



**VOLUSIA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
FIRE/EMS COMMUNICATIONS CENTER**

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

POLICY# C-01.01	SUBJECT: RADIO INFORMATION
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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide employees of Central Fire and field personnel with necessary information about the Volusia County 800 MHz Trunked Radio System, and guideline to guide employees in the day to day routine use of the radio system.

2 VOLUSIA COUNTY 800 MHZ TRUNKED RADIO SYSTEM

Central Fire is one of numerous agencies utilizing the Volusia County 800 MHz trunked system. This system uses 30 frequencies in the 800 MHz range. Each agency is arranged in various subsystems on two (2) different primary systems.

2-1 TALK GROUPS

2-1.01 Primary Fire Service Talk Groups.

All Fire Departments with whom Sheriff's Office Fire/EMS Communications Center contracts for dispatch services shall utilize the following Talk Groups.

A. FIRE-1 (Eastside) & FIRE-2 (Westside)

The primary dispatch for dispatching of all incidents will be conducted on FIRE-1 & FIRE-2.

B. TAC-3 (Eastside) & TAC-16 (Westside)

When units leave their quarters for non-emergency functions such as fueling, district survey, inspections, pre-fire planning etc., TAC-3 & TAC-16 will be used to advise dispatch of unit's status.

When units leave their assigned station and go in service on TAC-3 or TAC-16 they must also state one of the following reasons:

Airport Service Call	Company Inspection
Fire Prevention Detail	Fire Pre-Planning
General Detail	Hydrant Detail
Move-Up/Zone Coverage	Prescribed Fire/Fuel Management
Smoke Detector Detail	Special Detail
Training Detail	Volunteer Recruitment

In addition to the reason, the unit must advise the specific location, either address, intersections, or building name they are enroute to for all the above except General Detail.

The following talk groups will be assigned by Central Fire as alarms are dispatched and are used for all alarm related traffic to include response and while on-scene.

If command is established NO other alarms are to be assigned to that specific Tac Channel and any other units already operating on the Tac Channel should be moved to an open channel for the duration of the alarm. This will also be at the determination of the Primary Dispatcher/Shift Supervisor.

Tac designation subject to change based on call volume and significance.

C. TAC-4 to TAC 7

TAC Channels used for single unit responses in the Eastern Region.

D. TAC-8 to TAC-15 (Except TAC-9)

TAC Channels used for multiple unit responses in the Eastern Region.

E. TAC-9

Primary talk group for units in District 16, and incident involving BA18/B18. Channel is hard patched with Flagler County TAC-9.

F. TAC-17 to TAC-20

TAC Channel used for single unit response in the Western Region.

G. TAC-21 to TAC-27

TAC Channel used for multiple unit responses in the Western Region.

H. TAC-28

Designated talk group for units in District 37, Channel is hard patched with Seminole County's 8TAC93 channel for communications.

Any units responding to this area should switch directly to 8TAC93 only when in they have reached District 37 for communications with Central Fire.

I. DBA TAC1

Used by ARFF units calling in still alarms, and working airport incidents.

This includes medical calls that are in the airport terminal. Talk group would be patched with all agencies outside jurisdiction.

J. EOC Channel

Used with communications with Brevard County Fire/Rescue. To be used in the I-95/county Line area and the US Hwy 1/county Line area ONLY.

K. FCOM 1/FCOM 2

These are talk around channels for field units and are not monitored by the communications center.

VOLUSIA COUNTY MUTUAL AID TALK GROUPS

A. VC WIDE1 Through VC WIDE15

VC WIDE1

is used as a "Hailing Channel".

VC WIDE 2 – VC WIDE 9

Reserved for tactical assignment of large complex incidents

VC WIDE 10

Reserved as a "Command"

VC WIDE 11

Reserved for FIRE usage

VC WIDE 12

Reserved for EMS usage

VC WID E13

Reserved for LEO usage

VC WIDE 14

Reserved for SUPPORT usage

VC WIDE 15

Reserved for HAZMAT usage

B. VC-DC

Used for all Emergency Management broadcasts/notifications county wide.

Example: Severe Weather / Tornado Warnings and Watches

A talk group used by designated officials within the various governmental agencies to coordinate county wide response to large scale disasters.

C. WHITE CHANNELS

This talk group is used by fire agencies for State-Wide Mutual Aid purposes. The State of Florida Forestry Service governs this channel. The white channel operates off the VHF radio system and can be patched to the 800 MHz system. This channel does not require a repeater activation.

2-2 SYSTEM/SUB-SYSTEMS

2-2.01 The 800 MHz radio system is divided into two (2) systems, System A and System B. This provides the user with a back-up system in case of primary system failure. System A is to be used primarily on the westside of the county and System B is to be used primarily on the eastside of the county.

2-2.02 Each agency is assigned one of the two systems as its primary. The opposite system then would be the agencies "Back-up System" for mobile coverage.

- A. Operate on Secondary system when Primary system is not functioning properly.
- B. Acknowledged all changes on the new system to ensure operation.
- C. When directed by Communications to select a new system, units will remain on that system until advised otherwise by Communications.

3-1 MUTUAL AID REBANDED

3-1.01 The National Conventional channels provide radio communications with other fire departments outside Volusia County that also operate on 800 MHz Systems. The Mutual Aid Rebanded appear in the M/A RB System as follows:

A. 8CALL90

This talk group is designed to provide a common hailing channel anywhere in the United States. The 8CALL90 channel can be used to contact any other fire department outside our county that is using a 800 MHz radio system.

B. 8TAC91 thru 8TAC94

The repeater transmitter sites for each of these are as follows:

NE – EVAC	SE – Edgewater
NW – Pierson	SW – Orange City

C. MA FLA

This talk group is designed to provide a common hailing channel anywhere in Florida for agencies utilizing 800 MHz radio system. This talk group could be used to contact any other fire department outside our county that is using an 800 MHz radio system.

4-1 UNIT/APPARATUS DESIGNATIONS

4-1.01 Unit Identification

Unit designations are based upon their function/purpose. The unit number corresponds with the number of the station to which the unit is assigned. All units assigned to a particular station are given that station's number. To identify a unit, the unit takes on the station number preceded by the unit's nomenclature.

EXAMPLE:

Tender 44 – This unit's function is to transport water and it is assigned to Station 44.

4-1.02 When a station is assigned multiple units of the same type, the first unit will assume the station number, the second unit will use the station number preceded by a two (2), the third unit's number will be preceded by a three (3), and so on.

EXAMPLE:

Engine 281 (E281), or Tender 211 (T211)

4-1.03 When contacting a unit's supervisor, use the unit's radio I.D.

EXAMPLE:

Battalion 10 wishes to contact the officer on Engine 11

Unit: "Battalion 10 to Engine 11"

4-1.02 Substitution of Unit

When a unit is taken "Out of Service", for whatever reason, and is replaced by a substitute unit, the substitute unit will assume the I.D. of the unit it is replacing. This will require that the substitute unit be placed out of service for Central Fire reference.

EXAMPLE:

E81 is placed "Out of Service" for maintenance. E281 will substitute as E81 and called E81. When the equipment change out is completed. E281 will be placed in "Out of Service" status and E81 will be back in service.

EXCEPTION:

In the case of a Non-Aerial equipped pumper (i.e. E281) substitutes for L81, the substitute unit will be designated E281.

4-2 STATION ALERTING SYSTEM

The policy regarding the monitoring of FIRE-1 and FIRE-2 in the fire station during daylight hours will be at the discretion of each individual agency.

4-3 STATUS OF UNITS

4-3.01 It is absolutely necessary for all units to identify who is transmitting a message and who the message is intended for. Central Fire should acknowledge field unit transmissions with the unit's complete designation.

EXAMPLE: (INCORRECT)

Unit: 32 to Dispatch

Disp: 32

(CORRECT)

Unit: E32 Dispatch

Disp: E32

4-3.02 Central Fire must maintain the status of field units at all times. Therefore, ANY changes in status must be reported as they occur.

4-3.03 The term "In Service" not accompanied by a destination shall indicate that a unit is out of quarters in its first due district.

4-3.04 When a unit responds "In Service" from its quarters and is going to a location out of its first due district, it will state its destination as it reports "In Service". This includes when leaving the scene of an alarm.

4-3.05 Units do not give their location each time it changes as long as the unit remains within its first due district unless the stop will change the unit's status for response, or the crew will be utilizing portable radios to maintain contact with Central Fire.

4-3.06 Units will report when they are back in their first due district any time they return from out of district.

4-3.07 All Fire/Rescue units will advise Central Fire any time they arrive at or leave a station.

4-3.08 The Battalion need only report to Central Fire when:

- A. In Service
- B. In quarters – when he/she will not be monitoring the radio, otherwise the Battalion Officer need not call in quarters.
- C. Out of Service
- D. Returned to Service

The Battalion will not be tracked each time there is a location change as he is readily available by radio at all times.

4-3.09 “Out of Service” status will be at the discretion of the company officer/unit. When making an out of service report, the company officer should include a brief explanation of the reason for out of service status. It is not necessary to notify Central Fire of actions required to return to service, only the approximate duration of out of service status. Central Fire will be notified when the situation is resolved.

4-3.10 Field units calling Central Fire by radio will give their unit designation and number along with message

EXAMPLE: Unit: Quint 91 – In Service, Inspections

4-3.11 Field unit requesting location of status of other field units will call that unit specifically and not involve Central Fire. These calls should take place on the specific department “Talk Around” or “FCOM” channel. Central Fire does not monitor each agency talk around channel.

4-3.12 Portable radios should be carried by **Firefighter Crew (s)** at all times when out of quarters.

4-4 ADVISORY BROADCASTS

4-4.01 Advisory broadcasts are made whenever information is received which may affect emergency responses, routine detail or other Fire/Rescue Activities.

4-4.02 This information is generally of two (2) types:

- A. General Announcement
 1. Apparatus out of service/Returned to service
 2. Other

4-4.03 When information which warrants an advisory broadcast is received, the following procedures will be used:

A. General Announcement, DOF Fire Weather Forecast

1. Activate "Alert" tone on FIRE-1 & FIRE-2
2. Announce:
"Attention all listening units and station, (Give info)"
3. Give current time.

4-4.04 Advisory broadcasts will be given as follows:

A. General Announcements

1. Units/Apparatus out of service will be broadcast as follows:
(On TAC 3 or TAC 16) 2 sec alert tone, "Dispatch all listening units, E23 "Out of service" mechanical approx 2hrs, Communications clear, 15:45hrs"

If the appropriate Battalion/Command Officer does not immediately acknowledge announcement, an alpha page must be sent.

1. Between 0700 and 2100, broadcast as received.
2. Between 2100 and 0700, notify first due station by telephone. Notify all stations of any accumulated announcement via a general announcement broadcast at 0700.

4-5 COMPLAINTS/PROBLEMS

4-5.01 All inquires and complaints regarding communications procedures or problems are to be handled in an expeditious manner, consistent with interdepartmental procedures.

4-5.02 Complaints/Problems Needing Immediate Attention.

- A. All complaints/problems needing immediate attention will be handled by the Battalion/Commander Officer while on duty. In the absence of the Battalion/Commander Officer, the on-duty Communications Supervisor will handle such complaints/problems.
- B. Monday through Friday, 0800 to 1700 contact the Central Fire Communications Shift Supervisor or Assistant Commander.
- C. Submit to the Fire/Rescue Agency Communications Liaison a brief summary identifying the complaint and corrective action to be taken, if any. This report can be accomplished by sending an email summary to VCSOCOM@VCSO.US. The report will then be forwarded to the Central Fire Communications Assistant Commander for investigation.
- D. Fire/Rescue Agency Liaisons are not to discuss complaints directly with the Telecommunicators without prior approval from the Central Fire Communications Supervisor. Telecommunicators should not be discussing complaints directly with field personnel, as this should follow the above procedure.