



Newport News Police Department - Operational Manual

OPS-510 - RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES

Amends/Supersedes: OPS-510 (06/05/2017)

Date of Issue: 09/25/2019

I. PROCEDURE

A. Radio Demeanor

1. Field personnel shall monitor the police radio. Every on-duty officer will have a portable radio with him during the course of his tour of duty. [81.2.2; 81.2.5]

NOTE: As referenced in this policy, the term “officer” shall include any police personnel operating a radio, unless otherwise denoted.

2. Police radio use shall be limited to official business. [81.2.4(a)]

3. A calm, business-like manner of voice will be used.

4. Personnel will check to see if the radio talk group is clear before transmitting, allowing at least one second after the “push to talk” button on the microphone is pressed before voice transmission. Personnel will ensure their message transmission is acknowledged.

5. Radio transmissions are to be brief and in plain English, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11. Supervisors will be responsible for encouraging and enforcing strict radio discipline.

12. Personnel will use their chain of command when addressing problems regarding radio usage/demeanor.

1. South Precinct Talk Groups

- a. SOUTH1 - Primary radio talk group reserved for use by South Precinct personnel. SOUTH1 is used for emergency, priority and routine radio traffic and dispatching calls for service.
- b. SOUTH2 - Used to communicate with the Police HQ Records Section (Unit 91) for warrant checks, telephone calls, information requests, etc.
- c. SOUTH3 - Used by personnel assigned to South Precinct who need to converse other than on their primary and secondary talk groups.

2. Central Precinct Talk Groups

- a. CNTRL1 - Primary radio talk group reserved for use by Central Precinct personnel. CNTRL1 is used for emergency, priority and routine radio traffic and dispatching calls for service.
- b. CNTRL2 - Used to communicate with the Central Precinct Information Desk (Unit 92) for telephone calls and general information requests, etc.
- c. CNTRL3 - Used by personnel assigned to the Central Precinct who need to converse other than on their primary and secondary talk groups.

3. North Precinct Talk Groups

- a. NORTH1 - Primary radio talk group reserved for use by North Precinct personnel. NORTH1 is used for emergency, priority and routine radio traffic and dispatching calls for service.
- b. NORTH2 - Used to communicate with the North Precinct Information Desk (Unit 93) for telephone calls and general information requests, etc.
- c. NORTH3 - Used by personnel assigned to the North Precinct who need to converse other than on their primary and secondary talk groups.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

5. When shift personnel switch from primary to a secondary channel, one of two available methods may be used:

- a. Notify their primary dispatcher of the new talk group and the purpose of the change (e.g., “Unit 2241 switching to Central 2 for a warrant check”). When returning to the primary talk group, notify the dispatcher of the return to primary (e.g., “Unit 2241, back on Central 1”).

- b. If both portable and the car radios are available, the officer may switch to another talk group on one radio, and continue to monitor the main radio channel on the other.

C. Priority of Calls [81.2.4(e)]

Calls for service will be dispatched according to an assigned priority (1, 2, 3, or 4) as outlined in COM-304.

D. Alert Tone

- 1. *Alert Tone* - An audible high frequency sound activated from the radio console in Communications. When activated, the tone over-rides other transmissions.
- 2. Alert tones are given at the discretion of the dispatcher to indicate an emergency situation or important information.
- 3. When an alert tone is given, all units will cease transmitting and listen for the information that follows.

E. Response to Dispatches

- 1. Officers shall respond to all assigned dispatches Officers may not cancel or reassign a call without a supervisor's permission. [81.2.4(a)]
 - a. On calls of a serious nature, if another officer is distinctly closer than the officer assigned, the closer officer will advise Communications of their location.
 - b. Communications may add the closer officer to the response, or have the closer officer replace one of the initially responding officers.
 - c. Officers should coordinate their response to arrive together if practical.
- 2. Communications will dispatch units to the emergency.
- 3. Officers arriving to an emergency scene will advise Communications. If the location is different from the original dispatched location, the first officer on the scene will advise Communications. The first officer to arrive is considered the "primary officer."
- 4. Communications will be advised when an emergency situation is under control so that additional officer response may be canceled.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

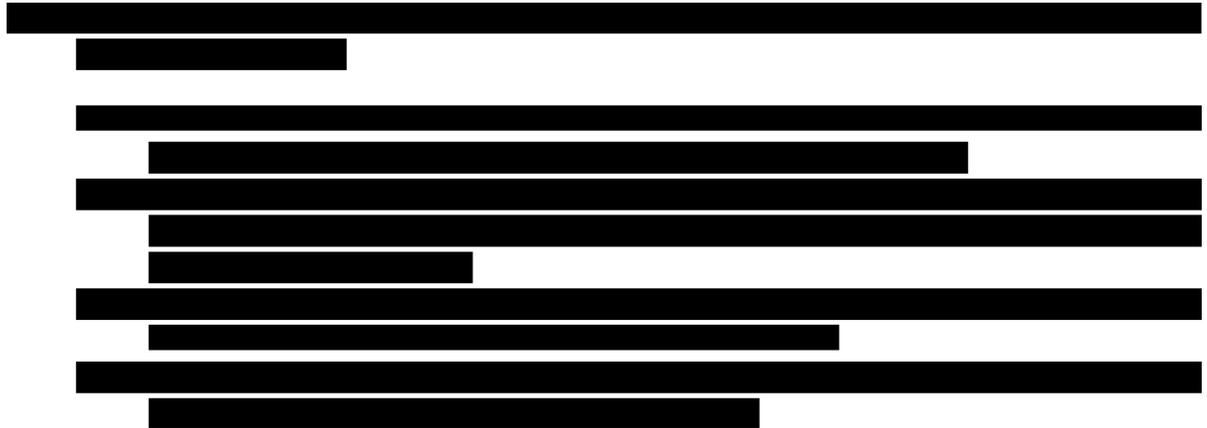
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3. The district Supervisor will be notified if an officer who is not marked out of service fails to respond to Communications.



G. Officer Initiated Events

[81.2.4(a,b)]

In officer-initiated investigations/situations:

1. The officer shall advise Communications of the location and nature of the event.
 - a. The location must be provided in one of the following formats:
 - 1) Nearest numerical street address, if known;
 - 2) Block number; or
 - 3) Street intersection.
2. Checks of suspicious persons (“SUSP”) and vehicles (“SUSV”)
 - a. Officers will advise Communications of the unit number and situation. Upon acknowledgment by Communications, advise officer location and description of the person/vehicle.
 - b. An additional back-up unit will be sent unless the initiating officer advises no back-up is needed.
3. Traffic Stops (“STOP”)
 - a. Officers shall advise Communications when initiating a traffic stop (e.g.; “Unit 2241 - Traffic Stop”) and wait for dispatch’s acknowledgment, after which the officer gives information in the following order:
 - 1) Location of the stop.
 - 2) The make and color of the vehicle.
 - 3) The license plate number of the vehicle.

EXAMPLE: *“J Clyde Morris and Warwick on a green Ford Mustang, Virginia registration: ABC-123.”*

NOTE: If the vehicle has no tag number, the officer shall give a complete description of the vehicle.

- b. The officer should give Communications the vehicle information before the vehicle has stopped or before approaching the occupants.
- c. If it pertains to anything other than a traffic violation, the officer should give the reason for the stop and Communications will dispatch any necessary back-up unit.

4. Foot Pursuits (“PURF”)

- a. Officers will give Communications as much information as possible, (i.e., location, direction of travel, reason for chase, and description).
- b. Communications will clear the talk group of all non-emergency traffic and dispatch additional back-up officers, as needed.
- c. Upon ending a foot pursuit the initiating officer advises Communications as soon as possible so radio traffic may resume.

5. Vehicle Pursuits (“PURV”) [41.2.2(b,e,f)]

- a. Officers will advise their unit number, stating, “Vehicle Pursuit”. Upon Communications acknowledgment, officers will provide location, complete vehicle and occupant(s) description, nature of pursuit reason, the direction of travel and pursuit speed.
- b. Communications will clear all radio traffic from the talk group.
- c. The vehicular pursuit policy will be implemented (OPS-120, Vehicular Pursuits).

6. Special Assignment/Directed Patrol

- a. When on a special assignment or directed patrol, officers shall mark out of service, even if it will only last a few minutes.
- b. Officers will advise Communications if they will be available for emergency situation dispatch while on the special assignment/directed patrol.
- c. It shall be the supervisor’s responsibility to monitor their officers to ensure that they are marking out as policy directs.

H. Information Requests from the Communications Division (NCIC, VCIN, DMV)

- 1. Most computer inquiries and information requests routed through Communications will be given the following priority: [81.2.4(a)]
 - a. Radio initiated NCIC/VCIN wanted checks for officers;
 - b. DMV checks for personnel in the field (via MDC or radio); and
 - c. Non-emergency or low priority requests.

NOTE: Officers will request local wanted checks from Records Section.

- 2. Phone requests for NCIC, VCIN, DMV and local warrant checks shall be to the Records Section if possible.

3. Personnel marked out at any police facility will use Citrix or precinct support personnel to obtain City Directory, rosters and similar information during normal working hours. After hours, personnel will utilize Citrix or contact Records Section.



- b. After securing the area, officers will advise Communications to go ahead with the wanted/hit information.
 - c. Communications will provide the officer with the full VCIN, NCIC or local “want or hit.”
5. Officers should limit using Communications to make telephone calls. Direct these requests to the appropriate Precinct , or to the Records Section  after hours.
- I. Telephoning the Communications Division - Non-essential traffic should use the non-emergency phone line.

NOTE: Use of the 911 phone line non-emergencies is prohibited by law.

J. Personnel Messages

1. All messages regarding police business or emergencies will be relayed as soon as possible.
2. All other messages will be directed to the officer’s duty assignment front desk during normal business hours.

K. Mutual Aid (Adjoining Jurisdictions)

[2.1.3(c,f)]

1. During Mutual Aid requests or other extraordinary circumstances or events, Communications has the ability to link any of the Department’s 800 MHz radios, giving direct radio contact with Hampton Roads (HR) law enforcement agencies (Addendum A).
2. Fixed gateways talk groups in different zones on the officer radios (permanent radio patches) are maintained with the following law enforcement agencies:
 - a. Hampton Police Department;
 - b. York/James City County (Williamsburg and Poquoson included) PD;
 - c. Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport PD and FD;
 - d. CNU PD;
 - e. Jefferson Lab PD and FD;
 - f. ORION radio system – designed for Mutual Aid and events when needed with Hampton Roads localities;
 - g. Coordinated “SWAT” events with all Peninsula localities including Gloucester;
 - h. NN Public Works Security;
 - i. NN Sheriff Dept.;
 - j. NN Schools Bus Transportation for approved coordinated evacuation assistance;
 - k. Newport News Shipbuilding, Shipyard Security.

3. Communications is also able to contact other jurisdictions and agencies using:
 - a. Federal Interoperability Channel (Fed I/O Channel);
 - b. ORION talk groups.
4. 800 MHz radios are capable of making direct radio contact with the following HR law enforcement agencies when within range of that department's repeater and on the corresponding talk group in their respective zone. Encryption is added on select channels (Addendum A – Instructional Procedure):
5. Requests for mutual aid by other law enforcement or public safety agencies will be handled in accordance with OPS-610 (Requests for Mutual Aid and Assistance).

L. Radio Failure Procedures

1. Failsoft

If the 800 MHz radio system fails, the entire radio system should automatically go to a back-up system known as "FAILSOFT." (See "Radio Failure" in Addendum A)

2. NPSAC Channels

In the event the FAILSOFT mode fails, or if an officer is outside the Newport News coverage area, the radio will display the message "OUT OF RANGE." All 800 MHz talk groups will be unavailable except for the National Public Safety Advisory Committee (or NPSAC) channels on Zone B. (See "Radio Failure" in Addendum A)

3. [REDACTED] is reserved for Communications to give periodic announcements of channel assignments or other necessary instructions after radio failure. After radio communication with officers has been established, groups of units may be reassigned to this channel if a tactical channel is overcrowded or experiencing a major incident.
 - a. [REDACTED] has designated channels for PD and FD.
 - b. [REDACTED] channels can be utilized for other operations when there is a radio system failure.
4. If utilizing SIMPLX talk group, the range will vary with the radio used and conditions.
 - a. 1/4 to 1/2 mile with portable radios;
 - b. 1 to 2 miles with mobile radios;
 - c. In the event of radio loss, officers will return to their precinct or office to await supervisor instruction.
5. If "DISCONNECTED" displays in the MDC's status bar, an officer should:
 - a. Attempt reconnection by moving 100 feet or more to another location, and/or
 - b. Rely on the vehicle and/or portable radio for communication.

Steven R. Drew
Chief of Police