

3.1.3.3 General Communication Procedures



YOUR ORGANIZATION
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

TITLE: General Communication Procedures

SECTION/TOPIC: Communications

NUMBER: 3.1.3.3

ISSUE DATE:

REVISED DATE:

PREPARED BY:

APPROVED BY:

X

Preparer

X

Approver

These SOPs/SOGs are based on FEMA guidelines FA-197

1.0 POLICY REFERENCE

CFR

NFPA

NIMS

2.0 PURPOSE

This standard operating procedure/guideline addresses general procedures and protocols for communications among dispatch and field personnel in emergency and non-emergency incidents.

3.0 SCOPE

This SOP/SOG pertains to all personnel in this organization.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

These definitions are pertinent to this SOP/SOG.

5.0 PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

5.1 General procedures and protocols for communications among dispatch and field personnel in emergency and non-emergency incidents:

DISPATCH POLICY

This Fire Department will respond to any EMERGENCY situation that threatens LIFE, SAFETY or PROPERTY. In cases when the fire department is not the appropriate agency or is not capable of delivering the needed assistance, or if the situation is not a true emergency, an attempt will be made to place the caller in contact with an appropriate provider. The fire department will dispatch the closest available unit(s) with the assigned capability to control the emergency. The judgment of both dispatch and emergency response personnel is an integral part of the decision making process, taking into consideration both information received and the potential that exists.

Timely response and effective management of EMS, rescue and fire control situations represent the most immediate priorities of the fire department. Upon receipt of adequate information (location and nature of the emergency) Dispatch will send the appropriate assignment. Dispatch will upgrade the response, as required, until command is established upon the arrival of the 1st unit.

JURISDICTION

Emergency incidents within the city limits will be dispatched without regard to jurisdiction. Units will also be dispatched to borderline locations when Dispatch personnel cannot make accurate determination of the jurisdiction.

The Dispatch Center also dispatches for other jurisdictions. They are dispatched under mutual aid guidelines.

Calls for assistance from public or quasi-public agencies outside the City limits will be dispatched as mutual aid incidents, with the approval of the individual jurisdiction's Chief and/or BC, or the Fire Department Shift Commander.

Calls for assistance from citizens outside the City limits will be transferred to the appropriate agency. If that agency requests mutual aid assistance, the Regional Dispatch Center will contact the appropriate jurisdiction for approval of the mutual aid request and dispatch accordingly.

CALL ROUTING

Determination of the nature of the problem may indicate that a caller does not have a true emergency and that fire department response is not necessary. The avoidance of unnecessary responses is a basic part of the dispatch function. The call routing process must not delay response to valid emergency incidents, but should attempt to verify the nature of questionable calls. When a positive determination of need for emergency response cannot be made, **THE FIRE DEPARTMENT POLICY IS TO DISPATCH.**

INCIDENT TAKER

The primary responsibility of the Incident Taker is to determine, without delay, the nature and location of the emergency, the source of the call (call back number), and to verify entry of the incident into the CAD system.

The Incident Taker determines the appropriate response (nature code) based on the information gathered from the caller. This information is necessary to process the incident. Additional details may be sent to responding units as they become available.

NATURE CODES

The Incident Taker enters the appropriate Nature Code, based on information derived from the caller. The CAD system determines the appropriate response based on the nature of the emergency, the location and the jurisdiction in which the incident is located. On some incidents the CAD system will select different types of capabilities, from different jurisdictions. This guarantees an appropriate response in the different cities that have varied capability requirements for similar incidents. (The call requirements listed in this document fulfill the city of Phoenix requirements only.)

UNIT SELECTION

The CAD system recommends the closest, most appropriate units for dispatch based on current unit location, capability and status information. The CAD system combines this information with the response type.

A response type is assigned to each Nature Code. The response type identifies the requirements needed on the assignment. Requirements can be identified by unit capability, such as engine or ladder, or by specific unit, such as BC2. Requirements are also expressed as primary or secondary. A unit can fulfill only one primary requirement. A unit can fulfill more than one secondary requirement.

When an incident is selected for dispatch, the CAD system builds an ordered unit consideration list. As a unit is considered for dispatch, its capabilities are inventoried against the outstanding response requirements. If it can satisfy any outstanding requirement it is added to the recommendation. The CAD system will continue to add units to the recommendation until all response requirements have been satisfied or all units have been exhausted. Some unit capabilities have distance limitations added to requirements. The system will not send certain types of units if they are out of the predetermined response range.

INCIDENTS

Nature Codes can be broken down into several different types of incidents. They include: Medical, Fire, Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue and Service Calls. The following are the Nature Codes, Nature Description and Response Requirements for the respective incident types.