

Communications Operations

705.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for two-way radio communications during routine, local emergency, regional emergency, and mutual aid events. The basic function of the communications system is to satisfy the immediate information needs of the district in the course of its activities. Standards of performance are necessary if the system is to remain functional during emergencies.

705.1.1 FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC) COMPLIANCE

All Blue Ridge Fire District radio operations shall be conducted in accordance with FCC procedures and guidelines.

705.2 POLICY

The Blue Ridge Fire District will provide access to a two-way radio communication system to facilitate a more efficient response to emergency situations. The communication system is intended for official job-related communications between fire apparatus and Dispatch. Fire apparatus and members shall be equipped with the appropriate types of two-way radios, personal communication devices and/or satellite paging system for the jurisdiction, type of work anticipated, and for local and regional interagency/multi-agency incidents.

705.3 COMMUNICATIONS LOG

It shall be the responsibility of the dispatchers in Dispatch to record all relevant information on an incident. Dispatchers shall attempt to elicit as much information as possible to enhance the safety of the personnel who are responding and assist in anticipating conditions that may be encountered at the scene. Desirable information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Location of incident reported
- (b) Type of incident reported
- (c) Date and time the report was received
- (d) Name and address of the reporting party, if possible
- (e) Incident number
- (f) Time of dispatch
- (g) Apparatus dispatched to the incident, including member identification numbers
- (h) Time of apparatus arrival
- (i) Requests from members during the incident
- (j) Time the apparatus returned to service
- (k) Disposition or status of the reported incident

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- (l) The time of any Incident Commander (IC) requested or automatic timed Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) or building collapse clocks

705.4 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Operations are more efficient and member safety is enhanced when dispatchers, supervisors and members know the status of other companies, divisions, or groups, including their locations and the nature of the tasks or objectives to which they are assigned. Most critical incident communication should occur verbally, over the radio, for this reason.

705.4.1 APPARATUS IDENTIFICATION

Apparatus radio identification systems shall be based on the type of apparatus and the station responsibility/jurisdiction. Members should use the entire call sign when initiating communication with Dispatch. The use of a call sign allows for a brief pause so that the dispatcher can acknowledge the appropriate company. Members initiating communication with other agencies shall use their entire call sign. This requirement does not apply to continuing conversation between the mobile unit and Dispatch once the mobile unit has been properly identified.

705.4.2 RADIO TESTING

Members assigned to an apparatus for a shift should check for radio functionality at the beginning of each shift to ensure that the mobile and portable radios are working as designed.

Radios that are inoperable or malfunctioning shall be placed out-of-service, an appropriate repair tag completed and the radio or apparatus placed in the area specified by the maintenance section or contractor.