



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 81.1

TITLE: COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS

EFFECTIVE: 12/17/2017

REVISED: Replaces Policy/Procedure 802

PURPOSE

The basic function of the police radio communications system is to satisfy the immediate information needs of the law enforcement agency in the course of its normal daily activities and during emergencies.

POLICY

1. Operations are more efficient and officer safety is enhanced when dispatchers, supervisors and other officers know the status of officers, their locations and the nature of their cases.
2. All conversations on New Orleans Police Department frequencies shall be restricted to that which is necessary to conduct the official business of the Department.

COMMUNICATION OPERATIONS

3. The Orleans Parish Communications District (OPCD / 911 – System) provides 24-hour telephone service to the public for information or assistance that may be needed in emergencies. The ability of the public to telephone quickly and easily for emergency service is critical. This organization provides access to the 911 system with a single emergency telephone number.
4. The department has two-way radio capability providing continuous communication between Communication Services and officers. The Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau shall maintain a police liaison at the OPCD 24/7.

COMMUNICATIONS LOG

5. It shall be the responsibility of Communications Services to record all relevant information on calls for criminal and noncriminal service or self-initiated activity. This includes:
 - (a) All reported crimes or criminal activity.
 - (b) Criminal and non-criminal cases initiated by members.
 - (c) Complaints of members or organization conduct or performance.
 - (d) Arrests, summons or diversions.
 - (e) The assignment or dispatch of a member.

6. Members shall attempt to elicit, record, and share as much information as possible to enhance the safety of the officer and assist in anticipating conditions to be encountered at the scene. Desirable information would include, at a minimum, the following:
 - (a) Item number
 - (b) Date and time of request
 - (c) Name, address and telephone number of complainant, if possible
 - (d) Type of incident reported
 - (e) Involvement of weapons, drugs and/or alcohol
 - (f) Location of incident reported
 - (g) Identification of any units assigned as primary and backup
 - (h) Time of dispatch
 - (i) Time of arrival
 - (j) Time of return to service
 - (k) Disposition or status of reported incident
7. Dispatcher controlled talk groups and telephone communications within Communication Services shall be electronically recorded. The recording equipment utilized for this purpose shall have the capability of immediate playback. Recordings shall be retained for a minimum of three years.
8. The administrative staff of Communication Services is responsible for the secure handling and storage of all recordings. Recordings shall be labeled. These recordings are maintained and stored by Orleans Parish Communications District (OPCD).

RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

9. All on-duty members shall initiate a radio transmission with their assigned unit number. All on-duty members shall acknowledge a radio transmission with their assigned unit number and the plain language acknowledgment signal 10-4 indicating "message received."
10. All off-duty members shall initiate a radio transmission with their unit number if they have a permanently assigned unit number or their badge number. All off-duty members shall acknowledge a radio transmission with their unit number if they have a permanently assigned unit number or their badge number and the plain language acknowledgment signal 10-4 indicating "message received."
11. The use of partial unit numbers, nicknames, or monikers is prohibited.
12. Members shall maintain a courteous, professional demeanor in all radio transmissions and shall not engage in disputes, arguments, or disagreements on the radio. Members shall not use obscene language or degrading remarks on the radio.
13. When code two (2) calls-for-service (CFS) are broadcast, units shall not utilize the radio talk group until sufficient units have acknowledged the call, unless an emergency situation arises.
14. Supervisors shall monitor radio talk groups to which their subordinate members are assigned and take the appropriate action when deviations from this Chapter are noted.
15. Nothing in this Chapter shall prevent a supervisor from instructing members under his/her command to switch to another designated radio talk group, if the situation warrants.

PROHIBITED ACTS

16. The following actions are prohibited:
- (a) Broadcasting superfluous messages or communications;
 - (b) Maliciously/intentionally interfering with the radio communications of another unit;
 - (c) Making unidentified broadcasts; and
 - (d) Using / broadcasting a call signal, letter, or numeral not assigned to the member, station or unit.

PLAIN TALK DURING DECLARED EMERGENCIES

17. During declared emergencies where support from agencies outside the State is expected, all members shall use plain language/talk in lieu of the police ten codes and/or signals when communicating over the radio. The only exception to this procedure will be the universally accepted ten code (**10-4**) indicating "message received."

EMERGENCY RADIO TRANSMISSIONS

18. All radios affiliated with the talk group of the declared emergency will receive the emergency transmission when the emergency button is activated including any public safety radios within blue tooth range (approximately 50 ft.).
19. An emergency should be verbally declared on the appropriate talk group as with any other radio transmission. The activation of the emergency button is only authorized when the talk group the person wishing to declare the emergency on is busy with another transmission and the person cannot wait until the talk group is clear.
20. Should such activation be required, the person activating should immediately utilize his emergency button and begin verbally declaring the emergency in accordance with existing procedures.
21. Should the emergency button activation be accidental, the member shall immediately notify Communications Services and request cancellation of the emergency activation. The radio identifier of the individual's radio will confirm to the dispatcher the radio used to cancel the emergency is the same used to declare it.
22. To ensure any such declaration of an emergency is heard and responded to, such declarations should (if possible) take place on talk groups monitored by a dispatcher.
23. Emergency declarations on talk groups not monitored by a dispatcher will only be heard by those individuals monitoring that talk group. The appropriate response or assistance requested may not be rendered.
24. Emergency activations which do not result in either a verbal declaration of an emergency or cancellation of same shall result in the following actions:
- (a) The dispatcher assigned to that dispatch talk group shall call the individual assigned to the radio to determine the reason for the activation.
 - (b) If unsuccessful, the dispatcher shall notify both the Police Communications Liaison and the member's supervisor on the talk group. If the member's supervisor is not on the talk group, the Police Communications Liaison will be responsible for notifying the supervisor.
25. If the above initial attempts by the Communications Services to resolve the emergency activation are not successful, it shall be the responsibility of the member's supervisor to determine the reason for activation.

INTEROPERABILITY PATCHES

26. In a declared emergency, the Incident Commander can initiate a patch with any agency on the **Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN)** or on a system capable of creating a patch.
27. To initiate a patch during an emergency, the Incident Commander shall notify the ESF-2 (**Emergency Support Function – 2**) at the City Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) under the **Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (NOHSEP)**.
28. Any agency requesting to be patched into an ongoing incident/patch should contact that Incident Commander for authorization to join. The request shall be made through the agency's Communications Centers. The Incident Commander has the authority to grant or deny another agency joining the patch. Once an agency has been relieved or no longer wishes to be part of a patch, they will notify their Communications Center to be removed. The Incident Commander may also authorize an agency to be removed from a patch. NOPD Incident Commanders must contact the Police Communications Liaison and make this request.
29. When communicating with other agencies, use clear text to reduce confusion and misinterpretations and not 10 codes or signals. Units must identify themselves by agency and number. An example is "**NOPD 728 to FBI 455.**" Up to sixteen (16) agencies can be connected together on a single patch.
30. Radio transmissions over a patch are not encrypted and can be monitored by the general public. When patched together, any agency may be recorded by another participating agency.

SPECIAL EVENTS / EMERGENCY EVENTS

31. During a large event, only supervisors in command and control should transmit on the designated radio talk group.
32. For an event involving a small number of first responders, 25 or fewer, all involved officers may work the event on a designated radio talk group once a supervisor has consulted with the Police Communications Liaison for availability. Authorization from a supervisor shall be required to switch from a unit's primary talk group to the designated radio talk group.