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**Communications**

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**OBJECTIVE:**

To establish a common communication system to effectively communicate with units while conducting routine and emergency duties within the department

**GUIDELINE:**

**5.1 Non-Emergency Radio Communications**

**5.1.1** All radio communications will be for department related issues. CCF/R radios and radio frequencies shall not be used for personal use at any time.

**5.1.2** Radio transmissions shall be brief and to the point. As a general rule no one communication should be longer than 20 seconds.

**5.1.3** All radio transmissions will be made in CLEAR TEXT. The following are a few examples of routinely used terms.

Responding/Enroute:	Apparatus/Unit going to a determined location
On Scene/Location:	Arrived at the location
Returning to Station:	Unit clearing the scene or canceling and returning to station.
In Quarters/Station:	Unit arrived safely back to the station
In Service:	Unit out of the station available for all calls
Out of Service:	Unit not available for calls
Cancel:	Unit response terminated, return to prior status
Standby:	Await further message

Emergency Traffic:	Clear radios of all unnecessary traffic, await unit to transmit the emergency traffic.
Stage:	Park apparatus at designated location
E.T.A.:	Estimated time of arrival at the location
Copy:	Message understood
Affirmative:	Yes or OK
Negative:	No
Unreadable:	Transmission unclear/garbled
Loud and Clear:	Transmission good/Clear
Telephone/land line:	Utilize telephone (instead of radio)
DOA:	Non-viable patient/no resuscitation

**5.1.4** There are instances that plain text may not be appropriate or feasible depending upon the situation. Also our dispatch center, titled “**Control**”, dispatches for a police department that utilizes “10” codes religiously. The following “10” codes are acceptable to use over our frequency and are directly related to law enforcement involvement.

- 10-4: Acknowledged
- 10-69: Need emergency police assistance. This designates that your life is in immediate jeopardy!!!
- 10-79: DOA – (Contact JPD for unattended deaths)
- 10-96: Mentally unstable patient or Behavioral disorder

**5.1.5** Being that the dispatch center utilizes “10” codes with the Juneau Police Department you may hear the following “10” codes over our frequency from them from time to time and they are important to know.

- 10-21 or “21” Please call via telephone
- 10-22 Cancel or disregard
- 10-300 Emergency traffic only (to the dispatch center)

(they may have other departments on emergency calls also or be on the phone with a 911 caller)

Units going “in service” will address the dispatch center by radioing “Control” followed by their unit designator. Upon reply from Control, (“Eng 17...Control”) , you will supply the information you need to pass along.

Example: Eng 17: “Control... Engine 17”.

Control: “Engine 17 Control, go ahead”

Eng 17: “ Engine 17 is enroute to 143 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue with a crew of three.”

Control: “Engine 17 enroute. 20:30 hours”.

Also when addressing another unit call their designator first followed by your designator. (i.e. “Hey you it’s me” NOT “IT’S ME HEY YOU”)

Occasionally, you may hear “Dispatch” instead of “Control”. They mean the same entity.

**5.1.7** Once a unit calls “in service” for training or enroute to an event that is not a response to an emergency, that unit does not contact dispatch when they arrive or when they are returning to the station. They will only contact the dispatch center when they arrive back in quarters. Dispatch will not be tracking these times.

**5.1.8** At the 18:30 pager check, the on-coming Duty Officer will transmit that they are the Duty Officer. This allows the dispatch center and personnel on duty to note who is the Duty Officer.

**5.1.9** Any broken or malfunctioning radio equipment should be reported to the career Division Chief or Duty Officer.

## **5.2 TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS**

**5.2.1** All CCF/R stations are equipped with telephone service. Telephones are available for personal, business, and emergency use. Respect all uses of these phone lines and be courteous to all others including the public that may be attempting to contact the station.

**5.2.2** All CCF/R telephones will be answered by a courteous voice stating “Capital City Fire / Rescue - Station \_ may I help you?” or use your name and rank e.g. “Capital City Fire/ Rescue, Firefighter Smith , may I help you?.”

**5.2.3** Callers will be assisted to the best of the answering party’s ability. Care should be taken to not give inaccurate or “your opinion” advice or information to callers. If you are unable to answer a question, get a name and call back number and pass it on to your officer. **DO NOT GIVE OUT ANYONE’S HOME OR**

CELLULAR TELEPHONE NUMBER UNLESS THE CALLER IS AFFILIATED WITH CCF/R. Offer to take a message and if urgent, to contact the person your caller is trying to reach.

- 5.2.4** Messages for personnel not in the station, should be taken and provided to the shift officer or member.
- 5.2.5** Occasionally, an emergency call will be received at the station. It is important to get the following information:

- Where is the Emergency?
- What is the Emergency?
- What is the caller's name?
- What is the number you are calling from?

Once this information is received advise the caller to hang up and dial 911. At the same time you can be preparing to respond and passing along a quick synopsis to control over the radio if the call is within our response area. (i.e. "Control, station 2"; "Station 2 go ahead"; "We received a report of a structure fire at 10143 Glacier Highway, you should be receiving a 911 call shortly' Please dispatch a structure fire response to that location".)

- 5.2.6** If a walk-in reports an emergency, try to quickly get their name and contact information. Provide Control information as noted in 5.2.5.
- 5.2.7** Any malfunctioning telephone should be reported to the Station Captain or to the Duty Officer.
- 5.2.8** Personal cell phones should be silenced or turned off during training or emergency responses. Use of personal cell phones should not interfere with assigned tasks.
- 5.2.9** Use of department phones for personal business should be kept to a minimum. Use of department phones for personal long distance calls is not allowed.
- 5.2.10** Departmental cell phones issued to CCF/R personnel should only be used for department business. Use of cell phones while driving is expressly prohibited by CBJ unless it is an emergency. Disciplinary action up to an including dismissal may occur for violation.

Control will often use cell phones to contact the station Captain or Duty Officer. Dispatchers are encouraged to use the radio system to contact personnel responding to an emergency instead of a cell phone. If confidential information is to be communicated, Control should call the responding unit on the radio and ask them to contact Control via telephone.

**5.2.11** Exceptions may be made to these guidelines by your supervisor depending upon the situation. Persons causing charges to the department for these exempted personal calls may be required to reimburse the department.

### **5.3. EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMUNICATION**

**5.3.1** Initial dispatch by Control will include the nature and location of the incident. The information will be repeated when units go enroute with pertinent details.

Units responding to in-district emergency scenes will notify Control that they are enroute, at staging, arrival on scene and clear of the scene. The volunteer officer or apparatus operator should advise Control when responding as to the number of persons on board, e.g. "Control, Eng. 45 responding: driver and one firefighter on board." It is important to listen before broadcasting so that you do not prevent the transmission of critical information.

**5.3.2** Radio frequencies are often overrun during emergencies. Think before you transmit. If you do not need to transmit, do not do so.

**5.3.3** As much as possible or feasible, ON SCENE communications should be done face to face without the use of the radio. This is much more effective and clears the frequency for communications unable to be done face to face. Incident Command should direct units to change to specific tactical frequencies and do a radio check to ensure that frequency transfer has been made by all units.

**5.3.4** When receiving orders via radio, the receiving party should repeat the order to ensure clarity in the communications. In order to reduce radio traffic, they should then use the radio only to report completion of the task, inability to complete the task, to request additional resources, to report hazardous situations or for emergency communications.

**5.3.4.1** It is especially important during emergencies for messages to be formulated prior to transmitting. Messages should be crisp, clear and enunciated well. Speaking rapidly or too loudly into the microphone causes distortion so utilize a calm well mannered voice. **PROFANITY IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE DURING ANY RADIO COMMUNICATION.**

**5.3.5** CCF/R will utilize the commonly accepted "three blasts from an airhorn" as the signal for an emergency evacuation of a structure. This will also be supported by a command broadcast of the fire ground frequency of "ALL UNITS EVACUATE THE BUILDING". A role call of all personnel on the scene by the incident commander or his/her designee will commence immediately. Any unit can contact COMMAND with emergency traffic. (i.e. "Command, Interior with

EMERGENCY TRAFFIC” We have partial collapse of the second floor and one firefighter is trapped. We are on the second floor side C and need assistance”) **ALL OTHER RADIO TRAFFIC MUST CEASE IMMEDIATELY UPON A CALL OF “EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”. EMERGENCY TRAFFIC HAS ABSOLUTE PRIORITY.**

- 5.3.6** During responses, Control will usually establish dialogue with the Duty Officer, the first out career Captain, or the Lead Medic on EMS calls. Apparatus should not contact dispatch directly unless calling out “responding” or “on scene”.

Requests for further information or direction should be routed through the Duty Officer or career Captain if the Duty Officer is not responding to the call. Other officers, or personnel, may call out as responding and on scene, however they should not contact the dispatch center. (i.e. “Lt. Smith responding for Rescue 1” , NOT “Control, Lt. Smith responding for Rescue 1”) These radio units may or may not receive a reply from dispatch. This procedure of calling out is a courtesy to the Duty Officer to plan responses, coordinate apparatus response and evaluate personnel needs.

- 5.3.7** Upon arrival of the first officer or person establishing Incident Command on scene, all radio traffic will be directed and controlled from the scene through “Command”. In general, “Command” will be the sole direct link to dispatch. Upon arrival, Command should transmit a size-up over the air. In general the items that need to be addressed are: “What do I have, What do I need, What am I doing, who is in Command”. (See section 1.9 on size-ups for further) If “Command” was not called, like on a simple EMS incident, the senior medic or officer would fill the role of being Control’s contact.

- 5.3.8** When Incident Command” is established at an incident, a geographic title should be applied to the incident. (i.e. “Main Street Command”). This will assist dispatch and provide additional clarity in the event of multiple incidents.

- 5.3.9** The Dispatch Center will notify CCFR of emergency calls by utilizing a tone to open the pagers. The tones will alert the appropriate career station and the on-duty volunteers. All initial dispatch voice communications will be repeated a second time upon notification of response by the first unit out, to allow units that may have missed the specific location on the initial announcement to receive the proper dispatch information. **Volunteers should not contact Control by phone to ask for locations, directions or additional information.**

- 5.3.10** “Command” or the In-Charge Medic on EMS calls, when extended period of time are required to mitigate a situation should give updates to the dispatch center as time permits. A good rule of thumb would be every 10-15 minutes and during “Benchmark” accomplishments addressed in 5.3.11. Control will conduct welfare

checks or status checks after approximately fifteen minutes on scene.

- 5.3.11** “Command” should update dispatch when “Benchmark” accomplishments are made. Examples of these “Benchmarks” can include: Patient Extracted, Fire Knocked Down, Fire Under Control or Fire Contained, Fire Out, Patient Loaded in Ambulance, All Units Available on Scene, All Units Clear of the Scene, Fire Watch Status.
- 5.3.12** AT NO TIME WILL PATIENT OR VICTIMS NAMES BE GIVEN OUT OVER THE RADIO. Patient confidentiality is paramount.
- 5.3.13** During a Full Arrest or Long Extrication of a patient, the Duty Officer or In-charge Medic may request 5 minute interval “time checks” be done by the dispatch center. Dispatch will then announce over the radio every five minutes how long units have been on scene. This will aid in evaluating progress and gives notification to EMS personnel for repeat medication intervals. (modified Boddy)
- 5.3.14** During serious EMS responses, the Duty Officer or the In-charge Medic may consider having the dispatch center contact the hospital to advise them of the situation prior to the EMS report commonly given by the ambulance. This is to allow BRH to prepare to receive the patient or patients that will be transported to their facility. Utilization of cellular telephones or residences telephones can also be used for this purpose and eliminates the information getting to the hospital second hand.
- 5.3.15** During EMS operations, situations occur whereby medical personnel need to consult with the Emergency Room Physician. This can be accomplished by utilizing cellular phones or the residence phone. A possible alternative is to use the ambulance radio. (Note: future projects include installing a tone activated radio system in BRH ER activated from the ambulances.) Identify yourself, patient’s condition, and your plan of action clearly and concisely and after consult provide appropriate treatment.
- 5.3.16** CCF/R has a voted repeater system, however, within CCF/R’s service area, there are areas that are not conducive for our portable radios to hit our voted repeater system or to receive transmissions from our main transmitter site that is located on Saddle Mountain. Alternate transmission sites are available and Control should be requested to change transmitters. The east Valley area is best served by the Peterson Hill repeater, remote areas on Glacier Highway are best served by Bessie Mountain and the downtown/Douglas area are best served by Marine Plaza Repeater. Fire 1 and Fire 2 frequencies are repeater frequencies.

When working incidents, units upon direction of Command, should switch to CCFR’s simplex frequency [channels 3 or 4] for ON SCENE communications. An

alternate is to use the talk-around feature on the portable radios. Control will not receive any of the radio traffic put over simplex channel since they only monitor channels 1 and 2. All communications to the dispatch center will need to be done over the repeater channel(s).

When changing channels, all units should briefly check in when making the frequency change. E.g. "All units, Command change to Fire three". " Switch is made: "Engine 11 on three". "Engine 41 on three. "Attack team one on three" etc.

**5.3.17** On larger scale incidents, the incident commander may elect to put specific functions such as water supply or triage on a separate frequency from the primary emergency scene frequency to free up air time for the ongoing operations in each area of the incident.

**5.3.18** When the Duty Officer or Incident Commander cancels further response to an incident, all responding members and apparatus not on the scene will cancel their response and return to prior status.

## **5.4 EMS Radio reports**

**5.4.1** EMS reports may be made to Bartlett Regional Hospital via cellular phone. (see 5.3.15) The Emergency room currently only monitors the channel 1 and does not have transmitting ability.

The pre-hospital report should include:

- Unit identification
- Age and sex of patient
- Severity
- Chief complaint
- Relevant medical history
- Vital signs
- Treatment given, and response to treatment
- ETA
- Request for additional information or treatment

**5.4.2** During large scale or multiple casualty incidents, a Medical Transport Officer may be established. Individual medical units will not provide a telephonic or radio report to Bartlett Regional hospital. This will be the responsibility of the Medical Transport Officer. Similarly, individual ambulance units will report verbally to the staging officer upon arrival and to the Medical Transport Officer when ready to depart the scene.. The Medical Transport Officer will establish a land-line as soon as possible to BRH and maintain the line open. Cellular telephone coverage is unreliable during large incidents

## **5.5 Radio Designators**



City Manager	Manager 2
Emergency Services Director	Manager 3
Tongass Forestry Service:	Forestry 1 through 5
Eagle Crest Ski Patrol:	Ski Patrol 1-5
Juneau Police Department	JPD
Juneau Transit	Transit unit ____
Juneau Public Works	Public Works unit ____

## 5.6 Communication Control (Chain of Command)

This guideline is intended to define types of communication and define the chain of command to follow when communicating with Control.

Definitions of communication with Control are as follows:

Routine communication: announcing apparatus status, clarifying addresses, announcing benchmarks, etc.

Field communication: adding/deleting apparatus to pages, clarifying caller information, etc.

Other communication: concerns about an individual's performance or attitude, notifying of a formal incident debriefing, etc.

Routine communication may be done at any time by Control or any fire department personnel.

Field communication shall only be done by Station Officers, Duty Officers, or Incident Commanders.

Other communication shall be done only through the chain of command. The Division Chief of Career is the liaison with Control for fire personnel. Fire personnel having a concern needing Control's attention need to follow their chain of command to the Division Chief. The Dispatch Manager or their designee is the liaison with the fire department for dispatchers. Dispatchers with a concern needing the fire department's attention need to follow their chain of command to the Dispatch Manager.