



PROCEDURES MANUAL

SUBJECT: Structure Fire Operations – Radio Reports and Communications

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203.01.04 Structure Fire Operations – Radio Reports and Communications

A. Purpose

1. This topic is intended to establish a procedure for the role of Dispatch in communications on the fireground. Dispatch will monitor all radio traffic on the fireground for structure fires. Communications obtained from the radio traffic will be entered into the run information and displayed on the PMDC. Important or critical information as specified in this procedure will be acknowledged and repeated over the fireground channel by Dispatch.
2. To demonstrate what information is contained in the Initial Radio Report and the Follow-Up Report.

B. Initial Radio Report (IRR)

1. The first arriving company on scene will provide an Initial Radio Report (IRR) to all incoming units on the fireground channel. This report can be made from the officer's seat or upon exiting the apparatus.
2. The Initial Radio report will contain the following critical fireground factors:
 - a. Announce Company's arrival on the scene.
 - b. Building Area / Description
 - i. Building Size (Small, Regular, Large, Mega)
 - ii. Building Height
 - iii. Occupancy – dwelling, multi-dwelling, commercial, church, McDonalds, etc.
 - c. Problem Description
 - i. Nothing Showing
 - ii. Smoke Showing
 - iii. Working Fire
 - iv. Defensive Fire Conditions
 - d. Location of Problem – basement / floor number and side (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta)
 - e. Resources needed
 - i. Can Handle
 - ii. Hold Assignment

- iii. Upgrade – extra companies or alarm
- f. Establish Command
- 3. Radio Traffic Example:
 - Fire Company:** “Engine 20 on scene of a large 2 story multi dwelling, with a working fire on the 2nd floor Alpha side. Engine 20 will be Hamilton Command”.
 - Dispatch:** “OK – Engine 20 is on scene reporting a working fire on the 2nd floor Alpha side of a large two-story multi-dwelling, Engine 20 will be Hamilton Command.”

C. **Follow-Up Radio Report**

- 1. The Follow-Up Radio Report will made by the first arriving Company Officer (Initial Incident Commander), unless the first due Chief Officer arrives on the scene and states that he/she will perform it.
- 2. This report contains the following information:
 - a. Results of 360 survey – completed or not completed
 - b. Height from the “Charlie” side if different from the Initial Radio Report (I.R.R.)
 - c. Basement Type
 - i. Look Out
 - ii. Walk Out
 - iii. Walk Up
 - iv. Block Windows
 - v. No Basement
 - d. Incident Action Plan (IAP) – tasks.
 - i. Hose stretch and location
 - ii. Primary search, etc.
 - e. Life Safety Hazards Location and Needs
 - f. Strategy – Offensive or Defensive
- 3. Radio Traffic Examples:
 - a. Example #1:
 - Incident Commander:** “Hamilton Command, 360 Complete, there is a walk-out basement, no change in grade on Charlie side, Engine 1 will be stretching a line through alpha, we will be in the offensive strategy.”
 - Dispatch:** “OK Hamilton Command on the follow-up report.”
 - b. Example #2:
 - Incident Commander:** “Hamilton Command follow-up report, unable to access Charlie due to building size, we are investigating “possible food on the stove”, all other companies Level 1 stage.”
 - Dispatch:** “OK Hamilton Command on the follow-up report.”

D. **Status Update Reports** - Are reports made at any time when the Incident Commander determines it is needed to give an update of conditions or actions that have been performed at the incident. This can also occur when a Company completes a task and needs to be reassigned.

E. **Critical Updates**

1. Report of Persons Trapped, other items related to life safety. When Dispatch receives updates from callers, Dispatch shall relay that information over the fireground channel to notify all units either responding or working on scene. This critical radio traffic will be acknowledged by the responding first due Company, Chief Officer or the Incident Commander. If not acknowledged it shall be repeated by Dispatch.
2. Radio Traffic Example:
-Dispatch: "Companies responding to Hamilton Ave we are receiving reports of people trapped on the second floor unable to exit due to fire in the hallway".
-District Chief: "District 3 clear on the report of occupants trapped on 2nd floor".

F. **Time Lapse Updates**

1. Dispatch will give Time Lapse Updates to the Incident Commander (IC) every ten (10) minutes. The first-time lapse update will occur ten (10) minutes after the first fire company arrives on the scene.
2. Time lapse updates shall affect strategy decisions by providing updates to the Incident Commander about the amount of time that the fire has been burning and the affect the current strategy has on stabilizing the incident. The first ten (10) min mark will typically be approximately 14 minutes from when the call was received, noting that the fire started prior to that. When a fire has been burning that long it will begin to impact the structural stability of the structure, especially if it is made of lightweight construction and/or trusses. The IC shall consider this while evaluating the current strategy.
3. The ten (10) minute mark time lapse updates will also provide the IC with an understanding of the working time for companies using an SCBA. Companies can be expected to get about 15-20 minutes of working time out of their SCBA. The IC should be anticipating this and be prepared to replace working crews with new companies at this point. The 10-minute updates from Dispatch will assist the IC in the management of the incident.

4. Radio Traffic Example:

-Dispatch: “Dispatch to Hamilton Command this is your second (2nd) ten (10) minute mark.”

-Command: “Hamilton Command OK.”

G. **Command Transfer**

1. Procedure for transferring Command from the Initial Incident Commander to the first arriving Chief Officer -*Reference 203.01.05 Structure Fire Operations- Incident Command and Command Transfer*

2. When Command is transferred from the initial working IC to a later arriving Chief Officer, this information will be transmitted over the fireground channel and repeated by Dispatch. This ensures that all companies working on the fireground are aware that Command has been transferred and a stationary Command Post has been established.

3. Radio Traffic Example:

-District Chief: “District 3 to Dispatch; District 3 will be taking Command on Hamilton Ave. Companies will remain in the offensive strategy”.

-Dispatch: “Clear, District 3 will be Hamilton Command remaining in the offensive strategy”.

H. Emergency and Mayday Declarations (*Reference 203.01.15 Mayday and Emergency Declaration*)

1. Extra Alarms: When the IC requests an extra alarm from Dispatch, that information shall be repeated over the fireground channel. This will confirm that the request was received. For example:

-Command: “Hamilton Command **Emergency**, dispatch the 2nd alarm”.

-Dispatch: “That’s clear Command the 2nd-Alarm is in”.

2. Emergency Tones: Dispatch has the ability to transmit an emergency tone over the fireground channel to alert on scene personnel of an “Emergency” situation. This tone **will only** be transmitted at the request of the Incident Commander, and should be used for the following reasons:

a. Evacuation of the building

b. Any situation where there is imminent danger to life

3. Note: **Not** all “Emergency” declarations will result in the use of the emergency tone. For example, a request for an extra alarm does not receive an emergency tone.

4. Radio Traffic Examples:

a. **-Command:** “Main St Command to Dispatch Emergency, give me the emergency tone”.

-Dispatch – “Clear” -then gives the tone.

-Command: “Main St. Command to all companies we are changing to a Defensive Strategy, Retreat, Retreat, Retreat, give a PAR and location, upon exiting the building”.

- b. **-Command:** “Command to all companies Emergency, there is a hole in the floor on the second floor, Charlie side, stay off the second floor.” (No Emergency Tone)

I. EMS Branch Communications

1. The ALS supervisor shall communicate to the incident commander on the fireground channel.
2. EMS communication between the ALS supervisor and the fire ground medic units shall be conducted on the treatment channel.
3. The ALS Supervisor shall carry 2 radios and monitor the fireground channel and the “Treatment” Channel in the same fireground zone.
EXAMPLE: Fireground is “Command B” or “B-2” the ALS shall also monitor the “Treatment” Channel in Zone B or “B-9”.
4. Each medic unit shall monitor the fireground channel and the “Treatment” Channel in the same fireground zone. One member of the medic unit shall monitor the fireground channel “Command B” or “B-2” and the other member of the medic unit shall monitor the “Treatment” Channel in the same fireground zone.