**WASHTENAW CENTRAL FIRE DISPATCH**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)**

**SUBJECT: UNIFIED COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: November 15, 2017 (Tentative)**

**APPROVED DATE: November 7, 2017**

**PROCEDURE:**

This procedure defines when and how radio talk groups are assigned to an incident for operations, and defines common radio procedures for regional use by Washtenaw County Fire Departments.

**SECTIONS:**

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2. **Assignment of Talk Groups**
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9. **DEFINITIONS:**

The following terminology is meant to be used by fire departments so that dispatchers understand what is meant when used over the radio on a fire ground operation or other emergency scene.

**All responding companies** – All apparatus/companies/units dispatched and responding to the emergency.

**Balancing a 1st alarm BOX / Fill-out the assignment/Balance or upgrade the Box** – All terms frequently used interchangeably. Balancing a 1st alarm from the initial assignment where a department uses a portion of the full 1st alarm assignment as an initial response until more information on the extent of the emergency (typically a structure fire) is better determined. The initial arriving Officer(s) of the assignment must fill-out, or balance, (request the remaining elements of the1st Alarm assignment not yet sent) before requesting resources greater than the 1st BOX Alarm assignment. This will ensure that all dispatched 1st BOX Alarm resources will respond directly to Level 1 staging positions while operating on the incident’s assigned tactical talk group.

**CAN Reports** – Conditions, Actions, Needs (CAN) reports establishes a format for operating units to provide a consistent way to report back to the Incident Commander (IC) on their progress and needs. CAN keeps things simple and delivers the IC the information needed to keep the strategy and Incident Action Plan (IAP) current. The CAN acronym stands for:

* Conditions
* Actions
* Needs

Note: It is sometimes referred to as an L-CAN report (Location, Conditions, Actions, and Needs)

**Company** – A staffed piece of fire apparatus (Engine, Ladder, Tower, Tanker, etc.), typically housed in a fire station.

**Cover Assignment** – A unit dispatched to an alarm assignment for another unit failing to respond for some unknown reason after being dispatched to an emergency.

**Defensive Working Fire** - A defensive fire situation is where the incident problem has evolved to the point that lives and property are no longer savable, and offensive tactics are no longer effective or safe. The entire defensive strategy is based on protecting firefighters, then property in that order. Firefighter safety is the number one defensive priority.

**Dispatched assignment** – A predetermined response that is dispatched to a reported fire or other emergency, following the department’s Box Alarm Cards for the given type of emergency.

**Elapsed Time Notifications (ETN)** – When an offensive Working Fire or HazMat incident is declared, it will prompt the Dispatcher to begin elapsed time notifications (an IC can also request ETN’s whenever they feel it is necessary). The dispatcher will announce over the tactical frequency and elapsed time notification every ten-minutes (10:00) until the incident is placed under control, or until command, requests to discontinue or restructure the ETN’s. The IC must verbally acknowledge each 10-minute notification by re-announcing the incident’s strategy over the assigned tactical radio frequency until the incident is placed under control, or until command requests to discontinue or restructure the notifications.

**Emergency Traffic-**Emergency traffic must be transmitted by any unit encountering any immediately dangerous situation

**Greater Alarms/Boxes**: Request for a 2nd or Additional Alarms, which are dispatched in accordance with the specific department’s Box Alarm Cards. Typically reflects the resources of a full 1st alarm assignment. However, if enough chief officers or additional command help was sent on the 1st Alarm/Box, the need for the same amount of chief officers will vary from incident to incident and should be specified by IC when calling for additional alarms. This could also be the same case for Ladder/Truck companies.

**Hazard Zone** – The ”Hot Area” or zone at an emergency scene, characterized by the area of greatest hazard for serious death or injury to responders and the area where full and appropriate personal protective gear, including SCBAs must be worn. Entry into the zone is strictly limited, monitored and controlled.

**Incident Action Plans** (IAP) – A recognized plan that details the IC’s operational plan for completing the identified incident tactical priorities.

**Level 1 Staging -** Level 1 staging is in effect for all units dispatched on the first alarm. The first Engine Company, Tower/Truck Company, and Chief/Command Officer will respond directly to the scene and conduct standard company functions as directed by IC. All other units will stop short of the incident scene, announce their direction of travel and that they are Level 1staged. Central Dispatch does **not** acknowledge this over the radio.

**Level 2 Staging** – Level 2 staging is used for resources beyond the initial 1st alarm assignment. This provides the IC an area where later arriving resources can assemble. When command requests extra company and greater alarm units (those beyond the full 1st alarm assignment) they will be dispatched and shall operate on a separate **staging** radio talk group (until formally assigned by command to a S/D) to eliminate non-hazard zone communications from spilling over and interrupting the tactical radio traffic. Units will keep their mobile radios on the primary dispatch talk group and their portable radios on the Staging talk group until assigned to a S/D or returned to Quarters/Station.

The staging talk group will be the same radio talk group rehab operates on, placing all non-active hazard zone responders on the same radio talk group under the control of the command post.

The officer in charge of the first unit to arrive to the Level 2 staging area will contact "Command" and assume staging officer responsibilities until IC can arrange for a suitable replacement.

**Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs)** – Electronic devices utilized to transmit and receive digital information within an emergency response vehicle.

**Move-Up/Fill-in/Back-fill**– A unit or units sent to stand-by at fire stations vacated by units deployed to an active emergency. Used for maintaining system-wide service coverage for a given community.

**Offensive to Defensive Strategic Shift -** When the offensive strategy is chosen on our initial arrival, most of the time, a well-placed initial attack solves the incident’s problem. But there are many times (for many reasons) that our initial, and sometimes re-enforced attack efforts, do not solve the incidents problems and conditions continue to deteriorate to the point where the critical factors indicate switching from an offensive to a defensive strategy.

**Offensive Working Fire** – The basic offensive working fire control strategy is a fast, aggressive well-placed interior (offensive) attack on the fire, typically using a pre-connected 1 ¾”, 2” or a

2 1/2” handline, supported with all necessary resources and actions required to halt fire extension and bring the fire under control. Crews are committed to and working directly in the Hazard Zone.

**Order Model Radio Traffic** –The Order Model for scene management purposes lessens the overall amount of scene radio traffic; enhances the accountability process; and prevents deployment mistakes, directional mistakes and freelancing. It progresses as follows:

1. Sender contacts receiver. "Central (receiver) from Engine 1-4 (sender);
2. Receiver states readiness to receive. "This is Central, go ahead Engine 1-4"
3. Sender transmits message/order. "Engine 1-4 will be Main Street Command."
4. Receiver briefly restate message to confirm understanding the message. "Central copies, staging 2 additional Medic units 1block north of your location..."

The message is complete at this point; there is no need for additional radio traffic about this order (Engine 1-4 does not need to "clear" the message if it is repeated back correctly. It is understood to be correct by both parties at this point.), unless Central misrepresents the request as they are stating it back to Engine 1-4. Should that occur, Engine 1-4 will restate the order again and Central will repeat it back correctly; both parties are now ready for additional radio traffic at this incident as conditions warrant.

**Original Company** – a company assigned as part of the initial dispatch to an emergency incident.

**Personnel Accountability Report (PAR)** – A method of ensure all firefighters on the fire ground are accounted for.

**Priority Traffic Reports** - Once a unit is assigned into the hazard zone; they should **maintain radio silence** and wait to be contacted by the IC. A unit/member with priority traffic is allowed to break into the order model of routine radio traffic to deliver their priority traffic report.

**Routine Radio Reports -** Routine radio transmissions are the most common communications performed on the emergency scene. In most instances, routine radio traffic should be initiated by the IC.

**Sectors, Divisions, Groups “tactical boss” (S/D/Gs) –** S/DGs divide the incident scene, and command responsibility, into smaller more manageable units, allowing IC to maintain a reasonable span of control. This improves accountability and crew safety. Once assigned to an S/D/G, usually out of staging, crews will communicate directly with their tactical boss (not IC) by radio or, when practical, face-to-face. **Building Sides,** the four external sides of a build are labeled as Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta, starting with the front (generally the address side) and proceeding clockwise around the structure. Labeling the four sides does not automatically make any given side a sector; these labels are primarily directional indicators or reference points so all working units communicate and are on the same page directionally regarding assignments and conditions. However, it is frequently common that these designations evolve into formal sectors as the incident progresses and units are assigned to each separate area. **Divisions** are usedin our structural operations to designate interior levels within structures. For example, the first floor is designated as division1, the second floor as division 2...and so on. For below grade situations, the designation is subdivision 2, subdivision 3 and so on. **Note**: Some fire departments use divisions as sectors to divide up the incident scene. In this sense, they are interchangeable depending on local preference.

**Special Call Assignments** – A request for specific resources/apparatus to supplement working units at an incident, yet not requiring a full 2nd or greater alarm assignment, i.e., only one or two Truck/Ladder companies, an extra engine or two, additional chief officers, etc. IC will simply ask that the needed units be dispatched to the Level 2 staging area, with the exception of extra chief officers, who report directly to the scene and face-to-face with command.

**Status Change Report** - a status change is defined as; moving from an assigned geographic work location to a different geographic work location or when exiting the hazard zone.

* All status change reports should include a PAR of the unit transmitting the report.
* A status change report should be transmitted to the IC as soon as possible, but the report should not be structured as priority traffic and the Order Model must be used.
* When an SD has been upgraded with tactical level supervision, companies should report status changes face to face to their assigned SD boss when exiting the hazard zone

**Working Fire** – Indicates a situation that will at least require the commitment of all responding companies. This report advises Central Dispatch that the companies will be engaged in tactical activities and will be held at the scene for an extended period of time. Central will monitor radio traffic on all incidents to anticipate the needs of Command.

1. **ASSIGNMENT OF TALK GROUPS:**

All incidents dispatched by Washtenaw County Central Dispatch (“Central”) will be dispatched over 81 Fire 1 talk group (Fire Dispatch) of the Michigan Public Safety Communication System (MPSCS). This talk group is intended **only** for outbound dispatching radio traffic. As an example, if a fire department returning to the station comes across an incident (i.e. Motor Vehicle Accident) the department will hail the dispatcher on Fire Dispatch about the incident and then switch to their assigned talk group for operations.

Incidents will be assigned a talk group by the dispatcher based on the nature of the incident. This assignment of the talk group will occur at the time the units are dispatched. Incidents will be assigned a talk group based anticipated radio traffic. The two basic type of talk groups:

**1. EMS incidents / Routine incidents / Single station (department) responses:**

Routine or limited radio usage will primarily be assigned 81 Fire 2 (Fire 2) for incidents. When the talk group becomes overloaded, additional incidents will be assigned to 81 Fire 3 (Fire 3). Example: Medicals, MVA’s, fire alarms, single unit station (department) response, vehicle fire with no exposures, wires down and no hazards.

**2. Fire incidents / Large incidents / Multiple department incidents**

For incidents that are expected to have large communication needs, the operations will be assigned an Interop talk group. Example: Multiple companies/stations/departments, structure fires, hazmat spills.

The assignment of a talk group will occur at the time the units are dispatched by Dispatch.

***At no time should an incident be managed on the Fire Dispatch talk group where subsequent dispatches could cover other critical communications.***

Additional **INTEROP** talk groups, at the request of an IC, will be assigned to an incident for on-going support operations, such as Sectors/Divisions/Groups (S/D/G); Staging, Water-supply; Rescue, Triage; Logistics, etc.

**OVERLOAD SITUATIONS -** When the county is inundated with multiple incidents such as a storm, **INTEROP** talk groupscan be used to handle 3-4 incidents (generally the same agency or neighboring agencies) on one talk group. This will promote efficiency for those department(s) affected by the storm and provide command and control for the dispatch center.

**NOTE:** When communications are hampered due to construction and/or design of a building,

* Fire crews should consider using the UM radio system when on a scene.
* Fire crews should consider using the Washtenaw system when on a scene.
* Fire crews should consider using the NPSPAC (Zone F) system when on a scene during system overload.

**EMS/AMBULANCES RESPONSES –** EMS/Ambulance units responding to an assigned event shall utilize the same talk group assigned to the responding fire department to facilitate communications at the incident. Central will identify the responding medical unit designator at the time of dispatch to the responding department, and enter this information into CAD, including the assigned talkgroup identifier for departments utilizing Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs). In the event a responding medical unit is reassigned to an existing incident, HVA Central Fire Dispatch shall advise the responding department/unit via radio communications and CAD/MDT.

1. **DISPATCHING INCIDENTS**

**EMS incidents / Routine incidents / Single Unit-Station-Department** – Incidents such as a medicals, motor vehicle accidents, fire alarms with a single unit (department), station (department) responses, vehicle fire with no exposures, wires down with no hazards are a few examples dispatchers will place on these talk groups. **Departments could be assigned a different talk group than normal when call volume is heavy on one talk group.**

**Fire incidents / Large incidents / Multiple department incident –** Incidents such asmultiple companies or departments and incidents listed below shall utilize Interop talk groups to conduct all radio traffic for the incident. Additional Interop talk groups will be assigned at the request of IC.

* Greater alarms / BOX alarms
* Michigan MABAS mobilizations
* Motor vehicle accidents with 2 or more departments responding
* Potential heavy rescue (rollover, pin-in, vehicle tanker, extrication)
* Structure Fires
* Hazardous Spills
* Inclement weather causing multiple incidents in an area (i.e.; section of I94)
* Any incident with multiple fire departments (2 or more)
* An incident with the potential of a fire (i.e.; Alarms, odor of smoke, light smoke)
* Active violence situation or terrorist situation
* Mass casualty or potential of a mass casualty.

**NOTE:** All structure fires will have two adjacent Interop talk groups assigned. The main Interop and the following talk group Interop channel to be utilized for operations as Water Supply or staging, or until IC advises the Interop is no longer needed.

BOX alarm agencies (or at the direction from the IC) will be dispatched to an incident and assigned an **Interop** talk group prior to response to be used for staging (Level 2) or other support operations such as S/D/G; Water-supply; Rescue, Triage; Logistics, etc.

1. **RESPONSE TO AN INCIDENT**

**Dispatched acknowledgment:** All agencies responding to an incident shall acknowledge Central by MDT if equipped, and/or by radio.

**For Career/Staffed departments**

If Central does not receive an acknowledgment within one-minute and twenty seconds, (1:20) of the 1st tone out, the dispatcher will request acknowledgment by radio on all talk groups (starting with the assigned talk group and Fire Dispatch).

If no response after two-minutes (2:00), Central will dispatch the next closest agency/station if no reply is received. Dispatch should continue to attempt to make contact with the original agency/station. If Central is unable to contact the original station/department within a two-minute (2:00) interval, the station will be placed unavailable and the Battalion Chief/Captain/Chief notified of the circumstances.

**For Paid-On-Call/Non-Staffed departments**

If Central does not receive an acknowledgment within five-minutes, (5:00) of the 1st tone out, the dispatcher will request acknowledgment by radio on all talk groups (starting with the assigned talk group and Fire Dispatch talk group). ***NOTE: this is not an automated CAD function and the dispatcher has to manually keep track of the time expired.*** If no response, Central will then re-tone (2nd tone out of incident) the department.

If no response after two-minutes (2:00), for a total of seven-minutes (7:00), the dispatcher will request acknowledgment by radio on all talk groups (starting with the assigned talk group and Fire Dispatch).

If no response after three more minutes (3:00), for a total of ten-minutes (10:00), the dispatcher will follow the **Delayed Response Policy** and dispatch the next closest agency or HVA will handle.

1. **HAZARD ZONE INCIDENTS**

As a general rule, fire companies will leave their mobile radio (radio mounted in the vehicle) on the main talk group, Fire Dispatch. When dispatched, the assigned companies will place their individual portable radios on the assigned talk group. The first unit arriving on scene will transmit their Initial Radio Report (IRR) to Central **on the assigned talk group**. All additional hazard zone communications for the incident will take place on the assigned talk group.

Some incidents may require the use of multiple radio talk groups in order to support operations outside of the hazard zone. Examples include Level 2 staging, Rehab, Safety, Planning, Logistics, etc. Each additional talk group activated for the incident must have a dedicated person assigned on-scene to manage that talk group at all times.

**The IC is responsible for the operation of one (1) tactical radio talk group while on the scene of an incident.** All other talk groups assigned to the incident when needing to speak with IC shall switch to the talk group the IC has operations on.

1. **ALARM ASSIGNMENTS ON SCENE**

Initial arriving officers of a dispatched assignment must “fill-out, or balance,” the initial 1st BOX Alarm before requesting more resources greater than the full 1st BOX Alarm.

Example. *“Main Street Command to Central, give me the balance of this response to level 1 staging. Also, give me the 2nd BOX alarm for this location; have them level 2 stage two blocks east of the scene; assign them to a separate staging talk group.”*

“Filling out the Box” will ensure that all dispatched 1st BOX Alarm resources will respond directly to Level 1 staging positions on the scene operating on the assigned talk group.

Central will provide continuous updates to responding agencies to assist them in deciding the correct response to an initial assignment. Central does have the ability to fill-out or balance an alarm assignment based on developing information being received by Central. The responding officer will take updated information into consideration and determine the balance of a box and/or request for additional BOX alarms. For example:

* Central is receiving several calls reporting the incident;
* Responding units advise Central of a visible column of smoke in the general vicinity of the address;
* Caller reports seeing visible fire and/or that occupants are likely still in the structure;
* A reliable public safety official is on scene and verifies a working fire; or
* Anytime command orders the assignment filled-out to full first BOX alarm status

**Working Fire Policy**

The term “working fire” indicates a situation that will at least require the commitment of all responding companies. This report advises Central Dispatch that the companies will be engaged in tactical activities and will be held at the scene for an extended period of time. When notified of a Working Fire, Central will check with IC to see if they would like Central to make the standard notifications(the standard should be the following):

1. Upgrade the incident to a full 1st BOX alarm assignment, if not already done
2. Request PD for traffic and crowd control
3. Request gas and electric companies as appropriate
4. Document progress/benchmark reports Conditions, Action, Needs (CAN) reports, Sectors, Divisions, Group (S/D/G) assignments, emergency traffic, and elapsed time notifications.
5. Consider assigning additional dispatchers when needed to monitor/support Staging and other S/D/G’s created by the IC.
6. Dispatch any special agencies or equipment when the need is indicated.
7. Make notifications to pertinent personnel, as directed.
8. Inquire with command the need for a Fire Investigator
9. Dispatcher will notify IC after a BOX alarm has been dispatched to the incident what pieces of apparatus are responding and what talk group has been assigned for staging.

**Elapsed Time Notifications (ETN):** When an offensive working fire incident is declared, it will prompt Central to begin elapsed time notifications (an IC can also request ETN’s whenever they feel it is necessary). The dispatcher will announce over the tactical talk group an elapsed time notification every ten-minutes (10:00) command requests to discontinue or restructure the ETN’s.

The IC **may verbally** acknowledge each 10-minute notification by re-announcing the **incident’s strategy** over the assigned tactical radio talk group until the incident is placed under control, or until command requests to discontinue or restructure the notifications.

It is important that the IC report the incident strategy every ETN over the radio. This is a helpful reminder to determine if they should continue with the current strategy or adjust it based on the situation and reports coming into the IC.

1. **ROUTINE / PRIORITY / EMERGENCY TRAFFIC REPORTING**

It is recommended when communicating on a radio, the Order Model be followed.

Routine radio traffic communicates basic, routine communications that are typically performed on an emergency scene. This includes:

* Initial Radio Reports
* Follow-Up Reports
* Assigning Units
* Command Transfers
* CAN Reporting
* Roof Reporting
* Communicating with Central Dispatch

Routine radio transmissions are the most common communications performed on an emergency scene. In most instances, routine radio traffic should be initiated by the IC. Other routine radio traffic may include:

* Pump operator to company to coordinate critical work and water supply
* Company to company to coordinate critical work
* Company to S/D boss to coordinate critical work and the work/rest cycle
* S/D boss to company to coordinate critical work and the work/rest cycle

It is suggested all communications that details routine work performed in assigned areas should be done face to face whenever possible in the assigned work area and should not be transmitted over the tactical talk group.

**Radio Discipline** - When 3 to 4 units (or more units) are assigned to the incident site, the tactical talk group can quickly become clogged with unnecessary radio traffic. The 2 main reasons for this are:

1. Assigned units are communicating/contacting the IC with non-essential radio traffic.
2. The IC is communicating non-essential radio traffic

The IC maintains strategic control of the incident operation by controlling the tactical radio talk group. When the IC loses control of communications the incident operation is out of control.

The following radio guidelines are to be strictly adhered to when there are units assigned into a hazard zone:

* Know exactly what you’re going to say before keying up the microphone to talk.
* Only communicate information on the tactical talk group that pertains to the completion of the tactical priorities and firefighter safety.
* Always let a communication loop close between two users before clicking the microphone button to talk.
* Always let the IC be the one to contact you (unless you have a status change, Priority or Emergency traffic)
* Always end every CAN report with a NEED assessment (or with “No Needs”).
* Don't get on the radio to give good news (All-Clears, Under Controls, PARs) unless it is requested by the IC, which typically is by way of a CAN Report
* Only break into the Order Model with Priority traffic.

**Status Change Report** - a status change is defined as; moving from an assigned geographic work location to a different geographic work location or when exiting the hazard zone. The following are examples of status changes that should be reported:

* All status change reports should include a PAR of the unit transmitting the report.
* A status change report should be transmitted to the IC as soon as possible, but the report should not be structured as priority traffic and the Order Model must be used.
* When a S/D (Sector/Division boss) has been upgraded with tactical level supervision, companies should report status changes face to face to their assigned S/D boss when exiting the hazard zone

**Priority Traffic Reports -** Once a unit is assigned into the hazard zone, they should **maintain radio silence** and wait to be contacted by the IC. The following items are the instances where a unit can break radio silence. These transmissions should be structured as Priority Traffic reports (***example: “Command from Delta – Priority Traffic***”):

* Unable to gain access to an assigned work area
* Unable to complete an assigned task/tactical objective
* Urgent need to be reinforced/backed-up to complete an assigned task/tactical objective
* Victims encountered
* Roof reports containing significant tactical information
* Working concealed space fires not easily controlled by the locating unit
* Sudden, significant incident events (flashover, backdraft, collapse)
* Anytime the IC directs you to contact him/her immediately after obtaining a specified piece of information

All Priority traffic reports are to be direct to and acknowledged by the IC. ***Having the Central Dispatch center acknowledge priority traffic reports will greatly slow down the IC’s ability to quickly readjust their Incident Action Plan (IAP) based on these reports***. Unit/members with priority traffic are allowed to break into another unit/members radio traffic to deliver their priority traffic report to the IC.

**Emergency Traffic -** Emergency traffic shall be, if possible transmitted by any unit encountering any immediately dangerous situation that will severely affect the safety of:

* The affected company/member
* Other units in their work area, or
* Other operating areas around the incident site

Emergency traffic situations as declared by the IC or on the fire ground (see Emergency Traffic Policy):

* Power lines down
* Crew member disoriented, separated from their crew and/or lost and getting low on air (MAYDAY), see Mayday Policy.
* Gas meters that are off-gassing or directly exposed to fire
* Pressurized gas cylinders that are off-gassing or directly exposed to fire
* Unstable or sagging roof or floor structures where collapse is imminent
* Heavy fire in a truss loft or joist space where collapse is imminent
* Whenever the IC is transitioning from an Offensive strategy to a Defensive strategy

The person who is initiating the emergency traffic report must contact Central directly to initiate the report. Once emergency traffic has been requested, Central will immediately activate the emergency traffic tones. It is very important to get the emergency traffic tones transmitted as soon as possible. The sooner they are activated, the sooner the IC and all other affected units can initiate corrective action(s).

The emergency traffic report will be structured in the following manner:

* The IC or unit initiating emergency traffic will contact Central directly and ask for emergency traffic
* Central will sound the emergency traffic tones and then will direct the requesting unit to go ahead with their emergency traffic report
* The unit who requested emergency traffic will deliver their radio report
* Once the report has been given, central will repeat the emergency traffic report verbatim on the channel it was given on
* If the IC did not initiate the emergency traffic, Central will end their repeat of the report by having the IC acknowledge the emergency traffic

Emergency traffic will receive the highest communication priority from Central Dispatch and the IC. All other units operating at the incident scene **will maintain radio discipline** until the emergency traffic has been cleared by the IC and acknowledged by Central.

Emergency traffic should only be used for true emergencies. The improper or overuse of emergency traffic at emergency scenes tends to diminish the overall effect it has on the operation. Units operating at the incident site must be able to differentiate the use of routine, priority, and emergency traffic radio reporting.

**Example 1** – **An IC** **Driven Emergency Traffic Report**

***IC – “Central from Main St. Command, “emergency traffic”***

EMERGENCY TONE #1 FOR A FEW SECONDS including any talk groups related to the incident.

***Central - “Go ahead with your emergency traffic Command”***

***IC - “Main St. Command to all units, we are going defensive on the main fire occupancy. All units operating in the main fire occupancy exit the structure and report PAR’s upon exiting. Central can you repeat that with an emergency tone?”***

***Central -* “*Central dispatch to all units command is reporting this is a defensive fire on the main occupancy. All units operating exit the structure and report PAR’s upon exiting.”***

In this example, once all operating units in the main fire occupancy have exited and have transmitted PAR’s, the IC should clear the emergency traffic. That report should sound like:

***IC - “Central from Main St. Command -“All units have exited the main fire occupancy with PAR’s. Clear the emergency traffic.”***

***Central – “Copy Command, all units have exited the main fire occupancy with PAR’s. Clearing the emergency traffic.”***

**Example 2** – **An Operating Unit or Member Declaring an Emergency Traffic Situation**

***Engine - “Central from Engine 1-4, “emergency traffic”***

EMERGENCY TONE #1 FOR A FEW SECONDS including any talk groups related to the incident.

***Central - “Engine 1-4, Go ahead with your emergency traffic Engine 1-4”***

***Engine - “Engine 1-4 has just arrived to the Charlie side of the structure and we have high voltage power lines down and arching”***

***Central - “Central is clear, Engine 1-4 has just arrived to the Charlie side of the structure and you have high voltage power lines down and arching. Central to command, are you clear on Engine 1-4s emergency traffic?”***

***IC – Command copies Central, Engine 1-4 on the Charlie side of the structure reports high voltage power lines down and arching. Notify DTE to respond ASAP….”***

1. **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACTIVATIONS**

To provide emergency responders with a method for requesting immediate law enforcement assistance when they are involved in a situation that may present an immediate threat to themselves or others that has the potential for causing great bodily harm or death.

**Code “X” Activations**

1. In the event, a scene becomes unsecured while a crew is on scene and they are not able to verbalize the situation, the use of “X” shall designate a crew as needing immediate assistance, example “Engine 14-1X”
2. The dispatcher will immediately do the following:
	1. Contact the appropriate law enforcement agency and advise them a Distress Code has been received, requesting immediate assistance," giving any details available.
	2. Dispatch a second fire station and the closest ambulance, road supervisor and fire officer priority 3 to the scene and stage.
	3. Reassign all other operating incidents to another available talk group.
	4. Notify the Communications Supervisor/Shift Leader.
	5. The crew will attempt to notify the dispatcher when possible, giving any information pertaining to the incident and the security status.
	6. The dispatcher will relay all information to the responding law enforcement agency(s).
	7. The dispatcher will hold a secure channel until the crew/scene is secure.
	8. Once crew/scene are secure, the dispatcher will broadcast "Unit secure, all units resume normal traffic" And cancel any additional responding units.

**Radio Emergency Alert Activations**

1. In the event of an emergency alert activation from a fire department portable, the EMS D2 dispatcher shall immediately advise the fire dispatcher a panic alarm has been activated.
2. The fire dispatcher will announce on the talk group affected and/or notify IC, “All units hold your traffic, EMERGENCY traffic only.”
3. The dispatchers will immediately silence the alarm, but not clear the alarm on the radio talk group.
4. The dispatcher will check the number displayed on the radio module for the alert.
5. The dispatcher will check the Radio Tracking Form (if necessary) and determine which unit pressed the emergency alert button.
6. The dispatcher will attempt to make contact with the fire department who owns the portable on the talk group.
7. The dispatcher will notify the Communications Supervisor of the Emergency Alert.
8. If contact cannot be made within three (3) attempts, it is to be assumed that the crew is not secure and the following procedure should be followed:
	1. Immediately contact the appropriate police agency or IC and advise them a crew is not secure and request an emergent response.
	2. Start a second fire station and the closest ambulance (if not a fire incident), road supervisor and fire officer priority 3 to the scene and stage.
	3. Reassign all other operating incidents to another available talk group.
	4. Continue to attempt contact.
	5. If contact is made and the crew is not secure (be sure to listen for the “X” code), the dispatcher shall follow the procedures in step #9.
	6. **Once contact is made, and the crew is secure, or the emergency has been mitigated.**
	7. The dispatcher will cancel any additional responders and advise on the air “All units resume normal traffic.”
	8. The dispatcher will advise the crew to hold down the orange emergency button until the radio beeps, then contact dispatch to confirm the alarm has cleared.
	9. The EMS D2 dispatcher will clear the alarm on the Radio Control Module.