



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**



POLICY NUMBER	
OPR:31	
EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/01/2011	ORIGINAL ISSUED ON: 05/23/2007
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SUBJECT: TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for effective and efficient telecommunications operations. Department personnel should familiarize themselves with the *DPS Telecommunications Manual* as it provides greater detail concerning department telecommunication operations.

2.0 POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Public Safety to provide 24-hour communication between the agency and on-duty personnel, persons requesting police services and other agencies.

3.0 APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all Department of Public Safety personnel.

4.0 REFERENCES

- A. Chapter 29 Article 7C, NMSA 1978 – Public Safety Telecommunicator Training**
- B. CALEA Chapter 81 - Communications**

5.0 DEFINITIONS

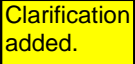
- A. CAD** – Computer Aided Dispatch.
- B. DPS** – Department of Public Safety.
- C. FCC** – Federal Communications Commission.

6.0 PROCEDURE

A. Telecommunications Operations

1. All DPS telecommunications operations will be conducted under approved FCC regulations.
2. Portable and mobile two-way radios will be utilized by DPS personnel.
3. DPS Telecommunications Centers provide emergency dispatch services to include:
 - a. Two-way radio communication on a 24-hour, seven days-a-week basis.
 - b. Telephone communication on a 24-hour, seven days-a-week basis.
 - c. Teletype and automated data communication.
4. Department telecommunications personnel will conduct operations within the guidelines outlined in the *DPS Telecommunications Manual*, with the understanding that situations are unique and may require a response not found in the manual.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

5. All field personnel will maintain contact with their respective telecommunications center via radio and telephone when/if necessary. Field personnel are required to contact the telecommunications center and advise of any changes in their status (e.g. traffic stop, lunch break, at office, etc.).
6. All field personnel will be identified by a call sign when communicating via radio. This call sign will be utilized by both the officer/agent and telecommunicator. The call sign will also be used to track the officer/agent's activity on the CAD system. The following general rules apply to call signs utilized by the different divisions of DPS.
 - a. State Police Uniform Bureau commanders Lieutenant and above as well as the Chief's Staff will be assigned call signs numbered 1 to 99.
 - b. State Police Uniform Bureau call signs will be the number of their unit, which will be 100 and above.
 -  → c. State Police Investigations Bureau call signs will consist of the prefix "Zebra" and then their number assigned by the Bureau.
 - d. State Police Standards Bureau call signs will consist of the prefix "Ida" and then their number assigned by the Bureau.
 - e. State Police Tactical Team call signs will consist of the prefix "Tac" and then their number assigned by the Tactical Team.
 - f. State Police Governor's Security call signs will consist of the prefix "George" and then the number assigned by Governor's Security.
 - g. Motor Transportation Division call signs will consist of the prefix "Mary" and then their number assigned by the Division.
 - h. Special Investigations Division call signs will consist of the prefix "Sam" and then their number assigned by the Division.

Additional call signs may be utilized as necessary.

7. Telecommunications personnel answering calls for service shall:
 - a. Make an initial inquiry as to whether or not the caller is requesting emergency or non-emergency service.
 - b. Judge the characteristics of the call and make a decision as to its priority I, including the number of units to assign, based on the information being given by the reporting party.
 1. This determination depends on the type of call. In the instance of a domestic violence call, calls involving multiple parties, possible weapons, major incident or accident calls, the communications personnel will notify a uniform supervisor on duty or on call. Per direction from that supervisor, more officers will be assigned.
 2. Officers assigned to calls are also authorized to request additional units to assist. With this request, additional units will be assigned as needed.
 - c. Determine the need to dispatch law enforcement or other resources.
 - d. Promptly direct law enforcement services and/or make referrals to other agencies.
 - e. Log all calls for service appropriately in the CAD system.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- f. In the event of any major call, including domestic violence cases, major crimes, accidents, or any critical incident, communications personnel will notify the appropriate supervisor on duty to respond and assist or take command.
 - g. Telecommunications personnel will contact an available or on call supervisor when an officer requests such assistance.
 - h. Inform the caller of the type of agency response, including providing law enforcement services, or referrals to other agencies.
8. Telecommunications personnel shall continually maintain contact with field officers and keep an updated status of each using the CAD system, including when personnel are out of service. This method will ensure officer safety as well as maintain an up-to-date listing of officers and supervisors available to respond to calls for service or assist other officers. This may also be accomplished through the use of the officers or the dispatch radio.
- a. CAD system protocols shall be adhered to for any information input into the system. Refer to the *DPS Telecommunications Manual* for further explanation.
 - b. Telecommunications personnel shall obtain and record relevant information from each request for services or self-initiated activity to include, but not be limited to:
 1. Control number.
 2. Date and time of request.
 3. Name and address of complainant, if possible.
 4. Type of incident.
 5. Location of incident.
 6. Identification of officers assigned as primary and backup.
 7. Time of dispatch.
 8. Time of officer arrival.
 9. Time of officer return to service.
 10. Disposition or status of incident.
9. Refer to Attachment A: DPS Telecommunications Manual for details on emergency responses in situations where a field officer requires assistance due to a duress activation. Information is also offered for non-duress related emergency responses.
10. The DPS Telecommunications Centers have access to local, state, and federal criminal justice systems by means of National Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems (NLETS), National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and the Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD) and are often requested to perform computer inquiries by field employees. Telecommunications personnel shall complete those requests and provide the results according to established rules and procedures regarding these information systems.
11. Additional communication services, external to the department, may be required on a regular or occasional basis. These services include, but are not limited to:
- a. Requests for fire and ambulance services.

Clarification added.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- b. Requests for aircraft, environmental, and disaster assistance services when a request is initiated by a department supervisor. Telecommunications personnel will refer to the *DPS Telecommunications Manual* for procedures for fulfilling these types of requests. The on call number for the State Office of Emergency Management.
 - c. Requests for information, e.g., road conditions, public information, and victim/witness assistance, etc.
 - 1. Telecommunications personnel should be able to respond to initial and subsequent victim/witness requests for information and/or services. Depending on the situation this may involve simply providing individuals with information or if necessary contacting services or obtaining information for them. The information and/or services provided may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. District Attorney's Victim Assistance Program.
 - b. Children, Youth, and Families Division
 - c. Local Domestic Violence programs.
 - d. Local Domestic Violence shelters.
 - e. Local traveler assistance programs.
 - f. Local Magistrate and District Court information.
 - g. Central Records to obtain copies of reports.
 - h. Refer the victim/witness to an officer/agent if necessary.
 - 2. Have the ability to direct victims/witnesses to other agencies that can provide additional services.
 - d. Emergency messages shall be accepted and delivered according to the following criteria:
 - 1. The agency will assist with emergency messages (deaths, serious injuries, accident notifications, etc.) from official sources or other agencies. No message will be delivered that can not be verified via telephone or teletype with an outside agency.
 - 2. Requests for emergency messages shall be routed from the telecommunications center to the appropriate location for disposition. The patrol supervisor should be notified, if available, of any emergency messages that need to be delivered by an officer/agent. The patrol supervisor will then assign an officer/agent to deliver the emergency message. If no patrol supervisor is available then telecommunications personnel may assign an on duty officer to handle the notification as soon as they are available.
12. Telecommunications personnel receiving misdirected emergency calls shall take the call, provide the correct phone number (if requested) and immediately redirect the call to the appropriate agency. Telecommunications personnel shall ensure the call is received by the other agency.
13. Only those telecommunications personnel certified to provide emergency first-aid instructions over the phone are authorized to do so.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

14. In order to facilitate communications operations, telecommunications personnel shall have the following materials immediately available to them in the Telecommunications Center:
 - a. Duty rosters of shift personnel.
 - b. Roster of department supervisors and contact numbers.
 - c. Home phone numbers for all department personnel.
 - d. Written procedures for contacting/requesting emergency and non-emergency contact information for additional resources, such as fire, ambulance, and wrecker service.
 - e. Maps detailing the agency's service area.
 - f. Tactical dispatching plans.
 - g. Any other resource materials necessary to perform the communications function.
15. CAD operations shall be conducted according to the guidelines provided in the *DPS Communications Manual*.
 - a. CAD System "Crashes": In the event the CAD system crashes, the telecommunicator will document all radio transmissions utilizing a written log (attached to this policy and the manual). The documentation shall include all pertinent information; e.g. time notified, unit assigned, arrival times, completion time, changes in duty status, etc.

B. Telecommunications Personnel

1. Telecommunications personnel are often the first line of contact between the department and the general public; therefore, telecommunications personnel are expected to conduct business in a professional and courteous manner at all times.
2. Call-taking and telecommunicating shall be in accordance with the requirements described in the *DPS Telecommunications Manual* and department policy and procedures.
3. All telecommunications personnel shall be trained and certified by the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy (NMLEA).
4. Telecommunications personnel are required to maintain their certification by meeting all of the NMLEA certification requirements.

C. Communications Security

1. The safety of telecommunications personnel and equipment is of paramount importance; therefore, unauthorized access to telecommunication center shall be strictly prohibited.
 - a. Physical barriers are the preferred method of restricting access; however, access can be denied by any means available in order to maintain a safe and professional environment.
 - b. At a minimum, access to Telecommunications Centers must be denied by the use of signage restricting access to **"AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY"** in bold lettering, conspicuously posted.

D. Equipment and Preparedness

1. Every telecommunications center operation shall be supported by an alternate power source in the event power is lost to the facility. This requirement is to ensure uninterrupted operation of essential communication equipment until the power can be restored.
2. The alternate power source (generator) shall be maintained in top working condition.
3. The generator shall have monthly documented tests conducted by district personnel. In the event the test is automated, a maintenance log shall reflect these tests, as well as any conducted by district personnel.
4. In the event of a loss of power, or loss of ability to provide radio communications, the nearest district with communication abilities will assume the role of dispatching for the affected district. At the discretion of the Chief, this assignment may be changed to a district with less radio traffic, or more personnel to handle incoming calls.
5. In the event of a lack of manpower, the Chief may choose to assign communications personnel from other districts to assist in communications duties.

E. Recordings of Telephone and Radio Transmissions Procedures

1. Recordings of radio and telephone transmissions are to be retained for a minimum of thirty (30) days.
2. District commanders, or their designees, shall implement security measures for maintaining recordings of telephone and radio transmissions. These measures should include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Password protection on recording machine.
 - b. Archived recordings shall be maintained in a secure location, such as a locked filing cabinet in a locked room. District commanders, or their designees, are responsible for identifying those personnel authorized to access the recordings.
 - c. District commanders, or their designees, shall implement guidelines for reviewing recordings. These criteria and procedures shall include, but not be limited to:
 1. Permission must be obtained from the district commander, or designee, to access recordings.
 2. This request must be made through the appropriate chain of command.
 3. The district commander or designee will authorize a review of the recording and may request the communications supervisor to make a recording of the initial recording; which can then be reviewed by the requesting individual.
 4. The district commander or his designee will designate under what conditions the recording will be disseminated, i.e., if the communications supervisor will transfer the recording back through the chain of command to the person requesting.

F. Warrants

The entry, maintenance, validation, and removal of all warrants will be accomplished in accordance with the Federal NCIC Wanted Person File Guidelines.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1. All felony, misdemeanor and petty misdemeanor warrants will be entered into NCIC by an entering agency. These entries will be made in accordance with NCIC 2000 criteria governing the entry of warrants.
2. Original copies of warrants will be stored only at district office with twenty four (24) hour coverage by communications personnel. Warrants from sub districts without this coverage will be housed at the respective district office. After warrants are entered into the system, the original copy will be placed in the filing system. These warrants will be stored so that they are accessible to communications personnel for file maintenance, addition, validation, and removal as needed.
3. Upon receiving information from another agency or jurisdiction, the telecommunications staff will respond according to the following criteria:
 - a. When telecommunications personnel receive a request for information, such as a hit confirmation, they will make every effort to check the filing system, verify whether or not the warrant is valid, and respond to the request as quickly as possible; and prior to a second or third request from the requesting agency. In cases where a second or third request is received, the telecommunications supervisor will review and document the incident and take corrective action as appropriate.
 - b. After verifying the status of a warrant and sending a reply, telecommunications personnel will follow up on the status of a locate message from a locating agency, so warrants can be removed from the system quickly.
4. When telecommunications personnel receive a "hit" on a warrant, they will notify the appropriate officer of the hit, and confirmation when it is received. Telecommunications personnel will keep track of confirmation requests and send second and third requests as needed. Telecommunications personnel will also be responsible for sending a "locate" or status change message to the entity which confirmed the warrant.
5. Monthly validation requests from the FBI will be carried out and reported in accordance with NCIC guidelines covering scope and time frames.
6. Upon receiving cancellation notices from the appropriate court or jurisdiction, or after service, telecommunications personnel will remove, warrants from NCIC and the file from the manual filing system, as quickly as possible.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS

A. DPS Telecommunications Manual

B. NMSP Radio Log

8.0 APPROVAL

APPROVED BY: s/Gorden E. Eden Jr.
DPS Cabinet Secretary

DATE: March 1, 2011