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GENERAL ORDER 81
COMMUNICATIONS
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 1, 2019
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PURPOSE: The purpose of this chapter is to describe the basic function of the communications system to

satisfy the immediate information needs of the law enforcement agency in the course of its normal daily activities and during emergencies.

81.1 ADMINISTRATION

81.1.1 N/A

81.1.2 AGENCY ADOPTS F. C. C. PROCEDURES

All radio operations will be conducted in accordance with **Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements. Licensing** will be obtained and renewed as required by the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) Operations Supervisor. All 911 emergency calls for service will take priority over non-emergency and administrative line calls for service.

81.2 OPERATIONS

81.2.1 24-HOUR EMERGENCY PHONE SERVICE (LE1)

The agency may be contacted **toll-free** on a **twenty-four hour basis** for emergency calls by dialing 9-1-1. Equipment utilized to answer emergency calls is capable of receiving calls from the hearing impaired community using an **integrated telecommunication device for the deaf (TDD)**.

81.2.2 24-HOUR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS (LE1)

The agency has 24-hour two-way radio capability providing continuous communication between the communications center and officers on duty.

- Every officer is assigned a portable radio.
- Every patrol vehicle has a mobile radio.
- Each portable radio transmits a push-to-talk identification and has an emergency button.
- Normally, each patrol vehicle has a mobile data computer capable of transmitting calls for service data.

81.2.3 RECORDING SERVICE INFORMATION (LE1)

Relevant information of all requests for criminal and non-criminal service or self initiated activity **shall be recorded in the computer-aided dispatch system** that will include the following elements:

- A. A **control number** affixed by the computer-aided dispatch system as the basis for filing and retrieving subsequent reports of the incident
- B. The **date and time of request**
- C. If possible, the **name and address of the complainant**
- D. The **type of incident**
- E. **Location** of the incident
- F. Identification of **officer(s) assigned** as primary and back up

G. **Time of dispatch**

H. **Time of officer arrival**

I. **Time of officer return** to service

J. **Disposition or status** of the reported incident

81.2.4 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH OFFICERS (LE1)

Operational efficiency and officer safety is enhanced when the PSCC, supervisors, and fellow officers know the status of officers, their locations, the nature of incidents, and developments in the incident or investigation.

A. Officers will communicate with the PSCC and this communication will be logged in the agency's computer-aided dispatch system during the **following circumstances**:

- upon arrival at the scene of an incident
- when clearing the scene
- when making vehicle or pedestrian stops
- reporting incidents
- when requesting to be taken out of service for any reason
- any other times that are appropriate

B. Communications personnel shall record the **status of officers** when out of service by logging the information in the computer-aided dispatch system.

C. Radio communication for employees of the Division of Police as well as agencies that maintain primary channel capability will follow **work unit designations established by the PSCC** at the recommendation of the Division.

– Radio designation is **based on the work assignment**. Individual officer numbers may be used for special details.

– Either plain or 10-code language is acceptable in our radio transmissions; however, 10-code usage is suggested as it allows for brevity of radio traffic.

D. During **communication with other agencies**, transmissions should be in clear, concise language.

E. The **computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system**, that is the central reference for all dispatchers, will be programmed to recommend an **appropriate amount of officers** to respond to an incident based on the call type.

– Situations requiring a **multiple officer response** include:

- felonies
- violent misdemeanors

- crimes in progress
- fleeing suspects
- weapons involved
- officer in trouble

F. A **patrol supervisor** should be dispatched to oversee operations for:

- felonies
- crimes in progress
- crimes that involve injuries
- vehicle accidents with serious injuries/death
- any time the supervisor's presence is requested by the complainant or an on-scene officer
- any incident involving a response to resistance

G. Upon **receipt of an activated Officer Down alert** from an officer's portable radio, the dispatcher will immediately attempt to check on the officer. If there is no response from the officer the dispatcher will immediately broadcast an officer in trouble (10-3) notification over channel 1, dispatch units to the last known location of the officer and notify the patrol supervisor. Once there is adequate assistance on scene and/or the officer in trouble call is cancelled, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast a cancellation message.

Upon **receipt of verbal request for emergency assistance from an officer**, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast an officer in trouble (10-3) notification over the air, dispatch units to the last known location of the officer and notify the patrol supervisor. Once there is adequate assistance on scene and/or the officer in trouble call is cancelled, the dispatcher will immediately broadcast a cancellation message.

81.2.5 ACCESS TO DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCES (LE1)

Communications personnel will have **immediate access to departmental resources**.

- A. The **supervisor** of the on duty patrol shift will be available via radio or telephone at all times.
- B. The computer-aided dispatch system will include a **duty roster** of all agency personnel.
- C. **Telephone numbers** for all agency members are maintained on a rolodex in the PSCC and the department's intranet.
- D. **Visual maps detailing the agency's service area** are available in CAD and AVL mapping.
- E. **Officer status indicators** are displayed on the CAD status monitor.
- F. The Division of Police Emergency Operations Plan outlines **procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services** to the agency and is available on the department's intranet and in hard copy form in the communications center.
 - Telephone numbers for other emergency service agencies are maintained in the computer-aided dispatch system as well as the speed dial listing on the communications center telephone system.

G. The **CAD system** is programmed to recommend an **appropriate** response to an incident based on the call type. Additionally, PSCC personnel have immediate access to **Emergency Operations Plans** to assist in dispatching for critical incidents and/or tactical operations (GO 46 and Emergency Operations Plan).

81.2.6 VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE INFORMATION (LE1)

A. Communications personnel will use information provided by the caller and use the guidelines in General Orders 55.2.1 to judge the characteristics of the call to **determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required**.

– If the communications technician has any doubt about the seriousness of the situation, information should be referred to the on duty **supervisor** as soon as possible.

B. Communications personnel, in responding to victim/witness calls for information or services, will inform the victim/witness of the **agency's response**.

– Communications personnel will notify the victim/witness if an officer will be responding to their call.

– **If the call is referred to another agency**, the caller will be notified of the referral.

C. **Referral information for victim/witness assistance** is available 24 hours daily from communications personnel by calling the communications center number. The services available, in addition to 24 hour emergency police response include those offered in this agency's jurisdiction by other organizations, which include following; 24 hour emergency fire response; 24 hour Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and/or phone numbers for local medical facilities; counseling to include Center for Individual & Family Services (i.e. HELP Line), Rape Crisis Line, Ohio Health Hospital and additional references in the FIRST CALL RICHLAND (211) guide.

81.2.7 RECORDING RADIO AND PHONE CONVERSATIONS (LE1)

Radio communications and all **emergency telephone lines** used by the Division of Police Communications Center are **continuously recorded** on a multiple-track digital audio logging recorder.

Instant recall recorders are provided at each dispatch position to allow **immediate playback** of radio and telephone conversations without interrupting the recording of other calls or radio transmissions.

A. All recordings are retained for a minimum of **90 days**.

B. Only a communications supervisor, can **access recording media** that are secured in a cabinet in the equipment room, which is also a secured area, in the communications center.

– The digital audio logging recorder utilizes a password protection system to restrict access to only authorized personnel.

C. Agency personnel who wish to **review or obtain copies** of audio recordings shall make their request in writing to a communications supervisor via a Request for Logging Data Recorder Transmission and include the reason for the request.

81.2.8 ACCESS TO INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The communications center has access to **state and federal criminal justice information** through the Ohio Law Enforcement Automated Data System (**LEADS**) and the National Crime Information Center (**NCIC**).

81.2.9 ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The **radio** system shall serve as the **primary means of communication** between on-duty units.

- Patrol supervisors will be provided cellular phones while on duty for official business only.
- Officers may utilize cellular capability to communicate with the PSCC, supervisors and each other, as the need arises.
- Mobile data computers may be used for unit to unit and unit to communications center text messaging. Use of mobile data computers is governed by General Order 41.3.7.

81.2.10 ACCEPTING & DELIVERING EMERGENCY MESSAGES (LE1)

Messages of an emergency nature, such as dealing with the health and welfare of persons and/or their property, death notifications, and messages dealing with attempts to locate individuals, will be logged in the computer-aided dispatch system by communications personnel and relayed as soon as possible to on-duty officers/supervisors in accordance with General Orders 41.2.5. and 55.2.6

81.2.11 ROUTING MISDIRECTED EMERGENCY CALLS (LE1)

Misdirected or overload calls received on the enhanced 9-1-1 system will be transferred to the proper public safety agency without delay.

Communications personnel will offer to relay information for **other misdirected emergency calls** for service to the proper agency or may transfer the call to the proper agency.

81.2.12 MONITORING AND RESPONDING TO SECURITY ALARMS

The PSCC will accept telephone calls for service from **alarm monitoring companies** that monitor residential and commercial robbery and burglary alarms.

Division Officers respond to and document the outcome of alarm responses in accordance with the city ordinance for false alarms.

After responding to an alarm, the primary officer on the call shall leave an ALARM OFF NOTICE at a conspicuous place at the residence if there is no one present. If there are residents/employees present, the officer should personally present the ALARM OFF NOTICE and, if necessary, explain our procedure. All false alarms shall receive an ALARM OFF NOTICE.

When an officer clears an alarm call, the officer should give the appropriate clearance code and should state the apparent reason for the alarm, e.g. weather related, neighbor feeding a pet, phone lines out of service nearby the residence, etc. The only non-chargeable false alarms are those which are weather related, due to a power surge or outage, involve the maintenance of telephone lines or other service lines in the area, or an actual attempt. The officer should provide information such as names, license numbers, or other details (which will be used during the alarm billing process). Officers are encouraged to be as thorough as possible in obtaining information which will be recorded in the CAD Call.

81.2.13 EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCHING (LE1)

PSCC personnel **are trained** in Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) in order to provide emergency basic life support instructions per Priority Dispatch Systems Protocols. For further, reference EMD Manual.

81.3 FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

81.3.1 SECURITY MEASURES (LE1)

The communication center and remote communications sites are secured at all times.

A. **Access to the communication center** will be restricted to agency employees, authorized repair technicians, and other persons accompanied by a member of the agency.

- Doors to the communications center remain locked at all times and can be accessed only by authorized personnel.

B. Communications **equipment** is located in the **secured area** of the communications center.

- Communications equipment located at the **remote tower sites** are maintained in locked shelters within secure fenced-in perimeters.

C. The agency maintains **radio capability on multiple Radio Systems** including but not limited to the Richland County Sheriff, Ontario Police Department, State Band, and Multi Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS) Radio System for use in the event of a failure of the Mansfield Police Department Radio System.

- **Emergency telephone calls** can be forwarded to an alternate Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) in the event of a failure of the telephone system.

D. **Transmission lines, antenna and power sources** at all sites are secured within locked shelter buildings and fenced-in areas accessible only to authorized repair technicians.

- Keys to these areas are maintained by the authorized repair technicians.

E. The PSCC Operations Manager, or designee, will log into OSSI/CAD on a bi-annual basis and conduct an audit of all Division of Police employees. Any personnel no longer employed with the Division of Police will have their account disabled to prevent any unauthorized access to criminal justice information, programs, equipment, or data files. This shall be accomplished in the following manner:

- Log into CAD/OSSI
- In the tool bar Select “Options”
- Select “User/Group Administration”
- Select “Disable”

81.3.2 ALTERNATE SOURCE OF ELECTRICAL POWER (LE1)

The communications center and remote radio tower sites utilize an **uninterrupted power source** to provide sixty minutes of battery power.

- The communications center and primary radio transmitter site utilize a **back-up generator** to maintain

power during extended commercial power outages.

- The back-up generator is equipped with an automated **self-testing function**, programmed in conformance with the manufacturer recommendations, which tests the generator under full load **monthly**.

81.3.3 JOINT PUBLIC SAFETY FREQUENCIES

Agency radio equipment is capable of two-way operation on **joint public safety frequencies**. The Division's multi-channel radios and portable radios contain the channels needed to communicate with the, Richland County Sherriff; Ontario Police Department; Lexington Police Department the Mansfield Fire Department;, State Band, and other entities. See Addendum.

- An officer may communicate with a different agency by radio by switching to the agency's channel after notifying the PSCC of intent to do so.

81.3.4 INFORMATION/EMERGENCY TELEPHONE LINES

The agency maintains a published **non-emergency 10-digit call for service line** and a non-emergency 10-digit administrative line to separate emergency from non-emergency calls.

- The communications center phone system is designed to **route emergency calls** with a higher priority than non-emergency calls.
- **Outgoing calls** from the agency are accomplished using dedicated outbound phone lines.

CROSS REFERENCE TO STANDARDS AND POLICIES: General Orders 41.2.1, 41.2.2, 41.2.5, 41.3, 41.3.7, 42.2.2, 46, 55.2.1, 55.2.6, 82.2.1, 82.2.2.

CROSS REFERENCE TO FORMS: Communications Center Procedure Manual, Division of Police Emergency Operations Plan, PSCC Access Control Lesson Plan, Emergency Medical Dispatch Manual, Alarm Off Notice, Codified Ordinance of the City of Mansfield.