

WASHTENAW AREA MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION POLICY

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Signature of Approval:	

WAMAA PRESIDENT – James Rachwal

PURPOSE:

To develop a procedure to address urgent to emergent radio traffic announcements.

DEFINITIONS / COMMON TERMINOLOGY:

Routine Radio Reports – See Unified Communications Procedure

PROCEDURE:

Priority Traffic Reports

- 1) Once a unit is assigned into the hazard zone, they should maintain radio silence and wait to be contacted by the Incident Commander. 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”):
 - a) Unable to gain access to an assigned work area
 - b) Unable to complete an assigned task/tactical objective
 - c) Urgent need to be reinforced/backed-up to complete an assigned task/tactical objective
 - d) Victims encountered
 - e) Roof reports containing significant tactical information
 - f) Working concealed space fires not easily controlled by the locating unit
 - g) Sudden, significant incident events (flashover, backdraft, collapse)

- 2) All Priority traffic reports are to be direct to and acknowledged by the Incident Commander. Having the Central Dispatch center acknowledge priority traffic reports will greatly slow down the Incident Commander’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 Incident Commander.

Emergency Traffic / Emergency Traffic Announcements

- 1) Any unit encountering any immediately dangerous situation that will severely affect the safety of the following, shall contact the Incident Commander immediately:
 - a) The affected company/member
 - b) Other units in their work area, or
 - c) Other operating areas around the incident site

- 2) Emergency traffic situations are declared by the Incident Commander and may include the following situations on the fireground:
 - a) Power lines down.
 - b) Gas distribution meters (Natural Gas, Propane) that are off-gassing or directly exposed to fire.
 - c) Pressurized gas cylinders that are leaking, off-gassing or directly exposed to fire.
 - d) Unstable or sagging roof or floor structures where collapse is imminent
 - e) Heavy fire in a truss loft or joist space where collapse is imminent
 - f) Whenever the Incident Commander is transitioning from an Offensive strategy to a Defensive strategy
 - g) Crew member disoriented, separated from their crew and/or lost and getting low on air (MAYDAY), see Mayday Policy.

- 3) Once emergency traffic has been requested, Central Dispatch will immediately activate the alert tone. It is very important to get the alert tone transmitted as soon as possible. The sooner they are activated, the sooner the Incident Commander and all other affected units can initiate corrective action(s).

- 4) The emergency traffic report will be structured in the following manner:
 - a) The Incident Commander will contact Central Dispatch and ask for emergency traffic.
 - b) Central Dispatch will sound the alert tone. The Incident Commander will then proceed with the emergency traffic report.

- 5) Emergency traffic will receive the highest communication level from Central Dispatch and the Incident Commander. All other units operating at the incident scene will maintain radio discipline until the emergency traffic has been cleared by the Incident Commander and acknowledged by Central Dispatch.

- 6) 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 OF EMERGENCY TRAFFIC

Incident Commander – *“Central Dispatch from Main St. Command, “emergency traffic”*

ALERT TONE FOR 3 SECONDS

(Including any talk groups related to the incident)

Incident Commander - *“All units from Main St. Command, 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 Dispatch would then repeat the following on all talkgroups being utilized on the incident.

ALERT TONE FOR 3 SECONDS

(Including any talk groups related to the incident)

Central Dispatch - *“All units from Central Dispatch, per Main St. Command, 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.*