendship Utility 1	UT1
Gator 1	Friendship Gator 1	GAT1
Truck 2	Rouss Truck 2	TK2
Ladder 2	Rouss Ladder 2	L2
Serv 2	Rouss Serv 2	SV2
Utility 2	Rouss Admin Utility	UT2
Ambulance 4-1	Shawnee Ambulance 4-1	A41
Ambulance 4-2	Shawnee Ambulance 4-2	A42
Medic 4-1	Shawnee Medic 4-1	M41
Medic 4-2	Shawnee Medic 4-2	M42
Engine 4	Shawnee Engine 4	E4
Wagon 4	Shawnee Wagon 4	W4
Utility 4	Shawnee Utility 4	UT4
Ambulance 5-1	South End Ambulance 5-1	A51
Ambulance 5-2	South End Ambulance 5-2	A52
Medic 5-1	South End Medic 5-1	M51
Medic 5-2	South End Medic 5-2	M52
Engine 5	South End Engine 5	E5

Wagon 5	South End Wagon 5	W5
Utility 5	South End Utility 5	UT5
Chief 6	Fire Chief 6	FC6
OPS 6	Operations Captain	OPS6
EMS 6	EMS Captain	EMS6
FM 6-1	Fire Marshal	FM61
FM 6-2	Assistant Fire Marshal	FM62
Battalion 6	Duty Officer	BAT6
Hazmat 6	Hazmat 6	HM6
Admin 6	Administrative 6	ADM6