

# Standard Operating Procedures Manual

## **City of Poquoson Fire and Rescue**



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### **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS**

**SOP#:** EO 5.00

**Title:** Radio Communications

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Fire Chief's Signature

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### **RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

To provide a uniform guideline for communications among dispatch and field personnel in emergency and non-emergency incidents.

This SOP is not all-inclusive and cannot encompass all situations that may be encountered.

#### **II. POLICY**

Efficient radio communication is critical for effective emergency scene management for the transfer of vital information and provides an avenue to account for personnel operations in hazardous environment.

Proper radio etiquette and providing concise and timely information hastens the overall outcome of the operation and provides for scene safety for all personnel.

**III. TALK GROUPS**

<b>Talk Group A:</b>	CH-1	Poquoson Fire Dispatch
	CH-2	Tac 1
	CH-3	Tac 2
	CH-4	YCFD Dispatch 1
	CH-5	YCFD Tac 1
	CH-6	YCFD Tac 2
	CH-7	YCFD Tac 3
	CH-8	YCFD Tac 4
	CH-9	Regional Fire Tac 1
	CH-10	Regional Fire Tac 2
	CH-11	Poquoson PD
	CH-12	Poquoson PD Investigations
	CH-13	PPD Tac 1
	CH-14	PPD Tac 2
	CH-15	Blank
	CH-16	Poquoson 911
<b>Talk Group B:</b>	CH-1	JCCFD Dispatch
	CH-2	NNFD Mutual Aid
	CH-3	NNFD Dispatch
	CH-4	NPSPC Calling
	CH-5	NPSPC 1
	CH-6	NPSPC 2
	CH-7	NPSPC 3
	CH-8	NPSPC 4
	CH-9	Simplex 1
	CH-10	Simplex 2
	CH-11	Simplex 3
	CH-12	Poquoson Public Works
	CH-13	Poquoson Vehicle Maintenance
	CH-14	Poquoson Parks & Recreation
	CH-15	Poquoson Emerg. Management
	CH-16	Poquoson 911

<b>Talk Group C:</b>	CH-1	CMD 1
	CH-2	CMD 2
	CH-3	Law 1
	CH-4	Law 2
	CH-5	Ops 1
	CH-6	Ops 2
	CH-7	Ops 3
	CH-8	Ops 4
	CH-9	Stage
	CH-10	EMS 1
	CH-11	EMS 2
	CH-12	EMS 3
	CH-13	Planning
	CH-14	Logistics
	CH-15	Administration
	CH-16	Poquoson 911

## **IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### **Emergency Scene Operations**

To maximize the capabilities of the Motorola XTS 2500 radio, it is vital that department personnel are intimately familiar with the operational procedures associated with the unit including normal use, scanning talk groups, private line calling, trunked phone access capabilities and the “emergency” call feature.

- 911 Emergency Communications Center (ECC)
  - Apparatus will be dispatched on the primary fire dispatch Talk group.
  - Talk group A is continuously monitored and recorded by the 911 ECC.
  - Talk group B - C are recorded when in use.
- Initial Arrival
  - The first arriving unit will report their arrival to the 911 ECC and assume command of the incident utilizing

established guidelines set forth by the City of Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department Incident Management System Procedures.

- The Incident Commander (IC) will provide an initial scene assessment to the 911 ECC and additional responding apparatus.
- All personnel will remain on the primary fire dispatch Talk group unless directed to an alternative channel by the IC.
- The IC will direct companies to the appropriate tactical channel “**ONLY**” when he can monitor the primary fire dispatch and the assigned tactical channel **simultaneously** using a mobile radio and a portable radio or two portables.
- The IC will instruct arriving personnel to switch to a tactical channel to free up the dispatch channel if the incident is a “working” incident or a prolonged incident.
- The tactical channel will be assigned based on the district location of the incident. Example: “Station #1 switch to Tac 1 upon arrival.”
- Staff operating on scene will turn all radios to the assigned tactical channel. The IC will be notified of unit ID and PAR on the assigned tactical channel. Example: “Engine 109 on Tac 1, Par 3”

## **Radio Traffic**

The Incident Commander requires concise and timely information in order to ensure assigned tasks are completed and to address the resource needs of the situation. The following radio traffic is considered essential to the initiation and evaluation of strategic and tactical objectives.

- Each unit announces arrival on scene and gives PAR
- If assigned a task, identify your unit, repeat assignment and give your PAR (ex. Eng-207 to conduct primary search on Division 2 – PAR 3).

- When entering or exiting the hazard area, notify the Incident Commander of such and give your PAR.
- When moving through major geographical areas within the hazard area.
- Communicate to the Incident Commander when assignment is complete including PAR.
- If PAR call is made during operations - indicate your unit ID, PAR, location and assignment (ex. Eng-109 is PAR 4 on Division 3 for ventilation).
- Notify the Incident Commander of any additional resource requirements needed to complete your assigned task.

### **Emergency Request for Assistance**

- If the radio operator feels that they or the crew is in personal danger, the orange button located on top of the XTS 2500 is an “emergency” call to the ECC. Be aware that if this button is depressed you will return to the primary dispatch channel.
- The telecommunicator will be able to identify the specific radio transmitting the “emergency” call and attempt to reach the operator.
- If the “emergency” transmission was an error, the operator hold the orange button down for approx. 10 seconds after advising dispatch of the error. Dispatch will confirm the alert has been reset to normal mode.
- If the “emergency” transmission was intentional, no response is necessary and the telecommunicator will inform the IC.

- If the “emergency” transmission is pressed on anything other than a fire scene, the telecommunicator will dispatch the police to respond to your last known location.
- The ECC must be notified if a portable radio is taken out of service and replaced with a spare in order to track the radio identification and associate it with a specific operator.

### **Standard Radio Language**

Responding – This means that you are reacting with urgency and purpose in the emergency mode (i.e., *using lights and sirens*) to a call for assistance.

En route – This means that you are traveling to an incident, location, etc. in a non-emergency mode, *without the use of lights and sirens*, such as frequently occurs when medic unit is transporting a stabilized patient to the hospital or a unit is investigating a burning complaint.

On Scene – This means that you have arrived at the location of an incident. In general we do not use “arriving” in place of “on scene.”

Gathering Information – This means that you are on the scene of an incident where emergency services are no longer needed and you are obtaining information for reports, etc. and will be leaving the scene shortly.

Out At – This means that you are out of the vehicle and continuing to monitor the radio at locations such as at a hospital or at a business or some location *other than at the scene of an incident*.

Available – This means that you are available for the next call/assignment, after being unavailable, *usually as a result of a commitment to a previous call/assignment.*

In Service – This means that the unit has been placed back in service after being “*out of service*” *usually as a result of mechanical problem, repairs and/or maintenance.*

Committed – This means that you are *busy and not available* for a call.

In Quarters – Location of assigned station.

Code Blue – Means you are working a Full Arrest. Communicate that you are “working a Code Blue” immediately.

Code Gray – Deceased person

### **Portable Radio Communications**

When communicating on a portable radio (handheld), you are to identify your self to dispatch and/or personnel on scene by rank and name, i.e. Firefighter Jones, Lt. Smith, etc. The use of numbers will no longer be an acceptable method of identifying personnel as it has a tendency to cause confusion.

### **Contacting the Coast Guard/Maritime Response**

Contact with the Coast Guard is accomplished using the Marine VHF radio on the Fire/Rescue vessel. Channel 16 is the hailing channel used to initiate contact with the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard will advise the caller to move to an alternate channel, usually VHF channel 22, for on scene operations.

**Mutual Aid**

In the event the City of Poquoson Fire/Rescue Department is called for assistance in another jurisdiction, personnel will mark en route, on Poquoson Fire Dispatch and switching to the appropriate jurisdiction's main channel.

In the event Poquoson Fire/Rescue is called for assistance in the City of Hampton, personnel will have in their possession a Hampton portable radio which is located in the radio room at Poquoson Station #2. The same format, as stated above, will be used for communications.