

Washington Township Fire Department Standard Operating Procedure

Division 600: Communications and Fire Alarms Office
Section 601: Radio and Telephone Communications
Subject 601.05: Portable Radio Distribution and Utilization
Supersedes: N/A
Approved By:



Date: March 22, 2004

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PURPOSE:

To establish the guidelines for the distribution, utilization, care and storage of portable radios.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all personnel to know, understand and follow the guidelines established herein.

PROCEDURES:

All front line fire apparatus (engines, ladder and rescue unit) are assigned portable radios based on the number of seats available with immediate access to self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). The portable radios are numbered from the officer's position (right front seat) in a clockwise manner around to the driver's position in the following format:

- Officer will be "1", the officer's side rear jump seat will be "2", the next jump seat with an SCBA "3", etc.

The term "portable" will no longer be used when transmitting on a portable radio, instead the respective apparatus # followed by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 will be used i.e., position 2 portable for Engine 45 would be identified as "Engine 45 2". When using the mobile radio, only the respective apparatus # will be utilized i.e., "Engine 45".

Portable radios are assigned to other apparatus as follows:

Attack	2 Portable Radios
Medics	2 Portable Radios
Tanker	1 Portable Radio
Air Unit	1 Portable Radio
Brush Truck	1 Portable Radio
Battalion	1 Portable Radio

The Chief may also assign portable radios to individuals as deemed appropriate.

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The goal is not for personnel to “talk” on the radio, it is to be utilized to “listen” to all radio traffic pertaining to the incident and to provide the user with the capability to transmit emergency traffic when warranted.

Unless urgent circumstances arise, the only persons to be talking on the radio are the following:

- Incident Commander
- Sector Commanders
- Crew Officers
- Drivers/Operators
- Personnel directly involved with patient care
- Personnel directly requested by a specific radio ID
- Personnel declaring an emergency/“MAYDAY” (MAYDAY is an internationally recognized distress signal via radio.)

In the event of an emergency, all personnel having radio capability have the responsibility to transmit the appropriate “MAYDAY”. In the event personnel are unable to transmit verbally, personnel have the capability of pushing the orange “EMERGENCY” button to alert the Fire Alarm Operator (FAO) of an emergency situation. Events which warrant the use of the orange “EMERGENCY” button include but are not limited to the following:

- Hostile event (violent patient, threatening patient, collapse, disoriented firefighter)
- Unable to claim free air time to transmit a “MAYDAY”

Should an accidental activation of the emergency button take place, the designated word “OKAY”, must be used to confirm with the FAO that there is no problem. If personnel fail to use the designated word once the emergency button has been activated, it will be assumed by the FAO that a problem or hostile event is in progress.

Spare Battery Rotation, Storage and Reporting Damage to Radio or Radio Equipment

Spare batteries and storage pouches are provided for each radio. The following battery rotation will ensure that all portable radios have a charged battery in place and a charged battery available. This method will also ensure that an extra battery is charging in the charging bank and ready for use as necessary. Duty crew personnel must complete the rotation at ALL equipment checks Monday through Friday.

- Battery on portable goes to charging bank
- Spare battery in the pouch goes to the portable
- Battery in the charging bank goes to the pouches spare battery slot

The portable radio pouches will serve the following purposes:

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- Protect the radio from damage while being stowed on the apparatus
- Ease of radio accountability
- Ease of radio access for the user

If any damage is noted to a portable radio, spare battery or storage pouch, a memorandum of the damage or lack of operability of the radio must be made to the appropriate Shift/Company Commander with a copy of the memorandum forwarded to Headquarters.