

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

GENERAL ORDER



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Distribution: All Personnel	Review Month: October	Reviewing Authority: CSCD / Communications
Subject: Mobile Dispatch System		

This order consists of the following:

1. Purpose
2. Policy
3. Definitions
4. Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide agency personnel with guidelines for effectively using the Mobile Dispatch System. The Mobile Dispatch System is used to facilitate the dispatch of calls for service through electronic means in order to minimize radio air time and provide additional services to the units.

2. Policy

It is the policy of the agency that all agency personnel shall conduct themselves in a safe and professional manner while receiving and transmitting information via the Mobile Dispatch System.

3. Definitions

- A. 10-33 Traffic – an emergency situation in which users should cease all radio traffic except those responding to the emergency.
- B. BOLO - a broadcast over all Primary Talkgroups advising agency personnel to be on the lookout for described persons or things specified in the broadcast.
- C. Case Number – a number assigned to any call for service indicating a report will be written.
- D. Clear Channel - only radio transmissions pertaining to officer or public safety are allowed. Non-essential radio traffic is not permitted.
- E. Dispositions – the official outcome of a call for service.
- F. Event Number – an internal computer-generated number assigned to any activity.
- G. FCIC - Florida Crime Information Center based in Tallahassee that networks statewide law enforcement information on persons, vehicles and articles.
- H. Minimum Traffic – only radio transmissions necessary to complete the law enforcement mission are allowed. Radio traffic will be kept as brief as possible.

- I. Mobile Data Computer (MDC) – a laptop computer capable of wireless communication with agency computer systems.
- J. Mobile Dispatch System (MDS) – a computer software program that allows the transmitting of data from CAD to the units' Mobile Data Computer or MDS equipped desktop computer. It permits the user to receive information sent by the dispatcher and to make status changes via the MDS.
- K. NCIC - National Crime Information Center that networks with all states. (Interfaced via FCIC)

4. **Procedures**

A. General

- 1. The Communications Supervisor or Watch Commander shall determine when to revert to full voice dispatching due to system failure, other problems experienced with MDS, or any other situation that may arise. An announcement preceded by alert tone 2 will be made over all primary radio channels and a staff page will be initiated whenever the decision is made to revert to full voice dispatch only. An announcement and staff page will again be initiated when MDS is fully operational.
- 2. All officer safety information will be broadcast by voice over the radio.
- 3. Units are able to perform many CAD functions and inquiries from the MDS as described in the Mobile Dispatch System user's manual. The functions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Beginning and end of the tour of duty
 - b. Add additional information into calls for service
 - c. Unit status inquiries
 - d. Incident recall
 - e. Sending mail messages
 - f. Incident update
 - g. Unit status changes
 - h. Create self-initiated calls
 - i. FCIC/NCIC vehicle queries
 - j. Wanted person queries
 - k. Article, gun, boat and airplane queries

B. Assigning Non-Emergency Incidents (No Threat to Officer Safety)

- 1. The procedure for prioritizing and handling calls will not change with the use of the MDS system.
- 2. The following incidents will be dispatched by MDS ONLY, unless exigent circumstances exist. In the event a suspect is present or is likely to return, the call will be voice dispatched as well. It is the unit's responsibility to notify dispatch via voice transmission if circumstances are different or change upon or after their arrival. The incidents include but are not limited to:
 - a. Abandoned vehicles

- b. Animal calls (e.g., loose cows, horses)
 - c. Felony over with
 - d. Found property
 - e. General investigation
 - f. Injunctions served (Only at secured facilities)
 - g. Traffic light problems
 - h. Lost property
 - i. Misdemeanors over with
 - j. Missing persons
 - k. Obstruction on highway
 - l. Obscene/harassing or threatening phone calls
 - m. School crossing
 - n. Warrants served (Only at secured facilities)
3. Upon assignment, personnel shall automatically receive an incident dispatch notification screen on the MDC. All incoming dispatches will be viewed as soon as practical. After initial dispatch, any updates received by the dispatcher pertaining to officer safety or other exigent circumstances will be voice announced to the responding units.
 4. After viewing the dispatched call, the unit shall acknowledge the call by showing themselves en route by using the 10-51 function key. An incident is not considered dispatched until all units have acknowledged.
 5. When the unit has arrived at the scene, he/she shall change his/her status to on scene by using the 10-97 function key. Verbal acknowledgment is not necessary.
 6. When clearing the call, the unit shall type the disposition code in the space provided using the [agency-approved dispositions](#) from the document posted on the PowerDMS site. Verbal acknowledgment is not necessary.
 - a. All Attempt to Contacts and Check on Well-Being type calls must have the results of the call logged into the call, either through the log info command or through comments added after the disposition is set. Any comments that are added must be professional and directly related to the call as these comments are subject to public records request.
 - b. The only exception to clearing the call will be when the unit is assigned an emergency call prior to clearing the current call. If the unit cannot clear the current call immediately, he or she should advise the dispatcher and dispatch shall clear the call with the correct disposition and assign the emergency call to the unit.

C Assigning Non-Emergency Incidents (Possible Threat to Officer Safety)

1. Any Code 1 or Code 2 call that has potential for becoming a threat to officer safety will be voice dispatched as well as dispatched via MDS. Types of calls include but are not limited to:
 - a. Alarms
 - b. Open doors

- c. Suspicious persons/vehicles/incidents, etc.
 - d. Disturbances
 - e. Trespassers
 - f. Drug violations
 - g. Reckless driving
 - 1. Non-residential roadways will be voice dispatched as a Local Lookout on the appropriate talkgroup(s). The CAD call will be routed to all sectors involved as well as to county wide units.
 - 2. Residential roadways will be voice dispatched to an appropriate zone car to respond.
2. Units shall view the dispatched incidents and place themselves en route and clear in accordance with the procedures listed in the "Assigning Non-Emergency Incidents (No Threats to Officer Safety) section of this general order. The unit(s) shall advise on scene via the radio.
 3. Although the call must be verbally dispatched, the dispatcher shall only dispatch the address and call type once. Any supporting details will not be dispatched unless necessary for officer safety (e.g., weapons or past violent behavior) or requested by a responding personnel without access to MDS.

D Assigning Emergency Incidents

1. All emergencies will be dispatched in their entirety by voice in addition to being dispatched via MDS. An exception to this is calls received during 10-33 traffic or as requested by a Patrol supervisor. These calls will be dispatched via MDS as soon as possible without compromising officer safety and followed up by voice dispatch as soon as practical.
2. All calls received for Edgewood and Belle Isle will be dispatched via MDS as soon as possible without compromising officer safety if the channel is on Minimum, Clear or 10-33 traffic. Voice dispatch will be followed up as soon as practical.
3. The dispatcher shall place the unit en route after receiving voice acknowledgment from the responding unit. All updates pertaining to the call will be voice dispatched.
4. When the unit has arrived at the scene he/she shall advise the dispatcher via voice and the dispatcher shall place the unit on-scene.
5. When completing the call, the unit shall type the disposition code in the space provided using the [agency-approved dispositions](#) from the table listed on PowerDMS under the Communications Section. Any comments that are added to the disposition or by using the log info function must be professional and directly related to the call as these comments are subject to public records request. The only exception to clearing the call will be when the unit is assigned another emergency call prior to clearing the current call. If the unit cannot clear the current call immediately, they should advise the dispatcher and dispatch shall clear the call with the correct disposition and

assign the new emergency call to the unit.

E On View (Self-Initiated) Calls

1. All self-initiated calls not involving officer safety will be input using the self-initiated function key using the appropriate dispatch codes. Messaging is not to be used for self-initiated activity.
2. The MDS will be used for all non-emergency calls except when officer safety may be jeopardized. If officer safety is compromised, the self-initiated activity MUST be called in to dispatch via the radio. Self-initiated calls that compromise officer safety are not allowed during 10-33 traffic unless they are of a critical nature.
3. When a unit self-initiates a call, a unique call for service will be generated. This includes activity such as directed patrol, area checks, foot patrols, etc. The Self Initiate button is not to be used for checking out on administrative functions such as 10-19, Fleet, Supply, etc. The 10-6 key will be the only method used for admin markouts.
4. Dispatchers as well as the self-initiating unit shall verify unit checks are conducted within the allotted time frame specified in SO [8.0](#). Back up units will be dispatched as necessary.
5. If the address does not verify on a self-initiated call, the unit must notify the dispatcher to set location before the unit clears the call. This can be accomplished via radio or messaging.

F Pending Calls

1. The dispatcher shall notify the Patrol supervisor about all calls holding for more than 10 minutes in length.
2. All units shall use the event number when requesting dispatch to assign calls from the Pending Call screen.

G Traffic Stops

Units shall not self-initiate traffic stops via MDS except under the following conditions:

1. DUI Checkpoint Details
2. Prostitution/Decoy Details
3. Traffic Enforcement Details (minimum two persons per vehicle required)
4. Any other detail as approved by the Watch Commander or Tactical Commander

H. Unit Status Changes

1. Units are required to complete unit status changes via MDS unless exigent circumstances (i.e. emergency call) exist. The status changes include but

are not limited to:

- a. En route
- b. On-Scene
- c. Change location
- d. Transport
- e. Completion of call
- f. Return to station
- g. Busy
- h. Subject to call at
- i. Eat
- j. Back-up

- 2. When transporting individuals, units are required to use their Unit Status Change screen. In accordance with GO [6.2.17](#), the beginning and ending mileage will be notated on this screen.

I. Messages

- 1. Messages can be sent from one user to another user, from one user to another terminal or from one user to a group of terminals.
- 2. Messages will be used for all requests for phone calls and any transmission that may be of a sensitive or confidential nature.
- 3. All messages will be work related and professional in tone. Any message received by or sent by the dispatcher or unit that does not meet this standard will be reported to the Communications Supervisor. Messages will be used when multiple units need to be advised of information such as BOLO's, local lookouts and official announcements.
- 4. Call takers are authorized to send messages directly to the MDS user as it pertains to call back messages.
- 5. If any agency member has a question or problem about the way a call was written, they should contact the on-duty Communications Supervisor for clarification.
- 6. Messages should not be sent directly to a call taker or dispatcher unless it is in response to a direct message from them.
- 7. Any group message requested by a unit must have prior approval from a Corporal or above.
- 8. Group messages requesting anything pertaining to off-duty jobs are prohibited.

J. CAD Downtime

- 1. If CAD is taken down or goes down for any reason, an announcement will be made via radio, staff page and agency wide e-mail.

2. Units should not attempt to perform any function via MDS until they have received instructions from Communications.
 3. When CAD is operational again Communications shall reset event and case numbers (if necessary). When all Communication terminals have been brought back on-line an announcement will be made to each sector (via radio, staff page and agency wide e-mail) advising units that CAD is operational again and to log back on.
- K. Radio Failure
1. In the event of partial radio failure, all calls will be dispatched via this policy with as much voice dispatch as possible.
 2. In the event of complete radio failure, dispatch shall send out a message advising units which radio talkgroup to use. All calls will be dispatched via this policy.
- L. General Guidelines for MDS Use
1. In addition to following all applicable rules and regulations regarding the use of the police radio, users shall adhere to the following guidelines governing the use of the MDS:
 - a. MDS will be used for official police business only.
 - b. When in service, units and dispatchers are required to monitor their screens and acknowledge the sender when appropriate.
 2. Logging On
 - a. Units are responsible for logging themselves on MDS when their shift begins and for logging themselves off at the end of their shift.
 - b. At no time should a user be logged off without confirming that he or she has completed his or her shift, as well as verifying all calls assigned to him/her have been cleared in MDS. When a user appears to be logged on well after the shift has ended, Comm 10 or a road supervisor must confirm with that user that he or she has completed his or her shift before proceeding to log them off. This is an officer safety issue. Personnel who continually neglect to log themselves off at the end of their shift shall be reported to their chain of command.
 - c. Two-Person Units – When multiple units are working as one unit (i.e. FTO program, special details, training exercises), only one MDC in the passenger compartment per vehicle is authorized. When logging on to the MDS, the report writer should log on as the primary user. The second person shall be logged on as a secondary user.
 - d. On duty County Wide Units – Prior to beginning any law enforcement activity, countywide units must notify the dispatcher of the appropriate sector that they shall be working in their area. The dispatcher shall then take control of the countywide unit in order to monitor activity. Countywide units include all personnel who are not assigned to a sector, such as Tactical units, Warrants, Criminal Investigations, etc.
 - e. Off-Duty Jobs – When working off-duty employment, any unit who

elects to log onto MDS shall utilize their call sign unless there is a permanent call sign designated for the off-duty job. The sector dispatcher shall be notified via radio or MDS messaging so the dispatcher can take control of the unit, if necessary.

- f. All personnel are reminded that when they log onto MDS they shall display on the dispatcher's screen as an available unit and are potentially subject to dispatch. If a unit has a reason to be logged on to MDS but is not available for dispatch, they should place themselves on an admin mark out such as 10-6.