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Student Resource Guide

Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission
Telecommunicator Program Office
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Introduction

Telecommunicator II- Basic Law Enforcement & Fire owes thanks to a number of individuals and organizations.

- First, to the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, Inc. (APCO) and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) for the APCO/ANS 3.103.1-2010-Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicator. This standard is the current benchmark for minimum training standards for this industry in the U.S.
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This Student Resource Guide has been developed as a companion to the forty-hour Problem Based Learning Telecommunicator II course offered by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission. The target audience for which the curriculum was developed is public safety Dispatchers with 1-3 months experience.

The class was designed as a problem based learning classroom course. There are four core questions that students will consider throughout the course:

Who are your customers?

What do you owe them?

What steps do you take to dispatch the call?

How does what you do support the agency mission, values, or goals?

This document is a resource guide. Agency policy, procedure, or practice may differ and takes precedent. The guide is intended as a general effective practices guide and is not intended to replace agency policy. Students in the classroom are given that stipulation in class.

UNIT 1 –ROLE OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIRE DISPATCHER

Learning Goals for this Unit:

At the end of the course, the participant will be able to:

- Describe a number of the essential knowledge, skills, duties and tasks of a public safety Law or Fire dispatcher
- Describe ways in which the dispatcher can provide excellent customer service
- List the considerations when prioritizing an incident
- List conditions or facts which raise the priority of a call
- Define the term “emergency” as described in this course
- List the FCC requirements for public safety radio
- Describe the different communication skills needed by the dispatcher
- Articulate what the term “brevity” means in the context of public safety radio
- List the different ways a dispatcher standardizes transmissions
 - List the way in which vehicle and person descriptors are broadcast
- Describe the way a dispatcher appropriately documents an incident
- List examples of when you ask a field unit to repeat a transmission
- Comprehend the recommended voice and speech requirements for a public safety dispatcher
- Understand group and team dynamics
- Define critical thinking
- List the Tuckman stages of group or team dynamics

Essential Knowledge, Skills, Duties & Tasks

We will be discussing the Occupational Analysis for Public Safety Law and Fire Dispatchers, conducted by APCO International as a basis upon which to create the Public Safety Telecommunicator Minimum Training Standard. An Occupational Analysis (OA) is a facilitated process that is like a mini job task analysis. It uses high performing incumbent workers; in this case we used panels of Law Enforcement Dispatchers, panels of Fire Dispatchers, and panels of EMS Dispatchers from around the U.S. The individuals on these panels then provide information about how they do their jobs.

These high-performing Dispatchers then prioritized the information based upon criticality, frequency (how often did they do this as part of their job), what information was important when training new workers and what information was important when training veteran workers.

Much of the information that was gathered from these Dispatchers indicates agency-specific topics such as “geography”. However, we are going to spend some time on other topics that were deemed important and can be delivered as general topics and discussed in this course.

We will also be asking you to consider the information in this course using 4 core questions:

Who are your customers?

What do you owe them?

What steps do you take to dispatch/process the call?

How do your actions on this call tie into your agency’s mission, values, and goals?

Our high performing incumbent worker panels from across the U.S. said that there are important knowledge pieces a law Dispatcher should have. A Dispatcher should have knowledge of:

- Customer Service
- Geography
- Laws/statutes/codes
- Equipment/Systems
- SOP/SOG/Policy/Procedures

Additionally our panelists said that a fire Dispatcher should have knowledge of:

- Apparatus capabilities/responsibilities

As you can tell by the list, most of these knowledge areas tend to be agency-specific.

Our high performing industry co-workers stated that these skills were essential to doing the job of a law enforcement Dispatcher (the **highlighted** skills will be the focused upon in this curriculum):

- Keyboarding/Typing/Computer
- **Customer Service**
- **Ability to prioritize**
- **Critical Thinking/Deductive Reasoning/Memory/Retention/Problem Solving/Decision making**
- **Communication Skills (verbal, written, interpersonal)**
- **Voice control**
- **Team player**
- Multi-tasking
- **Stress/Anger Management**
- Leadership

The national panelists identified the skills listed above and this essential skill for fire is:

- Active listening

As you can see, the lists created by separate panels, in different parts of the country with two different public safety disciplines, identified almost identical knowledge and skill areas.

Our national panels provided information on essential knowledge and skills. They were then asked to provide a list of duties and tasks. We will define a "duty" as "general areas of competence that successful workers must perform on a regular basis". Duties are the large, broad areas of the job. Our national panels for both law and fire narrowed it down to the following 3 duties:

- **PROCESS CALLS (FOR SERVICE)**
- **OPERATE AGENCY EQUIPMENT**
- **ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The area that we will concentrate on for this course will be the Duty the analysis identified as: "Process Calls for Service".

In an occupational analysis, once a duty has been identified, the tasks that support it are also identified.

The most important tasks identified under the "Process Calls for Service" are:

Analyze Calls for Service

- Receive incoming calls (CAD)
- Gather required information (Review 6 W's)
- Prioritize calls for service
- Identify caller safety issues/info
- Update incident/call narrative as needed

Demonstrate Clear/Effective Communication

- Actively listen
- Enunciate clearly
- Be concise/brief
- Use appropriate terminology/codes/signals
- Provide excellent customer service
- Communicate with co-workers

Initiate Incident Response

- Assign units to incident
- Relay pertinent info
- Obtain acknowledgement
- Coordinate available resources
- Relay updates
- Disseminate info to other resources
- Anticipate potential escalation
- Perform status checks
- Determine scene & responder safety
- Complete incident documentation

Make Appropriate Notifications

- Notify supervisors
- Notify appropriate resources
- Communicate with other agencies
- Activate mutual aid
- Disseminate interdepartmental intelligence
- Coordinate any special incident notification
- Provide briefing

Control Radio Traffic

- Monitor radio traffic
- Acknowledge radio traffic
- Comply with FCC communications
- Track/document agency activity

Participate in Post-Incident Activities

- Attend CISM debriefings
- Participate in call critique or post incident analyses
- Report procedural issues
- Provide operational feedback
- Provide peer support
- Finalize/submit incident documentation

Critical Skills, Duties & Tasks for Law Enforcement & Fire Dispatchers

Our skills, duties and tasks merge as you review the list.

The Big One: Customer Service

For our national panels of fire and law enforcement Dispatchers, Customer Service appeared as both an essential Knowledge and Skill.

One of the core questions in this course is: Who are Your Customers?

The U.S. Government website, HowTo.Gov has an article on developing an effective customer service strategy for government agencies. The information was designed for managers to help them create a strategy for the organization; however, you can see how much of these strategies can or will directly relate to your job as a Dispatcher.

The first step they list: **Identify Your Target Customers**, which fits in with one of our 4 core questions:

Who are your customers?

(Excerpted for HowTo.Gov Developing an Effective Customer Service Strategy for Government Agencies)

Begin by identifying your target customers. Who are they? What do they need from your agency? How, and at what times or places do they interact with your agency—what are the “points of service delivery”?

- Cluster or segment target customers based on their common behaviors.
 - Law Enforcement responders
 - Fire/EMS responders
 - Co-workers
 - Records personnel
 - Data personnel
 - Corrections personnel
 - Other agency personnel
- Determine the priorities of your customer.
 - For public safety responders, the threat to life is the first priority.
 - For the public, the threat to life is the first priority, followed by a threat to property.
 - How you prioritize activity will affect your customers.
- To target the highest level of service to your “frequent flyers” (users of Dispatch services), you also need to identify the best ways to serve non-target customers, those to whom it is expensive to provide services, or those who might be better served by other means. This is a necessary part of a customer focus. One example: a fire department could discourage residents from contacting the department to remove cats from trees by charging a \$20 fee for performing the service, and by advertising their busy emergency call load.

Step 2: Determine what your customers want

- Determine what target customers want (not just what they need right now) by considering these techniques:
 - online customer satisfaction surveys
 - phone or email survey
 - in-person meetings or focus groups
 - user testing
 - channel analytics (web, phone, etc.)
- **Determine how target customers prioritize their “wants”.** Generally, customers want timeliness, convenience, quality services, and protection or security. However, each agency must identify what is most important to its customers.
 - User or operations board members determining the priority of user needs operationally
- Weigh how important the customer-identified “wants” are to your agency. Are the services something that the organization does, is capable of doing, or wants to pursue?
- Determine how well your agency can meet your customers’ “wants”. You may think you don’t have competitors, but more than likely you do. Be mindful of who’s doing similar work—if competing organizations meet or exceed customer expectations, it changes the customer’s frame of reference and increases their expectations.
- Determine which “wants” would most positively impact your agency’s bottom line (for example, increased compliance with a regulation, more loyalty and trust, or a desired customer behavioral change), and whether those “wants” should be targeted for improvement.

Step 3: Create a culture of customer service

- In the best performing private companies, CEOs ensure that employees at all levels understand their customers and are given the tools to serve them well.
- Agency leadership must communicate the importance of customer service and ensure that all employees, even those without direct customer-facing jobs, understand how their work serves customers.

- Management must regularly interact with customers so they understand evolving customer needs.
- **Most importantly, front-line customer service workers must be empowered to actually solve problems on the spot.**

Step 4: Clearly communicate service standards and expectations

- Set service standards, such as call wait times and satisfaction ratings.
- Clearly define the standards and make them publicly available.
- Clearly defined goals help motivate employees and help manage customer expectations.
- When service standards cannot be met, customers must be informed—a non-negotiable best practice in the private sector.

Step 5: Provide consistent service across channels

- Agencies should continuously collect comprehensive customer feedback across the whole customer experience—not just via each channel.
- As communication preferences change, we need to adapt our services to interact with our customers, when and how they prefer.
- Consistency of service across channels is critical—a customer who gets an answer on the phone should receive the same answer in-person at a local office, via the website, over email, or via mobile device.

Step 6: Establish a vision for customer service excellence

- Establish your agency's customer-focused vision using all the information in these steps. The vision statement should be simple and may also identify what the company does **not** want to be. Sample vision statements include:
 - "Absolutely, Positively Overnight" by Federal Express
 - L.L. Bean's promise of "Guaranteed. Period."; and
 - Google's "Do no evil"
 - **ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME**
- Continually reflect on the vision and goals and the way services you're delivering service. Be creative about the ways you create and deliver new services. Be willing to change existing practices to integrate improvements.
- Live up to what you promise by applying both an external and internal strategy that reflects the vision. If your agency doesn't implement both internally and externally oriented strategies consistent with the vision, you'll have good intentions but poor customer service.

Step 7: Implement an external strategy

The external strategy should focus on how your agency's service is designed, marketed, and delivered to target customers.

- Take into account the costs of providing services and ways to minimize those costs while implementing quality control. Develop the service concept with the frontline worker at its center. Determine the necessary financial, human, and technological resources, as well as how your agency structure and flow can enable frontline workers to deliver excellent customer service.
- Use advertising/educational strategies to set appropriate customer expectations.
 - Consider user groups or boards to determine radio procedures or call processes
- Provide a feedback loop to incorporate customer comments and complaints into the planning process. Customer complaints are an invaluable resource. Without them, organizations can't be successful. Complaints that people bring to your agency are one of the most efficient and

least expensive ways to get information about people's expectations of your agency and its products and services. Studies have shown that customer comments and complaints are a more direct means of getting information than conducting research studies of customer expectations, conducting transaction studies, or reviewing customer expectations in similar industries.

- Ensure that the complaint resolution strategy supports the customer-focused vision. Most research shows if customers believe their complaints are welcomed and responded to, they will more likely come back to your organization for a future interaction.

Step 8: Focus on recruiting and retaining good employees

While Step 7 outlined an external strategy, the next three steps cover, in detail, the internal strategy—how your agency's internal processes will support the customer-focused vision.

- The premise is that "capable workers who are well trained and fairly compensated provide better service, need less supervision, and are much more likely to stay on the job. As a result, their customers are likely to be more satisfied..." (Harvard Business Review, 1994).
- Research also shows that employee turnover and customer satisfaction are directly correlated—typically, the higher the turnover rate, the lower the agency scores in delivering good service.
- In addition, it's commonly noted that employee turnover is an expensive problem, with significant costs needed to hire and train new people.
- Leaders must foster the creation and testing of new ideas and be openly willing to change existing practices to integrate improvements.
- Learn how targeted employees perceive the proposed customer services. An organization cannot change without the participation of its employees.
- Focus on recruiting employees who support the customer service vision. The costs of employing people who do not support the customer service vision are considerable. In addition, develop career paths that allow successful customer-oriented employees to remain on the frontline.

Step 9: Empower employees to resolve customer service problems

- Empower frontline employees to do what it takes to satisfy the customer. Management must support employee empowerment by clearly defining the boundaries of the empowerment, while remaining flexible within those boundaries. This will encourage creativity. In general, rules should be simple and few—Continental Airlines actually had an employee handbook burning party to signify the change from a procedural environment to one of empowered customer service (Spector, 2001).
- In addition to skills and empowerment, equip frontline personnel with the technology, information, and internal resources to do what it takes to satisfy your customers.

Step 10: Develop good communications and rewards system

- Ensure that divisions and individuals within your agency communicate. Frontline employees who take customer questions, and other employees who have answers to those questions, need a support network. A customer should never have to tell one employee what another employee already knows.
- Develop cross-functional teams for operations and improving service. Ask the people who are doing the work for suggestions to improve productivity.
- Link employees' compensation to (and offer rewards for) good customer service performance. Rewards can be money, status, praise, acknowledgement, or perks such as trips, time off, or special events.
- Finally, measure employee satisfaction regularly.

Partially adapted from Health and Human Services Customer Service Report

In his book, *What's the Secret? To Providing World-Class Customer Experience*, John R. Dijulius III explains that *customers* determine the customer service ratings of customers. 80% of companies involved in a business survey judged themselves "superior" in customer service. 8% of their customers who were then surveyed agreed. Only 8% of those companies were truly providing superior customer service. Dijulius also found a correlation in superior customer service to increased employee satisfaction and loyalty. Companies with high customer service ratings had higher employee retention (lower turnover)!

Customer service begins at home! Companies that are recognized as world-class organizations, help their employees' lead world-class lives. "Great customer service companies have as many systems in place internally to exceed team (employees') expectations as they have in place to exceed their customers' expectations." That means that communications center managers wanting to help bring their organizations up to become an exceptional customer service-rated agency will be expected to provide both internal (employees) and external customers with the best training, management and service.

Dijulius makes an important statement for telecommunicators when he says "**it's not our experience we're selling; it's our customers' experience.**" What experience do you want your law or fire responders to have on your shift? More than anyone else, the Dispatcher sets the mood and tone for the shift. While you are not responsible for the calls for service that come in on a shift, a Dispatcher trained to provide exemplary customer service, can improve the experience responders have for that time period. If we go back to one of the earlier statements made in the HowTo.gov information, one of the steps was to create a culture of customer service and included in that statement was the bullet point: **Most importantly, front-line customer service workers must be empowered to actually solve problems on the spot.**

- This enables the Dispatcher to deal with customer service issues at the time they occur and to find reasonable ways to accommodate your customer's needs.

Consider: How does the customer service a Dispatcher provides mirror your agency mission statement?

Prioritization

An essential skill is the ability to prioritize. You will see that prioritizing calls for service is part of the first task of the first duty of Processing Calls for Service. This is an *essential* skill as well as a critical task performed frequently by both law enforcement and fire Dispatchers.

Prioritization takes place on a number of levels. The first and arguably the most critical level is determining if the call is an emergency. For purposes of this curriculum, we will define an emergency as **AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO LIFE OR PROPERTY.**

We will use terms such as imminent to mean "about to occur at any moment" or impending. An imminent threat to life or property may be less of a threat than immediate, but it can be a very fine line between imminent and immediate. Part of the skill set is to understand the difference erring on the side of caution. When we discuss high-risk calls, one of the expectations of an effective Dispatcher will be that the Dispatcher will quickly identify those calls.

An immediate threat to human life would clearly be a priority over an immediate threat to property.

As a general rule of thumb:

Prioritizing based on emergency vs. non-emergency situations:

- Is there an *immediate* threat to life?
- Is there an *immediate* threat to property?
- Is there an *imminent* threat to life?

- Is there an *imminent* threat to property?
- Is there a potential threat to life or welfare?
- Is there a potential threat to property?

Additional conditions that may raise the priority of a call may include:

- **Injuries**
- **Weapons**
- **Assaultive or aggressive behavior (past or current)**
- **Alcohol or drug use**
- **Suspicious activity, persons, vehicles, etc.**
- **Time lapse (chance of apprehension or damage mitigation)**
- **Major crimes** (felonies)
- **Size of fire**
- **Exposure**
- **Evacuation needs**
- **Safety of caller and other occupants (location/weather/potential threats) example – search and rescue in winter, child or elderly walk away with night approaching, empty parking garage at night**
- **Hazmat**
- **Wanted persons**
- **Previous events or history with individuals or at addresses/locations**

Non-emergent calls that may have an increased priority of dispatch:

- Time sensitive issues – service of papers, certain emergency messages
- Time of day or night – caller convenience, i.e., middle of the night
- Location/safety of caller while waiting to make report

Questions to further determine prioritization:

- Is there a district or other unit available?
- Is this going to require a case report or follow up?
- If so, is this at the end of shift or near the beginning of another? Is it more appropriate to advise the oncoming shift or to hold over the current shift to handle the call?
- Do you need to check with the shift commander in order to hold the call or hold over personnel from the current shift?
- Are there other factors that dictate the priority of this call?
- Time, place and safety of reporting party:
- Is it safe for the caller to wait for a responder?
- Would it be acceptable for them to go home and call?
- Could the call be handled by telephone?

Looking at the information above, it shows just how complex the ability to accurately prioritize can be.

There are many different things to consider. The ability to prioritize and the actual task of prioritizing calls are probably more complex than many of us have considered. Experienced, effective Dispatchers do it without appearing to work at it. They process this multiple data, stimuli, and information in a matter of moments. When we discuss the skill of “multi-tasking” it may be more accurate to describe it as *rapid multi-processing*, as in the way a good Dispatcher can quickly read through multiple pending calls and make an accurate determination for priority of dispatch.

Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making

Our panelists identified “critical thinking” along with problem solving and decision making as a key skill. We will take a brief look at *Critical Thinking* as it is defined by those in education who have promoted the concept for many years, and by how many of us use the term “critical thinking”.

Critical Thinking as Defined by the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking, 1987

(In a statement by Michael Scriven & Richard Paul Presented at the 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking & Education Reform, Summer 1987)

Critical Thinking (capitalized & in italics) is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.

Dictionary.com defines it:

The mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion

You will see examples of critical thinking when a busy Dispatcher reviews and prioritizes (or re-prioritizes) multiple calls. Critical thinking *is* problem solving and decision making at the highest cognitive level. During a dynamic and changing fire or law enforcement call, Dispatchers are revising, planning, conceptualizing, and determining the needed course of action. They base their decisions on observations (updates in the call, multiple calls coming in, changing call priorities), experience, reflection (very *fast* reflection which includes policy, procedure or other knowledge), and communication (from the field, from co-workers, other agencies, etc.). While *critical thinking* (italics-as defined by the educational community) has an expectation of the ability to reflect upon one's thinking, **critical thinking (not capitalized, no italics)** for a Dispatcher is a set of developed knowledge, skills and beliefs that allow for rapid and generally accurate problem solving and decision making.

What *Critical Thinking* and critical thinking have in common is that it is a skill that can be learned and practiced.

Consider your thinking about a call, one of yours or someone else's, after the fact. When you dissect the call, you consider:

- The call and information in it
- The call in comparison to other calls going on at the time
- The call and the details allowing you to prioritize it (emergent, availability at that moment of units to respond, other radio traffic and demands)
- What was known about the call?
- What was unknown about the call at the time?
- What was done?
- What else might have been done?
- The call and what was learned from the call
- The call and what could now be additionally learned

Critical thinking is not just problem solving and decision making; it is a process by which you must make a *decision* to critically think. Through practice and reflection it can become habit. Dispatchers who are the top performers in their centers probably engage in critical thinking and reflection on a regular basis, even if they don't identify it as such.

Critical thinking does not have to be self-criticism. Critical thinking for a Dispatcher may mean taking the time and effort to think about a specific or eventful call or event that has occurred considering aspects of the call such as:

- What did I know?
- What did I not know?
- Were there different things I might have considered? What were they?
- If I were to handle this call in the future, how would my response change or what other factors might I consider?

Contemplation of work events improves skill. This is NOT second-guessing or Monday-morning-quarterbacking. It is making a conscious decision to find ways to improve upon the job you are doing, by thinking about what you did and how you might do it better. This is *reflection* for the purpose of Critical Thinking. If you “always do what you always did then you will always get what you always got”! This means, if someone rarely reviews his or her work in a thoughtful way, they limit their chances to make significant improvement in their work product. Critical Thinking allows a Dispatcher to use their recent experiences to build expertise and “Experience” more meaningfully.

Communication Skills

Another common skill identified by our panels was Communication Skill. This was meant to be written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills. In the APCO ANS Telecommunicator Minimum Training Standard, under the General Duties of a Telecommunicator, the actual standard states:

- 4.3.9.1 Active listening,
- 4.3.9.2 Clear enunciation,
- 4.3.9.3 The ability to be concise in verbal and written communications,
- 4.3.9.4 Appropriate use of Agency terminology, codes, and signals,
- 4.3.9.5 An understanding of plain speech/language techniques,
- 4.3.9.6 The use of the Agency approved phonetic alphabet,
- 4.3.9.7 The use of generally accepted customer service skills, and
- 4.3.9.8 The ability to communicate on a professional level with internal and external customers

We have previously talked about Customer Service as part of having effective Communication Skills. Now we will focus on the Skill of using voice control and give attention to the task of Demonstrate Clear/Effective Communication:

Be concise
Enunciate clearly
Use appropriate terminology
Communicate with co-workers

Accepted communications practices and techniques assure clarity for both law enforcement and fire/EMS responders. A Dispatcher needs to have contact with police and fire service personnel for many different reasons. Methods used generally fall into one of these categories:

- Telephone
- Radio
- In person
- Pager
- MDT
- Other computer systems

A Dispatcher must be proficient in using the appropriate method of transferring information. Since time is often critical, they must be able to quickly and accurately relay this information.

Some methods of dispatching use “formats”. These are pre-determined ways in which information is provided **ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME**. An example would be the use of a mobile call-up procedure to notify a field unit that you are going to be giving her a call for service. Another example would be use of the initial dispatch and short report formats on law enforcement or fire calls.

Part of the ability to effectively communicate comes from the verbal skills of the Dispatcher. Areas of importance include, voice projection, tone, modulation, speed of delivery and clarity.

Paraphrasing

Dispatchers must summarize succinctly and accurately in order to provide responders with all the relevant information available in the most concise manner. Information must be organized quickly

and logically. The intent is to minimize airtime while still giving responding units a clear picture of the call. Summarization should include:

- Location where the unit is to respond
- Type of call
- Response information – emergency vs. non-emergent – generally the factors/conditions which set the priority of the call
- Suspect or suspect vehicle information if pertinent
- Should calling party be contacted – if so, where?

The purpose of the summary is not to give all information about a call, but to provide the **basic information a unit needs so they can safely and effectively respond to the call.**

Brevity and FCC Regulations

Brevity - Radio transmissions should be brief, concise and to the point. A *general* rule is that each transmission segment should be no more than 15-20 seconds. If a transmission is going to go longer, pause every 15-20 seconds (releasing the transmit button), listen for anyone who may need to use the radio for emergency radio traffic and then continue with the transmission. Some agencies precede a break by announcing, "break" or "also". This lets field units know there is more information to follow. By outlining what you are going to say before transmitting, the breaks will come in a natural "resting place" in the transmission.

Because "brevity" is one of the FCC rules regulating public safety radio communications, we are going to discuss this and the other relevant FCC regulations here. "Comply with FCC regulations" fell as a task under the duty of "Control Radio Traffic" on our Process Calls for Service "duty" band.

Public Safety radio frequencies are governed by FCC regulations, specifically, Part 90, 47CFR, Chapter 1.

FCC Rules on Public Safety Dispatching:

The following regulations are cited for information:

FCC 90.403C: COMMUNICATIONS BREVITY

"Each Licensee shall restrict all transmissions to the minimum practicable transmission time and shall employ an efficient operating procedure to maximize the utilization of the spectrum."

Point: Keep it short

FCC 90.403D: MESSAGE PRIORITY

"Communications involving the imminent safety of life or property are to be afforded priority by all Licensees."

Point: Life safety has first priority

FCC 90.403E: HARMFUL INTERFERENCE

"Licensees shall take reasonable precautions to avoid causing harmful interference. This includes monitoring the transmitting frequency for communications in progress and such other measures as may be necessary to minimize the potential for causing interference."

Point: Don't interfere

FCC 90.405: PERMISSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS

"Stations licensed under this part may transmit only the following types of communications:

- Any communication related directly to the imminent safety of life or property.

- Communications directly related and necessary to those activities that make the Licensee eligible for the station license held under this part.
- Communications for testing purposes required for proper station and system maintenance. However, each Licensee shall keep such tests to a minimum and shall employ every measure to avoid harmful interference.”

Point: Transmit only what is necessary

Radio Monitoring

The FCC may randomly monitor all assigned radio frequencies for compliance with rules and regulations.

It is also important to remember that there may be other users some distance away that may hear your transmission, and that inappropriate use of the frequency may elicit a complaint against the licensee by another agency.

What this means to the Dispatcher

FCC Rules include the following:
It is unlawful to:

- Transmit unnecessary signals, messages, or communications of any kind
- Use profane, indecent or obscene language
- Willfully damage or permit radio apparatus to be damaged
- Cause unlawful or malicious interference with any other radio communication
- Intercept, use, and/or publish the contents of any radio communication without the express permission of the proper authority within your department
- Make unnecessary or unidentified transmissions
- Transmit without first making sure that the intended transmission will not cause harmful interference

Standardize Your Practices-ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME

This section discusses methods of paraphrasing, use of abbreviations (written and verbal), law enforcement, and fire/EMS terminology. As agencies may vary their practices in this regard, the main point to remember is to **standardize your practices – do it the same ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME**. Standardization lessens the chance for misunderstanding and both Dispatchers and responders know what to expect in the way of relaying information.

Standardize – your dispatch format. Responders will know what to expect with the flow of information and the Dispatcher will have a standardized “work flow” which will allow them to automatically relay information in a concise way each time. This will be discussed at greater length when we discuss Mobile Call Up procedures.

Abbreviations

The use of standardized abbreviations is useful when recording (writing or typing) or broadcasting information pertinent to calls for service.

The purpose for using standardized abbreviations is to enhance effective communications between Dispatchers and other employees, agencies and responders.

Each agency may use abbreviations that are unique to it (example: SCSO-Spokane County Sheriff’s Office; VPD-Vancouver Police Department, etc.). Abbreviations may include those used for various public safety or municipal agencies or other governmental agencies (example: DSHS-Department of Social and Health Services; DOL-Department of Licensing).

Other abbreviations may be more widely used (such as NCIC codes). It is important to remember that someone else may have to read or hear the abbreviations or acronyms so they should be as standardized as possible.

As many abbreviations the Dispatcher will deal with are in the written form only (vehicle colors, physical descriptors), an agency can use abbreviations that already exist in the NCIC codes rather than developing their own. These abbreviations include:

COLORS

Vehicles
Hair and Eyes
Clothing

PERSON DESCRIPTIONS

RACE

Use only NCIC accepted race codes
W – White
B – Black
I – (see current NCIC definition) Native North or South American
A – Asian or Pacific Islander
O – Other

GENDER

M – Male
F – Female

Other abbreviations that are commonly used in communication centers:

DOL – Department of Licensing
WACIC – Washington Crime Information Center
NCIC – National Crime Information Center
A – Adult
J – Juvenile
DOB – Date of Birth
Ht – Height
Wt – Weight
LSW – Last Seen Wearing
LSH – Last Seen Headed
WCB – Will Call Back
N/B – Northbound
S/B – southbound
HX- history

Descriptions of people also have a uniform format:

- NAME (last name, first name, middle initial)
- RACE (using NCIC codes)
- GENDER (SEX) (M or F)
- AGE (actual or approximate)
 - DATE OF BIRTH (eight digits: Oct. 1, 1962 = 10011962 OR 19621011 with the year first)
- HEIGHT (3 digits: 6' 0" = 600; 5' 4" = 504)
- WEIGHT (3 digits: 87 lbs. = 087; 145# = 145)
- HAIR COLOR (using NCIC codes)
- EYE COLOR (using NCIC codes)
- FACIAL HAIR, GLASSES, ANYTHING NOTICEABLE STARTING AT TOP OF HEAD
- CLOTHING

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- Clothing descriptions are given from head to toe and from the outside in:
- HAT OR HEADGEAR
- UPPER, OUTER CLOTHING (coat or jacket)
- LOWER, OUTER CLOTHING (pants, shoes)
- UPPER, INSIDE CLOTHING (shirt, blouse)
- LOWER, INSIDE CLOTHING
- ACCESSORIES OR ANYTHING CARRIED (gloves, brief case, fanny pack, umbrella, etc.)

Recording and broadcasting descriptions of persons and vehicles the same way each time, ensures consistency. Responders know what to expect **ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.**

VEHICLE DESCRIPTIONS

Formatting descriptions of vehicles and persons in a uniform, standardized way is professional. When standardized procedures are used, it lessens the chance of omitting or repeating information.

- **VEHICLES:** Use the acronym CYMBALS for the order in which vehicle descriptions are given:
 - **C** - COLOR (using accepted abbreviations)
 - **Y** - YEAR
 - **M** - MAKE [and] MODEL
 - **B** - BODY STYLE
 - **A** - ACCESSORIES or ALL other descriptors (tinted windows, body damage, spoilers, mag wheels, etc.)
 - **L** - LICENSE PLATE NUMBER/LETTERS
 - **S** - STATE OF ISSUANCE

For example: BLK, 82, HONDA, ACCORD, 4 DR., TINTED WINDOWS, ABC123/ WA
Call Takers should format and provide the vehicle description in this manner. Dispatchers should broadcast the information in this format every time.

Even if the Dispatcher is unable to obtain specific vehicle descriptors, the CYMBALS format may still be used. For example: Dark color, large, older model 4 door with shiny wheels, unknown license.

Phonetic Alphabet

The purpose of phonetically pronouncing words or names is to insure the reception of the correct information. It eliminates the chance of a misspelling, and is important for verification of information that is entered into a computer system such as ACCESS, DOL, NCIC or a records management system (RMS). The most common phonetic alphabet used by law enforcement agencies in Washington State is:

A – Adam	N – Nora
B – Boy	O – Ocean
C – Charles	P – Paul
D – David	Q – Queen
E – Edward	R – Robert
F – Frank	S – Sam
G – George	T – Tom
H – Henry	U – Union
I – Ida	V – Victor
J – John	W – William
K – King	X – X-ray
L – Lincoln	Y – Young
M – Mary	Z – Zebra

Break up phonetic letters into *groups of three*. For example, spelling the word "MOTHER": MARY, OCEAN, TOM (slight pause), HENRY, EDWARD, ROBERT. This is especially important if someone is copying the information as you say it.

Precede the phonetic spelling with a warning that you will be spelling. For example: "Last name spelling – SAM, MARY, IDA, TOM, HENRY". If you do not warn that the spelling is forthcoming, when you say, "Last name, SAM", the other person may begin writing the last name as Sam.

DO NOT duplicate effort when pronouncing letters or spelling a name. It is not necessary to spell phonetically the word using the phrase "as in" for each letter. For example: "TOM" – T as in TOM, O as in OCEAN, M as in MARY. It is redundant to use both the letter and the phonetic designator.

Use a standardized method of broadcasting information ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.

Phrasing Numbers

When reading numbers, several methods are most useful, particularly when a responder has to write down the information. These are:

- **The number 0 is read as "zero"** and not O (oh) as in the letter. Writing the number 0 with a slash through it helps avoid confusion.
- Numbers that sound alike, such as "thirteen" and "thirty", are sounded out by individual digit to avoid confusion. Example: "Thirteen- One Three- Street".
- When reading lengthy series of numbers and/or letters, such as vehicle identification numbers (VIN) or serial numbers, read the numbers and letters in groups of three. A *slight* pause after each 3 characters gives the person writing the information a chance to keep up and is easier to hear than a long string of letter/numbers quickly read off. **This is especially useful when transmitting license plate numbers.**
- **License Plates** - A license plate of 123ABC is transmitted as "One, two, three (slight pause), Adam, Boy, Charles".
 - A plate of 67894W is read as "Six, seven, eight (slight pause), nine, four, William".
 - When a plate has 7 or more characters, there are a couple of ways it can be read. For example:
 - **A33146B** can be read: "Adam, three, three, (pause), one, four, six, (pause), Boy" or as: "Adam (pause), three, three, one, (pause), four, six, Boy".
- **Numbers in Addresses**

There is more than one proper way of broadcasting addresses. Normally, you will not pronounce the words "hundred" or "thousand" unless it is in terms of a block range or it is the specific address.

- **Hundreds and thousands:** For example, the address 10032 is probably not pronounced "One hundred, three two" or "One hundred thirty two" or "Ten thousand, thirty two". It may be pronounced as "one, zero, zero, three, two" (special note: some jurisdictions could pronounce it as "one hundred, thirty two" as Road 100 would be the cross street).
- **Block ranges:** For a block range, you may say the "One thousand block of Main Street" rather than "One, zero, zero, zero block of Main Street" or "Ten hundred block of Main Street".
- **Numbered streets:** Numbered streets can be tricky. One method of broadcasting is to drop the "th", "st", or "nth" designator from the numbers. For example: Fifth and sixth sound

similar, but if you say “Five” Street or “Six” Street, it is very clear they are different. Consider using the pronounced number on the repeat of the address. Example: 132 5 St. as: “One thirty-two Fifth Street, and on the repeat, that’s one thirty-two Five Street”

- SINGLE digit addresses can be read as:
 - 5 Alder Boulevard = “Number 5, Alder Boulevard”
- TWO digit addresses can be pronounced as one number:
 - 17 King Street = “Seventeen King Street”
- THREE digit numbers can be pronounced as either one number or separated:
 - 176th Street = “One Seventy Sixth Street” or “One Seven Six Street”
- FOUR digit addresses can be pronounced as two numbers run together or separated.
 - 1020 49th Court = “Ten Twenty (pause), Forty Nine Court
 - 7294 Slate Rd. = “Seven, two, nine, four Slate Rd”
- FIVE digit addresses can be divided into 2 and 3 digit segments. This is especially helpful if the numbers of an address indicate a cross street.
 - 23456 N. Glade Road: The cross street is 234th St. The address would be read as “two thirty four, fifty six, N. Glade Road”.
 - For the same address, the cross street might be Road 23. In this case, the address would be read as “Twenty three, four fifty six, N. Glade Road”.

Agency practices, particularly when addressing issues are involved, should prevail.

In establishing the procedure for pronouncing numbers, use a method that is logical. The easiest to copy (groups of 3) or indicates a cross street or some type of address marker.

Consistency in broadcasting numbers and/or addresses will help responders get it right, the first time ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.

Documentation

Documentation is part of a Dispatcher’s written communication skill set. In the APCO/ANSI Telecommunicator Minimum Training Standard, there are a number of references to the need for accurately documenting information.

Under the Law Enforcement Dispatcher and Fire Dispatcher sections of the standard it states:

“The Law Enforcement Dispatcher/Fire Dispatcher shall demonstrate the ability to analyze calls for service and determine the appropriate response action.

- 8.2.1 The Law Enforcement Dispatcher shall demonstrate the comprehension of agency documentation requirements and the ability to create and update the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) record or incident log, and maintain accurate call narrative or documentation.
- 8.2.2 The Law Enforcement Dispatcher shall demonstrate the ability to determine the nature and priority of incidents and assign available resources in accordance with written directives.
- 8.2.3 The Law Enforcement Dispatcher shall demonstrate proficiency in tracking and documenting radio activity, incident, and unit status within written directives.”

When the standard refers to updating call narrative or providing documentation at the end of a call, this is part of documentation. The need for accurate documentation is clear, entering dispatch and arrival times, updating pursuit or major event information are critical elements of the job.

Part of the ability to effectively communicate comes from the verbal skills of the Dispatcher. Areas of importance include, voice projection, tone, modulation, speed of delivery and clarity.

A Dispatcher must be able to use proper tone, rate of speech, and voice modulation on the radio. Dispatchers should **maintain a calm (modulation/tone), clear, crisp speaking voice (enunciation/rate of speech) without displays of excitability, annoyance, or confusion. This gives responders' confidence in the Dispatcher's ability to keep up with ongoing events.**

Many Dispatchers speak very rapidly. Make yourself aware of your speed of delivery. Think about how fast you are delivering information. Slow down if units are expected to write or type the information.

Proper enunciation is a critical Dispatch skill. Take the time to listen to your broadcasts, particularly on high-risk or high-priority calls. Look for ways to improve your modulation, enunciation, tone, and rate of speech. You want the information out quickly, but you always need to have it understood.

• **LISTEN before you transmit-** make sure the radio channel is clear before you key the radio to speak. If you think you covered someone when you spoke, advise field units that you covered them and ask them to go ahead with their transmission.

• **THINK** - before you transmit - it is important to determine what you are going to say before you transmit. If you are dispatching a call that someone else took, review it first. Consolidate information and transmit in a logical, uniform fashion.

• **SPEED OF DELIVERY-** it should be one that can be easily heard and understood by responders and if necessary, should allow them to write down pertinent information. Keeping the "brevity rule" in mind when transmitting, deliver information at this rate of speed for no more than 20 seconds, when possible.

• **CONFIRM AND VERIFY-** if you are not sure what was said, ask the field unit, "(unit ID), confirm your location is 123 Main Street?" The responsibility is now shifted back to the field unit to confirm and verify the information. *Do not acknowledge a transmission you did not understand.*

• **ASK FOR REPEAT- *if you did not understand any of the information given to you.*** It is your responsibility to document information correctly. Anything you did not clearly understand must be repeated **ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.**

It is essential to maintain a professional tone and demeanor devoid of:

- Inappropriate terms
- Horseplay/joking
- Sarcasm
- Argumentative tone
- Uncooperative tone
- Annoyance
- Boredom
- Excitement

Dispatchers should strive to project confidence and control.

Avoid dispatching using a voice or style that is:

- Sing-song
- Fading
- Overly loud, low, or “booming”
- Soft, whispering, breathy

Also, attempt to avoid common problems with the use of a radio system called:

- **CLIPPING** - is a term used to describe the problem of speaking before the transmitter or repeater is actually “open” or clipping off the last word by releasing the transmit button too soon. When speaking on the radio, key the radio for ½ to 1 full second before speaking into the microphone. Finish speaking before releasing the transmit button.
- **FADING** - term used when the voice volume fades or drops at the last part of a transmission. The entire radio transmission should be spoken at the same level.

Modulation volume should be in a mid-speaking range. Overly loud voice volume may cause units to turn down radios, potentially missing traffic or pertinent information. Likewise, a soft, whispery voice is neither appropriate nor professional sounding and field units may have to adjust radios in order to accommodate the low volume. It is also extremely important that a Dispatcher not display excitability as this can raise the anxiety level of responders. It may be beneficial to take a deep breath before you begin to speak if you feel your anxiety level increasing.

As a Dispatcher, it is your responsibility to make sure that we understand transmissions from field units, and likewise, may be expected to repeat information from them for the benefit of other responders.

REPEAT- the Dispatcher may need to repeat important, pertinent information from field units such as:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Unit in pursuit – pertinent information only with prevailing agency policy or practice</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Officer or firefighter needs assistance</i>• <i>Felony or high-risk stop</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Field unit finding a crime in progress (on-view, officer initiated, etc.)</i>• <i>Fire or law enforcement unit size-up</i>• <i>Suspect in custody</i>• <i>Beginning and ending mileage with transports of persons</i>• <i>When K9 containment or other assistance can be discontinued</i>• <i>When an Incident Command has been established or dissolved</i>• <i>Fire warning broadcasts – withdraw, abandon, master stream activation, etc.</i>• <i>ICS first unit size-up (*policy prevails)</i>

Team and Group Dynamics

Even if you are the only one on duty, you are part of the greater public safety team. You are counted on by responders to be their communication specialist. You are the direct link to the call for service, the responder, and the other resources at your disposal.

If you work for an agency with multiple telecommunicators on a shift, you are part of a team. In Telecommunicator I – Basic Dispatcher, we discuss the group or team dynamics model created by Bruce Tuckman.

As a new person at an agency, it is imperative that you become a functioning member of a team or work group. The information below is provided to assist telecommunicators in broadening their understanding of the processes that take place within a team or work group.

The Public Safety Team

Public Safety Dispatchers are part of several teams. Individually, they may be part of a team or group that is specific to a shift. Unless they work in a center where they are the only person on duty within the center, chances are they are part of a shift.

They are also part of the larger agency team. Dispatchers have a specific role to play within their agencies. They may be part of a stand-alone agency that provides public safety communications services for multiple agencies. Alternately, they may be employed by one public safety agency, i.e., sheriff's office, police department, or fire department. Dispatchers are part of the agency team.

Dispatchers are also part of the larger public safety team that includes 9-1-1 Call Takers and contribute to the makeup of this greater team which works to provide public safety services to a community.

As a member of several teams, it is important for persons new to the agency (and thus, the team) to understand some of the basic principles of group or team dynamics.

Group/Team Dynamics

Here is a review of the Tuckman model we use in Telecommunicator I- Basic Call Taker.

Groups go through several stages of development. In 1965 Bruce W. Tuckman, an educational psychologist now with the University of Ohio proposed a model that described the phases that are necessary for a group to go through in order to become effective.

FORMING

In the first stages of team building or group dynamics, comes the **FORMING** stage.

This stage is where a new group comes together (or one or more new persons are added to an existing group) and each individual's behavior is motivated by their need to be accepted by others in the group. This can be a "honeymoon" period identified by avoidance of conflict or controversy.

The group may consist of a new work shift that sees some members leave and other new ones arrive. The group learns about the shift's opportunities and challenges and determines the general flow of work and requirements of the shift.

Team members tend to work and behave independently. Often, they have no formal process for establishing shift or team goals or objectives. Most individuals are on their best behavior, but self-focused.

This is where members of the team get to know one another. This is also where team members watch to see how other members respond to workload, stress, and each other.

STORMING

The next stage that the group will enter is the **STORMING** stage.

In this stage the group individual's ideas compete for consideration. The group decides on the formal or informal leader or leadership style preference. Team members are more comfortable confronting each other's ideas or perspectives. This stage is where initial conflict arises and through effective interpersonal skills, this is the stage where the team may experience some stressful interactions.

This is a NECESSARY stage for the group to work through in order to come together as an effective and cohesive team. This is also the stage where teams get stuck and never progress to the other phases.

The group will be working more toward an understanding of individual roles and responsibilities. Because conflict can arise, some of the members may attempt to avoid confronting issues, thereby holding the group progress back.

Supervisors, who intervene at this stage with a “no conflict” message, may further delay the team’s progress into the next phase of development. This stage is critical for the formation of an effective team.

NORMING

In this stage, team members understand the “rules of engagement”, individual tasks and responsibilities and are generally in agreement. Effective group members practice tolerance and patience and exhibit supportive behaviors. This is a difficult stage to achieve. Every team member must begin to understand other members points of view and needs, and generally what the team will or will not accept or tolerate. This is a critical phase in order for a highly effective and successful team to be able to move into the next phase.

The norming phase may be where some groups remain. For various reasons, they may never reach the higher “performing” stage.

PERFORMING

This is the stage good teams work to achieve. Unfortunately, this phase is not reached by all groups or teams. It is characterized by member’s being able to work interdependently and flexibly. This group operates effectively as a unit finding ways to get the job done effectively without inappropriate behaviors and conflict. This group tends to need minimal supervision. This stage is typified by team members’ acceptance of each other and each other’s strengths and weaknesses.

Performing teams may revert back to earlier stages. Changes occur in the workplace or among team members that may require the group to revert back to earlier phases.

ADJOURNING

This phase occurs when the group’s goals are accomplished or there is a disengagement of members or duties. In a communications center, this may occur when new shift bids are put in place and the team breaks up as members go to different shifts, etc.

This phase may include a sense of loss by the group when a highly effective team breaks up.

The new team now goes back to the *forming* stage and begins again.

Understanding Informal Group Dynamics

Informal groups have a number of things in common:

- Informal groups may serve as a counter to the function of the organization
 - The informal group may attempt to counteract demands from agency management by finding ways to adopt less demanding norms or sabotage management’s imposed standards.
 - Informal groups may emerge that work to improve their shift’s or agency’s performance.
- Informal groups have their own communications network
 - Group members have a responsibility to make sure that the informal communications information is correct.

- There may be an individual who is expected to obtain and provide updated information to the group.
- Informal leaders may emerge
 - Groups may “elect” the informal leader or “un-elect” them
 - Having an informal group leader that works well with the supervisor or manager may create a better relationship between the group and agency administration.
- Informal groups serve a function
 - Provide a sense of belonging
 - Provide an identity and self-esteem
 - Provide stress reduction
 - May help create a more cohesive team
- Informal groups can be the best or worst of an organization
 - Informal groups or dysfunctional teams may damage the reputation of the organization as well as its members.
 - Informal groups can be high performing teams that set the bar for the organization and inspire others within the agency to higher achievement.

In organizations where call taking and dispatching are separate job duties, Dispatchers may emerge as informal shift leaders by virtue of the job they are performing. Dispatchers may need to request additional information, resources, or tasks such as requests for phone calls. As the person who is managing multiple resources through the radio, they may have a significant impact on the team, and need to be aware of that.

A telecommunicator new to an organization must find a way to navigate through the waters of group and team dynamics. They are new to the organization as well as the shift, group or team and as such want to fit in. It will help to understand that groups go through a process that has stages or phases that help move them toward becoming a cohesive and productive work group.

In addition to understanding group/team and informal group dynamics, being part of a team means communicating with your coworkers both verbally and in writing, respectfully and clearly.

A large part of relationship management is the ability to recognize the emotions and needs of others and to communicate in a way that respects those things. High performing teams are also teams that communicate appropriately and well.

Stress Management & CISM

Again, we find that Stress Management falls both as a Skill and a Task (attend CISM debriefings). We devote most of a day to this topic later in the course. You will be provided a manual licensed from Mind Tools – we call it the Stress Management Master Class. Additionally, we will have a Chapter on CISM later in this resource guide in Unit 9.

Unit 1 Summary

The information provided to us by the high performing panels of Dispatchers around the country, provide a road map to us for training and skill acquisition. You can see the number of skills needed, just in the one identified duty of “Process Calls for Service”. You will also note that these skills transcend public safety disciplines. Both law and fire Dispatchers essentially need the same skill set and have virtually identical duties and tasks identified. This section of the curriculum has looked at the work of the high performing panels used to identify the knowledge, skills, traits, duties, and tasks of the job. We will also discuss the APCO ANS Telecommunicator Training Standard itself as we move through the subject matter in this course.

UNIT 2 – EQUIPMENT

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit, the participant will be able to:

- Understand the different public safety radio systems
 - Trunked
 - UHF
 - VHF
- List the different terms used to describe features of a public safety radio system
- Understand the different features of a CAD system and their uses

There are many different types of equipment the Dispatcher may be expected to use. The following is a brief overview of some of these equipment types.

Most pieces of equipment come with an Operations Manual. If these are not readily available, ask your supervisor for them. These manuals can be invaluable and may include the User's Guide for a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) program that gives a detailed description of the system and its use. Other documentation may be a manual on operation of the radio console and all of its features. Often, these manuals are placed in a filing drawer somewhere and, over time, people forget about the infrequently used features. Pictures and diagrams of pertinent features can be copied or scanned and used in Department Procedure Manuals.

Radio Consoles

A radio console (a Dispatcher's workstation) may have any number of features. Many agencies use computer-based radios where Dispatchers can move frequencies around a screen, select or un-select frequencies, key microphones, etc. with a mouse or touchscreen. Other agencies may use radio consoles with buttons for selection of frequencies, etc.

The Dispatcher is expected to know:

- Where all frequencies are located on the radio console position
- Primary and tactical frequencies or talk groups
- Secondary or multi-agency frequencies such as MARS, LERN, OSCCR, REDNET
- UHF/VHF frequencies vs. 800 MHz frequencies

Many public safety radios broadcast in the **VHF Hi-Band** range from approximately **145-159 MHz** (megahertz). Other frequencies operate at *UHF band*, between *450-470 MHz*. These bands may have limited access to new frequencies, which is why 800 MHz frequencies became attractive to public safety.

700 & 800 MHz frequencies may employ a "trunked" radio system. This system uses several frequencies. A transmission may be made on one frequency and received on another. This is transparent to the user. A group of users has radios that are programmed to particular "talk groups". There may be several talk groups on one system. Many different agencies can use the same group of frequencies without hearing each other because they are programmed for different talk groups. Trunked systems use a computerized controller that "searches" for an available frequency for the transmission. If there is no frequency available, the user will get a beep, indicating they need to stand-by. The radio will beep again when there is an available frequency. Trunked systems use fewer frequencies with higher efficiency. All channels are available for use all of the time, rather than low traffic channels going for hours without activity.

Call Signs - Call signs are a combination of letters and numbers that identify an agency's license to use a particular frequency. For instance, a frequency may have "KLB258" for an identifier. The Dispatcher needs to announce this identifier, on a base station authorized to use the frequency, within ten minutes of the top of the hour unless the frequency is equipped with an automatic identifier that electronically transmits the identifier. The *base radio* (station) is the radio unit a Dispatcher transmits and receives on from the center.

Monitoring - Dispatchers may be responsible for monitoring frequencies, even if it is not a frequency used by their own agency on a regular basis (such as LERN-Law Enforcement Radio Network). These frequencies need to be kept at a volume level where the Dispatcher could hear someone calling on the channel.

PL (Private Line – Motorola Brand Term) or **CG** (Channel Guard – G.E. Brand Term): Transmission must be on the right frequency and emit a tone that is recognized by the receiver and “allows” the transmission to be heard. This equipment helps eliminate “skip” interference. Occasionally, radio transmissions from agencies located some distance away may be received. This is referred to as **skip**. Atmospheric conditions, equipment, and proximity may play a part for skip to be heard. PL or CG systems require a tone, acting like a password that tells the receiver the signal is “authorized”, thereby activating the equipment. Transmissions (skip) from other agencies can be eliminated because they do not emit the required tone to activate the receiver. Blocked transmissions do not have to originate from a great distance; *any* radio without the proper tone will be unheard by the receiver and, thus, the Dispatcher.

Transmitters -The Dispatcher must have knowledge of the transmitter and repeater sites and which frequencies use this equipment. This will allow the Dispatcher to troubleshoot technical malfunctions and quickly decide on an alternative frequency during an outage.

Repeaters- receive a signal and then re-transmit it to other radios. The repeater gives the signal a boost in power so it will get to where it is directed. Portable or mobile radios may use different repeaters as they move through different geographical areas. A *mobile* radio is the radio unit installed in a vehicle. A *portable* radio is that which is carried and used by responders in the field. Know the range of each repeater and how to change to another repeater if necessary. **Voting receivers** are receivers that choose the strongest signal and relay that signal by surface line to the center.

Patching - is a feature that allows the Dispatcher to “patch” two radios together that do not share a common frequency. A patch is done from the console workstation and is normally for temporary use. Some other types of patches may be permanently programmed into the radio system.

Transmit Buttons - Most radio consoles have several transmit buttons. Most common are the foot pedal and button that can be pressed with the hand. Some systems use the computer mouse to “point” at a frequency icon and when the mouse button is pressed, the Dispatcher can transmit. Other systems use touch screens and when the icon is touched, the frequency is open.

Intercom Buttons – may be built in. This is where a Dispatcher can use the intercom to say something through their headset right into the headset and ear piece of another Dispatcher. This does not actually use a frequency.

Alert Tones - are sometimes used to precede a high priority voice dispatch. Each agency should have their own procedure on the use of the alert tones. The alert tones are activated from the console. The Dispatcher must know which buttons to use and the procedure for using them. A guideline for use of alert tones is discussed in a later unit of study.

Channel Marker Tones - may be activated from the console and are used to alert radio users that a particular channel is restricted for an emergency and that non-emergency traffic should not be broadcast at that time.

Routine Testing

Each system must be tested routinely. Every department should have a testing schedule to follow to ensure the system is functioning properly. These tests are logged and used as part of the documentation showing the system was properly maintained. Telephone systems, *including TTY* machines should also be tested on a regular basis and documentation kept.

CAD

Most **Computer Aided Dispatch** systems have a number of things in common. They have a “geofile” that tracks addressing in block ranges or by individual addresses for the entire geographic area served by the system. The system may then break down this geographic area into “beat patterns”, census tracts, or other areas. Addresses must be verified in order to get correct recommendations. Additionally, the system will have “call type” codes that may do several things, including determine call priority. These codes may also drive:

- Recommendations for speed of response
- Number and type of units - used extensively in fire dispatching – this is what determines the “run card”
- Position of the call on the active call screen
- When combined with the geofile and beat pattern/unit information may be able to recommend the units responsible for that beat or district based on availability. It may even determine which unit is more appropriate based on overlapping shifts
- Most systems allow the Dispatcher or call taker to override the priority of the call or the recommended response
- Systems with Automated Vehicle Location may recommend closest units in proximity of the incident

CAD systems often have features that may include:

- Mobile data terminals (MDTs)
- Mobile computer terminals (MCTs)
- Mobile data computers (MDCs)

Mobile data systems are computers located in responder’s vehicles that allow them to read and send information regarding calls. This equipment may also allow use of local CAD/RMS (records management systems) as well as ACCESS/WACIC/NCIC use. Responders can communicate with other users or Dispatchers to make requests, give updates, etc.

Other useful features may include:

EVENTS IN PROXIMITY

Shows the Dispatcher or call taker other calls which may be going on in the immediate area or which may be related to the call.

PREVIOUS EVENTS

Shows other calls for service to this address. Frequently used for officer safety issues or to determine what has gone on at an address in the past.

PREMISE

Gives specific information about a particular location. May include responder safety information or other information that may be used by police and fire agencies.

The last three features should be checked on every call, particularly when dealing with responder safety.

CAD systems have a number of different displays. Some use multiple terminals to display calls as well as unit status. Some have a large screen, split to show these same features. Almost all of them will have a display of events pending in order of priority and time. Displays of field units can be set in a number of different designs. These different displays allow the Dispatcher to select a call, display and read it, and may recommend units or responses based on information received.

Times are kept as to when the call came in, when it was first reviewed, dispatched, etc. With CAD, calls can be updated from other positions and with MDT's field units can also view any updated information. Some systems may also utilize AVL (Automatic Vehicle Location) systems that depict each unit's actual physical location within a given geographic area. Cad systems equipped to recognize AVL may recommend the unit that is physically closest to the call.

Something to remember is that **CAD is a tool**. There are times when CAD systems go down and the Dispatcher must be prepared to efficiently deal with calls for service. The workflow may be slightly different but the outcome should remain the same. You must meet the goal of getting responders to the location where they are needed in an efficient and timely manner. **Therefore, it is essential for those Dispatchers who work in a CAD-exclusive environment to clearly understand the process to be undertaken when the CAD system goes down.**

Be prepared to operate manually or to override any dispatch that is incorrectly categorized by the computer.

Manual Dispatch

Manual dispatch systems rely on a set of "run cards" or a computer printout. The printout identifies what department or units should be sent to a particular address. The Dispatcher must follow the specific protocol for that agency as to which units to notify or send to an event.

Call Check

Also known as playback equipment, this equipment allows a Dispatcher to listen to the last radio transmission or telephone call. The purpose of the call check is to assist the Dispatcher when transmissions may be difficult to hear or for the occasionally missed traffic. Beware of using the call check instead of asking a unit to repeat. It is easy to become distracted while playing back the transmission and miss even more radio traffic.

Criminal Justice Computers

To use systems such as ACCESS, WACIC, NCIC, and DOL each operator is required to attend certification classes at whatever level is appropriate for the type of work they will be doing. Some systems are built into the CAD environment while others operate from a separate terminal. It is essential that the Dispatcher knows and understands all the different information that is available through these systems and then be prepared to use that knowledge where appropriate.

Documentation from the ACCESS system may also be retrievable and due to the sensitive nature of the information, anything needing to be disposed of should be shredded or disposed of in a manner consistent with ACCESS requirements.

Unit 2 – Equipment – Summary

The equipment used by Dispatchers in a communications agency is as varied as the number of agencies represented. It is the duty of Dispatchers to learn to use all equipment to a minimum degree of proficiency or better. Part of that knowledge involves understanding the capabilities of the equipment. Effective Dispatchers keep up with the technology in their centers. When there are upgrades to equipment, find out what features may be new or improved.

Know your agency policies about required activities involving equipment such as checking of persons or plates, checking premise or history files or other tools available to you through your equipment.

UNIT 3 – PHRASING AND TERMINOLOGY

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit, the participant will be able to:

- Understand the different phrasing and terminology used in law enforcement and fire radio dispatching
- Describe when radio traffic should be repeated or asked to be repeated
- List the essential information a dispatcher can gather and relay on a medical request
- List the components of an EMS system “tiered response”

Law Enforcement Terminology

Law enforcement personnel use their own vernacular. In addition to the acronyms used in everyday speech (DUI, FTA, ATL, etc.), there are commonly accepted words or phrases used on the radio that vary from everyday speech. These terms may be used for several reasons.

- A one syllable word may be replaced with a longer word so it is not “cut off” or “clipped” if the transmit button is not depressed long enough.
 - An example of this is “Affirmative” for yes and “Negative” for no.
 - The word “I” is generally not used. Dispatchers usually do not refer to themselves in the first person. Instead of “I’ll check”, the Dispatcher says, “Check and advise” or “Checking”.
 - “Please”, “thank you”, and “you’re welcome” are not normally used on the radio. They are considered superfluous. Politeness can be inferred in the voice tone by a professional demeanor.
 - Some other common phrases used in radio communications:

<u>COMMON PHRASE</u>	<u>PROFESSIONAL PHRASE</u>
Drunk	Intoxicated
Get	Obtain
Going	En-route
Can’t	Unable
Yes	Affirmative
No	Negative
Chase	Pursuit
Go	Proceed
Help	Assistance (unless officer needs <i>help</i>)
Tell	Advise
Broken down	Disabled
Dead body	Fatality/DOA
Dope	Narcotics
Don’t know	Unknown
Understood	Received/Copy
Refuses	Declines
Obnoxious	Uncooperative, irate

Sometimes, a word, phrase, or abbreviation is used, even if it is not grammatically correct in the sentence. For example, “The subject is HBD” may be used, although you would not say “The subject **is has** been drinking”.

Other terminology that a Dispatcher must be familiar with is the use of “call types” that reflect crimes. A Dispatcher must know the difference between a theft and a burglary. They must be able to recognize the difference between types of crime.

24-Hour/Military Time

Public safety agencies routinely use twenty-four hour time to denote hour of day. Twenty-four hour time begins at midnight, 0000 hours, ending at 23:59 hours. Noon is denoted as 1200 hours, all

subsequent time between noon and 11:59 PM. is the hour plus 12 hours. 3:00 PM. is 1500 hours; 7:45 PM. is 19:45 hours, etc.

Plain Language vs. 10 Codes

Many agencies use some of both plain language and 10 codes. The important point to make here is that if 10 codes are used, they should be used per the policy of the department, either consistently or not at all. Unfortunately, there are agencies that use a little of each, which can make it difficult for the Dispatcher and responder to understand. It is especially difficult for those people who have had little exposure to the 10-code system.

There are pros and cons with each type of usage, but for those agencies only using the occasional 10-code, it is imperative the Dispatcher understand which 10-codes may be used.

DO NOT use 10-code references when dealing with another agency. If another agency uses a 10-code reference, confirm you understand its meaning. DO NOT use 10-codes when in a Unified Incident Command System event with multiple agencies or disciplines (e.g., law enforcement, fire and EMS responders).

Obviously, the most important of these will be the "**officer needs help**" phrases or those which pertain to responder safety such as notification of felony wanted subjects, stolen vehicles, etc. For new employees, always maintain a copy of the 10-code at hand, even if many of the codes are not commonly used. This is to ensure that you are able to understand a responder who, in a time of stress, may revert to a previous system of language (10-codes).

For the agencies employing a 10-code, use it as it was designed, for brevity. Beware of redundant phrasing like, "10-8, in service" (if your agency's "10-8" means in service).

Special Terms and Phrases

Responder Safety Terms or Codes

- Agencies may expect the Dispatcher to assign response codes to calls, such as Code 1 for routine calls, Code 2 to respond as quickly as possible, but less than emergent and Code 3, respond using full emergency response, lights, sirens. Agencies define these terms differently so be mindful when using these codes when speaking with other departments. Other agencies may use a word identifier for response codes such as Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta responses. Alpha would signal an emergency response and Delta would be the lowest priority.
- Most agencies have a designated "**sensitive radio traffic to follow**" code that is used to alert a field unit of important, responder safety information. Some of these may be a 10-code type of notification, while others may use a phrase such as the agency name before the field unit's number. For an example, the Dispatcher would say, "Dispatch Oakville PD Unit 23" to signal dangerous/sensitive radio traffic, when normally they would have said "Dispatch, Unit 23".

• **When any dangerous/sensitive radio traffic signal is given, the Dispatcher should wait for a response from the field unit before giving the responder safety information.** The field unit may be too close to the suspect and not able to get the information without the suspect hearing the radio. **Know how and when to signal a field unit of dangerous radio traffic.** When in doubt, you can confirm by saying "Confirm you're clear to copy?"

• **ASK FOR A REPEAT** if you only get a mic click. The field unit could have meant to say "standby". Mic clicks should be verified **ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.**

• Field units may also signal you that they need assistance but are not able to explain the reason on the radio. This may be in the form of a code or phrase. *If this code is used, it is*

the Dispatcher's responsibility to make sure help is dispatched to the officer needing assistance.

- For requests such as "**send back-up**", a Dispatcher must know what the agency expects that back up to be. The Dispatcher may need to clarify what assistance is needed if there is no set procedure. How many additional units are needed? At what level do they need to respond?

- When a responder asks for "**help**", what response is expected? How many units? What levels of response? Does a call for help require a supervisory notification? What emergency tone procedure might you use? Are there differences for the fire service in your area?

- Responder *emergency button* responses – may be a button on the mobile, portable radio, or MDT which when activated, sends an alert or alarm signal to the dispatch center. Agency procedures may differ on acknowledgement and response to these alarms so refer to your department procedures and be prepared to respond appropriately.

- Does your agency respond with a dangerous-situation code word or phrase for you to notify other responders of the emergency activation?
- Are you expected to confirm the status with the unit?
- Do you switch all other units to another frequency or talk group?
- Do you announce the emergency activation over the primary frequency?

Fire/EMS Terminology

Fire Terminology

As with law enforcement, the fire service uses a vernacular specific to its operation. At the end of this section, there is a glossary of terms and phrases that will be discussed. NOTE: Not all of these terms are used in every agency, but they are included here for information.

Fire terminology as it relates to the Incident Command and National Incident Management Systems, will be discussed later, in those sections.

In addition, there may be some differences in terms from law enforcement terminology such as:

FIRE TERM

AOB (alcohol on Breath)
 Run or alarm (call for service)
 Obvious/DOA
 Patient

LAW ENFORCEMENT TERM

HBD (has been drinking)
 Call (for service)
 DOA/Fatality
 Victim

- **Abandon** – immediately exit the structure or area without regard to equipment or hose lines. This may be due to an imminent collapse or other emergency that may endanger the health and safety of responders.
- **A. F. F. F. (A-Triple F)** – Aqueous Film-Forming Foam – acts as a vapor excluder when used on flammable liquid fires.
- **Apparatus** – Motor driven fire-fighting equipment.
- **Attack Line** – Hose taken by fire fighters for primary fire suppression.
- **Automatic Aid** – When two or more agencies have an agreement that they will respond to all or certain types of incidents automatically within a given service area. Often, automatic aid is written into the run card. Automatic aid is not the same thing as mutual aid. Automatic aid is part of the original dispatch while mutual aid must be requested.
- **Battalion** – Unit comprised of several fire companies and commanded by a chief officer.
- **Battalion Chief** – The command officer in charge of several companies.
- **Blind Alley** – Term used by first units on a scene to advise incoming units that they will be leaving hose at the entrance to the fire scene for hook-up.

- **Call Back**- Process of recalling off-duty full-time fire fighters.
- **CAMEO** – CAMEO is a computer program and database that provides first responder information about chemical incidents.
- **Class A Fire** – Fires fueled by wood, paper, rubber, or plastic.
- **Class B Fire** – Fires fueled by flammable liquids, greases and gases.
- **Class C Fire** – Fire involving energized electrical equipment.
- **Class D Fire** – Fires involving combustible metals such as magnesium, titanium, zirconium, sodium, and potassium.
- **Class K Fire** – Fires involving appliances used in cooking that ignite via a combustible medium such as cooking oil, fats, or alcohol.
- **Evacuate** - Remove occupants of a structure or area.
- **Evolution** – A standard method of operating. Details of the proper action and teamwork necessary to accomplish the task. Hose Evolutions: different hose lays.
- **Exposures** – Materials or structures near a fire that are in jeopardy of being damaged due to fire, heat, or smoke.
- **Extension** – Spread of fire, usually during the course of firefighting operations, as extension of fire through open partitions into the attic, walls, or crawl space.
- **Halon** – Colorless, odorless gas used to extinguish fires in materials and equipment that might be damaged or destroyed by other fire fighting agents. It works by displacing oxygen.
- **Initial Report** – Similar to the “Size-Up” or on-scene report, it is transmitted by the first arriving company giving address, conditions, course of actions, and support needed from other responders.
- **Lay** – The way in which a hose is placed between the apparatus and/or hydrant/water source.
- **Laying In** – Fire fighters connect a hose to a hydrant while the engine continues on toward the scene
- **Master stream activation** – To alert personnel on scene that a master stream will be activated and clear the area.
- **Mutual Aid** – Reciprocal agreement in which each member is prepared to give assistance to parties of the agreement without charges being rendered. *Advantages with mutual aid agreements are that smaller agencies can augment their resources when needed and their personnel can gain experience when they reciprocate and respond to other jurisdictions to assist on larger incidents.*
- **NFPA** – National Fire Protection Association.
- **Overhaul** – The process during suppression of a fire involving discovery of hidden fires or smoldering materials.
- **PASS device** – a safety device attached to a firefighter that detects motion and emits a loud alarm when the unit fails to detect movement for a designated period of time.
- **Passport System** – a system of on-scene accountability that uses name tags, passports, helmet shields and status boards to track assignments and individuals at a scene.
- **Pre-connect** – A hose that is already connected to the engine plumbing and ready for use when the pump is engaged.
- **Pump Can/PW-P Can** – Pressurized water fire extinguisher.
- **Quick Attack** – Fire suppression attack made with a pre-connected hose line with or without a hydrant supply line, for purpose of rescue, exposure protection or confinement of a fire.
- **RIT (Rapid Intervention Team)** –required by WAC in WA state - a team of firefighters that serve as a standby rescue team for personnel at a scene. They are assembled and ready to conduct immediate search and rescue for firefighting personnel.
- **Roll call** – An accounting of all personnel on the scene.
- **Run Card** – A card or computer entry showing fire company assignment for a given response by location and type of incident.
- **S. C. B. A.** – Self-contained breathing apparatus.
- **Salvage** – Tarping/moving operation to reduce damage to goods and materials involved in the incident.
- **Tap/Tapped Fire** – Fire is under control.
- **Ventilation** – Introduction of air to remove heated or toxic gasses, e.g., by removing windows, doors, or opening a hole in the roof.
- **Withdraw** - Due to a change in strategy, directing personnel to exit the structure or area taking equipment and hose lines.

Other terms, phrases, and descriptions are listed in the glossary at the end of this section.

EMS Terminology

First Responders: First Responders are used to provide immediate response to events determined to be highly urgent. These persons are often trained in basic life support and provide immediate treatment or stabilization of the patient. Law enforcement personnel will often times have First Responder certification.

Basic Life Support (BLS): Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) generally staff Basic Life Support units. EMT training encompasses at least 110 hours and skills include CPR, defibrillation, fracture stabilization, wound care, extrication, and rescue. EMT's provide treatment and transport for the sick and injured in cases where more advanced treatments and interventions are not required or available. They may also assist more advanced level EMS responders.

Intermediate Life Support (ILS): Intermediate life support units have personnel with additional training in airway management and the administering of intravenous solutions. ILS Technician training includes an additional 80-100 hours.

Advanced Life Support (ALS): Advanced Life Support unit paramedics have from 400-600 hours of advanced level training (1000+ total hours of training). Paramedics respond to the most life threatening emergencies. They provide advanced life saving skills such as IV therapy, airway management, drugs and medications and field surgical procedures. All levels of advanced life support function under medical control and have a physician advisor to whom they are responsible.

ALS resources are expensive to establish, staff, and equipment. Most municipalities have limited resources with fewer ALS units than BLS resources. The EMS Dispatcher can begin to determine which patients require BLS resources rather than ALS resources conserving ALS resources for appropriate responses.

Air Medical Services: Many EMS systems have air medical support available if needed. These are usually hospital-based with teams of physicians and flight nurses specially trained in the medical or surgical services. These resources save time in the most severe cases where transport time to the hospital may be the determining factor in patient survival. They may be a critical response in remote areas where EMS ground transport units have difficult access. **MAST (Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic)** is an air transport and rescue service provided by military helicopters.

In order for a helicopter to land, they may require a **Landing Zone (LZ)**. Some landing zones are pre-arranged sites; for others the fire department at the scene makes the determination.

EMS Resources: Your agency will have several resources available to assist EMS. Included in these resources may be a "Crisis Clinic", a 24-hour psychological and emotional call screening and referral service; Poison Control, a 24-hour data bank with information pertaining to poison, drugs, bites, etc.; and Chemtrec, a 24-hour resource for information regarding hazardous materials.

Specialty Hospitals: You should become familiar with specialty hospitals that your EMS units may be transporting to depending on the illness or injury of the patient. Where is the regional trauma center? Burn center? Pediatric emergency center? High-risk obstetrics center? Hyperbaric chamber (pressurized oxygen-enriched environment)?

Common Terminology Used in EMD Programs

Tiered Response: This is a layered response using several components to deliver the EMS system. It refers to the level of care provided.

- The citizen who calls 9-1-1 and performs CPR or basic first aid at the scene
- The call taker who quickly assesses the problem and dispatches aid and offers pre-arrival instructions
- BLS units which respond to every reported emergency
- ALS units which respond to the most life threatening medical emergencies

Triage: (French word for “sorting”) occurs when resources are prioritized by determining severity of calls from most critical to least critical, knowing the availability of personnel, supplies and equipment and knowing unit ETA’s (estimated time of arrival).

Response Mode: Refers to the speed at which aid crews respond to the patient. Are they responding with lights and siren or not, based on the urgency of the illness or injury.

Chief Complaint: This is the most significant illness or injury complaint that the patient is reporting.

Pre-Arrival Instructions (PAI): After determining the initial response, the PAIs are simple first aid instructions given to the caller. These receive approval by the medical program director. The EMD offers PAIs after dispatching units. They have a psychological benefit for both the caller and the telecommunicator. The caller may be able to provide some type of assistance to the patient. The Call Taker may be able to help the patient by providing assistance while units respond to the scene. There are also scripted emergency telephone instructions for Cardiac Arrest, Choking, Unconscious Patients and Childbirth, which lead you through a scripted narrative that can be delivered to the caller, literally teaching them to do these skills on the phone.

Agencies without EMD Programs

There are agencies that dispatch EMS responders to medical calls who do not operate within an Emergency Medical Dispatch Program or list of protocols. There are other agencies that only dispatch law enforcement and do not normally take EMS calls, but **may get requests from field units for an EMS response**. For Call Takers or Dispatchers taking calls or requests for medical assistance within these agencies, there is a minimum amount of information that should be obtained whenever possible. This is the information that may allow EMS personnel to generate the appropriate medical response based on information. One way this information is useful is in the situation where a law enforcement unit makes a request for a medical response. If the information below is relayed to the emergency medical Dispatcher so that EMS personnel receiving the call may be able to formulate the appropriate resource and personnel response. This information includes:

- **Location** - (address) of the patient and location of the patient within a premise (include call back telephone number)
- **Chief Complaint** – the primary medical problem. What symptom or medical problem caused the caller to call? If this is an accident patient, what was the **mechanism of injury** (i.e., head-on accident, car/pedestrian accident, etc.)?
- **Status of Consciousness** (is the patient conscious and aware, have a decreased level of consciousness or is the patient unconscious). IF the patient is unconscious, then:

- **Status of Breathing (is the patient breathing “normally” or not)**

- **Age/Gender of patient – only if readily available**

As with any emergency call, the caller should be instructed to call back **if the status of the patient or anything at the scene changes**

UNIT 3 – Phrasing & Terminology Summary- Summary

Fire and Law Enforcement disciplines have their own vernacular. Dispatchers need to know those terms in order to do the job.

Likewise, knowledge of common phrasing and terminology used by the various public safety disciplines makes for a better Dispatcher. It is critical for a law enforcement-only Dispatcher to understand the minimum pieces of information a fire/EMS Dispatcher needs to generate the proper medical response to a request.

The more we know about how other disciplines operate the better prepared we are to work together on calls requiring dual responses.

Sources:

Washington State Dept. of Health – Emergency Medical Dispatch Protocol Reference System recommendations

Notes;

Notes:

UNIT 4 – RESPONDER SAFETY

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit participants will be able to:

- List issues that should be considered responder safety issues
- Describe the steps a dispatcher can take to develop a responder safety mindset

Dispatcher Responsibilities in Responder Safety ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME

Dispatchers *do* have a significant role in the safety of responding units. The following types of information should be broadcast to ensure responder safety. For fire service personnel, responder safety issues like the following should generate a law enforcement response as well to secure the scene.

Responder Safety Issues

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weapons - information on all weapons used, implied, or threatened. This includes the location of the weapon such as in a pocket, waistband, vehicle, or just having access to a weapon.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assaultive or threatening behavior - advise responders if an assault has occurred or if someone is threatening assault or harm.• Officer safety files - information from the caller or from a computer file such as a ¹records management system (RMS) showing previous complaints or current threats against officers or other responders.• CAD - some CAD systems offer features that may allow a Dispatcher to locate information helpful to responder safety:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Premise information files - in a CAD system, there may be responder safety information entered regarding a specific address. <i>These files should be checked ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.</i>• Previous event/history file. This feature may allow a Call Taker to check a specific address for information about previous calls. Previous calls of domestic or other types of violence or assault, drug activity, warrant arrests, etc. can be provided to responders.• Events in proximity file. This file may allow you to see what other calls are going on in the area. This may allow the Call Taker to see related events or catch a duplication of the call being entered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alcohol or drug use - advise responding units if any parties in the call are under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.• Time lapse - calls are prioritized differently based on if they are in-progress, just occurred or are "cold".• Other agency response - if another agency is responding in an emergency mode into the area, units should be advised.• Be aware of events occurring in proximity of a call. They could be related. If other emergency apparatus or personnel are responding into an area where a field unit has been dispatched, then so advise, even if they are responding on an unrelated incident.• Warrant, stolen vehicle, or WACIC/NCIC officer safety/caution flags - as the call information is being obtained and dispatched, checks should be made on names of parties involved in the incident and license plate numbers of vehicles. This information should be given to responders.• Provide vehicle description - using the CYMBALS format. The full vehicle description should be obtained and broadcast along with the last known direction of travel, time lapse,

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Release or broadcast of records or criminal history information via the radio - Information transmitted by law enforcement radio communication, even though it may be monitored by civilians with scanners, about a person's arrest and/or conviction record, is probably not covered by the RCW (RCW 10.97.030(8)) which addresses dissemination of arrest or criminal history information. This means the communication is viewed as within a criminal justice agency as long as it is pertinent, such as in a current warrant, a case already filed and still in process, a conviction or current arrest information, or information pertinent to the safety and security of the police and the public.

and possible destination. For fire/EMS responders, information on vehicles may be relayed if there is a responder safety issue or if needed to identify a patient location or other pertinent information.

- **Suspect description** - using the head to toe, outside-in format. This information should be relayed to fire/EMS responders as well if there is a potential danger to them from a suspect. Fire/EMS responders can use this information to watch for a suspect somewhere around the area and take appropriate steps to avoid a confrontation.
- **Suspicious activity** – update responders of any suspicious activity the suspect may be engaged in such as trying door handles, looking in vehicles, hiding behind bushes, looking at something through binoculars, etc.
- **Warning broadcasts** - for fire personnel, this may include master stream activations, or repeating an IC order to evacuate or abandon a site.
- **Other information** - this may include alarm location information (back door motion), responsible party information, and information found in **previous event/history files**. These files, often available in CAD systems, list previous calls at a specific location. If available, *these files should be checked on every incident.*

Responder Safety Begins with Dispatcher Awareness, ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME

Dispatchers *must* take an active role in responder safety. The following is a list of steps a Dispatcher may take to increase responder safety.

- Make sure that you are **FULLY BRIEFED** before assuming the radio console. Know where every unit is, what types of calls they are on, which units will need status checks, and calls that may require further assistance or other units. Have a responder safety attitude when you take responsibility for the console. Likewise, **BRIEF YOUR RELIEF DISPATCHER IN FULL**. If necessary, make a note of important incident numbers or other information for the person relieving you. Let them know how long calls have been holding and why. *Brief your relief in the manner you expect to be briefed.*

- Know **WHICH UNITS ARE ASSIGNED** in every area. Know who is assigned to special details or are unavailable. Account for any specialized units.

- **LOOK THROUGH EACH ACTIVE AND PENDING CALL**. Note how long the field unit has been out on the call, do they need a status check? Check pending calls that have not been assigned. How long have the calls been holding? (Holding calls will be covered later). Is it your policy to call the reporting party back and explain the delay?

LISTEN TO THE FIELD UNIT AND BACKGROUND NOISES - Know the "Officer or firefighter needs assistance" phrases, codes, or signals and how to respond to them if they are used. Know what to do if a field unit requests additional units or requests assistance from an outside agency. Listen to background noise. There may be indication help is needed, but the actual voice message cannot be heard because of the loud background noise. If you are not able to confirm with the field unit whether or not they need additional units, send them anyway. Always err on the side of responder safety.

- **CHECK WACIC/NCIC/DOL** on all license plates stopped or logged by law enforcement personnel. Be prepared to provide that information if asked. Check the RMS on registered owner, drivers or field contacts, when and if the circumstances warrant it, such as calls involving weapons, assault (including domestic violence), felony crimes, suspicious activity, vehicles or persons, etc.

- Keep in mind any **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES** such as a potential for hazardous materials involvement, etc. Keep field units informed of any of this type of information.

- **DUAL RESPONSES-** (law & fire) **make sure that responding fire personnel are aware of any need to stage away from the scene** for safety purposes until the scene has been secured by law enforcement. Make fire responders aware of any drugs, alcohol, weapons, assaultive or threatening behaviors, potential hazards or animals. **Make sure law enforcement responders are made aware of any Hazmat, fire or other fire-EMS related issues.**

- **Read all updates in a timely manner.**

- **TIMELY UPDATING** of responders about rapidly changing events. If an updated call contains information potentially affecting the safety of responders, that information should be appropriately relayed to responders as soon as possible. **KNOW WHEN YOUR CALL HAS BEEN UPDATED BY SOMEONE ELSE AND READ THE UPDATE.**

- **CHECK UNIT STATUS-** Know your agency's policy on status checking field units. The following is a *general guideline* of common practice on status checks. This information may be helpful to update or add to your policies and procedures. This includes checking the status of fire/EMS units based on policy, particularly if they are in a situation where they may be endangered.

If you do not receive acknowledgement from a unit on a status check, be prepared to send another unit to check their status. **Do not accept a mike click as an answer to a status check.**

Be aware of areas where portable radios may not work. The officer, firefighter, or EMS responder may have to get back to the vehicle to use the car radio or telephone in order to answer.

- **BE ATTENTIVE** to all events occurring. Attentiveness will give a Dispatcher a much better understanding of what the appropriate action will be to insure the safety of the responder and the public.

UNIT 4-Responder Safety Summary

The same conditions that raise the priority of a call, also make up our list of types of information that need to be gathered and relayed to responders.

Attentiveness to responder safety issues is an attitude and a behavior. It often ties into our agency mission, values and goal statements and is critical customer service issue. Dispatchers can make a significant difference in responder safety **ON EVERY CALL EVERY TIME.**

Notes:

UNIT 5 – DISPATCH METHODS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit, participants will:

- Understand how to format a call
- Describe the mobile call up procedure described in the course
- Understand the information provided on alert tones and channel markers
- List ways described in the course, to manage the radio during pursuits or high-risk calls
- Understand the law enforcement officer-involved domestic violence model policy discussed in the class
- Describe terms used in active shooter events
- Define building locations as used in active shooter events

Formatting the Call

Although calls may have different details, there is a standardized method for formatting calls for dispatching that should be used each time. Using standardized guidelines lessens the chance of information being omitted. The basic format is:

- Determine the type of call and level of response needed
- Determine the priority based on information in the incident compared with other incidents active or pending
- Determine field units to be assigned
- Use mobile call-up procedures to notify units of the assignment
- Wait for acknowledgement from assigned units
- Provide responders with details of the incident
- Receive acknowledgement from responding units
- Sign off/close the transmission with unit ID or the time

Prioritize - pending calls based on:

- Emergency vs. non-emergency

Determine which unit(s) to send - based on the priority and type of call; determine which field unit(s) will be assigned. Determining how many units to assign may depend upon the following factors:

- Previous history of events with parties or at location
- All of the factors in determining priority listed on the preceding page

Mobile call-up procedure - once the responders have been determined, use a “**mobile call-up**” procedure (also may be called the “**initial dispatch**”), and format the call. There are three commonly used call-up procedures:

- Identify yourself first and then the mobile unit:
 - “Dispatch [to] 3S8” or “Radio [to] Oakville 34”
- Identify the unit you are calling and then yourself:
 - “3S8, Dispatch” or “Oakville 34, Radio”
- Only identify the unit number, not yourself:

- “3S8” or “Oakville 34”
- In the mobile call-up, the **type of call** should also be given. This will allow the field unit to prepare to copy the information they are about to receive. They should be able to determine the incident priority and level **of response** by the information provided in the initial dispatch. Some agencies also give the location and/or business name of the call in the call up procedures for high priority incidents.

Dispatch: “[Unit(s)], armed robbery just occurred at Washington Mutual, 1st and Main”.

- After calling the field unit, the Dispatcher waits for an **acknowledgement** before beginning the details of the call. This acknowledgement means the field unit is prepared to receive the information. Use of acknowledgement lessens the need to repeat information on calls. Agency policy may dictate that when dispatching units to major crimes, such as a robbery in-progress, that the Dispatcher directed the broadcast to all units, therefore, requiring no unit acknowledgement before continuing with the dispatch. Agency policies and practices will prevail, however, *consistency* in use of the practice is needed.
- After acknowledging the field unit, the Dispatcher proceeds with the “body” or **details** of the call also called the **SHORT REPORT**. The broadcast provides the details of the call in a uniform manner. The Dispatcher quickly organizes those details before dispatching the call. For example, if the suspect has left in a vehicle, it is more logical to broadcast the vehicle description before the person description. Remember to pause approximately every 15-20 seconds so anyone needing to broadcast emergency radio traffic can do so.

“Respond to 17243 NE 23 Pl., Mrs. Smith, regarding a suspicious male last seen 5 ago walking northbound from her residence on the west side of the street. Described as a WMA early 20’s, medium height and weight, blond hair, LSW white t-shirt, jeans. Subject was in the caller’s yard. She thought she saw him hide something in a shrub on the north property line in front of the house. She has not gone outside and is requesting contact. Contact Mrs. Smith.”

- After the details of the call are given, the field unit should once again **acknowledge** the Dispatcher. This could be done by the field unit saying

Responder: “[Unit(s)] enroute to [location]” or
Responder: “[unit ID] copy”.

For in-progress or just-occurred calls, the Dispatcher may say there is more information forthcoming and call the unit when that information is available.

- When the call has been given and no more details are immediately forthcoming, the **transmission should be signed off or ended**. This can be accomplished by having the Dispatcher repeat the unit number and then give the time:

Dispatcher: “3S8, 10:53”

Additionally, stating the responding unit number may end the transmission. Some agencies also close out a call by announcing the FCC identifier for the frequency.

Holding Calls

Know your agency’s policy on holding calls. Some agencies allow holding calls, but only for a certain amount of time before the Dispatcher must consult with the shift commander for further direction. Some details to consider when outlining a policy or procedure for holding calls:

- Types of calls that can be held, what is their priority?
- Time limit for holding
- Whom should the Dispatcher consult when the time is up?

- Should the Dispatcher assign the call to a different district unit?
 - After how long?
- Should a return call be made to the reporting party explaining the delay? Who will make this call (Dispatcher, call taker, supervisor)?
- What should be done with high priority calls when the district unit is not available?

Use of Alert or Emergency Tones

Alert tones should be used on law enforcement calls that indicate an immediate threat to life or on other calls as dictated by agency policy. Some examples of calls where alert tones may precede the dispatch:

- Sexual Assault/Rape in-progress or just-occurred
- Robbery
- Serious injury traffic accidents
- Mass Casualty Incidents
- Assault with weapons
- Riots or large fights
- Burglaries in-progress
- Officer needs assistance
- Any situation where there may be lives endangered

Closing or Restricting the Frequency

Closing or restricting the frequency is an option that Dispatchers, field units, or supervisors may choose on high priority or dangerous calls.

Again, agency policies may differ, but a guideline to follow when closing or restricting frequencies is that the Dispatcher should announce on all frequencies that the particular channel is closed or restricted for all but the emergency incident. The Dispatcher should also announce where field units not involved in the emergency should direct their traffic. If units not involved in the emergency use the frequency, the Dispatcher should advise of the restriction and/or advise the unit to switch to a secondary frequency. Once the emergency abates and the frequency is re-opened, the Dispatcher should announce on all channels the re-opening of the restricted frequency. If in doubt whether the restricted channel should be re-opened, the Dispatcher may verify whether to un-restrict the frequency with the incident commander or person in charge of the event.

Channel Marker Tones

Some agencies use channel marker tones rather than voice announcements to advise of a frequency closure or restriction. This marker is an intermittent "beep" on the channel. A voice transmission overrides the beeping. This beep indicates the channel is ***not clear for non-emergency radio traffic.***

You may hear these channel marker tones or beeps on LERN or other frequencies that you monitor, even if you do not have the capability of activating them.

Examples of Dispatches– This is "The Dance"

The following are examples of different ways to dispatch specific calls.

Burglary report:

Dispatch: "Dispatch 3A6, burglary report"
Field Unit: "3A6"
Dispatch: "1419 Midland Ave, occurred over weekend"
Field Unit: "3A6, copy"
Dispatch: "3A6, 10:23"

OR

Dispatch: "3A6, Burglary report"
Field Unit: "3A6, go ahead"
Dispatch: "Burglary report at 1419 Midland Ave. Contact Mr. Harris, reference a burglary to residence that occurred sometime over the weekend."
Field Unit: "3A6, received, contact Mr. Harris, be enroute".
Dispatch: "3A6, 10:23"

Burglary in-progress:

Dispatch: "Dispatch Robert 48 and a unit to back, burglary in-progress, 1010 W. Washington, Wood's Lumber Yard"
Field Unit: "Robert 48"
Field Unit: "Robert 65"
Dispatch: "Copy Robert 65 to back"
Dispatch: "Robert 48, Robert 65, burglary in-progress, 1010 W. Washington, Wood's Lumber Yard. A neighbor reports two male subjects entered the side office window 3-5 minutes ago and sees a vehicle parked outside of the fenced compound. Descriptions: (pause for acknowledgement)"
Field Units: "Robert 48, Robert 65"
Dispatch: "Suspect #1, a W/M 20's wearing dark clothing and carrying a dark duffel bag. #2, a B/M, wearing a light colored jacket and dark pants. Vehicle, break"
Dispatch: "Vehicle, a dark colored, older two door parked on west side just outside fence. R/P unsure if vehicle is associated with suspects, but does not recognize it from area."
Field Unit: "Robert 48, in the area"
Field Unit: "Robert 65, 2 minutes away, coming in from the west".

It is appropriate in the above example to advise responders that a witness is still on the telephone providing updated information. Likewise, if the caller/witness is no longer on the telephone, advise responders.

High-Risk Calls

Pursuits

Pursuits are usually initiated by field units and involve either vehicle or foot pursuits. The Dispatcher is required to document the location, where it began, the direction of travel, speed, and other information.

After a field unit advises he/she is in pursuit, Dispatchers should:

- **Repeat that the unit is in pursuit, the location and direction of travel.**
- **Close the air.**
- **Repeat only critical information** such as occasional updated locations and direction of travel or information such as weapons, items thrown from the vehicle, etc. The information repeated should be what other responders will need to know, particularly if the pursuing unit is difficult to understand. *Agency policies prevail.* Repeating of information is often based on clarity of transmissions and effectiveness of radio systems. Your agency policy or practice as well as clarity of the transmission or the ability of other responders to receive the transmission, may dictate how often information is repeated by the Dispatcher.
- If a license number is given, **check the vehicle for stolen and registration** – advise pursuing units that the information is available.
- **If a stolen hit is received, advise pursuing units** using the *dangerous radio traffic* signal, of an *unconfirmed* stolen vehicle hit. Confirm the stolen status as soon as possible.
- **Notify the shift supervisor.**
- **Notify surrounding agencies if applicable.**

- **Maintain a log** either in CAD or by hand of all changes, times and information given by pursuing units.
- **Prepare for a request for a K9 and handler or other resources.**
- **Document the location of units on containment and check their status periodically.**
- **Prepare for an EMS request** in case of an accident.
- **Prepare for felony or high-risk stop** procedure.

High-Risk or Felony Traffic Stops

There may be any number of situations occurring that will require a felony stop procedure from field units. These may include armed robbery, stolen vehicles, eluding, or any felony crime.

During these stops, field units may not be able to give updates or status checks while they initiate the stop and remove people from the vehicle. Upon notification that a felony stop will be made the unit should advise dispatch of the number of persons in the vehicle. The Dispatcher should send back up to the unit, which equals at least one more field unit than the number of persons in the vehicle. While agency policy prevails, it is recommended that the air be closed or frequency restricted.

Each individual will be removed from the vehicle one at a time. A general rule of thumb is to expect it to take at least five minutes per person. During this time, a field unit may not be able to respond to queries about status. If possible, a second or third unit arriving at the scene should update dispatch.

Upon receiving notification that the scene has been secured, the frequency should be opened.

Assault or Domestic Violence Calls

The determination to use alert tones will be made based on the nature of the assault. Any assault where weapons are used or threatened may be preceded by alert tones. These include assaults with weapons or any call where there is a threat to life.

While department policy may vary, most agencies will require a minimum of a two-officer response on most assaults. In cases of life threatening assaults such as those involving guns, knives, or other weapons, more units may be recommended.

Example:

Dispatch: "Dispatch 213, 243, and 205, assault with a firearm just occurred at 7320 Darden Blvd.
Field units: All acknowledge.
Dispatch: "Units responding, suspect in the shooting described as an Asian male, early 20's, 507, 140, black hair, wearing dark jacket and pants. Was involved in a verbal altercation with the victim in front of this address. Suspect pulled a handgun out of a jacket pocket and shot the victim at least twice. Was last seen running westbound on Darden toward 73rd Avenue in the last three minutes. Aid unit enroute, they will be staging at 75th and Darden until scene is secure, break"

Break to allow any unit with emergency traffic to transmit then continue:

Dispatch "Witnesses on the scene say the suspect may be Joe Young. Has been known to drive a white 1992 Honda civic with tinted windows. This vehicle was not actually observed, information only"

OR

Dispatch: "213, 243 copy a domestic violence in-progress at the Claremont Apartments, 832 NE Main #242."
Field Units: All acknowledge.

Dispatch: "A possible physical DV 832 NE Main #242. Caller can hear a male and female yelling. Heard a loud thump against an adjoining wall and then heard crying. Show two previous DVs at that location since October.

Domestic violence and assault calls require the Dispatcher to update responding units as new information becomes available. This may include any information regarding on-going assault, persons leaving the scene, injuries, weapons, use of alcohol or drugs, or any information related to responder safety. Information about movement of any of the participants and full vehicle and physical description should be relayed, as they become available.

Domestic violence and assault calls elicit serious responder safety concerns. The status of responders who have arrived at the scene should be checked periodically. Checking on the units between 5-10 minutes of arrival also appraises other units of the status of the call and responders at the scene.

If asked to confirm protection order information, make sure the information given is correct. Confirm with an outside agency that the order has been *served* and is still in force. Obtain the name or personnel number of the person confirming the information.

Officer Involved Domestic Violence

This is a *draft* of a sample policy made available to WASPC members. It is not an RCW or WAC, but telecommunicators should be made aware that this policy or a similar one may prove to be the "standard of care" or best practices for agencies in Washington State. While individual agency policy should prevail, it is being included in this resource manual for your information.

Every law enforcement agency in Washington State should have a policy for officer-involved domestic violence. Communications Agencies may have access to those policies for purposes of compliance with departmental written directives or for stand-alone agencies, to initiate an appropriate response to the incident.

Additionally, you may review or download a copy of the International Association of Chiefs of Police document *Domestic Violence by Police Officers – A policy of the IACP Police Response to Violence Against Women, July 2003*

WASPC Model Policy OFFICER-INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear procedures, protocols and actions for investigating, reporting and responding to domestic violence involving agency employees and law enforcement officers from other agencies and to thereby discourage and reduce acts of domestic violence by sworn law enforcement employees.

POLICY

Public confidence in law enforcement is important to our ability to maintain public safety. The public must trust that law enforcement employees are held to the standards of the law regarding domestic violence. Therefore, the agency will:

- **Promptly respond to allegations of domestic violence by an employee according to this policy and all applicable laws.**
- **Give primary consideration to protection of the victim of domestic violence and enforcement of the law.**
- **Respect the due process rights of all employees, according to applicable legal precedent and collective bargaining agreements.**
- **Expediently report and conduct thorough investigations into any allegation of a law enforcement employee involved in domestic violence.**

- **Train employees and seek to educate their families about intimate violence and avenues for assistance.**

DEFINITIONS

Domestic violence as defined in RCW 10.99 includes two elements: first, a relationship between the perpetrator and the victim defined in RCW 10.99.020(3), and second that a criminal act has occurred as defined in RCW 10.99.020(5).

Domestic dispute is an incident involving a relationship defined in RCW 10.99.020(3) where there was no criminal action.

Domestic violence treatment provider refers to a treatment provider certified by the State of Washington as a batterer's treatment provider as defined in RCW 26.50.150.

Domestic violence specialist refers to an individual with professional credentials in the dynamics of battering, advocacy, and victim safety. The specialist may be associated the agency of jurisdiction, employing agency or by partnership with another agency.

Sworn employee means a general authority Washington peace officer as defined in RCW 10.93.020, any person appointed under RCW 35.21.333, and any person appointed or elected to carry out the duties of the sheriff under chapter 36.28 RCW.

Employee means any person currently employed with an agency.

ACTIONS

AGENCY ACTIONS:

- Provide pre-hire screening procedures reasonably calculated to disclose whether an applicant for a sworn employee position has a history of domestic violence or child abuse allegations or has been subject to protective order as defined in RCW 10.99.090.3a.
- Maintain ongoing and meaningful relationships with victim advocacy groups and other domestic violence professionals in the community.
- Provide education to agency employees on the dynamics of interpersonal violence.
- In response to observed behavior or at the request of the employee, the agency will provide information on programs under RCW 26.50.150 and may offer or recommend intervention services to employees. If domestic violence is suspected, referral to a domestic violence specialist or treatment provider is critical.
- **Any employee who becomes aware of domestic violence committed by a sworn employee must immediately report that allegation to their supervisor.**
- **Employees who disclose that they have personally engaged in criminal acts of domestic violence are not entitled to confidentiality. Such acts shall be investigated in separate administrative and criminal investigations as appropriate.**
- **Provide information to the employing law enforcement agency as soon as possible after a domestic violence or domestic dispute report involving a sworn officer.**
- Provide information on this domestic violence policy to employees and make it available to employee families and the public.
- Provide victims of domestic violence by agency employees an agency point of contact to assist the victim through the investigative process. Consideration should be given to selecting a point of contact at least one rank higher than the perpetrator and ideally someone other than the investigator.
- Provide victims of domestic violence by agency employees contact information about public and private nonprofit domestic violence services and information regarding relevant confidentiality policies related to the victim's information.
- **Respond to agency employees who are known by the agency to be victims of violence by sworn employees of the agency. Provide a point of contact and review**

safety concerns and domestic violence services information with the victim employee.

- Provide for an impartial administrative investigation and appropriate criminal investigation of all acts of domestic violence allegedly committed by a sworn employee and appropriate sanctions when it is found that an employee has committed an act of domestic violence. Administrative investigations may be conducted by the employing agency or through agreements with other law enforcement agencies.
- Consider whether to relieve a sworn employee of agency-issued weapons, equipment and identification; as well as suspending law enforcement powers pending resolution of an investigation.

EMPLOYEE ACTIONS:

- Employees are entitled to seek assistance through the employee assistance program, employee peer counselors, chaplains, or psychological professionals; however, in situations where family violence is indicated a referral to a domestic violence specialist or treatment provider is critical.
- **Employees with knowledge or information about any sworn employee in violation of this policy must report in writing to their supervisor or through the agency's professional standards function as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours. Failure to report may subject the employee to disciplinary action.**
- Employees who are victims of domestic violence are encouraged to request assistance, but are not subject to punitive measures for failing to report their abuse.
- **Employees should be alert to the likelihood of victim or witness intimidation and shall immediately take appropriate action. This action will include, but is not limited to a report to their supervisor and/or through the agency's professional standards function within 24 hours.**
- **Employees are expected to fully cooperate with the investigation of allegations under this chapter as requested by a supervisor, professional standards investigator or by court subpoena.**
- When a law enforcement agency responds to a call in which a sworn employee is alleged to have been involved in a domestic dispute or committed an act of domestic violence, the involved employee must immediately report that police response to their supervisor. A written report must follow within 24 hours of the time the employee is made aware of the allegation of domestic violence, or as required by the agency's internal investigatory process.
- When an employee becomes the subject of an investigation for child abuse or neglect, or becomes subject to an order under RCW 26.44.063 or RCW 26.50 or any equivalent order issued by another state or tribal court, that employee must immediately report the fact to their supervisor. A written report must follow within 24 hours of service or employee notification of the investigation, to include a copy of any order and any notices of court dates, appearances, and proceedings received by the employee.

SUPERVISORS' ACTIONS:

- Supervisors should strive to be aware of behaviors in their subordinates that could be indicative of domestic violence and properly process their observations of such behavior.
- **All agency supervisors are required to see that domestic violence incidents are properly recorded and processed according to this policy.**

INCIDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

- Notification of an incident of domestic violence involving any law enforcement officer requires:
 - A prompt response
 - Full investigation
 - A complete written report by this agency, and
 - Notification to the employing agency
- Patrol responses to the scene of domestic violence involving law enforcement officers require on scene supervisory presence.

Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission
Telecommunicator Program Office
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- All incidents of domestic violence by agency employees require notification through the chain of command to the agency head.
- Incidents of domestic violence by other law enforcement agency sworn employees require notification to the agency head of the employing agency.
- *The agency head may delegate responsibility for receiving such reports to a specialized unit and/or specific person. Anyone so designated should have specialized training regarding the dynamics of violent relationships, victim safety and the role of advocacy. The assignment should be reviewed each time for potential conflict of interest.*
- In the event of a report of domestic violence alleged to have been committed by the agency head, prompt notification will be made to the employing entity's chief executive officer; or, in the case of an elected Sheriff, the County's Prosecutor.

RADIO RESPONSE:

- **Communications employees receiving domestic violence calls involving sworn officers of the agency will enter a call for service and notify the appropriate supervisor.**
- **If no supervisor is available to respond to the scene, communications will notify an on-call supervisor or supervisor from another agency.**
- **Prepare and preserve documentation of the facts of the call, including the 911 tapes.**

PATROL RESPONSE:

- A patrol officer responding to an incident described as domestic violence involving a law enforcement officer should, whenever possible, request a supervisory response to the scene.
- The primary unit will conduct a thorough investigation, including, but not limited to:
 - Photographs of the crime scene & any injuries identified
 - Statements from all witnesses, including children, if any
 - The Domestic Violence Supplemental Report Form
 - Seizure of any weapons used or referred to in the crime
 - Signed medical releases
 - **Copies of dispatch (CAD) records**
 - **911 call recording preserved**
 - Statement of the victim
 - Statement of the suspect, if possible
- The primary officer shall inquire if the victim requests any guns or specific weapons be removed for safekeeping and accommodate removal or explain the process for seeking a court order for removal.
- The primary unit will complete the report as soon as possible, ideally prior to the end of shift.
- A copy of the report should be forwarded to the agency's Domestic Violence Unit or a domestic violence specialist. Access to the report should then be restricted or physically secured, except as mandated by law.
- Patrol units responding to suspicious circumstances, compelling third party accounts of incidents, unexplained property damage, etc. or other troubling events involving law enforcement officers will complete written reports of the incident.

PATROL SUPERVISOR RESPONSE:

- **A patrol supervisor will respond whenever practical to the scene of any domestic violence incident involving a sworn law enforcement employee regardless of employing jurisdiction.** Supervisors will coordinate information and offer assistance to the agency of jurisdiction to provide a complete investigation.
- The patrol supervisor will coordinate the initial investigation, applying appropriate resources and special units such as forensics, photography, domestic violence specialists, and advocates, and ensuring command notification.
- The supervisor will write a report on all incidents, whether deemed criminal or not and route it through the chain of command.

- If an agency officer is arrested, the on-scene supervisor will contact the employing agency head that will order the surrender of the officer's agency-issued weapons, and identification. Consideration should be given to other agency equipment and inquiries made about voluntary surrender of personal weapons that may be secured for safekeeping.
- If an officer from another police agency is arrested, the supervisor shall contact that jurisdiction as soon as practical, but at least prior to custody transport and request authorization to seize that employee's duty weapon(s) and agency identification or arrange for the employing agency to do so.
- The supervisor will endeavor to provide a good faith effort to locate the suspect if there is probable cause for an arrest.
- The supervisor will explain the process to the victim, including the opportunity for an emergency protection order and administrative no-contact order, if applicable.
- Advise the victim of the potential for public disclosure of records and/or the criminal discovery process as well as any applicable records release statutes and policies.
- The supervisor will provide the victim with a copy of this policy and contact information, acting as the agency point of contact until an assignment is made.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SPECIALIST RESPONSE:

- The domestic violence specialist will review the report and coordinate with the investigative unit or the agency of jurisdiction.
- For all situations involving an employee of the agency, the domestic violence specialist will contact the victim, introduce the point of contact, and provide an update regarding the administrative process.
- Inform the victim that any information disclosed during either the criminal or administrative investigation is subject to public disclosure laws and policies of the department.
- The domestic violence specialist will coordinate with the appropriate prosecutor's office regarding charging and prosecution.
- The domestic violence specialist will coordinate with the appropriate advocacy organization to assist with victim safety concerns. Victim notification of each step in the administrative process is critical to victim safety.
- All completed investigations of domestic violence committed by any sworn law enforcement employee shall be promptly forwarded to the appropriate prosecuting authority for a charging decision.

COMMAND DUTY OFFICER:

- The command officer notified of an incident covered by this policy will see that the agency head is promptly notified.
- For incidents involving agency employees:
 - The command officer should respond to the scene if the involved employee is a sergeant or above or if the situation dictates command presence.
 - The command officer will make a decision regarding removal of the involved employee's law enforcement powers, duty weapon and other agency owned equipment, pending the outcome of the investigation and possible prosecutorial charging decision.
 - A command officer will issue an administrative order prohibiting contact with the victim if appropriate.
 - This decision will be forwarded through the professional standards function and/or the agency head for review and further action.
- For other law enforcement agencies:
 - The command officer should respond to the scene if the involved employee is a sergeant or above or if the situation dictates command presence.
 - The command officer will verify command notification of the employing agency.
 - The command officer will verify the supervisor has offered assistance with removing weapons, police powers, etc.

- The command officer will see that the agency provides appropriate reports and any other requested documentation to the employing agency.

VICTIM SAFETY & NOTIFICATIONS:

- Working with community resources and domestic violence advocacy agencies, the agency will make available to the victim:
 - Information on how to obtain protective orders and/or removal of weapons from his or her home.
 - Assistance with obtaining such orders in coordination with domestic violence victim advocates.
 - A copy of this policy and other agency policies referencing the confidentiality of the victim's information.
 - Information about public and private domestic violence advocacy resources to include the Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline.
- The agency should coordinate victim notification regarding criminal and administrative investigative processes through the designated agency liaison in order to assist with victim safety.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS:

- The agency will observe all other appropriate policies and procedures generally applicable to investigation of alleged officer misconduct. The agency will respect rights of the accused employee under applicable collective bargaining agreements and case law.
- Administrative investigations will be conducted through the agency professional standards function or by an outside agency as directed by the agency head.
- Where sufficient information exists, the Agency will make appropriate restrictions to assignments; law enforcement powers, building and records access and consider administrative reassignment and/or leave.
 - In determining the proper course of administrative action, the agency may consider consulting with treatment professionals and reviewing such factors as the employee's past conduct and history of complying with agency rules.
- Agency employees may be ordered to undergo a fitness for duty evaluation or assessment by a domestic violence treatment provider prior to any disposition, depending on circumstances and in accordance with administrative policy, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and civil service standards.

Sources:

Washington State Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (**WASPC Model Policy OFFICER-INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**)
RCW: 10.99.090

Other High-Risk Calls and Risk Statistics

In reviewing FBI's Law Enforcement Officers Killed & Assaulted reports, the statistics reflect information about which calls show the largest number of deaths and assault.

In the years of 2001-2010 there were 541 law enforcement officers (**LEOs**) feloniously killed. Of those the deadliest activities were:

- **In the process of making arrests** – 123 LEOs killed
- **Ambush** – 120 LEOs killed
- **Traffic stops** – 95 LEOs killed -60 at a routine stop, 35 in a felony/high-risk stop
- **Disturbance calls** – 75 LEOs killed- 33 at disturbance calls, 42 killed at a domestic violence call
- **Suspicious person/circumstances**-61 LEOs killed

The deaths which occurred during arrest situations were broken down. 43 LEOs were killed responding to or attempting to pursue a suspect at an in-progress robbery. 17 were killed at a burglary in-progress or pursuing a burglary suspect. 17 were killed in drug-related calls and 49 were attempting other arrests.

The FBI also keeps statistics on law enforcement officers assaulted. For 2010, these statistics show:

- 17,646 LEOs injured in a response to a disturbance call
- 7,881 were injured attempting an arrest
- 6,910 were injured handing or transporting a prisoner
- 5,074 were injured investigating suspicious persons, activity, or circumstances
- 4,752 were injured on traffic stops or in pursuits
- 248 were injured in ambush situations

In-Progress Felony Calls & Disturbance Calls

As the statistics indicate, in-progress calls, particularly burglary, robbery or drug-related incidents make up the category of highest law enforcement officer deaths. Additionally, disturbance calls have significant loss of life statistics and for our purposes here, we will consider most of those as in-progress. Dispatchers must be particularly attentive to these calls. Agency policy should always prevail, but a rule of thumb for status checks on units at the scene of an *in-progress call may be 5 minutes*. This gives the responder time to observe the scene, get into a safe position, and make decisions on how to further respond. Additionally, in-progress felonies will require a multi-unit response. The first arriving officer needs to be able to provide a size-up to incoming responders so radio traffic should be limited to just essential information.

Dispatchers will need to note the location of each responder to the scene, including all perimeter responders and remember to status check all of them regularly.

Suspicious Persons, Activity, or Circumstances

Law enforcement agencies receive many calls reporting suspicious persons or activity. These calls may seem routine, however, statistically these seeming "routine" calls account for almost 9% of the law enforcement officer deaths over the last 10 years. In addition, in 2010 alone, 5,074 LEOs were injured investigating these suspicious circumstances.

As a fairly common call-type, suspicious persons/activity/circumstances calls are often handled as routine, lower priority calls for service. While in-progress felonies and disturbance/weapons/fight calls tend to have higher priority status and multiple unit responses, the "suspicious" call type may only generate a single unit "check-the-area" response. The FBI stats indicate that out of 61 deaths that occurred while responding to suspicious activity calls, 27 of them were of law enforcement officers responding alone.

In 2010, of the 5,074 officers assaulted during suspicious activity investigations, 26.2 % were officers responding alone and 34.2% occurred when officers/deputies were assisted.

This seeming “routine” call-type is one that should generate extra vigilance and attention by the Law Enforcement Dispatcher.

Traffic Stops/Pursuits

Routine traffic stops and pursuits account for 95 LEO deaths between the years 2001-2010. Busy Dispatchers log units out on traffic stops twenty-four hours a day. These are one of the most common activities of law enforcement personnel and Dispatchers. Only 5% of these law enforcement officers were killed during the pursuit. Statistically, 31% of the LEOs killed were killed while approaching the offender on a traffic stop. 11% were killed while in their patrol vehicle and another 8% were killed while interviewing the offender at the offender’s vehicle.

In 2010, 4,752 LEOs were injured during traffic stops and pursuits. 32% of the time, the officer was alone. This information will allow Dispatchers to recognize that, again, this very routine activity may have fatal or injurious results. Recognizing the need to clearly understand the location of a stop and conduct regular status checks is essential.

Active Shooter Calls

Active Shooter Incidents

Active Shooter (AS) is defined in Wiki as:

“An armed person who has used deadly physical force on other persons and continues to do so while having unrestricted access to additional victims.”

The Dept. of Homeland Security provides the following “Profile of an Active Shooter”¹:

An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

Because active shooter situations are often over within 10-15 minutes, before law enforcement arrive on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

Active shooter incidents can occur anywhere, schools, universities, shopping malls, movie theatres, work sites, or other public places.

APCO International Public Safety Communications Magazine published an article, Shots Fired!² The article states:

Early warning signs of an active shooter call include:

- An onslaught of calls;
- Open line calls with muffled sounds;
- Shots being fired without a caller speaking;
- Seemingly unrelated explosion or fire calls that begin to form a pattern on the mapping system;
- Suspicious person calls with possible weapon sighting; and

¹ Dept. of Homeland Security-Active Shooter-How to Respond

² Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, Inc., Public Safety Communications Magazine, Jan. 2011

- Fire alarms — the latest strategy is to pull an alarm inside to drive victims outside to a waiting sniper.

“Active shooter calls have a different tone and a different pace,” says Julie Anderson, who was the on-duty supervisor at the time of the shooting. “The phone reports received are not only numerous, they are often received simultaneously. Some begin with the sound of shots being fired, while others begin with screams of panic. Once you have worked an in-progress shooting or heard audio examples from training, there will be no hesitancy recognizing the necessary response measures.”

One of the difficulties of handling an active shooter incident is that feeling of being blind to what’s happening on scene when radio traffic is quiet. I teach dispatch colleagues to give updates as needed but to practice the art of silence and listening.

“I knew what the officers were doing even when they weren’t talking to me,” says Bonnie Collard, who also worked Vail’s shooting incident.

What they were doing was setting up a perimeter and then attempting to clear the bar once they had a proper team in place for entry. The entry took 29 minutes. Outside the Sandbar, responders were confronted by the chaos of those fleeing the bar and those trying to re-enter in search of loved ones.

Once entry is made, having the control to remain silent on the radio is critical to officer safety during an active shooter incident. Unlike other shooting incidents, during an active shooter scenario, the shooter(s) is not given any verbal commands to drop their weapon. The objective is to shoot to kill to eliminate the threat. A Dispatcher calling for a status check during such a confrontation could prove deadly for responders.

“[During active shooter incidents, you don’t want any] of this ‘Did-you-all-copy?’ stuff that clogs the air,” says Sgt. Tim Maloney, a 29-year law enforcement veteran with the Brown County Sheriff’s Department in Green Bay, Wis.

“Dispatch the main units in a calm manner, and then be quiet and let the incident command structure out on the street run its course and guide you,” advises Maloney, who is often in command.

A few years ago, one of the responders who handled the Omaha, Neb., mall shooting in December 2007 taught me that an active shooter incident needs to be dispatched like a lawn mower theft that should have been called in two weeks ago: calm, collected and with as little emotion as possible.

The Dispatcher has a critical role to play in an AS incident. Dispatchers may be fielding phone calls as well as working tactical dispatch channels. In many cases, the initial responders may be moved to a separate frequency, channel, or talk group. If the agency is large enough, a Dispatcher may be dedicated to the channel assigned to first-in responders or tactical teams.

The incident will probably initiate a tactical response. Consider some general guidelines and terms:

- Inner perimeter – area closest to the event, suspect, and victims/patients or other endangered persons. This area may have first-in responders and tactical teams readying to make entry.
- Outer perimeter – area further away from the incident- manned by law enforcement and public safety set up to keep all other persons away from the scene.

- Important terms to distinguish locations on the scene, site, or building
 - **Side**- always oriented as you face forward looking at the front of a structure.
 - Side 1 (or Side A in the fire service) -the side you face as you look toward the front or main entrance of the structure.
 - Moving clockwise (to the left) – Side 2 (left side), Side 3 (back of the building-opposite the front), Side 4 (to the right)
 - **Level** – not “floors” levels include mezzanines, split-entry levels, etc.
 - From the ground up, Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, etc.
 - **Window** identification – as you face directly at the “side” counted from the right to the left, preceded by the Side and Level. Example Side 1, Level 3, Window 4 (S1/L3/W4) the 4th window from the right, on Level 3, Side 1 (front) of the building.

The Critical Role of the Dispatcher during an Active Shooter Incident

The Dispatcher has a critical role to play during active shooter incidents:

- Dispatchers may be asked to clearly broadcast inner and outer perimeter information for all responders.
- Dispatchers will take information from field commanders about recommendations for sheltering, hiding, or evacuation of endangered persons and pass it on to call takers for relay to these individuals if they are in communication with them.
- Dispatchers will take information from call takers (or directly from callers) about endangered or injured persons on the scene and relay them to the incident commander or on-scene personnel.
 - It is imperative that an accurate location within the building be determined for any and all endangered, hiding, or injured persons in the immediate area of the event.
- It is equally imperative that Dispatchers relay to responders in the inner perimeter, any information about evacuation attempts or movement of endangered persons.
- Dispatchers will relay updated information to the appropriate incident commander or on-scene personnel about changes in the situation, location of other responders or resources, etc.
- Dispatchers relay information from field units to call takers or callers about evacuation feasibility or other specific instructions.
- Dispatchers may need to keep others in the center updated on critical information so that this information can be relayed to affected parties, if needed. An example would be, advising your co-workers when the entry team is entering the building. Call takers may, in turn instruct persons who are hiding in the building to not run out, but to stay hidden until told to come out of their hiding place.
- Dispatchers may man the tactical channel where tactical teams and responders prepare to make entry into the area.
- Fire/EMS Dispatchers will dispatch or advise fire/EMS about the incident, information about injuries, etc., in preparation for a medical or fire response to scene.
- Dispatchers may relay information to on-scene commanders regarding all points of egress from the site.

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- Dispatchers should continue to check the status of units, inner and outer perimeter, per agency policy. If no policy exists, the APCO article recommends a general rule-of-thumb, every 10-15 minutes unless the contact or tactical team is clearing the building or area.
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- Dispatchers may be asked to broadcast information prioritizing the evacuation of persons from specific locations within the site.

Active Shooter incidents will take many resources and the Dispatcher is well-versed in the resources of his/her user agencies. It will take teamwork and flexibility to manage all the information that will be coming in. Accurate documentation, as in most of our work, is very important. It will help your team members help you. Even if you are working an incident alone, you are still part of the bigger public safety team, and critically important to their efforts!

UNIT 5 – DISPATCH METHODS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT – SUMMARY

Understand “the dance” of communication between field units and the Dispatcher. Stick with consistent standardized ways of formatting, relaying, and dispatching calls. Know what your agency mobile call-up procedure is, and use it every time.

Have a clear understanding of your agency policy or procedure on holding calls, using alert tones or channel markers and closing or restricting the frequency.

Be prepared, aware, and attentive when field units are on high risk calls, even when those calls are routine, such as traffic stops and investigating suspicious activity.

Know your agency policy on responses to law enforcement officer-involved domestic violence calls, information, or reports.

UNIT 6 – FIRE OPERATIONS AND DISPATCH METHODS

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit, the participant will be able to:

- Describe the four elements needed for something to burn
- List the four products of fire
- List the three phases of fire
- List the three ways in which fire moves
- Understand the different types of fire apparatus
- Describe the 5 essential functions of the fire service
- Describe the terms, Initial dispatch, short report, size-up, on-scene report
- Define the acronyms REVAS and RIT
- Define the term staging
- Describe a response to a HazMat event
- List the three primary goals in the first minutes of a HazMat event
- Demonstrate the use of the Emergency Response Guidebook
- Describe the use of a PASS device
- Describe the Passport system
- Define the terms, Roll Call, Evacuate, Abandon, Withdraw

Characteristics of Fire

Fire is defined as the rapid oxidation of combustible materials that usually results in the emission of light, heat and smoke. Fire behavior is the manner in which fuel ignites, flame develops, and fire spreads. It is also sometimes used to distinguish characteristics of one particular fire from typical fire characteristics. Fire needs four elements in order to burn:

- **Oxygen**
- **Fuel**
- **Heat**
- **Chemical chain reaction**

Fire spreads by consuming the available fuel and seeking out oxygen. Firefighting techniques are designed to allow fire personnel to extinguish a fire as efficiently as possible. The goal is to eliminate one of the four elements needed to burn.

The four products of fire are:

- *Fire gasses*
- *Flame*
- *Heat*
- *Smoke*

There are three phases of a fire:

- **Incipient** – the start or beginning of the fire
- **Free burning**
- **Smoldering**

Fire moves in three ways:

- **Conduction** – the transfer of heat through matter by communication of kinetic energy from particle to particle with no net displacement of the particles.
- **Convection** – the transfer of heat from the circulatory motion that occurs in a fluid at a non-uniform temperature owing to the variation of its density and the action of gravity.

- **Radiation** – the transfer of heat transmitted in the form of waves or particles

Methods of Extinguishment

Methods used to extinguish a fire operate on the principle of removing or eliminating one of the four elements. All of these methods remove the fuel, exclude oxygen, inhibit the chemical chain reaction, or diminish the heat. Some of these methods or products are:

- Water
- Foam
- Pressurized Water
- Carbon Dioxide Powder
- Halon
- Dry Chemical

Apparatus Types

Aid Unit/AMBULANCE - A basic life support unit (BLS) with patient transport capabilities and licensed by the State in which it is housed. Normally staffed with a minimum of two personnel. Personnel will be certified as First Responders or Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's).

Air Unit - A vehicle or trailer designed to carry self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) bottles and/or air compressor for the purpose of replacing or refilling emergency personnel air supplies at the scene of an incident. *Cascade System* – Firefighters use portable air tanks when in a hazardous atmosphere. These tanks are filled at the scene from air compressors or cascade systems. SCBA bottles use compressed air (21% oxygen) that can be stored in large bottles or filled by a compressor mounted on this unit. Typically dispatched only by request or to multiple alarms. This apparatus will park a safe distance from the scene in a smoke-free area.

Boat/Watercraft - A unit staffed by a minimum of two personnel trained in water rescue. Equipment should include but is not limited to water safety suit, vests, water rescue equipment. This unit may have the capability to fight fires.

Brush Unit/Mini Pumper- A vehicle staffed usually with a minimum of two personnel trained in suppression of wildland and structure fires. The apparatus may be four-wheel drive, and carry water tank, pump, hose, and hand tools for fighting brush and small fires.

Car Unit - A passenger vehicle that is utilized for administrative business or other department detail.

Command Unit - A vehicle staffed by a chief officer that is trained in and carries the equipment necessary to initiate the Incident Command / Management System including; reference materials, portable radio pool and mutual aid radio communications equipment. This vehicle may be the chief officer's private car or a state of the art semi-tractor/trailer or RV equipped with telephone, radio, and other equipment.

Communications Unit - A vehicle that at a minimum is capable of radio communications. May also have cellular telephone, amateur radio (HAM), CAD, and mapping capabilities.

Crash/Fire/Rescue Unit - (CFR) a specialized unit located at airports which is classified as a pumper, but may be used for foam application, usually found at airport fire agencies.

Engine - (Pumper) A fire attack vehicle that at a minimum meets NFPA 1901 (National Fire Protection Agency) Class A pumper specifications. A triple combination pumper has a hose, water pump (500-2500 gpm), and carries water (500-1500 gallons). There may also be other specialized equipment such as an elevated water stream (telesquirt), patient transport capability, extrication equipment, electrical generator, lights, and ventilation fans. The first engine or pumper on the scene

typically goes to the address side of the building. Second and later engines go to areas that are pre-determined by the type of event or at the direction of the incident commander. It is usually staffed with a minimum of three personnel trained in the use of the apparatus and its equipment. Apparatus carries water, hoses, and pumps from hydrants and drafts from other water sources. It also carries small tools, appliances, and usually 2000 ft. of hose in 3 or more sizes. A triple combination is a pump, hose, and water. *An engine is not a truck.*

Extended Air System - May be combined with other units as an add-on feature or can be stand-alone unit. Used when the SCBA bottle the firefighters carry will not give enough time in the hazardous atmosphere. It has large, compressed air tanks to supply firefighters.

Foam Unit - A vehicle or trailer with a minimum of one person trained in the use and application of firefighting foam and equipment. It usually carries a minimum of 1500 gallons of water, 150 gallons of foam concentrate, and 500 lb. of dry chemical. A trailer usually carries a minimum of 400 gallons of foam concentrate and is not required to have radio communication capabilities.

Hazardous Materials Unit - A specialized emergency response unit staffed with a minimum of two personnel trained and declared competent by their department as Hazardous Materials Technicians. Equipment should include but not be limited to monitoring, detection, chemical testing, decontamination, and personal protective equipment.

Ladder, Truck, or Aerial - (Ladder, platform, articulating boom, ladder platform) - A fire attack vehicle equipped with an aerial device of 65 feet or taller. Also carries a minimum compliment of ground ladders (206') as specified by NFPA 1904, usually staffed with a minimum of three personnel trained in the use of the apparatus and its equipment. Ground ladders are usually 35, 45, and 55 ft., multitude of heavy-duty tools and equipment such as saws, generators, lights, tarps, and fans.

Light Plant - A trailer with scene lighting capabilities. Several high -wattage light plants, with extension poles, and generation capabilities.

Medic Unit - An advance life support (ALS) unit with patient transport capabilities and licensed by the State in which it is housed. Staffed with a minimum of two personnel, one of which is a certified Paramedic.

Rehab Unit (Canteen): May be staffed with volunteers. Designed to carry beverages to wherever the department needs to refresh or re-hydrate firefighting personnel. The unit may have a cooking facility with the ability to prepare hot food. Stocked with quick energy foods and carries quantities of cold liquid beverages (water, Gatorade, etc.).

Rescue Unit - A vehicle staffed with a minimum of two personnel trained in automobile extrication and stabilization techniques. The apparatus shall include but not be limited to:

- Equipment and tools for automobile spreading and cutting – may be called a “Hurst” tool or “Jaws of Life”
- Air bags, cribbing and blocking materials,
- ABC dry chemical extinguishing agent
- 200 feet of utility rope and 200 feet of life line.
- It is also preferred that the unit be equipped with a pump, attack hose, and water tank.

Services (MECHANIC, SALVAGE) UNIT - A vehicle used for various non-emergency duties related to the fire department.

Squad Unit - A vehicle that carries fire personnel, SCBAs and may carry a variety of support tools such as generators, lights, saws, and small hand tools.

Support UNIT - A vehicle usually staffed with a minimum of two personnel trained in the operation of the unit. The unit shall at a minimum provide limited temporary shelter or field office for victims/family members or emergency service personnel needing an area out of public view. The unit

may also provide a limited canteen, skilled support counselor/friend, cellular and amateur radio communications, television monitor, and portable generator.

Tanker - (AIR TANKER) An **airplane** equipped to deliver fire retardant to brush and wildland fire scenes.

Technical Rescue Unit - A vehicle that at the minimum contains the equipment or ready access to equipment for response to emergencies in the areas of confined space, trench, high and low angle, surface water, and ice rescues. This vehicle and staff shall be part of a rescue response team made up of multiple members trained to the same level or higher of Rescue Technician. This team will be able to assemble its members in a timely manner to mitigate incidents as required.

Tender - A ground vehicle that transports 1500 gallons or more of water and has a folding tank, pump, and hard suction. A tender is usually staffed with a minimum of two personnel trained in the use of the apparatus and its equipment. May pump directly into an engine or may use a "drop tank", releasing water into a tank for the pumper to draft out, while tender goes for more water.

Utility Unit - A vehicle used to haul various equipment and personnel and or other duties as dictated necessary by a department.

Fire Dispatch Format and Information

The essential duties of the fire service are:

- **Prevention**
- **Suppression**
- **Investigation**
- **Medical Services**
- **Administration**

The student will deal more with the suppression and EMS dispatch aspects in this curriculum than the other three duties. As with law enforcement dispatch, it is important to *standardize* the delivery of information to fire/EMS responders.

While this information could be delivered in a different sequence, many fire departments across the country use this type of standardized sequencing for initial dispatch through the fire incident.

Response Information

These are divided into several segments for clarity and ease of remembrance.

Initial Dispatch – *given by the Dispatcher to start the response of apparatus.*

- Identify responding unit(s) or station(s)
- State the type of alarm or chief complaint of patient
- State the method of response, if appropriate
- Give the location or address
- Assign a radio channel, frequency, or talk group
- Repeat

Example for an initial dispatch:

Tones have been sent to the appropriate stations:

Dispatch: Engine 3, automatic fire alarm, Lexington Apartments, 14532 S. Roake, building 2.
Engine 3, automatic fire alarm, Lexington Apartments, 14532 S. Roake, building 2.
Respond on Tac 1, fire dispatch clear, 15:32 hours.

Or:

Dispatch: Aid 14, Medic 12, chest pain, code red response to 194 W. Oak #3, on Tac 2. Aid 14, Medic 12, chest pain, code red response to 194 W. Oak #3 on Tac 2. Fire dispatch clear at 01:46 hours.

Response Information – from the unit responding while enroute to the scene –given to the Dispatcher

- Apparatus ID
- Give address or incident location back to the fire Dispatcher for confirmation

Example:

Unit: Engine 3 responding to an automatic fire alarm, Lexington Apartments, 14532 S. Roake, building 2.

Or:

Unit: Aid 14 and Medic 12 responding to 194 W. Oak, chest pain, switching to Tac 2

Short Report - Given by Dispatcher when all units are enroute to incident

- Exact location and additional directions if needed
- Specific essential information pertaining to:
 - Type of fire - residential, appliance, or brush, etc.
 - Location of fire – in the attic, in a dumpster, etc.
 - Patient chief complaint and pertinent medical information
 - Vital information such as **trapped persons** or **responder safety issues** discussed in the previous unit:
 - Persons with weapons
 - Assaultive or threatening persons at the scene
 - Hazards – live power lines down, road hazards, dangerous conditions
 - Crime scenes

Example:

Dispatcher: Engine 3, automatic fire alarm, covers smoke, heat, and manual pulls in building 2. Security on scene advising alarm bells sounding with nothing found, they are continuing to check the building.

Or:

Dispatcher: Engine 14, Medic 12, patient is a 73 year old female, complaining of chest pain, radiating to the left arm, for the last 45 minutes. Patient has a cardiac history and has taken 2 nitro within the last 30 minutes with no relief. The front door will be unlocked. Patient is in the downstairs bedroom.

The Dispatcher should also be prepared to make notification to other agencies that may include:

- Law enforcement-responder safety issues or traffic control
- Fire investigator – cause determination
- Fire marshal – code violations
- Mutual aid requests
- Staff (administrative) notification – major events
- Call back of off-duty personnel
- Red Cross or other public service agency
- Fire volunteers for rehab/canteen or other needs
- Utilities
- Ambulance company
- Hospital notification or relay of information

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical helicopter request |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Landing zone fire apparatus notification |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Property owner |

After responders arrive at an incident, fire scene operations commence beginning with the *size-up* as described in the next section.

Fire Scene Operations

The order in which fire department personnel and apparatus arrive on the scene determines the initial responsibilities of that crew and equipment. For example, the first unit on the scene may be responsible for giving the other units an on-scene report or “**size-up**” of the situation and making some initial work assignments such as hooking up to a hydrant.

- **General arrival priorities** can be remembered with the **REVAS** acronym:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• R – Rescue - rescuing anyone that cannot escape on their own• E – Evacuate - removing people from areas that are or will be uninhabitable.• V – Ventilate - allows heat and gases to escape, making entry with suppression equipment possible.• A – Attack - extinguish or stop the progress of the fire.• S – Salvage - determines what property can be saved by covering it, removing it, or in some other way, protecting it. |
|---|

On-Scene Report

<p>Size-Up - The first unit on the scene will give an on-scene report, or “size-up”. Some communication centers have procedures that require the Dispatcher to repeat the size-up information verbatim for the incoming units. Other centers only have the Dispatcher repeat information if the initial report was not clear to the other units. The size up should be documented in the call. The purpose of the on-scene report or size-up is to let incoming units, command staff, or dispatch know what the arriving company is seeing. This provides the fire Dispatcher with some idea of what resources may be needed. It allows you to prepare to respond to requests from the field.</p>
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The report should include:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit ID of arriving apparatus• Where they are (address, front, back, side)• What they see (light or heavy smoke, flames, nothing)• What they are going to do (attack, rescue)• What they need others to do (bring in special equipment, hook to a hydrant)• What help they need (including immediate needs or any special equipment that needs to be dispatched at this time) |
|--|

Example of a size-up:

Unit: “Engine 1 on the scene at 123 Main Street. We have a two-story residence, heavy smoke showing from the eaves on three sides of structure. Engine 1 will attack with a pre-connect on tank. Second engine, take the hydrant. Truck, we need search and vent. Cars in driveway, no sign of family”.

This example tells the other responders what to do and what to expect on their arrival. With this report, the responding units and the Dispatcher can get a “mental picture” of the event. With this information, would you categorize this event as a “true emergency”? Could you repeat this report, verbatim, if you needed to?

At this point, be prepared to upgrade the incident upon the request of the Incident Commander. It is not unusual that the first-in unit upgrade to a second alarm on a structure fire. It may be at the

request of the person assuming command later in the incident, but from the time of the arrival of the first unit, be prepared to request additional responders, apparatus, and resources.

Another example:

Unit: Truck and Engine 46 on-scene of a 100 x 300 concrete tilt-up, alarm bells sounding, nothing visible, investigating.

Or:

Unit: Engine 216 on-scene of a 2 story, wood frame, single family dwelling, residence evacuated, smoke showing from the attached garage. Engine 216 establishing Main Street Command, command post will be to the west of the driveway. Engine 216 taking a pre-connect, next in company take the hydrant, all other incoming units stage at 3rd

Emergency Radio Traffic

A procedure must be in place to clear the air for emergency radio traffic. The Dispatcher must be ready to repeat critical information:

• **Warning Broadcasts** - Sometimes, messages need to be broadcast that affect the entire scene. These could include:

- **Master stream activation** – to alert personnel on scene that a master stream will be activated and to be clear of the area
- **Roll call** – an accounting of all personnel on the scene
- **Evacuate** - remove occupants of a structure or area
- **Withdraw** - due to a change in strategy, directing personnel to exit the structure or area taking equipment and hose lines.
- **Abandon** – immediately exit the structure or area without regard to equipment or hose lines. This may be due to an imminent collapse or other emergency that may endanger the health and safety of responders.

• **Emergency radio or PASS device activation**

- **A PASS device** is an alarm device attached to a firefighter. When the unit does not sense motion for a pre-determined amount of time, the unit emits a loud air horn-like sound. This is an audible signal to other personnel that there may be a responder down.

- Responders who may have activated an emergency button on their radio, signaling assistance is needed will require an immediate status check from the Dispatcher. These activations are not audible at the scene. The Dispatcher will need to identify whose emergency button was activated and confirm the status. If the button is on a portable radio associated with a piece of apparatus and advise the Incident Commander or officer in charge of the scene. A roll call of personnel may be needed.

Additional Dispatches, Multiple Alarms- Managing the Frequency

For agencies that use only one radio frequency, dispatching multiple alarms or additional units can affect the safety at a scene. During the dispatch of additional units, personnel may not be able to use that channel for an emergency radio broadcast.

The Dispatcher may announce “stand by for additional tones” and wait a moment before activating the tones, allowing anyone who needs to broadcast requests or information to do so.

If there is more than one radio frequency available, consider moving the incident to the tactical frequency and maintaining the primary frequency for dispatching of additional incidents or upgrades to the current incident. If the incident is moved to another frequency, Tac, or talk group make sure that the announcement is made over the air, giving all personnel the correct frequency and time to switch.

The frequency the event was switched *from* should be monitored for any personnel who did not hear the broadcast directing him/her to switch.

PROGRESS REPORT

This is an update given by unit or officer on scene, provided at intervals, which:

- Identifies the unit providing the update
- Provides an updated description of the incident, indicating any significant change in the status of the incident
- Should be documented in the call

Example:

Unit: Command from Truck 11, we have a team on the roof ready to ventilate. We have a small amount of smoke coming from under the eaves on side C of the structure. Advise when you are ready for us to begin.

Or:

Unit: Command from Engine 1, we have finished checking the ground floor and found nothing, we are going to the second floor and can detect a haze at the west end of the hallway. We would like utilities notified and we are continuing to investigate.

Passport System

The "Passport System" is a method of accountability for all emergency responders. Most fire agencies in the State of Washington have adopted this system and have policies requiring the use of the Passport (or other accountability system) for any response to an emergency. The system uses multiple nametags that are used to track personnel.

• DEFINITIONS

- *Company Officer* - Officers and acting officers in charge of engine/truck companies or team leaders.
- *Emergency Event* - Any situation to which the fire department responds to deliver emergency services.
- *Incident Perimeter* - Any area where, for safety reasons, the public is not allowed access.
- *Helmet Shield*: A soft plastic reflective identification tag backed with Velcro that attaches to the front of a helmet. The shield has numbers or letter that identify a company, unit, assignment, etc.
- *Incident Termination* - The conclusion of fire department operations, usually the departure of the last unit from the scene.
- *Nametag* - A hard plastic tag that has the department member's first initial and last name engraved in it. The tag has Velcro on the back.
- *Passport* - A 2" x 4" plastic tag that is covered with Velcro. Nametags are attached to this Passport tag.
- *Primary Passport* - Soft, flexible passport kept by team leader (officer).
- *Backup Passport* - White rigid passport kept on dashboard of apparatus.

- *Reserve Passport* - Green rigid passport for temporary replacement of lost primary or backup passport.

• ***Passport System* - The procedure that uses name tags, passports, helmet shields and status boards to track assignments of companies, teams and individuals at event scene.**

- *Passport Makeup Kit* - A kit designed to expand the passport system at large incidents and provide immediate replacement for lost or damaged system materials.
- *Roll Call* - A poll of all teams at the emergency event to account for all personnel.
- *Status Board* - A large, hard plastic board with Velcro strips to hold passports and team information. There is also room on the status board to write notes.
- *Team* - A group of two or more firefighters who work together and are responsible for each other's safety.
- *Pass Device* - A unit attached to a firefighter. When the unit does not sense motion for a certain period (firefighter has gone down or is trapped), the unit emits a loud air horn-like sound. This will assist rescue personnel in locating the firefighter.

The passport system is used in conjunction with the Incident Command / Management System to assure accountability.

It is the team member's responsibility to properly enter and leave the Passport System.

Team members must always be in contact with each other through voice (*NOT by radio only*), visual, or touch. Specifically exempted from this requirement are apparatus operators, Chief Officers, and lobby control teams, where the location is constant and is known by other members of the team.

If a team member is in trouble, the other member(s) shall take appropriate steps to:

- **Provide direct help**
- **Call for help**
- **Go get help**

Individuals assigned to administrative functions such as training or fire prevention shall have a helmet shield and passport for that division.

Status boards are divided into three sections. The top portion is for company designators (engine, ladder, etc.) the Fire Resource Zone, company number, and team designator (Team A, B, C, etc.)

The middle of the board is for the plastic nametags. The officer's nametag is at the top.

The bottom of the board is blank for taking notes (dry erase).

Arrival Procedure

Upon arrival at a scene, the company personnel will transfer their passport to the IC or the safety officer unless:

- They are the only unit on the scene
- They are committed to the event before "Command" is set up
- They are on a remote side of the event from the Incident Commander
- When a team is relieved of an assignment or transferred to a different commander, the commander will confirm that a roll call of personnel is conducted

When a commander determines that a firefighter or team is missing or trapped, they will start rescue efforts as soon as possible at the last known location (see **RIT** team after this section). The IC will then conduct a roll call to confirm the status of missing personnel.

Roll call will be per department policy, but it is recommended that it be conducted without the use of radios to keep the frequencies free for emergency traffic.

Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)

A Rapid Intervention Team is required by Washington Administrative Code 296.305.05001. A RIT is defined as a *designated crew that will serve as a standby rescue team for personnel and be available for the immediate search and rescue of any missing or unaccounted for firefighting personnel.*

A RIT shall be provided by the Incident Commander for all structure fire incidents.

The RIT is comprised of on-scene personnel and should be placed in service over the radio when established.

When a situation has been thoroughly evaluated by the IC and the safety officer, and is deemed to no longer be a hazard to personnel, the IC will suspend the operation of the RIT and advise over the radio so that all fire-ground personnel are aware.

If the RIT is utilized, a second team is formed immediately to handle any other needed search and rescue operation.

Staging

The staging process is a systematic method of controlling personnel and equipment into an event area. Staging places uncommitted equipment and personnel in a readily available area. Staging prevents congestion at an event and allows the IC time to evaluate conditions and assign companies in an orderly manner. Staging provides more effective radio communication through a reduction of individual traffic. Staging may automatically apply to general and multiple alarm events unless otherwise decided by the Incident Commander.

Examples of Staging Guidelines for Specific Events:

- *High rise fire:* During the incident, staging will be located two floors below the floor with the fire.
- *Residential and commercial structures:* If not assigned, by Command, staging is often approximately one block from event. Vehicles stage (or park) in the direction needed to travel. Preferably the vehicles will be able to turn left or right without needing to back up.
- *Hazardous materials incident:* First units on scene will establish Command unless otherwise directed. Additional units will stage 2000 feet away (1/3 mile), uphill, and upwind from the incident.
- *Crime scene:* Stage out of sight and (rule of thumb) at least 2 blocks from scene. The danger is that if people involved in the incident see fire units, they may bring victims/patients to the fire unit putting them in danger before law enforcement has secured the scene.
- *Limited-access roadway:* (LAR) Units may stage at entry ramps until one unit determines exactly where the event is located and advises of the best entry.
- *Major incidents:* Staging will depend upon the event, but may be miles from the actual location. This is especially true for large wildland or forest fires.
- *Mass casualty incidents (MCI):* Event may require multiple ambulances, engines, and truck companies. An area where access will not be blocked is required.

Decontamination

At an EMS event: Depending on the actual exposure, de-con may be done at a hospital, scene or fire station. Decontamination may take from ten minutes to several days.

At a fire event: Common hazards are asbestos, chemicals, and occasionally biological agents. The time out-of-service depends on the type of contamination.

At a hazardous materials event: Depending upon the contaminant, the unit may de-con in minutes or occasionally they may wrap the entire unit in plastic and bury it or have it contained and hauled away to an approved disposal site. Some hazardous materials incidents last for several weeks.

Post Incident Analysis

A Post Incident Analysis is just that, a review of the event after it occurs. A PIA is meant to be an analysis, not a critique where blame is placed.

A good PIA will focus on what actually happened at the event, the positive, and those areas where improvement could be made. The discussion should look at lessons learned and ways to retain the positive processes in the incident.

If mistakes were made, they should be discussed in a non-offensive manner. Any individual mistakes that require discipline must be handled separately from a PIA. Even department personnel who made mistakes have valuable information to offer to the entire group in the PIA and should be included.

Those attending the PIA should be an experienced facilitator, the administration, Chief Officers, firefighters, **AND** Dispatchers for the event.

The PIA should be a learning experience for all personnel. It should be conducted in an environment where everyone can participate and learn.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous Materials Defined & Goals

Any material or substance, including radioactive materials, which, when uncontrolled can be harmful to people, animals, property or the environment. Hazmat events occur from a variety of situations including fires, spills, and transportation accidents. Some companies refer to hazardous materials as "Dangerous Goods".

Each incident is unique and different. Hazmat plans are required by SARA Title III 29 CFR 1910.120, by WAC 296-62-3110 and RCW 70.136.

The first few minutes after a Hazmat event occurs are critical:

- **The initial primary goals are:**

- **Recognition**
- **Identification**
- **Stabilization**

The initial stage presents severe danger to unprotected responders as they approach the scene.

- Hot, warm and cold zones must be established to protect firefighters and other emergency workers as well as civilians.

- **Recovery and cleanup of a hazardous material is usually relegated to a private contractor paid by the party responsible for the release or spill.** Fire departments rarely clean up a Hazmat unless it is very small. Fire departments normally do not have the equipment or training to clean up a large amount of material.
- The Department of Transportation publishes a guidebook for hazardous materials that is very useful in the initial phase of a hazardous materials event. This guidebook will be discussed later in this unit of study. This book is called the North American Emergency Response Guidebook (NAERG).

In a Hazmat event, the priority of safety is as follows:

- **Life:** Preservation of health and life
- **Environment:** Reduce permanent damage, if possible
- **Property and equipment:** These can be replaced

Recognizing/Detecting a Hazardous Materials Event

Not all hazardous material incidents are obvious. They do not all involve a tanker truck or railway car with green vapor leaking from them.

Gasoline is such a common hazardous material it is sometimes overlooked. While gasoline can be handled easily, if not recognized it can be dangerous. One gallon of gasoline, when vaporized has the explosive heat release of 20 sticks of nitrodynamite.

Grocery store delivery trucks have items from almost all hazard classes. When these containers break and mix, extreme hazards result.

A fire in a garage or shed may seem like a routine call, but most garages and sheds store gasoline, pesticides, paint thinner and other dangerous material. These materials, when involved in fire or when mixed with other chemicals, can be deadly.

There are some outward signs that an event involves hazardous materials:

- Collapsed victims
- People running from the scene
- Flame or smoke, particularly odd colored smoke
- Rising sound from venting devices
- Hissing sound
- Animals exhibiting unusual behavior
- Explosions from inside the event area

Identification of Hazardous Materials

Transporting hazardous materials is heavily regulated. One of the regulations is the use of proper marking systems.

There are several identification systems for marking hazardous materials:

- **National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 704** applies to fixed facilities. This system uses colors and numbers to indicate the relative hazard. The NAERG will explain this in more detail.

ECLSORPCO system divides the materials into 9 categories:

- **Explosives**
- **Compressed Gasses**
- **Liquids** (Flammable)
- **Solids** (Flammable)

- **Oxidants**
- **Poisons**
- **Radioactive materials**
- **Corrosives**
- **Other**

Some of these categories (classes) have sub-divisions

Or: COOLPERCS

- Compressed Gasses
 - Oxidants
 - Other
 - Liquids
 - Poisons
 - Explosives
 - Radioactive materials
 - Corrosives
 - Solids
- **Biomedical Symbol** - Used to mark containers of biological hazardous waste. You may see these symbols on red plastic buckets or bags used in doctor's offices and hospitals.
 - **Military (Department of Defense – DOD)** - Uses geometric shapes, numbers and colors to indicate the type of hazard.
 - **Pipeline Markers** - The Olympic pipeline runs parallel to Interstate 5. The pipeline is marked with round signs that have a yellow background and black lettering. The Olympic pipeline carries gasoline, diesel fuel, and aviation jet fuel. **The emergency telephone number for the Olympic Pipeline is 1-800-424-5555** (in Washington State).
 - **American Chemical Society's Abstract** - Provides a registry to register each new chemical with a unique number. The registry provides numbers for up to 14,000 new chemicals each week.
 - **Department of Transportation** - DOT regulates 3,000 different materials when in transit. Vehicles or vessels carrying materials need to have placards (like posters) posted on the vehicle noting the type of material that is being transported. However, regulations do not require placards when there is less than 1,000 pounds of material on board. Many chemicals can be extremely dangerous to people and the environment in less than 1,000 pound quantities. Even if a truck is displaying a placard that says "EMPTY", the vehicle may still contain harmful amounts of a hazardous material.
 - **Shipping Papers** - All modes of transportation require some type of paperwork. This is separate from the placards required on the outside of the vehicle or vessel. The paperwork has different names for different methods of transport.
 - Highways: Bill of Lading
 - Railways: Waybill
 - Air Cargo: Manifest
 - Water: Dangerous Cargo Manifest
 - **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)** - Used in commercial occupancies that use or store hazardous materials. OSHA requires these sheets. Most cleaning agents are classified as hazardous and, as such, require an MSDS sheet. An MSDS sheet notebook for the hazardous material stored in a fire station is over 1' thick. Even items used every day such as Whiteout or Liquid Paper need an MSDS sheet.

Notifications

In a hazardous materials event, certain notifications need to be made. One of these is to the Washington Department of Emergency Management. 1-800-262-2990. Your agency's policy will dictate who makes this call and at what stage in the event. Notification to State Emergency Management is not necessarily a request for assistance.

You may also be asked (or required) to notify the Department of Ecology. Your county may have a local DOE (Ecology) office or you may have a regional office. They may want to send a representative to the scene.

Other notifications may include administrative personnel for the responsible jurisdiction and for the communications center. You may also be asked to call the headquarters for the shipping company to notify them of the spill or leak.

Resources

There are resources available to assist agencies with a hazardous materials event. Some of these are:

- **Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (Chemtrec)** - 1-800-424-9300 (24 hr.) - If the name of the product is known, Chemtrec will advise on the nature of the product and will give immediate steps to take to mitigate the incident. They will also contact the manufacturer and get detailed information on the product.
- **Hazardous Materials Response Teams** - Your area may have access to a Hazmat team. These teams are sometimes made up of fire personnel from several departments and have special equipment and apparatus to respond to a Hazmat event in their service area. The communications center should have resource materials available outlining how notifications and requests to this team are made.
- **Mutual Aid for spills** - Manufacturers of chlorine, pesticides, phosphorous, vinyl chloride, hydrogen cyanide, hydrogen fluoride, and liquid propane gas provide response teams to assist in case of an incident involving any of these substances. Chemtrec is the point of contact for these specialized teams.

Hazmat incidents may be classified by agencies into two levels:

- Level 1: May be a single engine company response used for small gasoline leaks from vehicles, etc.
- Level 2: May include a specially equipment vehicle and team response.

Important Information to Obtain in a Hazmat Event

In addition to the basic information for the call, important details should be obtained from the caller. These include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Location of the incident• Location/safety of the caller
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call back number• Caller's name• Is the caller the driver or operator of the vehicle or vessel?• Does the caller know the specific details of the material (type, amount, destination, shipping company, etc.)?• Can the caller see the placard?• Is anything leaking? What does it look like? Is it liquid, solid (powder), vapor? If liquid, is it flowing down the street? Is it likely to enter a storm sewer or waterway?• Is the caller in possession of the shipping papers?

- **Basic description of what happened to cause the accident** (collision with another vehicle, de-railed train, weather, etc.).
- **Wind direction and speed** at the scene.
- **Weather conditions** (raining, very hot, etc.)
- **ID number of vehicle.** License number of vehicle.
- **Time of accident**

If the caller is knowledgeable of the material and/or is in possession of the shipping papers, the Call Taker should *have them spell the substance*. The Call Taker should copy the information very carefully. Many substances sound alike, but must be handled differently. Many chemicals are very long words that are difficult to pronounce. **The Dispatcher should spell the chemical phonetically to the responders.**

Any directions to the caller should be given with the caller's safety in mind. If the truck is leaking, do not advise the caller to go to the cab for the shipping papers.

North American Emergency Response Guidebook (NAERG) or ERG

This book is sometimes referred to as the DOT guidebook or the Hazmat book. Every communications center should have an ERG available at each workstation (or by computer). If you do not have these books, contact your County Emergency Management Office. In most cases, the books are provided to a center at no charge.

These books are published every three years. 1996 is the first year the book includes chemicals transported in Canada and Mexico as well as the United States. Although an old book may be better than no book, try to use the most updated version. These books are normally paperback or softbound books with an orange cover. They also come in a spiral bound version. The book is divided into multiple sections. This unit of study will review each.

Section 1 (white pages): Page 1 explains how to use the guidebook during an incident involving dangerous goods.

Section 3 (yellow edged pages): This section lists the substances in order of their ASSIGNED ID NUMBER. As you can see, there are several at the beginning of the section that do not have an ID number. The numbering begins with 1001-Acetylene.

The next column provides a "Guide Number". This references which guide (from the orange-bordered pages) should be used to handle the material.

Note that some of the chemicals in the yellow-bordered section are also highlighted in yellow. This indicates there is special information on this ID number and name in the TABLE OF INITIAL ISOLATION AND PROTECTIVE ACTION DISTANCES (the green-bordered pages). Use this information in addition to the referenced guide.

Section 4 (blue edged pages): This section outlines each hazardous material by name (in alphabetical order). It is VERY important that you have the name spelled EXACTLY. One or two letters can make a big difference in the hazards associated with a particular material.

Section 5 (orange edged pages): These pages are the guides that are used to handle each chemical. The following is taken from Page 10 of the book. Each guide is divided into three main sections: the first section describes potential hazards that the material may display in terms of fire/explosion and health effects upon exposure. The emergency responder should consult this section first since it indicates in very brief form the dangers the material may present. This allows the responder to make decisions regarding the protection of the emergency response team as well as the surrounding population.

The second section of the orange pages outlines suggested public safety measures based on the situation at hand. It provides general information regarding immediate isolation of the incident site,

the recommended type of protective clothing and respiratory protection. Suggested evacuation distances are listed for small and large spills and for fire situations.

The third section of the orange pages covers emergency response actions and first aid. It outlines special precautions for incidents, which involve fire, spill, or chemical exposure. Several recommendations are listed under each part which will further assist in the decision making process.

The information on first aid is general guidance before seeking medical care. It is difficult to be specific about the kind of medical assistance that should be sought since factors such as the extent of the exposure, the material(s) involved, the nature and severity of the injuries, the proximity to emergency and medical services may vary. When exposure has occurred, immediate efforts should be made to remove all contaminated clothing and shoes and to obtain medical assistance in evaluating the injuries.

Section 6 (green edged pages): The Table of Initial Isolation and Protective Action Distances suggest distances useful to protect people from vapors resulting from spills involving dangerous goods which are considered poisonous/toxic by inhalation (PIH). The Table provides first responders with initial guidance until technically qualified emergency response personnel are available. Distances show areas likely to be affected during the first 30 minutes after materials are spilled.

This section continues by defining the Initial Isolation Zone and the Protective Action Zone.

There is a systematic guide (page 298 and 299) for using the table. Pages 338 and 339 show a list of dangerous water-reactive materials.

Section 7 (white pages): The last section explains protective actions, gives background information on using the isolation table, and has a glossary of terms.

The key to this guide is to know how to use it effectively BEFORE you have to use it in an emergency.

The key to responder safety is to keep responders updated on all available information regarding the incident, as that information becomes available.

Sources:
Emergency Response Guidebook
FEMA – ICS

Firefighter Death/Injury Statistics

**Fire Service Line of Duty Deaths
2001-2010**

Year	Number of Deaths
2009	93
2008	118
2007	118
2006	107
2005	115
2004	119
2003	113
2002	101
2001	105/458**

A line of duty death (LODD) is a death in the fire service while on duty at an emergency or drill. On average, there are more than 100 LODDs in the U.S. per year³.

- **The leading cause of fatalities of firefighters is heart attack (44%)**, followed by trauma (27%), motor vehicle accident (20-25%) asphyxia and burns (20%). Asphyxia and burns generally affect firefighters under 35 years of age more than stress or heart attacks, whereas the opposite is true for firefighters over 35 years of age.
- Full time and career firefighters accounted for 33% of fatalities, but only 26% of the fire service.
- Where fire departments have EMS, calls related to this service may account for as much as 80% of call volume and as low as 50%. However, fatalities associated with these calls are very insignificant (3%).
- Volunteer firefighters account for 85% of en route fatalities.
- In the past decade, fatalities during training have risen to 6%.
- About 8% of fatalities occur at incidents with more than one LODD.

Statistics for Wildland firefighter fatalities from 2000-2010 (2010 was the only fatality free period for wildland firefighting). Three major causes of death accounted for 83% of all Dept. of the Interior/USDA wildland firefighter fatalities:

- Aviation accidents (50%)
- Burnovers (20%) (The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) definition for "Burnover" is: "A situation where personnel or equipment is caught in an advancing flame front".)
- Motor vehicle accidents (13%)

The next largest cause of death in this group was heart attack (7%) followed by hazard trees (6%).

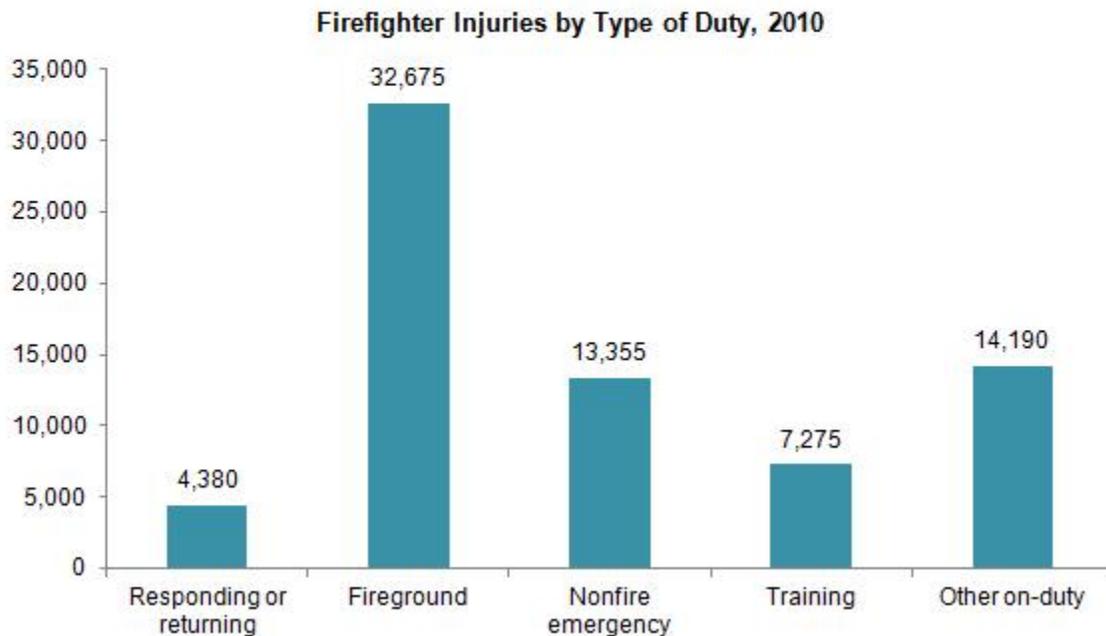
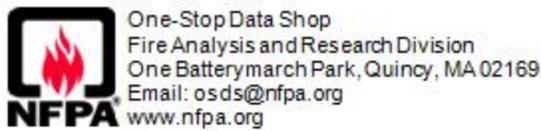
According to the U.S. Fire Administration information on Fatality Notices, of the 50 fatalities (and causes) listed from January 4, 2012-August 4, 2012, 12 were fatalities caused by job/work-related activities at the scene of a fire response, including 6 who were killed in the crash of an aircraft involved in firefighting operations. 38 of them were deaths from other causes, many vehicle accidents, often with volunteers on emergency and non-emergency responses. Many others were caused by overexertion or other medical issues such as cerebral hemorrhage.

³ U.S. Fire Administration. Firefighter Fatalities Historical Overview

It is more difficult to compare law enforcement officer vs. firefighter line of duty deaths since they are calculated so differently. The FBI statistics do not include officers killed in vehicle or aircraft accidents that are non-pursuit or traffic-stop activity related. Fire stats include any death, including death by common medical conditions, if the firefighter was on duty, responding to, or in some cases after a response to an event.

Clearly, the high-risk events that include Dispatcher involvement, such as fire or medical events may have improved outcomes when the Dispatcher is attentive to requests from the field, is able to relay information in a timely manner, and manage the radio frequency for the benefit of all.

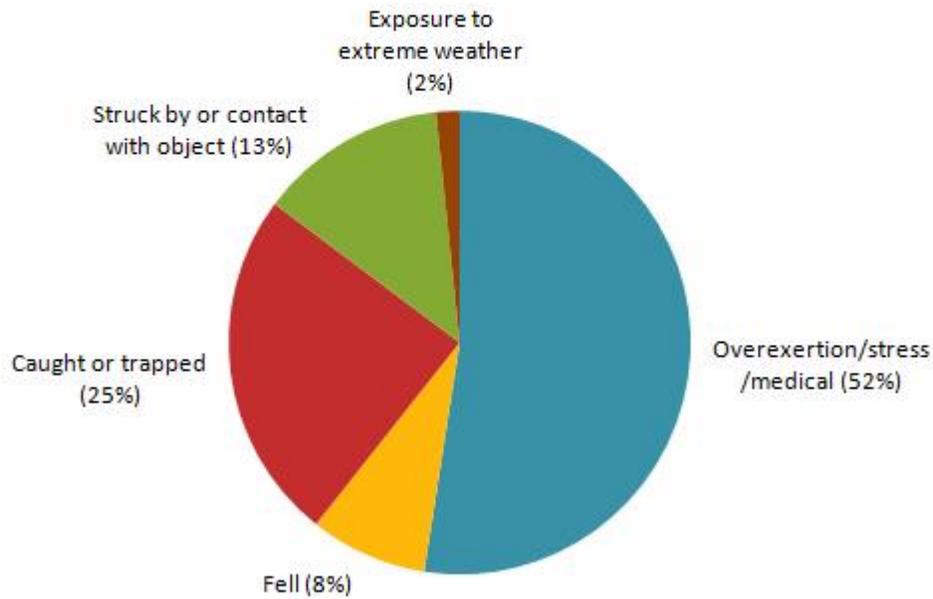
** The 2001 figure includes the 343 FDNY firefighters who were killed in the line of duty at the World Trade Center, September 11, 2001.



Source: *U.S. Firefighter Injuries-2010*, Michael J. Karter Jr. and Joseph L. Molis, October 2011



Firefighter Deaths by Cause of Injury – 2011

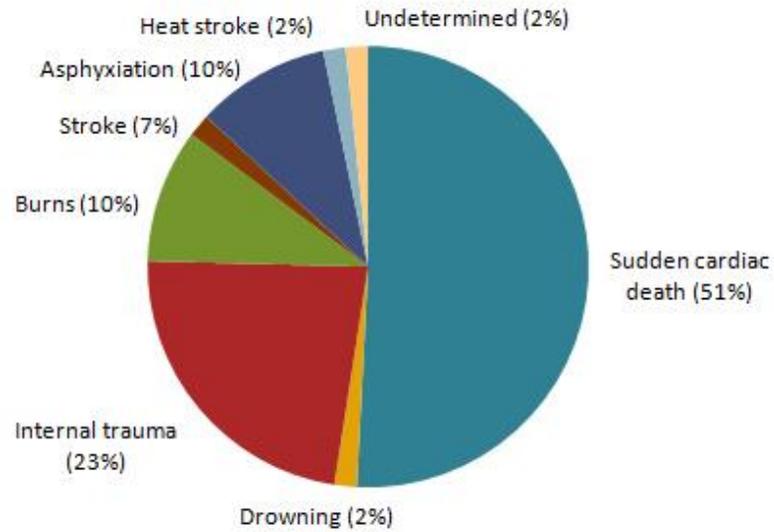


Source: *Firefighter Fatalities in the United States-2011*, by Rita F. Fahy, Paul R. Leblanc and Joseph L. Molis, June 2012.



One-Stop Data Shop
Fire Analysis and Research Division
One Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169
Email: osds@nfpa.org
www.nfpa.org

Firefighter Deaths by Nature of Injury -- 2011

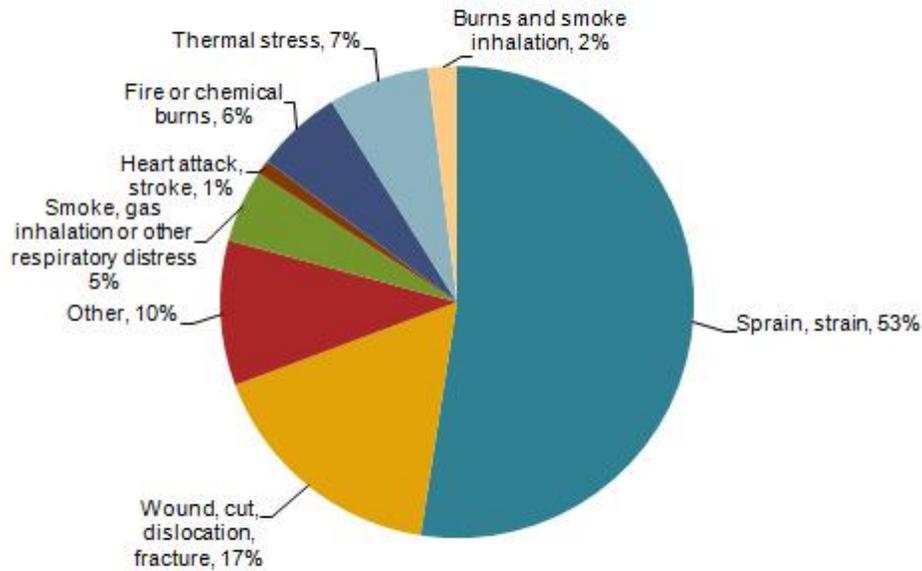


Source: *Firefighter Fatalities in the United States-2011*, by Rita F. Fahy, Paul R. Leblanc and Joseph L. Molis, June 2012.



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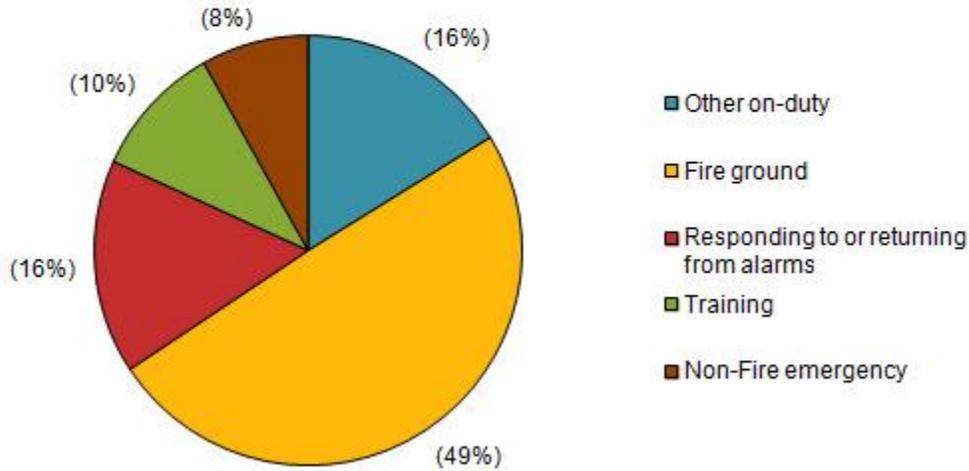
Firefighter Fireground Injuries by Nature of Injury, 2010



Source: *Firefighter Injuries in the United States 2010*, Michael J. Karter, Jr. and Joseph L. Molis, October 2011

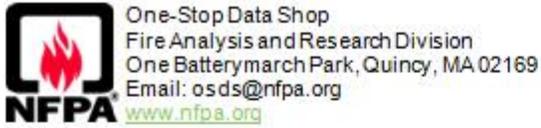


Firefighter Deaths by Type of Duty 2011

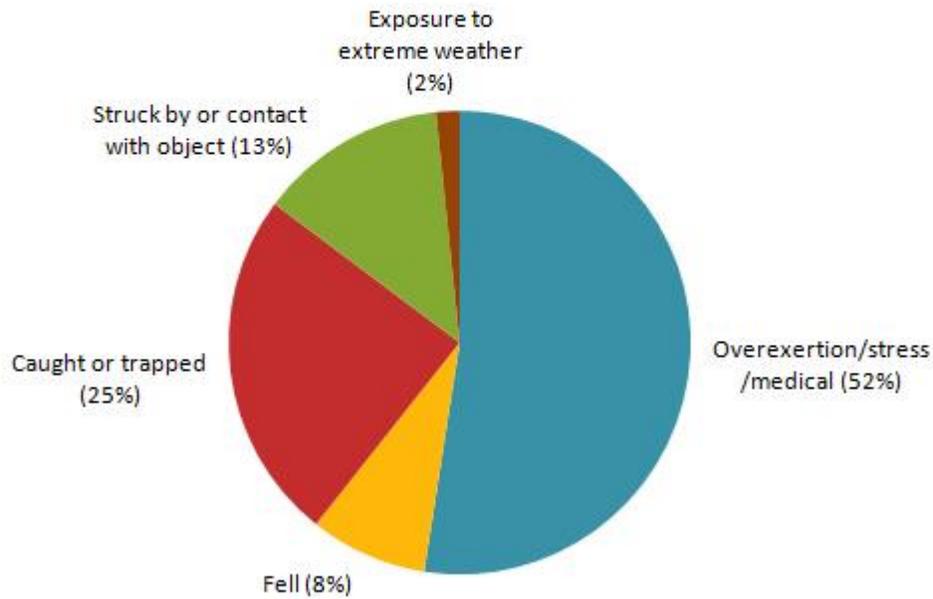


Source: *Firefighter Fatalities in the United States-2011*, by Rita F. Fahy, Paul R. Leblanc and Joseph L. Molis, June 2012.

Year	Total	Firefighting, fireground	Responding, returning	On scene at non-fire calls	Training	Other on-duty
2001*	443	38* (36.9%)	26 (25.2%)	2 (1.9%)	12 (11.7%)	25 (24.3%)
2002	98	46 (46.9%)	19 (19.4%)	10 (10.2%)	11 (11.2%)	12 (12.2%)
2003	106	29 (27.4%)	37 (34.9%)	9 (8.5%)	12 (11.3%)	19 (17.9%)
2004	104	30 (28.8%)	36 (34.6%)	9 (8.7%)	12 (11.5%)	17 (16.3%)
2005	87	25 (28.7%)	26 (29.9%)	4 (4.6%)	11 (12.6%)	21 (24.1%)
2006	89	37 (41.6%)	18 (20.2%)	6 (6.7%)	8 (9.0%)	20 (22.5%)
2007	106	37 (34.9%)	31 (29.2%)	8 (7.5%)	13 (12.3%)	17 (16.0%)
2008	105	29 (27.6%)	40 (38.1%)	11 (10.5%)	7 (6.7%)	18 (17.1%)
2009	82	27 (32.9%)	20 (24.4%)	10 (12.2%)	11 (13.4%)	14 (17.1%)
2010	73	22 (30.1%)	18 (24.7%)	5 (6.8%)	11 (15.1%)	17 (23.3%)
2011	61	30 (49.2%)	10 (16.4%)	5 (8.2%)	6 (9.8%)	10 (16.4%)



Firefighter Deaths by Cause of Injury – 2011

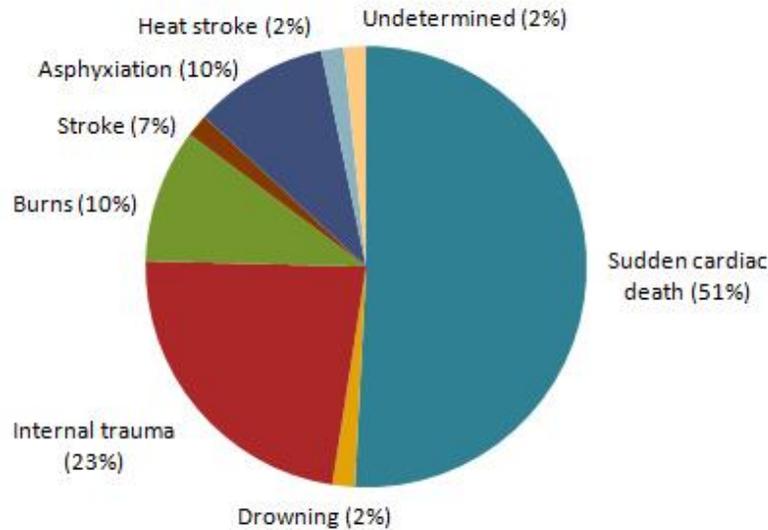


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Source: *Firefighter Fatalities in the United States-2011*, by Rita F. Fahy, Paul R. Leblanc and Joseph L. Molis, June 2012.

UNIT 6 –FIRE OPERATIONS AND DISPATCH METHODS - Summary

The fire service has specific terms and methods of operations about which the Fire Dispatcher should be aware. In addition, the information about fire operations & methods is valuable for the Law Enforcement Dispatcher to understand due the closeness with which law enforcement and fire interact, respond, and communicate.

The fire apparatus types include terms that will be used in events where the Incident Command System is used, therefore, that information is important for the Dispatcher.

The formatting of calls, initial dispatch, short report, response information, and size-up is similar to law enforcement, but is often used exactly the same way on every fire/EMS call.

Information about on-scene priorities, special groups, equipment, and accountability systems are critical knowledge pieces for the Fire Dispatcher. These include:

- REVAS – the general priorities at the scene (Rescue, Evacuate, Ventilate, Attack, Salvage)
- Rapid Intervention Teams (RIT)
- Pass device – personal alarm when there is a lack of motion for a prescribed period of time

Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission
Telecommunicator Program Office
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2012 Revised

- PASSPORT system – on-scene accountability system for tracking the location & assignment of personnel
- Hazmat – immediate goals: Recognitions, Identification, Stabilization
 - Know how to use the ERG and other resources
 - Be familiar with and drill on your Hazmat procedures

Sources:

Tacoma Fire Department
Yakima Fire Department
Spokane Fire Department

Notes:

UNIT 7 – NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND THE INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit, the participant will be able to:

- Define the acronyms NIMS and ICS
- List the five *functional* areas or *general staff* of ICS
- List four potential *command staff*

What is NIMS - National Incident Management System?

On February 28, 2003, President Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive–5. HSPD–5 directed the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System. NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents. This lesson will describe the key concepts and principles of NIMS, and the benefits of using the system for domestic incident response. At the end of this lesson, you should be able to describe these key concepts, principles, and benefits.

National Incident Management System

NIMS is a comprehensive, national approach to incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. The intent of NIMS is to:

- ✓ Be applicable across a full spectrum of potential incidents and hazard scenarios, regardless of size or complexity.
- ✓ Improve coordination and cooperation between public and private entities in a variety of domestic incident management activities.

NIMS Compliance

HSPD-5 requires Federal departments and agencies to make the adoption of NIMS by State and local organizations a condition for Federal preparedness assistance (grants, contracts, and other activities) by FY 2005. Jurisdictions can comply in the short term by adopting the Incident Command System. Other aspects of NIMS require additional development and refinement to enable compliance at a future date.

Why Do We Need a National Incident System?

Emergencies occur every day somewhere in the United States. These emergencies are large and small and range from fires to hazardous materials incidents to natural and technological disasters. Each incident requires a response. Whether from different departments within the same jurisdiction, from mutual aid partners, or from State and Federal agencies, responders need to be able to work together, communicate with each other, and depend on each other. Until now, there have been no standards for domestic incident response that reach across all levels of government and all emergency response agencies.

The events of September 11 have underscored the need for and importance of national standards for incident operations, incident communications, personnel qualifications, resource management, and information management and supporting technology. To provide standards for domestic incident response, President Bush signed Homeland Security Presidential Directive – 5. HSPD-5 authorized the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop the National Incident Management System, or NIMS. NIMS provides for interoperability and compatibility among all responders.

NIMS Concepts and Principles

NIMS provides a framework for interoperability and compatibility by balancing flexibility and standardization.

NIMS provides a **flexible** framework that facilitates government and private entities at all levels working together to manage domestic incidents. This flexibility applies to all phases of incident management, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. NIMS provides a set of **standardized** organizational structures, as well as requirements for processes, procedures, and systems designed to improve interoperability.

NIMS Components

NIMS is comprised of several components that work together as a system to provide a national framework for preparing for, preventing, responding to, and recovering from domestic incidents. These components include:

- ✓ **Command and management**
- ✓ **Preparedness**
- ✓ **Resource management**
- ✓ **Communications and information management**
- ✓ **Supporting technologies**
- ✓ **Ongoing management and maintenance**

Although these systems are still evolving, many are already in place.

Command & Management

NIMS standard incident management structures are based on three key organizational systems:

1. The ***Incident Command System (ICS)***, which defines the operating characteristics, management components, and structure of incident management organizations throughout the life cycle of an incident.
 - a. ICS is a standard, on-scene, all-hazard incident management system. ICS allows users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the needs of single or multiple incidents.
 - b. NIMS recommends variations in incident management. The two most common variations involve the use of Unified Command and Area Command (see ICS later in this unit).
2. ***Multiagency Coordination Systems***, which define the operating characteristics, management components, and organizational structure of supporting entities
 - a. Multiagency Coordination Systems are a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications integrated into a common framework for coordinating and supporting incident management.
 - b. The main functions of Multiagency Coordination Systems are to:
 - i. Support incident management policies and priorities.
 - ii. Facilitate logistics support and resource tracking.
 - iii. Make resource allocation decisions based on incident management priorities.
 - iv. Coordinate incident-related information.
 - v. Coordinate interagency and intergovernmental issues regarding incident management policies, priorities, and strategies.
 - c. Elements of Multiagency Coordination Systems
 - i. **EOCs** are the locations from which the coordination of information and resources to support incident activities take place. EOCs are typically established by the emergency management agency at the local or State level.
 - ii. **Multiagency Coordination Entities** typically consist of principals from organizations with direct incident management responsibilities or with significant incident management support or resource responsibilities.

These entities may be used to facilitate incident management and policy coordination.

3. **Public Information Systems**, which include the processes, procedures, and systems for communicating timely and accurate information to the public during emergency situations.
 - a. Under ICS the PIO is a key member of the command staff (Information Officer). The PIO advises the Incident Command on all public information matters related to the incident including media and public inquiries, emergency public information and warnings, etc.
 - b. The PIO establishes and operates within the parameters established for the **Joint Information System (JIS)**.
 - c. The JIS provides an organized, integrated, and coordinated mechanism for providing information to the public during an emergency.
 - d. The JIS includes plans, protocols, and structures used to provide info to the public and encompasses all public information related to the incident.
 - e. The **Joint Information Center (JIC)** is a physical location where public information staff involved in the incident management activities can co-locate to perform critical emergency information, crisis communications, and public affairs functions.
 - i. Incident commanders and Multiagency Coordination Entities are responsible for establishing and overseeing JICs. In the case of a Unified Command, those contributing to the joint public information management do not lose their individual identities or responsibilities; rather, each entity contributes to the overall unified message.

Preparedness

Effective incident management begins with preparedness activities conducted on a “steady-state” basis, well in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, training exercises, personnel qualification and certification standards, equipment acquisition and certification standards and publication management processes and activities.

- ✓ **Planning, training, and exercises.**
- ✓ **Personnel qualification and certification standards.**
- ✓ **Equipment acquisition and certification standards.**

Planning

Plans describe how personnel, equipment and other resources are used to support incident management and emergency response activities. Plans provide mechanisms and systems for setting priorities, integrating multiple entities and functions, and ensure that communications and another systems are available and integrated in support of full spectrum of incident management requirements.

Training

Training includes standard courses on multi agency incident command and management, organizational structure, and operational procedures; discipline-specific and agency-specific incident management courses; and courses on integration and use of supporting technologies.

Exercises

Incident management organizations and personnel must participate in realistic exercises including multidisciplinary, multi-jurisdictional, and multi sector interaction, to improve integration and interoperability and optimize resource use during incident operations.

Personnel Qualification and Certification

Qualification and certification activities are undertaken to identify and publish national-level standards and measure performance against these standards to ensure that incident management and emergency responder personnel are appropriately qualified and officially certified to perform NIMS-related functions.

Equipment Acquisition and Certification

Incident management organizations and emergency responders at all levels rely on various types of equipment to perform mission essential tasks. A critical component of operational preparedness is the acquisition of equipment that will perform to certain standards, including the capability to be interoperable with similar equipment used by other jurisdictions.

The Incident Command System was developed as a result of wildland fires that occurred in the 1970s. Due to the size and scope of these fires, multiple agencies were involved and there was a need to streamline coordination between them. The ICS system was developed to address these organizational difficulties.

The National Curriculum Advisory Committee recommended ICS as an all-risk, all-agency system. In 1987, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) endorsed ICS.

Resource Management

When fully implemented, NIMS will define standardized mechanisms, and establish requirements for describing, inventorying, mobilizing, dispatching, tracking, and recovering resources of the life cycle of an incident.

Communications & Information Management

NIMS identifies the requirements for a standardized framework for communications, Information management, and information-sharing support at all levels of incident management

- Incident management organizations must ensure that effective, interoperable communications processes, procedures, and systems exist across all agency jurisdictions.
- Information management systems help ensure that information flows efficiently through a commonly accepted architecture. Effective information management enhances incident management and response by helping to ensure that decision making is better informed.

Supporting Technologies

Technology and technological systems provide supporting capabilities essential to implementing and refining NIMS. Examples include:

- Voice and data communication systems.
- Information management systems, such as recordkeeping and resource tracking.
- Data display systems

Supporting technologies also include specialized technologies that facilitate ongoing operations and incident management activities in situations that call for unique technology-based capabilities.

Ongoing Management & Maintenance

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established the NIMS Integration Center to provide strategic direction and oversight in support of routine review and continual refinement of both the system and its components over the long term.

Incident Command System

ICS Defined

The Incident Command (or Management) System is the method used to effectively manage resources and personnel during an incident.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is based upon business management principles:

1. **Planning**
2. **Directing**
3. **Organizing**
4. **Coordinating**
5. **Communicating**
6. **Delegating**
7. **Evaluating**

As such, ICS is recognized as the foundation for an all-risk emergency response. This includes law enforcement, fire services, and EMS.

ICS is a management system that facilitates organizing and using the following resources:

- ✓ **Personnel – responders, Dispatchers, Call Takers, others**
- ✓ **Facilities – command post, staging, base, rehab, etc.**
- ✓ **Equipment – apparatus, equipment, etc.**
- ✓ **Communications – radio frequencies, telephones, faxes, documentation**

Laws & Standards of ICS

Federal laws *require* an ICS for ***hazardous materials incidents*** as stipulated by the:

- Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Additionally, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requires ICS

The National Curriculum Advisory Committee recommended ICS as an all-risk, all-agency system. In 1987, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) endorsed ICS.

ICS Concepts, Elements & Principles

There are eight primary elements of ICS. They are:

1. ***Common terminology***
2. ***Modular organization***
3. ***Integrated communications***
4. ***Use of a unified command structure***
5. ***Consolidated action plans***
6. ***A manageable span of control***
7. ***Designated incident facilities***
8. ***Comprehensive resource management***

Common Terminology

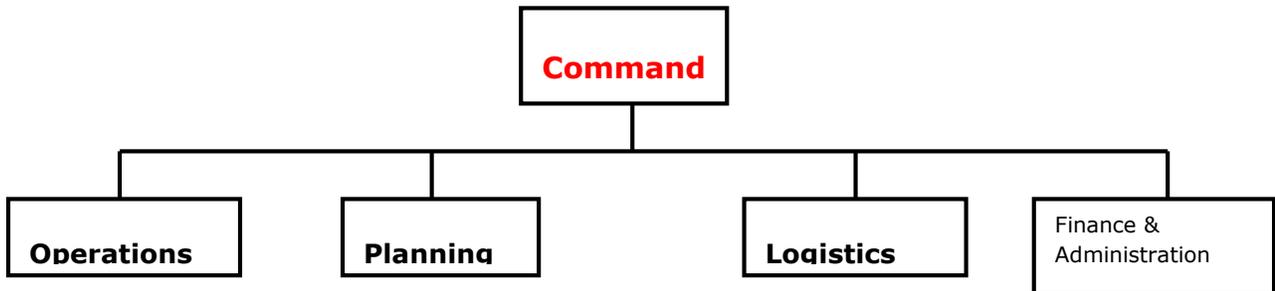
In ICS, the use of common terminology is critical. Major organizational functions and units are *pre-designated*. Common names are established for all personnel, equipment, and facilities and around

the incident. Plain language is advocated rather than “10” or other radio traffic codes. Everyone involved in the incident is using the same terms so there is common understanding among the participants.

Modular Organization

ICS is a system that may expand or contract as the needs of an event change. It is flexible. Not all positions are nor should be filled for all incidents. The need to have an effective *span of control* may dictate how many command or general staff positions are filled. If a position is *not* filled, the Incident Commander is responsible for that function.

The **five functional areas** that *may* be implemented as needed are:



Integrated Communications

A common communications plan and standard operating procedures (SOPs) or guidelines (SOGs) provide a:

- **Faster response**
- **Better coordinated response**

Unified Command

Unified command (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH “UNITY OF COMMAND” Unity of Command means every person reports to ONE individual) allows principal players (responding agencies) to:

- **Establish common goals and objectives** – *what* is the goal?
- **Develop a *SINGLE* plan** – *how* is the goal achieved?
- **Share resources** – *what* are they and *how* can they best be utilized?
- **Establish specific responsibilities** – *who* is the person responsible for specific or individual tasks?

Unified command can be used for:

- ◆ Single-jurisdiction, multiple-agency incidents
- ◆ Multiple-jurisdiction incidents
- ◆ When more than one individual shares overall management responsibility

Area Command

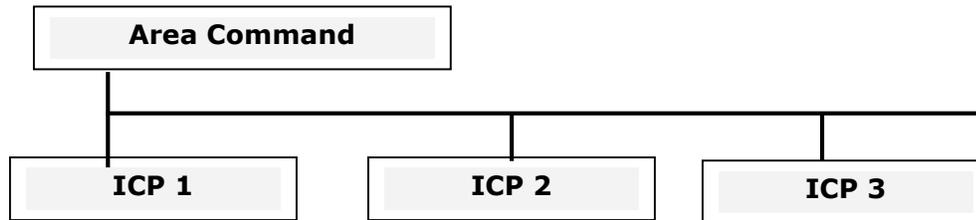
Area Command is one of the two most common models in NIMS. An Area Command is an organization established to:

- Oversee management of multiple incidents that are each being managed by an ICS organization
- Oversee the management of large incidents that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

Area Commands are particularly relevant to public health emergencies because the incidents are typically:

- Not site specific.
- Not immediately identifiable.
- Geographically idspersed and evolve over time.

These types of incidents call for a coordinated response, with large-scale coordination typically found at a higher jurisdictional level.



What does an Area Command Do?

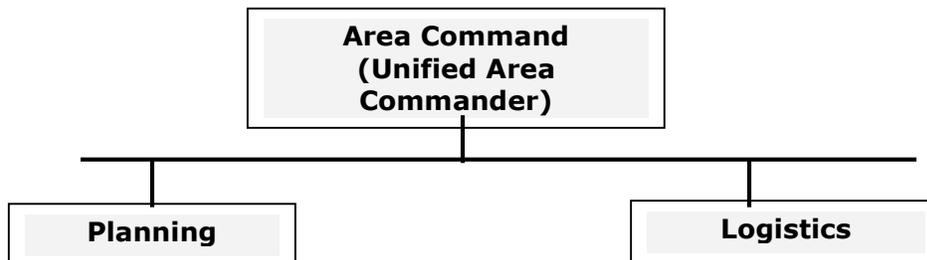
The Area Command has the responsibility for:

- Setting overall strategy and priorities.
- Allocating critical resources according to the priorities
- Ensuring that incidents are properly managed.
- Ensuring that objectives are met.
- Ensuring that strategies are followed.

An Area Command may become a Unified Area Command when incidents are multijurisdictional or involve multiple agencies.

How is an Area Command Organized?

An Area command is organizaed similarly to an ICS structure but, because operations are conducted on-scene, there is no Operations Section in an Area Command. Other Sections and functions are represented in an Area Command Structure.



Consolidated Action Plan

This is the plan that outlines what the goal is for the incident and how the goal will be accomplished. Each agency will have a part in developing the consolidated action plan.

These plans may be oral or written.

- Written plans are required when multiple agencies are involved
- Action plans cover:
 - Goals
 - Objectives
 - Support activities

Command Function

The Command function (Incident Commander):

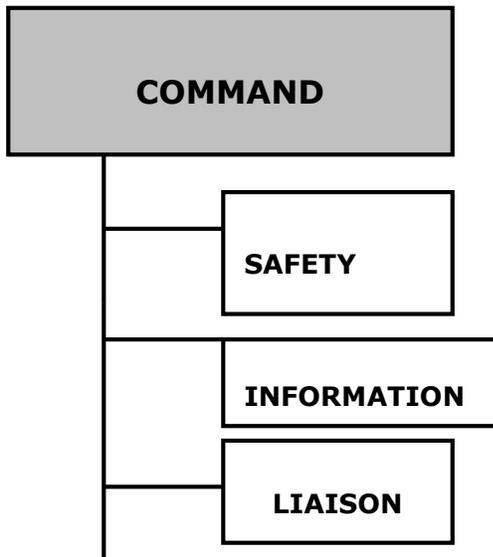
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| ▪ Exerts overall on-scene management of the incident and is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The action plan to control the incident• The organization structure• Handles the duties of all command staff or general staff positions that are unassigned |
|--|

Command Staff

Command staff is needed:

- At large-scale or complex incidents
- If the IC is unable to handle the functions of **Safety Officer, Liaison Officer, and Information Officer, then the Incident Commander shall establish the Command Staff. The Command Staff consist of:**
- **Safety Officer: is responsible for the safety of the personal at the incident.**
- **The Public Information Officer: is responsible for all media releases, in coordination with the Incident Commander. As known as the PIO.**
- **Liaison Officer: is responsible for coordinating the multi agencies that may be involved during the incident.**

The Command Staff



The Safety Officer:

- Ensures personnel observe safety procedures and safe practices
- Identifies unsafe or hazardous conditions that may exist or develop
- Develops measures to protect the safety of personnel
- Takes immediate action to stop or prevent unsafe acts
- The Safety Officer has the authority to take immediate action as necessary to prevent injury

The Liaison Officer:

- Is the point of contact for assisting and/or coordinating with agencies
- Provides lines of authority, responsibility, and communication

The Information Officer:

- Provides a valuable interface with the media to disseminate accurate, timely, and consistent information

Functional Areas in the General Staff:

The functional or general areas of the command structure are:

Operations Section Chief:

- Manages tactical operations
- Coordinates operations

Planning Section Chief:

Planning responsibilities include information:

- Collection
- Evaluation
- Dissemination
- Use for incident development and resource status

Logistics Section Chief:

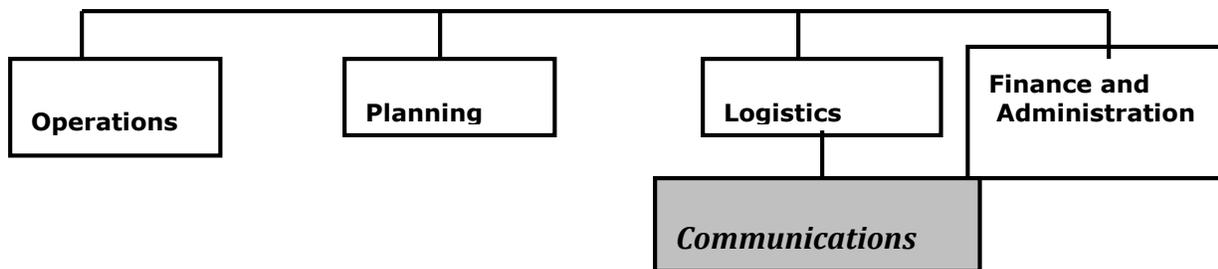
- Is responsible for locating, organizing, and providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident
- Services may include providing for *responder*
 - **Communications**
 - **Medical Care**
 - **Food**

Finance and Administration Section Chief:

Finance is responsible for:

- Tracking all costs and financial considerations surrounding the incident
- Monitoring recording of information and costs for potential reimbursements at a later time

Functional Areas or General Staff



Summary:

ICS is a management tool that can be used:

- In large or small incidents
- With one or more agency
- In:
 - Emergencies
 - Planned events (e.g., sporting events, concerts)
 - Unplanned events (e.g., earthquakes)

By implementing ICS, agencies and departments do not relinquish their authority. Rather, they combine their efforts into one integrated and effective response effort.

ICS and the Communications Center

If the telecommunicator is acting as both a Call Taker and a Dispatcher, it is clear that there is a need to know and understand the basic principles of Incident Command. As a Dispatcher, you may be dealing with this structure during fire responses as well as law enforcement incidents. It will be important for you to know whom each of the general or command staff persons are, as requests are made of you.

In addition, for those telecommunicators who are filling a Call Taker position will need to be able to respond to requests from the field. These may be received by telephone. Request from the field should be *thoroughly documented* in the call, including who made the request, the details of the request, and how the request was handled.

Documentation is extremely important after the event. It is essential that information or requests received from incident responders be accurately recorded, noting the time and disposition of the request or notification. An example would be if a request was received from the Dispatcher or commander in the field to make "staff notifications", the Call Taker notes the time of the request and

document the time and whether or not a staff member could be notified. This information is documented in the call. Requests may be made to notify the Red Cross or other organizations whose services are needed during the event. This information, too, is clearly documented in the call, including, *who* was notified and *when*.

Call Takers may be asked to relay information about the incident to other responders. It is essential to know the terms and information about such things as:

- **Staging**
- **Command Post**
- **Frequency or talk group assignment**

In addition to having an understanding of how the Incident Command System works in the field, the telecommunicator should understand how ICS could work within the Communications Center. While the "communications" function is often listed under the "Logistics" functional area of the incident, the Communications Center may also have in place a plan to operate in a modified ICS structure during a major event. An example would be if an agency with multiple telecommunications staff on duty was involved in a major incident, the staff may move into a "major incident" mode. Perhaps a supervisor would designate specific duties to other staff members, while maintaining an adequate "span of control". If the incident grew or there was more staff on duty than could be effectively managed by one individual, other person within the center could be assigned "functional" areas of responsibility.

Examples could be:

- Will additional staff be needed?
- Who will make the staff call-ins?
- Do we need to dedicate a person to make out-going calls, notifications, etc.?
- Do we need to assign back-up Dispatchers to assist the Dispatcher(s) handling a major incident?
- How can we make the operation of the center more effective and efficient during this event?
- How long is this event likely to last so we can plan for ongoing staffing issues?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS: Basic Incident Command System (ICS)

Action Plan (See Incident Action Plan.)

Agency - An agency is a division of government with a specific function, or a nongovernmental organization (e.g., private contractor, business, etc.) that offers a particular kind of assistance. In ICS, agencies are defined as jurisdictional (having statutory responsibility for incident mitigation) or assisting and/or cooperating (providing resources and/or assistance). (See Assisting Agency, Cooperating Agency, and Multiagency.)

Agency Administrator - The Chief Executive Officer (or designee) of the agency or jurisdiction or executive who has responsibility for the incident.

Agency Dispatch - The agency or jurisdictional facility from which resources are allocated to incidents.

Agency Representative - An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating agency that has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident. Agency Representatives report to the Incident Liaison Officer.

Air Operations Branch - The person primarily responsible for preparing and implementing the air operations portion of the Incident Action Plan. S/he is also responsible for providing logistical support to helicopters operating at the incident.

Allocated Resources - Those resources that have been dispatched to an incident.

Area Command - An organization established to:

1) Oversee the management of multiple incidents that are each being handled by an Incident Command System organization

2) To oversee the management of a very large incident that has multiple Incident Management Teams assigned to it. Area Command has the responsibility to set overall strategy and priorities, allocate critical resources based on priorities, ensure that incidents are properly managed, and ensure that objectives are met and strategies followed.

Assigned Resources - checked in and assigned work tasks at an incident.

Assignments - Tasks given to resources to perform within a given operational period, based upon tactical objectives in the Incident Action Plan.

Assistant - Title for subordinates of the Command Staff positions. The title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants may also be used to supervise unit activities at camps.

Assisting Agency - An agency directly contributing tactical or service resources to another agency.

Available Resources - Incident-based resources that are ready for deployment.

Base - The location at which primary logistics functions for an incident are coordinated and administered. There is only one Base per incident. (Incident name or other designator will be added to the term Base.) The Incident Command Post may be co-located with the Base.

Branch - The organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of incident operations. The Branch level is organizationally between Section and Division/Group in the Operations Section, and between Section and Units in the Logistics Section. Branches are identified by the use of Roman numerals or by functional name (e.g., medical, security, etc.).

Cache - A predetermined complement of tools, equipment, and/or supplies stored in a designated location, available for incident use.

Camp - A geographic site, within the general incident area, separate from the Incident Base, equipped and staffed to provide food, water, and sleeping and sanitary facilities to incident personnel.

Casualty Collection Point - A Casualty Collection Point (CCP) serves as a location near the incident site that provides areas to triage, treat, and transport victims in a multi casualty incident. CCPs are not an official facility in the NIIMS ICS.

Chain of Command - A series of management positions in order of authority.

Check-in The process whereby resources first report to an incident. Check-in locations include: Incident Command Post (Resources Unit), Incident Base, Camps, Staging Areas, Helibases, Helispots, and Division Supervisors (for direct line assignments).

Chief - The ICS title for individuals responsible for command of functional sections: Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

Clear Text - The use of plain English in radio communications transmissions. No Ten Codes or agency-specific codes are used when utilizing Clear Text.

Command - The act of directing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority. May also refer to the Incident Commander.

Command Post (See Incident Command Post.)

Command Staff - The Command Staff consists of the Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander. They may have an assistant or assistants, as needed.

Communications Unit - An organizational unit in the Logistics Section responsible for providing communication services at an incident. A Communications Unit may also be a facility (e.g., a trailer or mobile van) used to provide the major part of an Incident Communications Center.

Compacts - Formal working agreements among agencies to obtain mutual aid.

Compensation - The functional unit within the Finance/Administration Section

Unit/Claims Unit - responsible for financial concerns resulting from property damage, injuries, or fatalities at the incident.

Complex - Two or more individual incidents located in the same general area, which are assigned to a single Incident Commander or to Unified Command.

Cooperating Agency - An agency supplying assistance other than direct tactical or support functions or resources to the incident control effort (e.g., Red Cross, telephone company, etc.).

Coordination - The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate command authority of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives. The coordination process (which can be either intra- or inter-agency) does not involve dispatch actions. However, personnel responsible for coordination may perform command or dispatch functions within the limits established by specific agency delegations, procedures, legal authority, etc.

Coordination Center - Any facility that is used for the coordination of agency or jurisdictional resources in support of one or more incidents.

Cost Sharing Agreements - Agreements between agencies or jurisdictions to share designated costs related to incidents. Cost sharing agreements are normally written but may also be oral between authorized agency and jurisdictional representatives at the incident.

Cost Unit - The functional unit within the Finance/Administration Section responsible for tracking costs, analyzing cost data, making cost estimates, and recommending cost-saving measures.

Crew (See Single Resource.)

Delegation of Authority - A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the Agency Executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Many agencies require a written Delegation of Authority to be given to Incident Commanders prior to their assuming command of larger incidents.

Demobilization Unit - The functional unit within the Planning Section responsible for assuring orderly, safe, and efficient demobilization of incident resources.

Deputy - A fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, could be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a Deputy could act as relief for a superior and therefore must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies can be assigned to the Incident Commander, General Staff, and Branch Directors.

Director The ICS title for individuals responsible for supervision of a Branch.

Dispatch - The implementation of a command decision to move a resource or resources from one place to another.

Dispatch Center - A facility from which resources are assigned to an incident.

Division - Divisions are used to divide an incident into geographic areas of operation. A Division is located within the ICS organization between the Branch and the Task Force/Strike Team. (See Group.) Divisions are identified by alphabetic characters for horizontal applications and, often, by floor numbers when used in buildings.

Documentation Unit - The functional unit within the Planning Section responsible for collecting, recording, and safeguarding all documents relevant to the incident.

Emergency Management - The individual within each political subdivision that has coordination.

Coordinator/Director responsibility for jurisdictional emergency management.

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) - A health-care specialist with particular skills and knowledge in pre-hospital emergency medicine.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) - A predestinated facility established by an agency or jurisdiction to coordinate the overall agency or jurisdictional response and support to an emergency.

Emergency Operations Plan - The plan that each jurisdiction has and maintains for responding to emergency incidents.

Event - A planned, non-emergency activity. ICS can be used as the management system for a wide range of events (e.g., parades, concerts, or sporting events).

Facilities Unit - Functional unit within the Support Branch of the Logistics Section that provides fixed facilities for the incident. These facilities may include the Incident Base, feeding areas, sleeping areas, sanitary facilities, etc.

Field Operations Guide - A pocket-size manual of instructions on the application of the Incident Command System.

Finance/Administration Section - The Section responsible for all incident costs and financial considerations. Includes the Time Unit, Procurement Unit, Compensation/Claims Unit, and Cost Unit.

Food Unit - Functional unit within the Service Branch of the Logistics Section responsible for providing meals for incident personnel.

Function - In ICS, function refers to the five major activities in the ICS, i.e., Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. The term function is also used when describing the activity involved (e.g., the planning function).

General Staff - The group of incident management personnel reporting to the Incident Commander. They may each have a deputy, as needed.

The General Staff consists of:

- ✓ **Operations Section Chief**
- ✓ **Planning Section Chief**
- ✓ **Logistics Section Chief**
- ✓ **Finance/Administration Section Chief**

Generic ICS - Refers to the description of ICS that is generally applicable to any kind of incident or event.

Ground Support Unit - Functional unit within the Support Branch of the Logistics Section responsible for the fueling, maintaining, and repairing of vehicles, and the transportation of personnel and supplies.

Group - Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. (See Division.) Groups are located between Branches (when activated) and Resources in the Operations Section.

Helibase - The main location for parking, fueling, maintenance, and loading of helicopters operating in support of an incident. It is usually located at or near the Incident Base.

Helispot - Any designated location where a helicopter can safely take off and land. Some helispots may be used for loading of supplies, equipment, or personnel.

Hierarchy of Command (See Chain of Command.)

ICS National Training - A series of 17 training modules developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) consisting of instructor guides, visuals, curriculum tests, and student materials. The modules cover all aspects of ICS operations. The modules can be intermixed to meet specific training needs.

Incident - An occurrence, caused either by human action or natural phenomena that requires action by emergency service personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources.

Incident Action Plan - Contains objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy and specific tactical actions and supporting information for the next operational period. The Plan may be oral or written. When written, the Plan may have a number of forms as attachments (e.g., traffic plan, safety plan, communications plan, map, etc.).

Incident Base (See Base.)

Incident Commander - The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

Incident Command Post (ICP) - The location at which the primary command functions are executed. The ICP may be co-located with the Incident Base or other incident facilities.

Incident Command System (ICS) - A standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

Incident Communication Center - The location of the Communications Unit and the Message Center.

Incident Management Team - The Incident Commander and appropriate Command and General Staff personnel assigned to an incident.

Incident Objectives - Statements of guidance and direction necessary for the selection of appropriate strategies, and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished when all allocated resources have been effectively deployed. Incident objectives must be achievable and measurable, yet flexible enough to allow for strategic and tactical alternatives.

Incident Support Organization - Includes any off-incident support provided to an incident. Examples would be agency dispatch centers, airports, mobilization centers, etc.

Information Officer - A member of the Command Staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media or with other agencies requiring information directly from the incident. There is only one Information Officer per incident. The Information Officer may have assistants.

Initial Action - The actions taken by resources that are the first to arrive at an incident.

Initial Response - Resources initially committed to an incident.

Jurisdiction - The range or sphere of authority. Public agencies have jurisdiction at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority for incident mitigation. Jurisdictional authority at an incident can be political/geographic (e.g., city, county, State, or Federal boundary lines) or functional (e.g., police department, health department, etc.). (See Multijurisdiction)

Jurisdictional Agency - The agency having jurisdiction and responsibility for a specific geographical area, or a mandated function.

Kind - Resources described by function (e.g., a patrol car or a bulldozer).

Landing Zone (See Helispot.)

Leader - The ICS title for an individual responsible for a Task Force, Strike Team, or functional unit.

Liaison Officer - A member of the Command Staff responsible for coordinating with representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies.

Life Safety -The joint consideration of both the life and physical wellbeing of individuals.

Logistics Section - The Section responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident.

Management By Objectives - In ICS, this is a top-down management activity that involves a three-step process to achieve the incident goal. The steps are: establishing the incident objectives, selection of appropriate strategy(s) to achieve the objectives, and the tactical direction associated with the selected strategy. Tactical direction includes selection of tactics, selection of resources, resource assignments, and performance monitoring.

Managers - Individuals within ICS organizational units who are assigned specific managerial responsibilities (e.g., Staging Area Manager or Camp Manager).

Medical Unit - Functional unit within the Service Branch of the Logistics Section responsible for the development of the Medical Emergency Plan and for providing emergency medical treatment of incident personnel.

Message Center - The Message Center is part of the Incident Communications Center and is co-located or placed adjacent to it. It receives, records, and routes information about resources reporting to the incident, resource status, and administrative and tactical traffic.

Mobilization - The process and procedures used by all organizations—Federal, State, and local—for activating, assembling, and transporting all resources that have been requested to respond to or support an incident.

Mobilization Center - An off-incident location at which emergency service personnel and equipment are temporarily located pending assignment, release, or reassignment.

Multiagency Coordination (MAC) - A generalized term that describes the functions and activities of representatives of involved agencies and/or jurisdictions who come together to make decisions regarding the prioritizing of incidents and the sharing and use of critical resources. The MAC

organization is not a part of the on-scene ICS and is not involved in developing incident strategy or tactics.

Multiagency Incident - An incident where one or more agencies assists a jurisdictional agency or agencies. May be single or unified command.

Multi-Agency System (MACS) - The combination of personnel, facilities, equipment, procedures, and communications integrated into a common system. When activated, MACS has the responsibility for coordination of assisting agency resources and support in a multiagency or multijurisdictional environment. A MAC Group functions within the MACS.

Multijurisdiction Incident -An incident requiring action from multiple agencies that have a statutory responsibility for incident mitigation. In ICS these incidents will be managed under *Unified Command*.

Mutual Aid Agreement - Written agreement between agencies and/or jurisdictions in which they agree to assist one another upon request by furnishing personnel and equipment.

National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS) - A program developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group consisting of five major subsystems which collectively provide a total systems approach to all-risk incident management. The subsystems are the Incident Command System, Training, Qualifications and Certification, Supporting Technologies, and Publications Management.

National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) - A group formed under the direction of the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to improve the coordination and effectiveness of wildland fire activities and provide a forum to discuss, recommend appropriate action, or resolve issues and problems of substantive nature. The NWCG has been a primary supporter of ICS development and training.

Officer - The ICS title for the personnel responsible for the Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Information.

Operational Period - The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of operation actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan. Operational Periods can be of various lengths, although usually not over 24 hours.

Operations Section - The Section responsible for all tactical operations at the incident. Includes Branches, Divisions and/or Groups, Task Forces, Strike Teams, Single Resources, and Staging Areas.

Out-of-Service Resources - Resources assigned to an incident but unable to respond for mechanical, rest, or personnel reasons.

Overhead Personnel: are assigned to supervisory positions which include Incident Commander, Command Staff, General Staff, Directors, Supervisors, and Unit Leaders.

Planning Meeting A meeting held as needed throughout the duration of an incident to select specific strategies and tactics for incident control operations and for service and support planning. In larger incidents, the planning meeting is a major element in the development of the Incident Action Plan.

Planning Section - Responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of tactical information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of Incident Action Plans. The Planning Section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation and on the status of resources assigned to the incident. Includes the Situation, Resource, Documentation, and Demobilization Units, as well as Technical Specialists.

Procurement Unit- Functional unit within the Finance/Administration Section responsible for financial matters involving vendor contracts.

Radio Cache - A supply of radios stored in a predetermined location for assignment to incidents.

Recorders - Individuals within ICS organizational units who are responsible for recording information. Recorders may be found in Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections.

Reinforced Response - Those resources requested in addition to the initial response.

Reporting Locations - Location or facilities where incoming resources can check in at the incident. (See Check-in.)

Resources - Personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents. Resources are described by kind and type (e.g., ground, water, air, etc.) and may be used in tactical support or overhead capacities at an incident.

Resources Unit - Functional unit within the Planning Section responsible for recording the status of resources committed to the incident. The Resources Unit also evaluates resources currently committed to the incident, the impact that additional responding resources will have on the incident, and anticipated resource needs.

Safety Officer - A member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations and for developing measures for ensuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer may have assistants.

Section - The organizational level with responsibility for a major functional area of the incident (e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/ Administration). The Section is organizationally between Branch and Incident Commander.

Sector - Term used in some applications to describe an organizational level similar to an ICS Division or Group. Sector is not a part of ICS terminology.

Segment - A geographic area in which a Task Force/Strike Team Leader or Supervisor of a single resource is assigned authority and responsibility for the coordination of resources and implementation of planned tactics. A segment may be a portion of a Division or an area inside or outside the perimeter of an incident. Segments are identified with Arabic numbers.

Service Branch - A Branch within the Logistics Section responsible for service activities at the incident. Includes the Communications, Medical, and Food Units.

Single Resource - An individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified work supervisor that can be used at an incident.

Situation Unit - Functional unit within the Planning Section responsible for the collection, organization, and analysis of incident status information, and for analysis of the situation as it progresses. Reports to the Planning Section Chief.

Span of Control - The supervisory ratio of from three to seven individuals, with five-to-one being optimum.

Staging Area - Staging Areas are locations set up at an incident where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment. The Operations Section manages Staging Areas.

Strategy - The general plan or direction selected to accomplish incident objectives.

Strike Team - Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources with common communications and a leader.

Supervisor - The ICS title for individuals responsible for command of a Division or Group.

Supply Unit - Functional unit within the Support Branch of the Logistics Section responsible for ordering equipment and supplies required for incident operations.

Support Resources - Non-tactical resources under the supervision of the Logistics, Planning, Finance/Administration Sections, or the Command Staff.

Supporting Branch - A Branch within the Logistics Section responsible for providing personnel, equipment, and supplies to support incident operations. Includes the Supply, Facilities, and Ground Support Units.

Supporting Materials - Refers to the several attachments that may be included with an Incident Action Plan (e.g., communications plan, map, safety plan, traffic plan, and medical plan).

Tactical Direction - Direction given by the Operations Section Chief which includes the tactics appropriate for the selected strategy, the selection and assignment of resources, tactics implementation, and performance monitoring for each operational period.

Task Force - A combination of single resources assembled for a particular tactical need with common communications and a leader.

Team (See Single Resource.)

Technical Specialists - Personnel with special skills that can be used anywhere within the ICS organization.

Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) - Temporary airspace restrictions for non-emergency aircraft in the incident area. TFRs are established by the FAA to ensure aircraft safety and are normally limited to a five-nautical-mile radius and 2000 feet in altitude.

Time Unit - The functional unit within the Finance/Administration Section responsible for recording time for incident personnel and hired equipment.

Type - Refers to resource capability. A Type 1 resource provides a greater overall capability because of power, size, capacity, etc., than would be found in a Type 2 resource. Resource typing provides managers with additional information in selecting the best resource for the task.

Unified Area Command - A Unified Area Command is established when incidents under an Area Command are multijurisdictional. (See Area Command and Unified Command.)

Unified Command - In ICS, Unified Command is a unified team effort which allows all agencies with responsibility for the incident, either geographic or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. This is accomplished without losing or abdicating agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.

Unit - The organizational element having functional responsibility for a specific incident planning, logistics, or finance/administration activity.

Unity of Command - The concept by which each person within an organization reports to only one designated person.

Sources:
FEMA NIMS (IS700) – National Incident Management System
FEMA Incident Command System

Notes:

UNIT 8– STRESS MANAGEMENT CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT

Learning Goals:

At the end of this unit, the participant will be able to:

- Define the general adaptation syndrome as defined in the Mind Tools book
- List Hans Selye’s 3 stages of stress as listed in the Mind Tools book
 - Understand at which stage burnout occurs
- List at least 3 psychological symptoms of critical incident stress
- List at least 3 physical symptoms of critical incident stress

The Stress Management Master Class is the second manual you are given for this course. We will use it for a full day during the class.

We want to take a look at Critical Incident Stress Management in this section.

What happens when we combine acute stress with a critical incident?

What is the difference between our normal, everyday, on-going stress and critical incident stress?

First, let’s define the term “critical incident”: “A critical incident is any abnormal event that occurs outside the range of normal human experience. The event has the effect of interrupting a person's normal ability to psychologically cope or function.”⁴

Another definition: A critical incident is any situation faced by personnel causing unusually strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function during or after the event.⁵

Essentially, it is the *reaction* to an overwhelming event or incident.

Since the early 1980’s there has been a movement to include more public safety personnel with Critical Incident Stress Management training (CISM). Dr. Jeff Mitchell was one of the original proponents of Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD) as a way to reduce incidents of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) a potentially debilitating reaction to stress.

While training on understanding critical incident stress is generally accepted in public safety, there is an opposing viewpoint on the value and results of research about the effectiveness CISD (specifically the use of DEBRIEFING for all personnel) as it relates to post traumatic stress. We will be watching a couple of videos on critical incident defusing and critical incident stress debriefing, however, keep in mind the purpose of the videos is to let you see what these processes look like. You may very well be involved in them during your career when, in some cases, your attendance may be mandatory.

⁴ Jonathon Lake

⁵ Nebraska Dept. of Health and Human Services

A PRIMER ON CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)
George S. Everly, Jr., Ph.D., C.T.S. and Jeffrey T. Mitchell, Ph.D., C.T.S.

The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation

As crises and disasters become epidemic, the need for effective crisis response capabilities becomes obvious. Crisis intervention programs are recommended and even mandated in a wide variety of community and occupational settings (Everly and Mitchell, 1997). Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) represents a powerful, yet cost-effective approach to crisis response (Everly, Flannery, & Mitchell, in press; Flannery, 1998; Everly & Mitchell, 1997) which unfortunately is often misrepresented and misunderstood.

What is CISM?

- CISM is a comprehensive, integrative, multi-component crisis intervention system.
 - CISM is considered comprehensive because it consists of multiple crisis intervention components, which functionally span the entire temporal spectrum of a crisis.
- CISM interventions range from the pre-crisis phase through the acute crisis phase, and into the post-crisis phase.
- CISM is also considered comprehensive in that it consists of interventions which may be applied to individuals, small functional groups, large groups, families, organizations, and even communities.

The 7 core components of CISM are defined below and are summarized in TABLE 1.

1. Pre-crisis preparation. This includes stress management education, stress resistance, and crisis mitigation training for both individuals and organizations.
2. Disaster or large-scale incident, as well as, school and community support programs including demobilizations, informational briefings, "town meetings" and staff advisement.
3. Defusing. This is a 3-phase, structured small group discussion provided within hours of a crisis for purposes of assessment, triaging, and acute symptom mitigation.
4. Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) refers to the "Mitchell model" (Mitchell and Everly, 1996) 7-phase, structured group discussion, usually provided 1 to 10 days post crisis, and designed to mitigate acute symptoms, assess the need for follow-up, and if possible provide a sense of post-crisis psychological closure.
5. One-on-one crisis intervention/counseling or psychological support throughout the full range of the crisis spectrum.
6. Family crisis intervention, as well as, organizational consultation.
7. Follow-up and referral mechanisms for assessment and treatment, if necessary

TABLE 1
CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT
(CISM):
THE SEVEN CORE COMPONENTS
 (Adapted from: Everly and Mitchell, 1997)

INTERVENTION	TIMING	ACTIVATION	GOALS	FORMAT
Pre-crisis preparation	Pre-crisis phase	Anticipation of crisis	Set expectations Improve coping Stress Management	Group Organization
Demobilization & staff consulting (rescuers), group info, brief for civilians, schools, businesses	Post- crisis or shift disengagement	Event driven	To inform consultant, allow psychological decompression, stress management	Large group Organization
Defusing	Post-crisis within 12 hours	Usually symptom driven	Symptom mitigation, possible closure, triage	Small group
Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)	Post-crisis 1-7 days	Usually symptom driven, can be event driven	Facilitate psychological closure, Symptom mitigation, triage	Small group
Individual crisis intervention (1:1)	Anytime Any where	Symptom driven	Symptom mitigation, return to function (if possible), referral (if needed)	Individual
Family CISM Org. Consultation	Anytime	Either symptom driven or event driven	Foster support communications, symptom mitigation, closure (if possible), referral (if needed)	Organizations
Follow-up Referral	Anytime	Usually symptom driven	Access mental health, access higher level of care	Individual Family

[From: Everly, G. & Mitchell, 3. (1997) Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). A New Era and Standard of Care in Crisis Intervention. Ellicott City, MD: Chevron Publishing.]

As one would never attempt to play a round of golf with only one golf club, one would not attempt the complex task of intervention within a crisis or disaster with only one crisis intervention technology.

As crisis intervention, generically, and CISM, specifically, represent a subspecialty within behavioral health, one should not attempt application without adequate and specific training. CISM is not psychotherapy, nor a substitute for psychotherapy. CISM is a form of psychological "first aid."

As noted earlier, CISM represents an integrated multi-component crisis intervention system. This systems approach underscores the importance of using multiple interventions combined in such a manner as to yield maximum impact to achieve the goal of crisis stabilization and symptom mitigation. Although in evidence since 1983 (Mitchell, 1983), this concept is commonly misunderstood as evidenced by a recent article by Snelgrove (1998) who argues that the CISD group intervention should not be a standalone intervention. This point has, frankly, never been in contention. The CISD intervention has always been conceived of as one component within a larger functional intervention framework. Admittedly, some of the confusion surrounding this point was engendered by virtue of the fact that in the earlier expositions, the term CISD was used to denote the generic and overarching umbrella program/ system, while the term "formal CISD" was used to denote the specific 7-phase

group discussion process. The term CISM was later used to replace the generic CISD and serve as the overarching umbrella program/ system, as noted in Table 1 (see: Everly and Mitchell, 1997).

The effectiveness of CISM programs has been empirically validated through thoughtful qualitative analyses, as well as through controlled investigations, and even meta-analyses (Everly, Boyle, & Lating, in press; Flannery, 1998; Everly & Mitchell, 1997; Everly & Boyle, 1997; Mitchell & Everly, in press; Everly, Flannery, & Mitchell, in press; Dyregrov, 1997), unfortunately, this is a fact often overlooked (e.g. see Snelgrove, 1998).

Similarly, there is a misconception that evidence exists to suggest that CISD/ CISM has proven harmful to its recipients (e.g. see Snelgrove, 1998); this is a misrepresentation of the extant data. There is no extant evidence to argue that the "Mitchell model" CISD, or the CISM system, has proven harmful! The investigations that are frequently cited to suggest such an adverse effect simply did not use the CISD or CISM system as prescribed, a fact that is too often ignored (e.g. see Snelgrove, 1998).

In sum, no one CISM intervention is designed to stand alone, not even the widely used CISD.

Efforts to implement and evaluate CISM must be programmatic, not one dimensional (Mitchell & Everly, in press). While the CISM approach to crisis intervention is continuing to evolve, as should any worthwhile endeavor, current investigations have clearly demonstrated its value as a tool to reduce human suffering. Future research should focus upon ways in which the CISM process can be made even more effective to those in crisis.

While the roots of CISM can be found in the emergency services professions dating back to the late 1970s, CISM is now becoming a "standard of care" in many schools, communities, and organizations well outside the field of emergency services (Everly & Mitchell, 1997).

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Mitchell, J.T. & Everly, G.S. (1996). *Critical Incident Stress Debriefing: An Operations Manual*. Ellicott City, MD: Chevron.

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It will be up to your individual agencies and in some cases, you, to determine if and when you attend a defusing or debriefing. Some agencies may mandate attendance, others may not. As we briefly discussed there is an on-going discussion about the helpfulness of debriefing attendance in assisting emergency personnel in moving on from the incident.

(Excerpted from MayoClinic.com)

The Mayo Clinic lists signs and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder on their website. Here is the information:

Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms are commonly grouped into three types:

- Intrusive memories
- Avoidance and numbing
- Increased anxiety or emotional arousal

Symptoms of intrusive memories may include:

- Flashbacks or reliving the traumatic event for minutes or even days
- Upsetting dreams about the traumatic event

Symptoms of avoidance and emotional numbing may include:

- Trying to avoid thinking or talking about the traumatic event
- Feeling emotionally numb
- Avoiding activities you once enjoyed
- Hopelessness about the future
- Memory problems
- Trouble concentrating
- Difficulty maintain close relationships

Symptoms of anxiety and increased emotional arousal may include:

- Irritability or anger
- Overwhelming guilt or shame
- Self-destructive behavior, such as drinking too much
- Trouble sleeping
- Being easily startled or frightened
- Visual or auditory hallucinations

Post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms can come and go. You may have more symptoms during times of higher stress or when you experience reminders of what you went through.

Regardless of whether or not your agency uses CISM/CISD, it is good to learn to recognize symptoms of stress in yourself and others.

⁶Here are some of the important signs and symptoms of critical incident stress to watch for (you'll note the similarities between CIS and post-traumatic stress):

Physical Symptoms

- Nausea
- Fainting
- Vomiting
- Twitching
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Chest pain
- Headaches
- Elevated BP
- Muscle tremors

⁶ Used by permission CISM International, Sherry Cardinal, LCSW, ©2009

- Rapid heart rate
- Grinding of teeth
- Visual difficulties
- Profuse sweating
- Shock symptoms
- Difficulty breathing

Cognitive/Mental Symptoms

- Confusion
- Nightmares
- Uncertainty
- Suspiciousness
- Intrusive images
- Blaming someone
- Poor problem solving
- Poor abstract thinking
- Difficulty with numbers
- Hyper-vigilance-watchful
- Poor concentration/memory
- Heightened or lowered alertness
- Difficulty identifying objects or people
- Disorientation about time, place or person
- Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings

Emotional Symptoms

- Fear
- Guilt
- Grief
- Panic
- Denial
- Anxiety
- Agitation
- Irritability
- Depression
- Intense anger
- Apprehension
- Emotional shock
- Emotional outbursts
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Loss of emotional control
- Thoughts of suicide or homicide
- Inappropriate emotional response

Behavioral Symptoms

- Withdrawal
- Antisocial acts
- Inability to rest
- Intensified pacing
- Erratic movements
- Change in social activity
- Change in speech patterns
- Loss or increase of appetite
- Increased alcohol consumption
- Change in usual communications
- Hyper-alert or sensitive to environment

We would like you to take away a couple of important thoughts about CISM. One: be able to identify signs and symptoms of critical incident, acute stress, or post-traumatic stress in yourself and your coworkers. Two: understand the power of appropriate peer support.

Whatever your agency practice or your preference is, however, it is important for you to learn to recognize potential signs and symptoms of critical incident stress, in yourself and your co-workers.

In addition to debriefings or defusing, there are communications agencies that use peer support groups. Peer support members are telecommunicators who receive training on how to support and deal with other communications personnel who have been through major or traumatic events. These individuals may prove very helpful in assisting you or your agency personnel in dealing with a critical incident.

One researcher suggested that people who regularly practice stress management strategies tend to fare better overall after a critical incident. This should be no surprise. If you choose to learn ways in which to effectively manage stress, you will apply them throughout your daily life, not just for critical incidents.

Telecommunicators and PTSD

In an article published in the March, 2012 edition of the Journal of Traumatic Stress, a recent study out of the Northern Illinois University, researchers Heather Pierce and Michelle M. Lilly, concluded that public safety telecommunicators may also suffer from emotional distress that can lead to PTSD symptoms.

The research analyzed 171 responses of telecommunicators from 24 states, largely in the Midwest. The average number of years of service of the respondents was 11 years. It will come as no surprise that the survey responses indicated that the event with the highest response of "worst call" experiences was that of calls involving injury or death of a child, a response of 16%. The next highest event was suicidal callers, at 13%, followed by officer involved shootings & unexpected death of an adult, both at 9.9%.

Approximately 3.5% of the respondents reported severe enough symptoms for a diagnosis of PTSD.

Pierce & Lilly state in this report:

Telecommunicators rely on their interrogative skills to assess an incident, secure the emergency scene, and send appropriate help, all within minutes of answering a call. Crucial to success is the ability to remain calm and suppress emotional reactions. Yet little is known about the emotional reactions and mental health of telecommunicators. It is possible that physical distance from trauma (i.e., limited risk of physical injury) serves to buffer against post trauma psychopathology; research has shown that threat to an individual's physical integrity heightens risk for the development of PTSD symptoms (e.g., Carlier, Lamberts, & Gersons, 2000). Telecommunicators, however, have limited control over the event and may encounter extremely distressed callers and/or aversive details of traumatic events. Given these factors, one might expect the level of emotional distress surrounding this work to be elevated in telecommunicators compared to other professions. In fact, a dissertation about telecommunicators found that the majority of telecommunicators in the sample reported experiencing peritraumatic distress in reaction to at least one call handled while on duty as a telecommunicator.

The definition of a traumatic event is under review with official guidelines on the designation set to be published in 2013. The inclusion of PTSD risk for telecommunicators would provide a much better picture of the bigger public safety response and intervention goals used to combat PTSD in public safety responders.

Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission
Telecommunicator Program Office
©Telecommunicator II – Basic Law Enforcement & Fire
2012 Revised

Sources:

MayoClinic.com

Everly, G. & Mitchell, 3. (1997) Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). A New Era and Standard of Care in Crisis Intervention. Ellicott City, MD: Chevron Publishing, used by permission

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Journal of Traumatic Stress, March 2012, Heather Pierce & Michelle M. Lilly- BRIEF REPORT – Duty-Related Trauma Exposure in 911 Telecommunicators: Considering the Risk for Posttraumatic Stress