



Lauderdale-By-The-Sea Fire Department

S.O.P Number: 500	Effective Date: October 1, 2010
Section: 512	
Subject: Radio Communications	
By Order of the Fire Chief: Steven Paine	

Section 512: Radio Communications

Purpose

To establish a uniform process for radio communications for all types of emergency and non-emergency calls in district.

Scope

These guidelines are applicable to all Lauderdale by the Sea Fire Department personnel who has been assigned a radio or who will be operating a radio when responding to emergency and non-emergency calls in district and in mutual aid response areas.

Policy

LBTS VFD uses common terminology as recognized by the National Incident Management System (NIMS), instead of codes. The use of the radio frequency assigned to the Department will be for official business communications only. Such communications will be as concise as possible, spoken in a clear and audible voice tone at moderate speed, and with minimum voice inflection. All members are urged to strive to eliminate emotions from their communications while transmitting emergency traffic to improve the clarity of the message.

All radio equipment capable of transmitting an identifier tone will be programmed to do such. Once personnel arrive at the fire scene, firefighters should transmit on the main or an alternate channel designated by the Incident Commander or FIRECOM. This will allow more efficient communication and less confusion to the dispatcher. Typically, this channel will be identified as a TAC or Tactical Channel.

Pagers

All personnel assigned a pager and a radio should take care to protect these pagers which are expensive and difficult to replace. All members of the department are instructed to carry and read their pagers completely before responding so they are able to understand message broadcasts.

Routine Radio Traffic

- Common language is to be used, with the noted exceptions.
- Signal 2 – ETOH/Drunk Person



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- Signal 4 – Motor Vehicle Collision
- Signal 7 - Expired Patient
- Signal 20 – Psyche. Patient
- 10-4 - Copy
- 10-20 - Location
- 10-24 – Emergency
- No names are to be used on the air.
- Hailing Firecom will be done with the unit’s identifier said first. Ex. “Engine 12 to Firecom”
- “Responding” or “En-route” and “Arrival” or “On-scene” are to be used while on calls.
- “Station” is to be used when back in station.
- If repeating the traffic of another unit, the phrase “same traffic” is not to be used. Instead, the unit will state the traffic intended to be recorded. Ex. “Engine 12, station”... “Squirt 12, station”.

Medical Calls

- A suppression unit may be dispatched to medical calls.
- It will be the duty of either the Chief on duty, or Medical 12, to determine if the FD is needed on the call and the response priority. This is announced over the air.
- If Utility responds in lieu of another unit, the radio traffic is to be “Utility 12 responding in place of [state unit]”

Fire Calls

- Units will respond on main channel and/or TAC channel, if assigned. If a TAC channel is unmonitored, all units shall inform Firecom on main channel of time stamped traffic.
- Chief on duty or first due company officer shall request a TAC channel if an incident is suspected to be a working incident, with high radio traffic.
- All units are to announce their presence and status on the TAC channel, when the channel is put into operation.
- Card to Card (D2CC) Channel is to be used for non-emergent, internal communication between units or firefighters.
- Dispatch may be requested to switch to this channel for non-emergent communication.

- Switching to Card to Card (D2CC) channel. These steps are to be followed.
“Requesting unit to Firecom, have requested unit(s) switch to Card to Card”, “Requested unit(s) switching to Card to Card” all units switch to Card to Card at this time.

- All units are to come up on the channel to announce their presence. Requested unit goes on air first. Then the requesting unit will proceed with the traffic desired.



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- Clearing the channel is to be done by all units on echo and main channels.

Radio Communications Hardware

The Lauderdale by the Sea Fire department operates with 3 different types of radios, which operates in very similar ways and have standard operational settings.

- Motorola MTS2000 - Portable
- Motorola MTX 2500 - Portable
- Motorola MCS2000 - Mobil

Description and Use of Portable radios

LCD Display:

The Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) provides visual information, including zone indication and selected channel. Every Radio has an assigned alpha-numeric identification alias, which identifies the company assignment of the radio. (Example: E12-FF1) This identification number will identify the radio to FIRECOM which will be aliased to the display on the radio's LCD. Activation of the emergency alert button will cause the ID number to be displayed with alias in FIRECOM.

Note: The “Emergency Alert” will continue to sound both on the radio as well as at the FIRECOM console until which time the radio is reset by clearing the emergency, turning the radio off and on and by FIRECOM clearing the alert from their CAD screen.

ON-OFF / Volume Knob:

Radio ON: Rotate knob clockwise until a click is heard or felt. The radio will initiate a power-up self-test. The Model II and III display shows "Self Test". When the radio passes the self-test, it emits a short tone sound. If the radio fails the self-test, the radio emits a low-pitched tone sound. The Model III display shows "FAIL XX/YY", where XX/YY is an alphanumeric code. Turn the radio off, check the battery, and turn the radio back on. If the radio still does not pass its self-test, it is defective. The defect shall be noted on a repair tag and the radio sent for repair.



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Push-To-Talk (PTT) Button:

Puts Radio in the Transmit Mode – PTT function may also be extended to the remote microphone. When the PTT button is depressed it transmits a pre-determined 6-digit number, specifically assigned to that radio as well as an audible tone to advise the user that the air is clear and ready for a transmission to occur. The tone level is proportional to the volume setting.

Emergency Alert Button: (Top Orange Button)

When the Emergency Alert Button is activated, an audible alert is transmitted to FIRECOM advising of an emergency status. The user's radio will also display the nomenclature upon the LCD "EMERGENCY" letting the user know that he/she is transmitting an emergency message.

Emergency tones are sent at maximum power to facilitate better building penetration and will be heard at maximum volume regardless of the receiving radio volume setting. They are intended to signal FIRECOM, the Incident Commander and other firefighters at the scene that there is a Mayday/Urgent transmission in progress (CODE "10-24"). When activated, FIRECOM will sound an alert-tone from the console and **all other radio traffic should cease and desist to clear the channel for the message to be heard.**

When activated, the Emergency Alert Button sends out an electronic identification signal, representing to FIRECOM the radio alias. This gives FIRECOM the ability to identify the unit and the assigned position of the member transmitting the emergency. This will facilitate in contacting and locating the member expeditiously.

To reset the Emergency Alert Button, the member can, either depresses the Emergency Alert Button and hold it for approximately 2 seconds until a reset tone is heard, then release the button, or simply turn the radio off and then back on.

Note:

◆ When an Emergency Alert and subsequent voice communication are not Acknowledged, the "Emergency Alert Tone" can be resent by briefly depressing the emergency button again.

Light Button: (Purple button above PTT bottom)

Turns Channel Selector Knob and LCD; (Model II, III) backlight ON for 5 seconds.

Multifunction LED:

When the radio is turned ON, the LED temporarily illuminates Green and is followed by a short tone. This indicates that the HT is in proper working order.



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Steady Red ♦ Radio is transmitting

Flashing Red (while transmitting) ♦ Low battery or when the radio voltage temporarily drops below the preset alert level

Flashing Green (while transmitting) ♦ Battery too low to transmit but reception is still possible

Soft Keys®/Home Key /Arrow Keys (Model II, III)

Navigates the radio through a visual menu screen on the LCD display.

Channel Selection: 16 Position Select Knob

Rotate to select specific channel. The Model II, III LCD display shows the selected zone and channel. **When changing channels, you must ensure that the channel selector knob is on the intended channel. If the channel selector knob is inadvertently placed between channels, an incorrect channel may be activated. You must stop at a full click.**