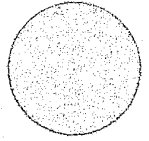


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COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE AND BASIC RADIO OPERATION

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U.S. Department of Justice
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LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPLORER PROGRAM
TRAINING GUIDE

The New York City Police Department's Communication network is among the most advanced in the world. It links the Department's resources to a centrally located dispatching facility. The radio a police officer carries allows the officer to be a part of that network. It is one of the most important tools that officers have at their disposal.

The Post Advisor will familiarize the Explorer with basic communication procedures and radio operation. This training guide will acquaint the Explorer with:

- a. The basic features of a portable radio
- b. The function of the Communications Section and its dispatchers
- c. The information transmitted by radio - particularly those locations designated "Hazardous" or "Sensitive"
- d. The Radio Code Signals used by this Department
- e. The phonetic alphabet used by this Department

Anyone who has listened to a police radio must wonder how police officers can understand what is going on. How can anyone pick their calls out of all that gibberish? While it takes some time to develop an "ear" for the radio, eventually everyone does. The ability to "hear" the radio improves with experience. Although time and experience are required to become proficient, most communication procedures and radio operation can be learned in a formal training setting.

By the end of this lesson the Explorer will be able to:

1. Describe the proper method of safeguarding a portable radio
2. Explain how a call to 911 reaches its final destination, the police officer
3. Define the terms "Hazardous" and "Sensitive" location
4. Explain the reason Radio Code Signals are used in communication
5. Recite the words used to identify letters in the Department's phonetic alphabet and explain why it is used
6. Give an example of how to identify a Department vehicle or assignment
7. Describe when interim or final dispositions are to be transmitted

8. Explain the importance of keeping the radio dispatcher informed of the officer's location while on assignment
9. State the minimum safe distance an officer must be from blasting operations prior to transmitting on a radio

RADIO OPERATION AND COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE

The radio is the police officer's most efficient means of contacting either the dispatcher or other officers on patrol. It serves not only as a means of receiving and transmitting assignments, but can also be used to summon assistance, broadcast alarms, and coordinate field activities. It is one of the most important tools that the officer has at his disposal.

PORTABLE RADIOS

Damage

Although the Department's portable radios are among the best available, they are fragile and must be carried in their carrying case. Experiments, conducted by the Communications Section, have shown that accidentally dropping a portable radio to the floor, without a carrying case, may render the radio inoperative. These experiments included throwing a portable radio, equipped with a carrying case, against a wall. In this instance the carrying case protected the radio, which remained operational. Damaging a portable radio not only deprives another officer of its use but it costs the Department money, that could be used elsewhere, for its repair. To reduce the possibility of damaging portable radios, it is mandated that the radio be carried in its leather case. Damage to Department radios, caused by carelessness, neglect, or misuse will result in disciplinary action.

Lost or Stolen

A number of portable radios have been lost or stolen. In addition to the expense of replacing this equipment, a lost or stolen radio may present a safety hazard. Its use by an unauthorized person could result in the jamming of Department radio frequencies or the disruption of emergency radio transmissions, placing both officers and citizens in jeopardy. It may be used to facilitate the commission of a crime. It provides the criminal with a means of monitoring police operations, and the ability to divert

resources away from a potential crime location. Because of the potential safety hazard, officers are mandated to maintain physical possession of their radio for the entire tour of duty. Officers should never leave a portable radio in an unattended vehicle.

Safe Use

Common sense dictates that officers responding to an assignment should not carry portable radios in their shooting hands. Officers responding to an assignment should recognize that transmissions received on their radio may alert a suspect to their arrival. Officers are permitted to reduce radio volume as required. It should be noted that radio receiver volume does not effect transmission volume.

An incident has been documented where a portable radio, carried in an officer's rear trouser pocket, came in contact with loose ammunition carried in the same pocket. The metal ammunition caused an electrical short across the charging contacts located on the base of the radio. This short caused a loose round of ammunition to discharge in the officer's pocket. Fortunately, the officer was not seriously injured. Should the radio's charging contacts come in contact with metal, an electrical short may occur and render it inoperable. Should a loose round of ammunition cause the short, the round may detonate. Had the officer had been carrying the radio in its carrying case, this incident would not have occurred.

One of the most fundamental principals in operating a radio is that the radio must be turned on in order to be useful. A light on the face of the radio (on both portable and mobile radios) indicates that the radio is transmitting.

Department radios are designed to operate on several frequencies. The radio should remain on the frequency designated for the officer's area of patrol. Only in an emergency situation or at the direction of competent authority should the officer change to another frequency.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Communications Section is charged with receiving information from the public related to crime or other situation that require a police response, and transmitting that information to field units. The 911 telephone number is used to report a crime or other emergency requiring a police response. Dialing this number puts the caller in contact with a police 911 operator. The operator, upon receiving a call, will determine the nature of the incident and obtain the necessary information required by field units. The operator enters this information into a computer linking the 911 operator with the radio dispatcher. The computer rapidly compares the location of the incident with the locations stored in its memory. It then routes the information, which now includes identity of the precinct and sector concerned, to the dispatcher assigned to that division. Dispatchers are normally responsible for a single division which encompasses several

precincts. Once the assignment is received, the dispatcher will transmit the information to the precinct unit concerned.

Information is transmitted in a standardized format. Field units are supplied with information regarding the type of assignment, the location or address, including the cross streets, apartment number or floor, and any additional information the 911 operator is able to obtain. This additional information may include the name and telephone number of the complainant, a description of the person requiring assistance, a description or direction of flight of suspects and / or the number of separate calls received at 911 regarding the assignment. Additional calls to 911 may help to indicate whether the assignment is founded or unfounded.

Hazardous or Sensitive Locations

A number of locations throughout the city have been designated as either Hazardous or Sensitive. These locations have been entered into the 911 computer and the designation appears on the dispatchers computer screen whenever an assignment is received at, or in the vicinity of, a Hazardous or Sensitive location. If a location has been designated as "Hazardous" or "Sensitive", dispatchers are required to notify responding units of the designation. Locations are designated as either Hazardous or Sensitive under the following guidelines:

HAZARDOUS

A Hazardous location is one which presents a threat to the safety of responding personnel. Two or more units or specialized equipment may be required to respond. The threat may be from individuals, groups or physical conditions at the location - an explosive or firearms storage area, a radiation, chemical or other hazard.

SENSITIVE

A Sensitive location is one which may be subject to demonstrations or may result in diplomatic or political confrontations. The United Nations, foreign missions, consulates, the residence of political or foreign officials and certain religious institutions would be classified as "Sensitive." These locations have a response plan, developed at the precinct level, which is consistent with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the individuals concerned.

Radio Code Signals

Dispatchers transmit information to field units utilizing the Department's Radio Code Signals. This code may seem confusing at first, but it is a useful form of verbal shorthand. It keeps transmissions brief, freeing the radio for others to use. To maintain brevity, officers are required, whenever possible, to use code signal dispositions for completed assignments. Code signals should be carefully selected to provide the dispatcher with an appropriate disposition. In addition to brevity, utilizing code signals makes it difficult for unauthorized persons to monitor police operations. Further, the proper use of disposition codes will assist in the gathering of statistical information for data analysis.

A list of radio code signals will be distributed. Some codes are self explanatory, others require additional explanation. The following list of code signals has been prepared to assist the Explorer in understanding commonly used codes which may require additional clarification.

RADIO CODE SIGNALS

INSTRUCTION:

10-01 CALL YOUR COMMAND

The dispatcher is contacted and requested to transmit a signal 10-01 to a specific unit(s). The officer(s) concerned will acknowledge receipt of the message, then contact the requesting command by telephone.

10-02 REPORT TO YOUR COMMAND

The dispatcher is contacted and requested to transmit a signal 10-02 to a specific unit(s). The officer(s) concerned will acknowledge receipt of the message, then report to the appropriate command. Unless the request is of an emergency nature, officers will be directed to complete their current assignment prior to responding to the appropriate command.

10-03 CALL THE DISPATCHER BY TELEPHONE

The telephone number to call will be transmitted along with the signal 10-03

10-04 MESSAGE ACKNOWLEDGED

Used when a unit has received and understood a message.

10-05 REPEAT THE MESSAGE

Used when a unit or the dispatcher needs all or part of a message repeated.

10-06 STANDBY

Used when the dispatcher requires all but emergency transmissions to cease, or by a field unit that requires additional time to prepare to transmit or receive a message. Supervisors on patrol use this code to request units to remain at their present location until the supervisor arrives.

10-07 VERIFY ADDRESS

Used to request either the field unit or the dispatcher to verify the address of an assignment.

POSSIBLE CRIMES:

10-10 POSSIBLE CRIME

Used by either the dispatcher or a field unit when an incident, such as shots fired, calls for help, suspicious person, etc., is reported and not accurately covered by another code signal.

10-11 ALARM

Used for alarms received from an individual, recording device or an alarm company. Alarms can be bank holdup alarms, audible (ringing) alarms, commercial or residential burglary, or robbery alarms.

10-12 POLICE OFFICER / SECURITY OFFICER HOLDING A SUSPECT

Self explanatory.

10-13 ASSIST POLICE OFFICER

Used when a Police Officer is in danger.

10-14 **LICENSE PLATE CHECK - VEHICLE OCCUPIED AND SUSPICIOUS**
- VERIFY IF STOLEN

Used by a field unit to request a check of a vehicle's licence plate, and the vehicle is occupied and suspicious. The officer should supply the dispatcher with the vehicle's license plate number, state of registration and a brief description of the vehicle, number of occupants and the officer's location.

10-15 **LICENSE PLATE CHECK - VERIFY IF STOLEN - OCCUPIED OR NOT**

Used by a field unit to check the license plate number of a vehicle under other than suspicious circumstances - vehicle stopped for a traffic infraction or at a D.W.I. checkpoint. This signal is also used to investigate parked and possibly stolen or abandoned vehicles. The officer should supply the dispatcher with the vehicle's license plate number, state of registration, and the officer's location.

NOTE:

Radio Code Signals 10-14 and 10-15 can also be used to check a vehicle's Vehicle Identification Number (V.I.N.).

When the dispatcher checks a license plate or vehicle identification number, three computerized stolen vehicle files are searched. These files are:

NATIONAL CRIME INFORMATION CENTER

(N.C.I.C.)

Federal - nationwide system

NEW YORK STATE POLICE INQUIRY NETWORK

(N.Y.S.P.I.N.)

New York State system

SPECIAL POLICE RADIO INQUIRY NETWORK

(S.P.R.I.N.T.)

New York City system

10-16 **VEHICLE IS REPORTED STOLEN**

This code signal is used by the dispatcher to advise field units that the vehicle is reported stolen. The word "stolen" will not be transmitted, thereby preventing the operator or occupants of the vehicle from overhearing the response and immediately attempting to flee or resist arrest. The dispatcher will provide the officer with

the alarm number, complaint number, precinct and date of alarm transmission. Additional information can be obtained by field units from the "FINEST" computer located at the precinct.

10-17 VEHICLE IS NOT REPORTED STOLEN

This code is used by the dispatcher to inform officers that a vehicle is not reported stolen. Should one or more of the three stolen vehicle computer systems be inoperable, the dispatcher will inform the officer which computer system(s) provided the not stolen information (e.g., S.P.R.I.N.T. - ONLY).

CRIMES IN THE PAST:

10-20 PAST ROBBERY

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a robbery is reported five or more minutes in the past and the suspects have left the scene.

10-21 PAST BURGLARY

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a burglary is reported five or more minutes in the past and the suspects have left the scene.

10-22 PAST LARCENY

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a larceny is reported five or more minutes in the past and the suspects have left the scene.

10-24 PAST ASSAULT

Used by the dispatcher or field units when an assault is reported five or more minutes in the past and the suspects have left the scene.

10-29 OTHER CRIMES IN THE PAST

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a crime not fitting a specific radio code signal is reported to have occurred five or more minutes in the past and the suspects have left the scene.

CRIMES IN PROGRESS:

10-30 ROBBERY IN PROGRESS

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a robbery is reported to have occurred less than five minutes in the past or when the suspects are still on the scene or in the immediate vicinity.

10-31 BURGLARY IN PROGRESS

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a burglary is reported to have occurred less than five minutes in the past or when the suspects are still on the scene or in the immediate vicinity.

10-32 LARCENY IN PROGRESS

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a larceny is reported to have occurred less than five minutes in the past or when the suspects are still on the scene or in the immediate vicinity.

10-33 EXPLOSIVE DEVICE OR THREAT OF EXPLOSION

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a suspected explosive device is reported or found. This signal is also used when there is a threat to use an explosive device, now or in the future.

10-34 ASSAULT IN PROGRESS

Used by the dispatcher or field units when an assault is reported to have occurred less than five minutes in the past or when the suspects are still on the scene or in the immediate vicinity.

10-39 OTHER CRIMES IN PROGRESS

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a crime not fitting a specific radio code signal is reported to have occurred less than five minutes in the past or when the suspects are still on the scene or in the immediate vicinity.

RAPID MOBILIZATION:

10-45 through 10-48

Used to provide personnel at the scene of emergency incidents which require large numbers of officers. Each successive code signal requires a specific number of officers from specified commands to respond. The transmission of a signal 10-45 through 10-48 can only be requested by a Deputy Inspector or above at the scene of the incident or by a ranking officer at Operations Unit upon request of the Captain at the scene, and after conferral with the supervisor-in-charge at the Communications Division.

NON-CRIME INCIDENT:

10-50 DISORDERLY PERSON - GROUP - OR NOISE

Self explanatory.

10-51 ROVING BAND

Used by the dispatcher or field units when a large group is moving through the streets (marchers, protesters etc.) The report should include the number in the group, their direction of movement, and their destination, if known.

10-52 DISPUTE

This code is used to report all disputes. If known, the dispatcher will inform the officer whether the dispute is violent or if weapons are involved.

10-53 VEHICLE ACCIDENT

Used for any vehicle accident. In incidents where injuries are also reported, the dispatcher will dispatch an ambulance in addition to the police unit.

10-54 AMBULANCE CASE

Used when a person is reported to be sick or injured. An ambulance will be dispatched with the police unit.

10-55 AMBULANCE CASE - POLICE NOT REQUIRED

Used by a field unit to notify the dispatcher that the incident requires an ambulance but a police presence is not required.

10-56 VERIFY IF AN AMBULANCE IS REQUIRED

Used by the dispatcher when it is unknown if an ambulance is required. Officers are directed to investigate and determine if an ambulance is needed.

10-57 SECOND CALL FOR AN AMBULANCE

Used by field units when an ambulance has not responded within twenty minutes of the initial request.

10-58 ASSIST AMBULANCE

Used by the dispatcher when ambulance personnel require assistance. This assistance may consist of helping the ambulance personnel carry a patient.

10-59 ALARM OF FIRE

This code is used to report a fire. When used by the dispatcher, it indicates that the Fire Department has been notified of the fire and directed to respond.

10-61 OUT OF SERVICE - PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT

This code is used by field units to inform the dispatcher that the unit is on a precinct assignment and out of service. The type of assignment should be transmitted with the code signal.

10-62 OUT OF SERVICE - MECHANICAL - GAS - ETC.

Self explanatory.

10-63 OUT OF SERVICE - MEAL

Used when a unit begins their meal hour. The unit is automatically returned to service and presumed available for assignment 60 minutes after the start of the meal period.

10-65 UTILITY TROUBLE

This code signal is used to report a dangerous utility condition, gas leaks, downed electrical wires, water main break, etc.

10-66 MAJOR UNUSUAL INCIDENT

Used to report major incidents, a train collision, aircraft accident or building collapse.

10-67 TRAFFIC OR PARKING CONDITION

Used to report serious traffic or parking conditions where there is danger to public safety.

10-68 SEE THE COMPLAINANT

Self explanatory.

10-69 OTHER NON-CRIME INCIDENT

Used to report a non-crime incident that is not specifically covered by any other code.

PATROL BOROUGH TASK FORCE MOBILIZATION:

10-70 BOROUGH TASK FORCE MOBILIZATION
BOROUGH OF OCCURRENCE

10-71 BOROUGH TASK FORCE MOBILIZATION
CITY-WIDE

LOCAL MOBILIZATION PLAN:

10-77 LOCAL MOBILIZATION

INTERIM ASSIGNMENT STATUS:

10-80 CANCEL REQUESTED SERVICE

Used by field units to cancel a requested service, e.g., ambulance, emergency service, etc.

10-82 **INVESTIGATION WHICH MAY RESULT IN ARREST**

Used when a unit is at the scene, station house, central booking, etc., conducting an investigation which may result in an arrest. Units should supply the dispatcher with the number of persons involved.

10-83 **REPORT / NOTIFICATION AT THE STATION HOUSE**

Used when a unit is at the station house in connection with a previously assigned job, e.g., Aided Card preparation, Complaint Report preparation, etc.

10-84 **ARRIVED AT THE SCENE**

Used to indicate the time of arrival at the scene of specified incidents.

10-85 **REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL UNIT(S)**

Used when one or more additional units are needed at the scene of an incident. Unit requesting should specify if a Supervisor's unit is required.

10-86 **FEMALE IN OR OUT OF A DEPARTMENT VEHICLE**

Used for official documentation of the time a female entered or exited a Department vehicle in connection with a previously assigned incident.

10-87 **UNIT TO A HOSPITAL**

Used to show that a unit has responded to a hospital in connection with a previously assigned incident. The name of the hospital should be transmitted.

10-89 **OTHER INTERIM STATUS**

A general code indicating that the unit is still on the original assignment. An explanation must be transmitted with this code signal.

FINAL DISPOSITIONS:

10-90(N) NOTICE SERVED - UNFOUNDED OR UNNECESSARY ALARM

Used when a report of an alarm is discovered to be unfounded or unnecessary and the owner of the premises has been served with a "Notice of Unnecessary Alarm." Signal 10-90-N3 will be used if service of the notice will be made at a later time.

10-90(U) UNABLE TO GAIN ENTRANCE

To be used when it is unknown if the incident reported actually occurred because of the inability of the officers to gain entrance to investigate.

10-90(X) UNFOUNDED

Used when the incident reported never happened.

10-90(Y) UNNECESSARY

Used when some type of incident did occur, but police response was not required.

10-90(Z) GONE ON ARRIVAL

Used when some type of incident did occur, but the persons involved have left the scene before the police arrived.

10-91 NON-CRIME INCIDENT CORRECTED

Used to indicate the resolution of an incident that was not a crime, e.g., a reported robbery in progress which was in fact only a minor dispute.

10-92 ARREST

Used to indicate an arrest has been effected. Include the number of persons arrested.

10-93 REPORT PREPARED - NO ARREST

Used when a report of a crime has been prepared but no arrest has been effected.

10-94 HANDLED BY THE PREVIOUS TOUR

Used when a unit is unsure of the disposition of an assignment which was handled by officers on the prior tour.

10-95 NON-CRIME REFERRED TO ANOTHER AGENCY

Used when a non-crime incident is referred to another agency or public utility, e.g., a water leak referred to the Department of Water Supply.

10-96 SUMMONS SERVED

Used as the final disposition when summonses are served.

10-97 AIDED CASE COMPLETED

Used to indicate that an assignment involving an aided case is completed. If the aided was removed to a hospital, include the name of the hospital in the transmission.

10-98 RESUMING PATROL - NOT FROM LAST UNIT ON THE SCENE

Used to indicate that the unit is resuming patrol and is available for assignment.

10-99 OTHER FINAL DISPOSITION

This code may be used with expansion codes for accident dispositions or when no other final disposition code is appropriate. If no other code is appropriate, an explanation must be provided.

PHONETIC ALPHABET:

The Department utilizes a phonetic alphabet to eliminate confusion when transmitting individual alphabet letters. The phonetic alphabet is as follows:

A	ADAM	B	BOY	C	CHARLES
D	DAVID	E	EDWARD	F	FRANK
G	GEORGE	H	HENRY	I	IDA
J	JOHN	K	KING	L	LINCOLN
M	MARY	N	NORA	O	OCEAN
P	PETER	Q	QUEEN	R	ROBERT
S	SAM	T	TOM	U	UNION
V	VICTOR	W	WILLIAM	X	X-RAY
Y	YOUNG	Z	ZEBRA		

Example: To transmit the license plate number 398AZL, a field unit would say: Three Nine Eight Adam Zebra Lincoln

GENERAL RADIO GUIDELINES:

1. Transmit only in the performance of duty.
2. Always begin transmissions by identifying your command and assignment, e.g., 84 Adam to Central. In this instance the officers assigned to sector "A" of the 84th Precinct are calling the dispatcher. Officers are required to identify their command and assignment when contacting the dispatcher for any reason, including radio checks.
3. Keep messages short and to the point.
4. Use the term "K" for clear and 10-04 for message received and understood.
5. Person-to-person radio communication, utilizing an individual's name, is prohibited. Department radio frequencies are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission, which does not permit person-to-person communication.
6. Do not conduct car-to-car transmissions unless required by police necessity. If possible, request the permission of the dispatcher prior to initiating car-to-car communication.

7. Keep the dispatcher informed of any change of location while on assignment. For example: Officers are dispatched to 123 6th Road, apartment 4R. When the officers arrive, they discover that their assignment is actually in apartment 3R. The dispatcher must be notified of the change in location. Should the officers require assistance, the dispatcher will direct responding units to the last known location of the unit requesting assistance.
8. Give interim and final dispositions as soon as possible. Dispatchers are required to ask units for a disposition 30 minutes after the start of an assignment.

NOTE: Dispositions must be given upon completion of an assignment and prior to leaving the scene.

9. Do not remain in an area where radio reception is poor. The radio is only useful when it works.
10. Do not transmit within 150 feet of any location where blasting operations are taking place. Some blasting caps are detonated by radio signal. Never transport blasting caps in a department vehicle for the same reason.
11. Do not attempt to repair a broken radio. If the radio is inoperable, notify the dispatcher and Desk Officer by telephone. If the radio is a portable, exchange it at the station house. If the radio is in a vehicle, make an appointment for the vehicle at radio repair. The vehicle is not out of service. A portable radio can be effectively used in place of the vehicle radio.
12. Do not transmit lengthy messages to the dispatcher. Others will be denied the use of air time. Should a lengthy disposition be required, contact the dispatcher by telephone.
13. When using the radio, speak in a normal tone of voice. Shouting into the radio results in garbled transmissions.

This information, designed to familiarize Explorers with Department radio operation and communication procedures, will permit Explorers to listen to and understand radio transmissions on Department radio frequencies. The information contained in this training guide is not intended for general release.