

BROOME COUNTY FIRE RADIO SYSTEM

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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REVISED AND UPDATED 2004

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Broome County Fire Radio System Policies and Procedures

The following is a compiled list of radio policies and procedures that have been placed into effect for the Broome County Fire Service. This system utilizes the following frequencies.

Channel 1	33.900	Dispatch
Channel 2	33.940	Incident
Channel 3	33.980	Incident
Channel 4	33.820	Fire Police/Coordinator
Channel 5	33.860	FAST/RIT Operations
Binghamton Fire	460.575	
Johnson City Fire	460.625	
Endicott/West Corners Fire	154.370	
Vestal Fire	154.310	

These policies and procedures were suggested by the County Fire Coordinator's Office.

These policies were developed by the Broome County fire Chiefs Association Communications Committee and the Fire Coordinator, and adopted by the Broome County Fire Chiefs Association. These policies will continue to be added to or amended as the system grows.

Any questions concerning these policies may be directed to the:

Broome County Fire Coordinator's Office

Board of Directors of the County Fire Chief's Association

We want to stress the need for education and training in regards to the radio procedures and policies. To this end we recommend a series of regional Round Table discussions for all officers to explain the need for Communications Policies and Procedures.

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REVISIONS TO THIS DOCUMENT ARE UNDERLINED (10/04)

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SECTION 1.

COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY

- 1.1 Definition of a daytime alarm: any alarm between 0600 – 1800 hours.
- 1.2 The Communications Center will assign incident radio channels for every alarm.
The Incident Commander may request another alternate operating frequency.
Indiscriminate switching to a secondary frequency for incident operation should not be done.
If operating on an alternate frequency, the Incident Commander will contact Broome Communications on channel 1.
Broome Communications will contact the Incident Commander on the assigned channel
Once a frequency is designated that frequency will be for FIRE GROUND COMMUNICATION ONLY. This includes I/C to interior units, I/C to Broome and Vice Versa. It is not for incoming units to receive orders or assignments unless requested by the I/C..
- 1.3 When calling Communications the designator is either Broome or Broome Communications
Broome from Chief 99
- 1.4 The Communications Center will acknowledge responses of Chief Officers and apparatus only and will not acknowledge response of other officers if network is busy. If acknowledgement from County is not received it is unnecessary to continue to repeat transmissions unless message is of an emergency nature.
- 1.5 Tele-Communicators have the authority to maintain radio discipline on the County Fire Radio system and will report to the Fire Coordinator who in turn will report to the County Chief's Association those departments who do not comply.
The problem reporting system will be as follows:
1st Complaint – letter from Chiefs Association to Fire Chief
2nd Complaint – letter from Fire Coordinator to Department Governing Board
- 1.6 County Communications Center personnel have the authority to automatically dispatch an ambulance to a reported structure fire if it appears there may be personnel trapped.

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- 1.7 Departments should regularly meet with their normal Mutual Aid Departments to work out run card assignments and cover up assignments.
- 1.8 Requesting a wrecker at an incident scene should be done by law enforcement personnel if they are present.
- 1.9 In the event a police officer investigating a motor vehicle accident requests EMS for a minor injury well into the incident, an EMS response may be dispatched without a fire response at the discretion of the dispatcher and officer on the scene.
- 1.10 A Standardized Maximum Call Receipt Time Interval Procedure for calls is in effect:
 1. After 5 minutes have elapsed from the initial activation (tone-out) of a department, dispatch will reactivate the home department if there has been no apparatus response from the station or there is no officer responding. The practice of Station Radio acknowledgement is no longer necessary or requested.
 2. After 7 minutes have elapsed from the initial activation, dispatch will reactivate the home department if there has been no apparatus response from the station or there is no officer responding, and place the nearest mutual aid department on stand by in their own quarters.
 3. If after 10 minutes have elapsed from the initial activation there is no apparatus actually responding, dispatch will send the nearest mutual aid department to assist with the call.
 4. During tone outs, home department will receive pager and siren tones, mutual aid departments will receive pager tones only.

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SECTION 2.

RADIO PROCEDURES

- 2.1 The Association recommends that as radios are replaced, they be replaced with minimum four channel capable radio P.L. equipped on transmit with a P.L. Code of 91.5 and time out timer.

- 2.2 Standard unit status terminology will be used as follows:

"Responding"	=	Unit is en route to incident.
"On the scene"	=	Unit has arrived on scene.
"In service"	=	Unit is available for a call. *
"Complete"	=	Last assignment is completed. *
"Returning"	=	Unit is returning to quarters. *
"Out of service"	=	Unit is unavailable for a call.

* Note – See section 2.6 below

- 2.3 When calling Communications Center give unit number and message all at once, instead of breaking it up. This saves air time.

i.e., Broome – Engine 99-3 responding

instead of

Broome – engine 99-3
Broome on engine 99-3
Engine 99-3 responding

- 2.4 The only time an apparatus needs to sign on the air is when:

They are responding
They are on the scene
They have been out of service for any reason
They will be utilizing a frequency other than 33.90
They will be out of their protection area

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- 2.5 Each unit will utilize the apparatus type along with the department and apparatus number. This is very important with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System.
- Tanker 99-1
Engine 99-7
Rescue 99-3
- 2.6 Once one department officer advises "On the Scene" other officers from that department do not have to radio on the scene. After an alarm, the Incident Commander or designee should place units back in service and returning, individual units need not call in unless only unit returning at the time.
- 2.7 Only 1 Chief Officer should sign on the air for Mutual Aid calls. All officers should physically check in at the Command Post on arrival at the scene.
- 2.8 It is not necessary for units to radio when they are in quarters. It is recommended that this be done by phone when calling for times.
- 2.9 It is requested that alarm times be obtained from Communications by telephone rather than radio. The exception is medical calls during which Med teams need times while still at the scene to pass on to the ambulance which transporting the patient.
- 2.10 In the event a department is placed on stand-by, the telephone should be utilized to notify the Communications Center of your stand-by status. Radio traffic by standby departments should be kept to minimum so that the frequencies can be left free for priority communications at the incident.
- 2.11 Communications should be contacted to obtain clearance to make non-emergency tone-outs from base-stations for announcements. Incidents elsewhere in the county may be in progress on the frequency.

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SECTION 3.

COMMAND OPERATION

- 3.10 At 2nd alarm or greater incidents departments are urged to establish a staging area. Units arriving should respond to staging and verbally check in with the Staging Officer unless given specific assignments over the air or by pre set policy.
- 3.11 Incident Commanders should utilize mobiles, Command Vehicles or hi-power Systems to insure communications between incident scene and dispatch and other in coming units.
- 3.12 ALL incident resources MUST be requested through the Incident Command Post and not through individual agencies. If this occurs the Dispatch Center will request that requests come through one point.
- 3.13 Cover up resources if not pre determined should be handled through the Dispatch Department Center. Dispatchers will have the authority to place units or agencies on standby in their own quarters.
- 3.14 Coordinator Staff shall be assigned to Communications to handle mutual aid requests and cover ups for all major incidents and fires that result in the response from three (3) or more departments
- 3.15 Departments should have pre arranged response procedures for their apparatus. These response procedures should be automatically followed unless changed by the Incident Commander.
- 3.16 Unnecessary messages for directions, staffing ect. Should not be needed for Mutual Aid.

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SECTION 4.

FIRE UNIT IDENTIFIERS

- 4.1 Department Chiefs will utilize the department number. Only Assistant Chiefs will utilize department numbers with a phonetic letter identifier.

Chief 99
Chief 99 Adam (1st Assistant)
Chief 99 Baker (2nd Assistant)
Chief 99 Charlie (3rd Assistant)

- 4.2 All other officers will utilize their rank:
Captain 99
Lieutenant 99
Fire Police Captain 99 (Captain of Fire Police)
Etc.

- 4.3 At the request of the Broome County Fire Chiefs Association, the BCFCFA Communications Committee has developed the following outline for apparatus. These will be used for radio identifiers in conjunction with the Broome County Communications Center.

Engine	An apparatus which carries a pump capable of pumping 750 GPM or more, and is set up for structural firefighting capabilities including hose lines, ladders, etc.
Mini Pumper	An apparatus which carries a pump capable of pumping less than 750 GPM.
Tanker	An apparatus whose purpose is to shuttle tank water to an incident scene, minimum tank size of 1200 gallons, and having "quick-dump" capabilities.
Pumper Tanker	An apparatus which qualifies as an engine and in addition has a water tank capacity minimum 1200 gallons, and having "quick-dump" capabilities.
Squad	An apparatus whose primary purpose is to carry support equipment and manpower.
Rescue	A squad vehicle which carries rescue equipment including hydraulic and/or pneumatic rescue tools.
Engine Rescue	An apparatus which qualifies as an engine and rescue.

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Brush	an apparatus which has 4 wheel drive off road capability and which carries equipment primarily to fight grass, brush, and forest fires.
Truck	An apparatus which includes an aerial ladder device.
Tower	An aerial device apparatus with a platform.
Quint	An aerial device apparatus which qualifies as an engine and in addition meets the truck or tower criteria.
Utility	A vehicle primarily used as a carry all.
Command <u>Vehicle</u>	A vehicle specifically used as a command post and contains equipment for the same.
Car	A vehicle primarily used by a duty chief or shift commander, or for administrative purposes.

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SECTION 4.

EMS UNIT IDENTIFIERS

- 4.1 Definitions of level of care are as follows:
 - 4.1.1 Advanced Life Support (ALS) – Level 3 or higher personnel on board and all necessary equipment to meet New York State and Broome County mandates for advanced life support.
 - 4.1.2 Intermediate Life Support (ILS) – Personnel on board and equipment to meet NYS and Broome County mandates which include the capabilities to defibrillate (semi-automatic or manual), intubate (EOA or ET) and equipment to start IV.
 - 4.1.3 Basic Life Support (BLS) – At least 1 basic EMT on board and all necessary equipment to meet NYS standards.
 - 4.1.4 ALS or ILS Capable – The ambulance responding has the equipment necessary to perform at the level but no personnel certified to the level.
- 4.2 Types of vehicles responding to calls that assist with patient care but do not transport:
 - 4.2.1 Vehicle response with ALS equipment
Identification – Medic followed by department number
i.e.: Medic 185 responding
 - 4.2.2 Vehicle response (either department or personnel) with ALS personnel but no equipment.
Identification – ALS Tech (Give department number)
 - 4.2.3 Vehicle response with basic life support equipment and first responders or basic EMT on board.
Identification – EMS (department number)
i.e.: EMS 35 responding
- 4.3 Ambulance Responses:
 - 4.3.1 Basic Life Support – Give vehicle number only
i.e.: Maine 109 responding
 - 4.3.2 If responding advanced or intermediate, state so after vehicle number.
i.e.: Chenango 111 responding advanced (or intermediate)
Always use full word, not initials.

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4.4 Ambulances and Med Team Officer identifiers:

- 4.4.1 Med Team Officers – EMS, rank and department number
i.e.: EMS Lieutenant 35 responding
- 4.4.2 Ambulance Officers – Department name, rank and number
i.e.: Broome Captain 180 responding
- 4.4.3 If ambulance is associated with fire department, the EMS officer should always use the ambulance number when identifying themselves.
i.e.: Maine Captain 109
- 4.4.4 Department with more than one (1) ambulance – Always use the lowest ambulance number as a department identifier.
i.e.: Chenango Lieutenant 111 responding

SECTION 5

BROOME COUNTY INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM COMMAND PROCEDURES

The proper path for communications should be noted on the organizational chart. The incident commander or an aide will make all communication with the Communications Center following the establishment of the command function on frequency one. Mutual aid units should call out of service on channel one and then switch immediately to the assigned channel to avoid tying up the air with unnecessary traffic.

Channel three shall be reserved for essential tactical communications and should not be utilized for routine traffic between engines, etc.

All radio frequency use on the Incident Scene will be under the control of the incident commander. In the event that personnel get lost or trapped, or in any other critical situation, the incident commander WILL transmit a message to cease all radio traffic by calling:

“TO ALL UNITS: CLEAR THE AIR FOR EMERGENCY TRAFFIC”

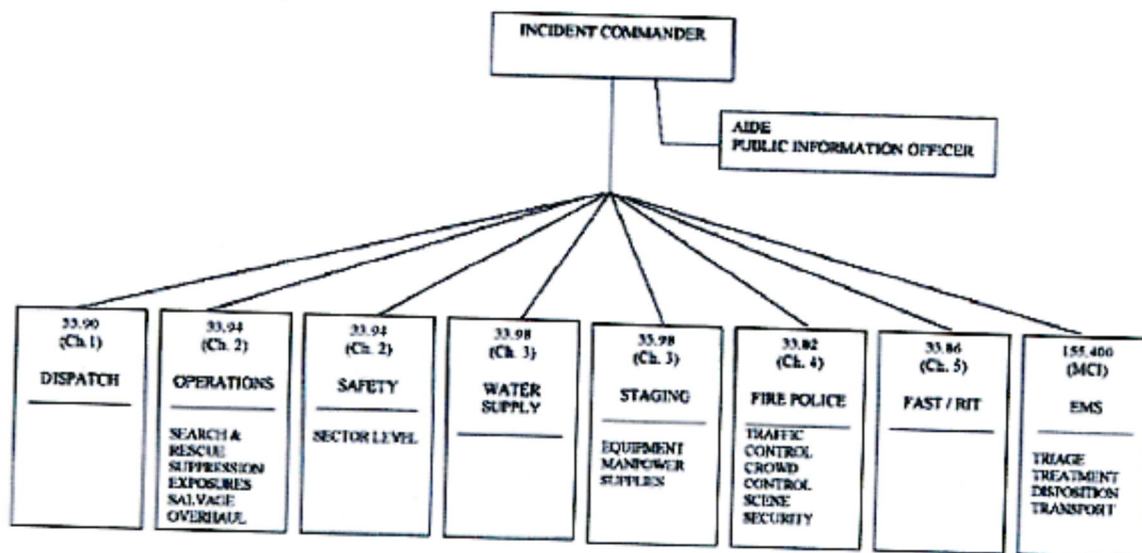
This message will be retransmitted by the Communications Center with an emergency alert tone and will result in the immediate suspension of all traffic so that the on-scene commander may address the critical emergency.

All messages should be as clear and concise and possible, and confirmations should be made whenever practical by repeating the order.

In the event that the incident commander judges a fire building to be unsafe for interior firefighting operations, interior crews will be alerted to exit the building by radio communications on all radio frequencies being utilized and by blowing vehicle horns. On orders from the incident commander, operator will sound a series of consecutive blasts repeated at regular intervals until all firefighters have exited the effected building.

Command should be formally relinquished at the completion of emergency incidents with a brief transmission to the communications center and the resumption of normal radio procedures.

BROOME COUNTY INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM SCHEMATIC



EXPOSURE & INTERIOR NUMBERING DIAGRAM

