


LEESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL		
General Order Number: 601	Section: INFORMATION SERVICES	Effective Date: MARCH 2023
Title: COMMUNICATIONS		
Accreditation Standards: ADM.24.01, ADM.24.02, ADM.24.03, ADM.24.04, ADM.24.05, ADM.24.06, ADM.24.07, ADM.24.08, ADM.24.09, ADM.24.10, ADM.25.06		
Review Date: JANUARY 2024	Total Pages: 9	Chief of Police: 

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. FCC Requirements.


1. All Leesburg Police radio operations will be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) procedures and requirements. The Department's FCC license will be posted in the communications center by the Administration and Support Services Division Commander or designee.
2. The FCC will assign the Leesburg police a call designator. The Auto-Identifier, which is built into the transmitter, automatically broadcasts the call designation on the hour and half hour in accordance with FCC regulations. FCC regulations prohibit any obscene or profane language and require that all radio transmissions pertain to official police business.
3. State and Federal privacy and security statutes prohibit broadcasting criminal history records. This does not prohibit broadcasting critical information for reasons of furthering an investigation or to ensure the safety of the officers and the general public. Communications technicians and officers shall exercise discretion before broadcasting a complainant's, suspect's, or a juvenile's name.

B. Authority and Responsibility.

1. Authority.

- a. The Administration and Support Services Division Commander is responsible for the overall operation of the communications function. Daily supervision of the personnel assigned to the communications function shall be the responsibility of the Emergency Communications Center Manager (ECCM).
- b. Communications technicians' directions/assignment of resources are made by classifying the information available on a situation, determining the time frame of the occurrence, and then applying the appropriate departmental procedures. Police supervisors may change a communications technician's directions based on the supervisor's knowledge of a specific situation.

2. General Responsibility.

- a. Personnel shall think before speaking on the police radio. They shall attempt to eliminate errors, increase clarity, and reduce the possibility of having to repeat the message. Plain language, appropriate codes and the phonetic alphabet shall be used in accordance with the procedures set forth in this General Order.
- b. 
- c. Personnel shall acknowledge radio messages which are understood without elaboration. Personnel should not acknowledge a message until it is fully understood, and necessary information is noted. Addresses, names, and other pertinent data should be recorded when initially dispatched so the information will not have to be repeated.
- d. Supervisors should be informed in the event of major crimes or circumstances. If a supervisor or assistance is needed, the request should be made as brief and clear as possible.
- e. Instructions given by communications technicians should be followed. Officers assigned as backup on calls for service should respond as directed. Officers should resume normal patrol immediately when told to disregard.

- f. Under normal circumstances, the assignment of patrol officers to complaints should be directed by the priority and urgency of the event. [REDACTED]
 - g. [REDACTED]
 - h. It is the responsibility of each officer to keep the communications technician advised of their status. Each officer is responsible for advising their status and location when leaving their vehicle. Officers out of their vehicles without immediate access to MDT's should be marked out with specific locations. Upon returning to their vehicles, officers should immediately update their status. Changes of notified locations by officers shall be updated upon any movement.
 - i. When contacting the communications technician, officers should state their unit number and await the technician's acknowledgment. It must be taken into consideration, because of various duties, communications technicians are not always prepared to record information without warning.
 - j. Points of law, policy or procedural decisions will not be made by communications technicians regarding operations performed by officers. If an officer needs advice or assistance, their immediate supervisor is to be requested.
3. Supervisory Responsibility.
- a. Supervisors or designee shall advise the Communications Section of personnel deployment and shall notify the communications technician of any personnel deployment changes which affect patrol coverage.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the team supervisor to monitor radio traffic to ensure that proper radio techniques are employed at all times and that excessive numbers of officers do not respond to calls.
 - c. Supervisors shall ensure that all officers under their command have access to a radio.

C. Dispatch/Call Response

1. Dispatching of Police Units

- a. [REDACTED]
- b. [REDACTED]

2. Call Classification

- a. [REDACTED]
- b. [REDACTED]
- c. [REDACTED]

3. Delayed Response

- a. [REDACTED]

- b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. [REDACTED]
 - e. [REDACTED]
 - f. [REDACTED]
4. Personal Injury Crashes
- a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
5. Order of Dispatch for Patrol Units
- a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. [REDACTED] ctions
6. Manner of Dispatch
- a. The format for dispatching is:
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
7. Phonetic Alphabet.
- | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|----------|
| A-Alpha | G-Golf | M-Mike | S-Sierra | Y-Yankee |
| B-Bravo | H-Hotel | N-November | T-Tango | Z-Zulu |
| C-Charlie | I-India | O-Oscar | U-Uniform | |
| D-Delta | J-Juliet | P-Papa | V-Victor | |
| E-Echo | K-Kilo | Q-Quebec | W-Whiskey | |
| F-Foxtrot | L-Lima | R-Romeo | X-X-Ray | |

EXAMPLE: When using the International phonetic-alphabet, officers shall state, “NOVEMBER, ALPHA, CHARLIE, ONE, SEVEN, FIVE,” for the license plate of NAC-175. Officers shall not state, “N-NOVEMBER, A-ALPHA, C- CHARLIE, ONE SEVENTY FIVE.”

II. OPERATIONS

A. 24-Hour Operations.

The Administration and Support Services Division commander or designee will ensure the Department operates a 24-hour Communications Section that provides continuous, toll-free, telephone access for the public and radio communications for police operations. All communication personnel shall inspect all equipment at the beginning of their shift to ensure it is functioning properly and all audible alerts/communications are at a volume level the operator can hear.

B. Emergency Telephone Number.

The Leesburg Police will maintain a single published emergency telephone number to facilitate quick and easy contact for all citizens within the Town. The Leesburg Police emergency number is "911". All "911" calls will be answered by the Loudoun County Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC). The PSCC has direct switching capability to the Leesburg Police. The PSCC will maintain a hardcopy tracking of all "911" calls. This information will be available to the Leesburg Police upon request.

C. Radio Specifications.

1. The Leesburg Police radio system must provide satisfactory radio transmissions between the Communications Section and officers on duty.
2. Every patrol officer in the field is provided with the means for constant radio communications through the use of portable radios and/or mobile radios.

D. Call for Service Information.

1. Employees that receive a call for service should obtain as much information as possible. The amount of information necessary will depend on the nature of the call. Employees shall gather sufficient information in consideration of officer safety and anticipating conditions to be encountered at the scene. In cases of a crime in progress, a crime that just occurred, or in any case where the caller may be able to provide additional information, the caller should be held on the telephone while an officer is dispatched. The communications technician should continue to relay additional information to responding officers.

When information is received in the Communications Section which warrants dispatching an officer on an auto theft investigation, the communications technician should broadcast a look-out for the stolen vehicle. The communications technician should make broadcast updates as additional information is received.

2. Every call for a police service is automatically assigned a unique call number in the computer aided dispatch system (CAD). A call for service may be a request from a citizen by telephone, in person, by letter, or from a self-initiated report by an officer. The following information shall be recorded, in CAD when a call for police service is requested:
 - a. Date and time of request;
 - b. Name, address and phone number;
 - c. Nature or type of incident;
 - d. Location of incident reported;
 - e. Time an officer is dispatched;
 - f. Time the officer arrives on the scene;
 - g. Time the officer returns to service;
 - h. Disposition and status of the reported incident.
3. Every call for police service which results in a report will be assigned a case number. The first four digits of the case number will reflect the current year and will be followed by a computer generated consecutive number beginning with 00001 on January 1st of each year.
4. When a primary officer is dispatched or responds, the Communications Technicians shall record by marking as primary.
5. When a back-up officer is dispatched to assist a primary officer on a call, the Communications Technician shall record that a back-up officer is responding. The call number will be the same for both officers.
6. Back-up officers will be dispatched to calls for service whenever necessary, which may include but are not limited to the following reasons:
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. [REDACTED]
 - e. [REDACTED]
7. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]
9. Team supervisors may alter these guidelines and assign back-up officers as situations dictate or at their discretion.

E. Patrol Radio Procedure

1. [REDACTED]
2. Members of the Department will utilize the police radio system only for proper transmission of police related communications. Transmissions should be as professional, concise, and complete as possible. At no time will members of the Department misuse or disrupt the radio systems with unauthorized transmissions.
3. Patrol officers are responsible for maintaining contact with the communications technician at all times during their tour of duty. Officers will respond promptly when called by the communications technician over the police radio system.
4. An alert tone is sounded by the communications technician prior to broadcasting an emergency call for service. When the alert tone has been sounded, officers and communications technicians will limit broadcasts to emergency transmissions until the emergency call has been controlled.
5. [REDACTED]
6. The following calls should require that at least two officers be dispatched to the scene:
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
7. When officers conduct activities other than calls for service, unit status shall be updated to reflect those activities as administrative tasks. Included in these entries will be nature, location, disposition, and times of the activities. These activities may include but are not limited to:
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]



- 8. Supervisory Response.

The officer will request the communications center to make appropriate notification to supervisors/command staff. See General Order 201.
- 9. Radio and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Designators.
 - a. The CAD designator system shall be used by all departmental personnel. The designators are designed to identify the functional and geographic responsibilities of the units to which they are assigned. Personnel must adhere to their exact radio and CAD designators for the system to function.
 - b. The Emergency Communication Center will maintain a master list of all designators permanently assigned to positions. Copies of this list will be distributed to the command staff as required. Commanders are responsible for keeping the Administrative Services and Support Services Division Commander or designee apprised of personnel changes which impact radio designators.
 - c. Supervisors from the Patrol Section shall submit daily line-ups to the Communications Section. Supervisors in charge of a special detail shall submit a line-up to the Communications Section prior to the beginning of the event. Line-ups must contain the CAD designator of all personnel listed. Supervisors are responsible for assigning and informing the Communications Section of the applicable designators for each officer who will be working and any changes to those designators during the shift.
- 10. Northern Virginia Common Language Radio Protocol
 - a. In order to enhance interoperability between Northern Virginia police agencies, a common language protocol has been developed for ease of communications. The Department utilizes “clear speech” procedures when communicating over the police radio system. “Clear speech” procedures consist of concise, discernible phrases, in plain English. In addition, the following standard transmissions are the only authorized “coded” transmissions to be used in accordance with the Northern Virginia Common Language Radio Protocol:
 - (1) **Signal 1** – Responder in immediate danger. A situation in which the responder or dispatcher has identified an immediate threat and must convey this to a partner, other responders or dispatcher without alerting the suspect.
 - (2) **Signal 2** – Responder needs backup/assistance. A situation that is unstable, but there is no immediate life threat. Backup should expedite, but an overt request could escalate the situation.
 - (3) **Signal 3** – Responder taking suspect into custody. A situation in which a responder wishes to alert a partner, other responders, or a dispatcher that the intention is to take a suspect into custody and resistance is anticipated.
 - (4) **Signal 4** – Holding transmission of sensitive information, please indicate when ready for transmission. Indicates that caller is holding sensitive information relating to an individual(s) that is possibly within earshot.
 - (5) **10-4** – Acknowledgement of transmission or unit status check - Responder’s status is okay. Note – this is the only authorized ten code.
- 11. Radio Communications with Other Agencies.
 - a. The Department follows the Northern Virginia Common Language Radio Protocol that is outlined above when communicating with other agencies.
 - b. The Leesburg Police Department operates on an 800MHz radio system that allows joint communication with the majority of law enforcement agencies within the Northern Virginia area. The Loudoun County Fire and Rescue Services also utilizes the same radio system.
 - c. The Department is an active participating member in the Statewide Interdepartmental Radio System (SIRS). This system facilitates communication, coordination and cooperation between the Leesburg Police and the Virginia State Police.
 - d. The use of SIRS in communicating with the Virginia State Police shall be in accordance with the guidelines and regulations established by SIRS.
- 12. Computer Aided Dispatch Data.

Data captured by the computer aided dispatch system (CAD) will be maintained as mandated by the Library of Virginia.

F. Duty and Personnel Rosters/Maps/Emergency Services.

G. Victim-Witness Requests.

[REDACTED]

H. Recording Equipment.

1. The Administrative and Support Services Division Commander, or designee, is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Leesburg Police 24-hour recorder. The recorder shall have immediate playback capability and will record all radio transmissions and telephone line usage within the Communications Section with the exception of the TIPS line. Recordings will be maintained per the retention guidelines established by the Library of Virginia.
2. A Leesburg Police Department officer or supervisor who wishes to review a recorded conversation for a criminal investigation, an administrative investigation, or the investigation of an incident shall submit a written request to the Communications Shift Supervisor. Any request from outside the Department must be a written request directed to the Administration and Support Services Division Commander or designee. Only personnel authorized by the Administration and Support Services Division Commander or designee may duplicate recordings from the recorder. Nothing in this section forbids the immediate playback of recorded conversations by communications technicians for verification of information received.
3. The Communications Shift Supervisors shall maintain a log book which details requests for the review of recorded conversations. The Communications Shift Supervisors will be responsible for storage of the log book in a secure file. The log entries shall be chronological and include:
 - a. The officer's name, the date and the case number;
 - b. The reason for the review, i.e., criminal investigation, administrative investigation, investigation of incident, or training.
 - c. The date that the tape is released.
 - d. The signature of the person it was released to.
 - e. The signature of the official/designee releasing the tape.

I. VCIN and NCIC.

The Department complies with the rules set forth in the Department of State Police VCIN Manual, and the United States Department of Justice NCIC Operations Manual. The Department receives revisions and updates, and retraining is given as needed and in accordance with the Department of Criminal Justice Services Standards. The Administration and Support Services Division Commander or designee is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Leesburg Police VCIN/NCIC terminal. The Emergency Communications Center Manager or designee, in coordination with the training officer, will ensure all communications technicians are trained and certified to operate this equipment.

J. Multi-channel Capabilities.

The Administrative and Support Services Division Commander or designee shall maintain in working order the following:

1. Department radio system;
2. Statewide Interdepartmental Radio System (SIRS) for interagency communications in Virginia;
3. Department of Public Works Radio System.

K. Emergency Messages.

1. Emergency notification calls, either from citizens or from public agencies, will be handled as a call for service. These calls will be judged on their own merit as to the priority they will receive. If communications personnel are unsure as to how to proceed with a call they shall notify the team supervisor.
2. Emergency messages may be delivered subject to the availability of patrol officers. Any message pertaining to a death, serious injury, or serious illness should be delivered in person by an officer if possible. The police chaplain may be contacted to accompany an officer on a notification whenever the chaplain is available.

3. The message shall be delivered to an adult family member or close friend. The officer shall offer assistance in contacting close friends, relatives or clergy that can provide comfort. The officer must explain the means used in transmitting the notification to the Leesburg Police so verification can be made by the citizen receiving notification.

L. Misdirected Emergency Calls.

In the event that the Department receives a call for service that should be directed to another agency, it will first be determined if the call is an emergency. If the call is an emergency, the caller shall be instructed to remain on the line and the call taker shall promptly relay all information to the appropriate agency. If the call is not an emergency, the caller will be given the appropriate agency's telephone number.

M. Alarms.

See General Order 219.

III. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

A. Communications Access.

1. Communications Access.

- a. As a general rule, only members of the Administration and Support Services Division should be in the Communications Section. Access is restricted to the following personnel:

- (1) Command Staff;
- (2) Officers serving as communications technicians;
- (3) Equipment services Technicians;
- (4) Personnel approved by the Administration and Support Services Division Commander;
- (5) Other personnel when essential to their duties.

- b. Members of the public must be escorted by departmental employees when entering the secured area of the police facility. Communications personnel shall receive all members of the public by speaking with them on the lobby intercom system.

2. The Administration and Support Service Division Commander or designee shall ensure that all transmission lines, antenna lines, antenna towers and radio and base station equipment are secure from unauthorized access.

3. The Administration and Support Services Division Commander or designee shall maintain the Leesburg Police radio system and ensure that the backup system is in proper working order. The Department's backup radio system is located [REDACTED]. All communications technicians will be trained in the utilization of the primary and backup systems.

B. Generator.

[REDACTED]

C. Telephone, Radio, Teletype and Computer Procedures.

All communication personnel shall inspect all equipment at the beginning of their shift to ensure it is functioning properly and all audible alerts/communications are at a volume level the operator can hear. The Administrative and Support Services Division Commander or designee will ensure that the Communications Section is equipped with a copy of the Standard Operating Procedure Manual. User manuals will be kept on file for the Virginia State Police OpenFox terminals. All personnel shall follow the guidelines set forth in these manuals. Leesburg Police General Orders will supersede the preceding manuals. Manuals will be maintained on the document management system for immediate accessibility. Teletype messages shall be read as soon as possible after they have been received in the Communications Section. Applicable information therein will be relayed immediately.