

	JEFFERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES	Initial: 03-01-2006 Revised: 10-05-2007
	SOP#: FIRE 3-07	
	Subject: Communications with fire mobile units	

COMMUNICATIONS WITH FIRE MOBILE UNITS

A. PURPOSE

This policy presents the procedure to be followed by the communications center and field personnel to ensure clear and understandable communications. This also provides for the basis of using common terminology as outlined by the National Incident Management System.

B. PROCEDURE

1. In advance of sending a lengthy message, it is preferable to make a preliminary call and await acknowledgment before proceeding. In such cases, the identifying words "Jefferson County" should be used when calling the Communications Center. The message should start with your unit number followed by "Jefferson County". For example: "Engine 1 Jefferson County"

2. When an incident is dispatched, the 9-1-1 center will acknowledge the highest officer responding from the home company, and a Department Chief, if applicable. All other company officers shall utilize the fire ground assigned for all radio traffic. If a lower officer arrives on scene prior to the ranking officer, he shall provide a report on the fire ground assigned. The dispatcher will then rebroadcast the report to all responders over the fire ground and fire dispatch. If you have an emergency, state your unit number and the word "**emergency traffic**". Then wait until you are acknowledged and proceed with your message.

3. **The communications center will not acknowledge mutual aid chiefs or line officers responding to in county incidents.** The responding mutual aid officers, if arriving prior to the OIC, shall check on scene and provide a report over the assigned fire ground. If the mutual aid company needs to know what officers they have enroute, the mutual aid company will use phones or an operations channel for company tactics related to response.

4. All apparatus responding to an alarm should advise the Communications Center that they are responding and on scene. All apparatus will be acknowledged by the Communications Center. Individual firefighters should not respond by radio and will not be acknowledged by the Communications Center.

5. Units should report "enroute" or "responding", "on-scene" and "in quarters". **Other miscellaneous or slang terms for these statuses SHALL NOT be utilized nor will be recognized by the communications center.**
6. Fire apparatus and line officers that are acknowledged by the 9-1-1 center on UHF dispatch will be assigned and switched to an operational channel when they report enroute. This may either be a regional repeater or fire ground channel.
7. No department will automatically assign themselves use to any channel owned and licensed by the County of Jefferson.
8. The first line officer or piece of apparatus reporting on the scene of an incident will be assigned a command designation by the 9-1-1 center. Additional line officers with the exception of the department chief need not report on-scene after the command designation has been established.
9. After a command has been established, the communications center will honor incident requests from the established Incident Commander only.
10. When a unit is relaying information to the Communications Center from an officer, it should be stated as such in their message. For example: "Jefferson County from Engine 1, by orders of Chief 1, dispatch second alarm." Also, if the Communications Center is calling an officer and the unit is answering for him, they should make that fact clear. For example "Jefferson County from Engine-16 proceed with your message for Chief 16."
11. There is no need to advise the Communications Center that units are "available by radio" for driver training, fuel, etc., either by phone or radio. The only time that the Communications Center should be notified is when such activities change the dispatch procedure of the station or necessitate a next due unit to respond, at which time the O.I.C. should advise the Communications Center by phone or radio. (Ex: Engine 1 out of service at DuBois parade, replace with next due engine).
12. Individual officers returning to station or available from a scene need not advise the Communications Center.
13. When a "box" is placed available, this indicates that **all** units that responded to that box, regardless of the station they came from, are available.

14. No further times will be recorded in CAD after a box has been placed in service. If a station reports all units are back in quarters, a verbal time will be given only. The communications center will not document this time in CAD.

15. Command may place an individual piece of apparatus available from an incident. CAD will recognize this unit as available in the event it is recommended on another box.

16. Once an individual unit is placed available, there is no need to call that unit back in quarters.

17. The Chief/O.I.C. may also place his equipment available with exceptions.
(Ex: Chief 2 placing all station 2 units available from Box 2A, with the exception of Utility 2, remaining on scene.)