

Renton Fire and Emergency Services Department
Standard Operating Procedure

Subject: Radio Communications	Number: 4203
Effective Date: March 1, 2008	Revised: January 1, 2009

1.0 Statement of Policy

- 1.1. Communication with Valley Communications relative to response to emergencies is crucial for both quality service delivery and documentation of response information.
- 1.2. The Deputy Chief of Response Operations shall be the liaison between the Fire and Emergency Services Department and Valley Communications as it relates to communications issues and shall ensure that SOPs regarding emergency communications issues are implemented and enforced.
- 1.3. No change in any aspect of policy or practice as it relates to dispatching of fire apparatus shall be made without the knowledge and approval of the Deputy Chief of Response Operations.
- 1.4. Emergency response communications shall take place on channels as designated in this SOP.
- 1.5. Tactical channels shall be utilized as the primary channels for communication between units at any incident where more than one Renton Fire and Emergency Services unit is operating.
- 1.6. When communicating via radio, the “communications order model” shall be utilized.

2.0 Objectives

- 2.1. To outline the process to be utilized when communicating with Valley Communications via radio on emergency responses.

3.0 Responsibility

- 3.1. Company Officers and Acting Company Officers in the Response Operations Section, or the person in charge of any responding Fire and Emergency Services Department unit (non Response Operations Section), shall ensure that:

- 3.1.1. Radio traffic is properly and clearly transmitted to the Dispatcher.
- 3.1.2. Response information received from the Dispatcher is confirmed by repeating the information.

4.0 Procedures

- 4.1. General Radio Procedures
 - 4.1.1. Radio transmissions shall be made in a concise, businesslike manner.
 - 4.1.2. Personal remarks or messages are to be avoided.
- 4.2. Response Operations Units
 - 4.2.1. Shall be responsible for maintaining radio contact with Valley Communications at all times.
 - 4.2.2. All units going on the air for other than emergency reasons shall state their assignment or detail on the unit's MDC.
 - 4.2.3. The use of the designated FCC call letters by any base station or, "Valley Communications" in the case of the communication center, in reply to a request from a mobile or another base station will signify the message has been copied and is acknowledged.
 - 4.2.4. The mobile radio number shall always be used when any type of acknowledgement is made.
 - 4.2.5. Units will give a specific location each time they go out of service.
- 4.3. Radio Report Types
 - 4.3.1. **Response Acknowledgement** reports are radio reports that confirm the fact that a unit has received response information from the Dispatcher, especially when out of quarters and available for response.
 - 4.3.1.1. As soon as the Company Officer of the unit **designated first** in the response order recognizes that the unit has been requested to respond, the Company Officer shall advise the Dispatcher that the unit has "**RECEIVED**" the call, via MDC, mobile or base radio.
 - 4.3.2. **En Route Notification** reports are radio reports that confirm the fact that the unit is en route to the response location; which means

the unit has cleared the apparatus bay or the wheels are moving towards the location.

4.3.2.1. When the apparatus begins moving, the Company Officer of each unit responding shall notify the Dispatcher that the unit is “**EN ROUTE**” through the MDC terminal.

4.3.2.2. If a call is acknowledged while the members are in the apparatus, the Company Officer shall advise the Dispatcher that they have received the call and are responding, this may also be done through the MDC.

4.3.3. **First Arriving Unit** reports are reports of the first unit to arrive at the scene of an incident, whether listed to arrive first or not, and shall utilize the STOPAND-C acronym which includes the following:

- Designation of unit arriving on the scene
- Size of the structure of incident
- Type of construction or incident
- Occupancy
- Percent of involvement
- Additional alarms
- Noteworthy items
- Directions to other units
- Establish command
- Command mode, and if command is chosen:
 - Command post location
 - Base location

EXAMPLE: “Engine 16 on location of a 30 x 40 two story wood frame single-family dwelling. We have flames showing from Side A-Adam 50% involvement. Dispatch a second alarm. Engine 16 will be in the transitional attack. Engine 12 lay a supply to Engine 16. Engine 16 establishing Pasco Command. The Command Post will be at the A-Adam B-Boy corner of the structure at Engine 16.

Base will be 100 yards south on 2nd NE. Pasco Command is declaring a working fire incident.”

4.3.4. **Progress** reports are radio reports from units that are in an “assigned” status and shall be used to indicate one of the following:

4.3.4.1. Assignment completed

Example – “Rainier Command from Division 2, we have the fire under control on floor #2; our team air is at ____.”

4.3.4.2. Assignment in progress, additional resources needed

Example – “Jericho Command from Division C, we have located two additional patients and need an additional unit to assist treating them; our team air is at ____.”

4.3.4.3. Assignment in progress, current resources are sufficient

Example – “Benson Command from Extrication Group, we have accessed the portion of the building that we heard the noises coming from, we have found no victims as of yet, and we have sufficient resources to continue the search; our team air is at ____.”

4.3.4.4. Assignment unable to be completed for any reason

Example – “Division 3 from Engine 11, we are withdrawing from our location, we have had a partial roof collapse, recommend you conduct a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) of all units in Division 3; our team air is at ____.”

4.3.4.5. Progress reports shall be transmitted:

4.3.4.5.1. Upon request from a Leader, Supervisor, Director, Section Chief, Officer or the Incident Commander

4.3.4.5.2. When significant progress towards the completion of an assigned goal, objective or task is achieved

4.3.5. **Update** reports are radio reports transmitted by the Incident Commander to clarify the overall incident progress and shall include the following:

- Current incident conditions
- Progress towards strategic goals
- Current operational mode

Example – “Dispatch from Lind Command, we have a working fire in a large warehouse, we are making progress towards fire control, we’re in a defensive mode”

4.3.5.1. Update reports shall be transmitted by the Incident Commander:

- Every 10 minutes
- Whenever a time check is received
- Whenever there is a change in tactical mode from offensive to defensive
- When a tactical benchmark is completed

4.3.6. **Status** reports are radio reports transmitted for the purpose of either changing or confirming unit status conditions.

4.3.6.1. Status reports shall consist of the following:

- Unit name or number
- Status condition
- Destination (if applicable)

4.3.6.2. Only the Incident Commander shall transmit status reports to the Dispatcher.

4.3.7. **Safety** reports are reports that have a direct impact on the safety of members operating at an emergency scene.

4.3.7.1. PAR – Personnel Accountability Report (see “Emergency Incident Accountability” SOP)

4.3.7.2. “*Emergency Traffic*”

4.3.7.2.1. Shall be used to clear a designated radio channel at an incident to make way for important radio traffic for a firefighter emergency situation or immediate change in tactical or task level operations.

4.3.7.2.2. Shall precede any of the following firefighter emergency notifications:

- “*Firefighter Missing*” – A firefighter or officer cannot be located visually, by touch, or electronic means.
- “*Firefighter Down*” – A firefighter or officer is incapacitated for any reason.
- “*Firefighter Trapped*” – A firefighter or officer is unable to extricate him/herself from a hazardous area or environment.
- “*Firefighter(s) Need(s) Help*” – One or more firefighters or officers are being threatened with bodily harm by another person or persons.

4.3.7.2.3. Shall precede any of the following changes in tactical operations:

- “*Withdraw*”
 - * A situation where an ORDERLY withdrawal from an area is necessary due to a potential safety hazard.
 - * Members should take all tools and equipment during a withdrawal.
- “*Abandon*”
 - * A situation where an IMMEDIATE withdrawal from an area is necessary due to a potential safety hazard.
 - * Members should NOT DELAY their movement from the area to collect tools or equipment.

4.4. Operational Modes

4.4.1. **Offensive** – Members are making attempts to control a situation or incident with a belief that their actions can bring the incident to resolution more rapidly through such action.

4.4.2. **Defensive** – Members have determined that the incident cannot be effectively controlled by offensive actions and have placed themselves in positions allowing the incident to progress to a logical conclusion.

4.5. Tactical Benchmarks

4.5.1. Fire operations:

4.5.1.1. **Fire under control** – the fire is believed to be at a stage where damage to other portions of the structure or exposures is unlikely.

4.5.1.2. **Fire tapped** – meaning the fire has been extinguished to a relative certainty based on the assessment of the Incident Commander.

4.5.2. EMS

4.5.2.1. **Patient located**

4.5.2.2. **Private provider on scene**

4.5.2.3. **Patient transferred** (to private provider, etc)

4.5.3. (Search and) Rescue operations:

4.5.3.1. **Primary search completed** – an initial quick search of an area is completed.

4.5.3.2. **Secondary search completed**

4.5.3.3. **Patient extricated**

4.5.4. Hazmat

4.5.4.1. **Release stopped**

4.5.4.2. **Product identified**

4.5.5. Any incident:

4.5.5.1. **Loss stopped** – the incident has been controlled to the point that further property loss is unlikely.

4.6. Tactical Channels

4.6.1. Any Incident Commander or Officer on a response with more than one unit may request a tactical channel in order to clear the main dispatch channel as necessary.

5.0 Reference

5.1. Model Procedures Guide Book 1, 1st Edition

6.0 Appendix

6.1. Radio Call Signs

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6.1.1. Radio numbers are assigned to fire apparatus and members for identification purposes.

6.1.2. King County Zone 3 (Valley Communications) Numbering System

6.1.1.1. The numbering system will consist of a two or three digit number. The first digit is the jurisdiction or department; the second number designates station or ID number.

6.1.1.2. Any other number would designate the subsequent identical equipment from the same station.

- 1 – Renton
- 2 - KCFD #2 and KCFC #20
- 3 – Valley Regional Fire Authority
- 4 - City of SeaTac
- 5 – Tukwila and Vashon Island
- 6 – South King Fire & Rescue
- 7 - Kent
- 8 - KCFD #43 and #47
- 9 - KCFD #17 and KCFD #44

6.1.3. Call signs for Response Operations Units shall be as follows:

Station 11	Station 12	Station 13	Station 14	Station 16	Station 17
Eng. 11	Eng. 12	Eng. 13	Lad. 14	Eng 16	Eng 17
Eng. 111	Eng. 121	Eng 131	Lad. 141	Eng 161	Eng 171
Eng. 112	Aid 12	Aid 13	Aid 14	Aid 16	Aid 17
Aid 11	Aid 121		Aid 141		Aid 171
	Batt 12	Batt 13	Eng 14		
			HazMat 14		

6.1.4. Call Signs for Executive Staff

Fire Chief/Emergency Services Administrator	Chief 11
Deputy Fire Chief	Chief 12
Deputy Fire Chief	Chief 13
Deputy Fire Chief	Chief 14
Emergency Management Director	Director 12

6.1.5. Call Signs for Community Risk Reduction

Deputy Fire Marshal	Fire Marshal 12
Assistant Fire Marshal	Fire Marshal 13
Haz Mat Lieutenant	Inspector 14
North Lead Inspector	Inspector 120
North Inspector	Inspector 121
North Inspector	Inspector 122
South Lead Inspector	Inspector 130
South Inspector	Inspector 131
South Inspector	Inspector 132

6.1.6. Call Signs for Safety and Support Services

Safety/Training Captain	Training 141
Safety/Training Lieutenant	Training 142
Safety/Training Firefighter	Training 143
Safety/Training Firefighter	Training 144
Logistics Captain	Logistics 131
Logistics Lieutenant	Logistics 132
Logistics Firefighter	Logistics 133
Logistics Firefighter	Logistics 134

6.1.7. Valley Communication frequency call signs are:

- Frequency 1 = Fire 1
- Frequency 2 = Fire 2
- Frequency 3 = Fire 3
- Frequency 4 = Fire 4

6.1.8. Any vehicle that may be used as utility apparatus to run errands and used by personnel other than those with a call designation will use the designated apparatus number, *e.g.*, Number 37 used by Response Ops member to run errands shall be designated as Renton Car 37.