Table of Contents

O P E R A T I O N S   M A N U A L

STANDARD INSTRUCTION 03 EMERGENCY COMMAND AND DATA CENTER

SECTION 01 DISPATCH, RESPONSE AND AVAILABILITY

TITLE	STANDARD	DEPARTMENT
O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	INSTRUCTION 03	F I R E–RESCUE

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY COMMAND AND DATA CENTER DISPATCH, RESPONSE AND AVAILABILITY	SECTION 06	PAGE 2 of 7	EFFECTIVE DATE 11 June 2021

I.   PURPOSE

To provide San Diego Fire-Rescue (SDFD) personnel with the information and guidance needed to respond and communicate in a timely and efficient manner.

II.   SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all sworn San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel, except lifeguards

III.   AUTHORITY

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV.   POLICY

   A.   Dispatch Philosophy

   1.   SDFD will dispatch an adequate and timely response of the closest available units to control an emergency in a safe and efficient manner.
   2.   The response level will be based on information received and level of potential. This initial dispatch will be continually monitored and upgraded or downgraded as the situation demands.
   3.   Individual company officers may add themselves to incidents if, in the opinion of that officer, the unit's presence on the incident will significantly enhance public and firefighter safety. Each officer will be responsible to justify their response.

   B.   Station Alerting System Tests

   1.   A test announcement will be made by the Metro Zone Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC) at 0:700 hours and requires no action.
   2.   At 08:00 hours five tones and a radio message will be made to test the fire dispatch system.
   3.   Captains are to monitor the 08:00 hours system test and report any failure or malfunction, without delay, to ECDC.

   C.   Company Officer Responsibility to Relay Smartphone Information

   1.   Company officers are to ensure that information received via smartphone alerting device is passed on to personnel under their command. Including:
   a. Dispatch information not heard over the radio or overhead paging system.
   b. Morning announcement of transfer status.
      1) When transfers are not complete, and personnel are asked to remain in station, company officers are to ensure this information is relayed to their personnel.
      2) Company officers and personnel will be held accountable for leaving the station prior to transfers being completed.

TITLE	STANDARD	DEPARTMENT
O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	INSTRUCTION 03	F I R E–RESCUE

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY COMMAND AND DATA CENTER DISPATCH, RESPONSE AND AVAILABILITY	SECTION 06	PAGE 3 of 7	EFFECTIVE DATE 11 June 2021

D.   Calls

1.   ECDC receives calls from the public, law enforcement, utilities, and other fire departments.

2.   ECDC screens the information to determine the nature of the emergency, address, callback number, and other information to determine an accurate and timely response.

3.   ECDC will relay all available applicable information to responding units as it is received.

E.   Dispatch

1.   Units for the selected location and level of response are researched by the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. When CAD determines the correct units, "quick–call" tones (three short beeps) for these companies are sounded on the dispatch channel. The dispatcher will then use the following format to give information to the companies:

a.   Engine company area and incident type:

"Engine 14, Structure Residential"

b.   Assigned radio channels:

"Command 8G, Tac 8H"

c.   Companies dispatched:

"Engine 14, Engine 18, Engine 17, Truck 10, Medic 11, Battalion 4, Battalion 2"

d.   Address:

"4260 El Cajon Blvd."

e.   Cross street:
"Copeland Avenue"

f.   All units will acknowledge that they are responding by pressing the responding button on their mobile device.

g.   Responding personnel will then change both portable and mobile radios to the channels assigned for that incident.

2.   Chute Times

a.   All units will acknowledge the call within 1:30 by verbalizing responding on the assigned command channel or pressing the 'responding' button on the mobile device.

F.   Responding into Jurisdictions Outside City of San Diego

    1.   Units may be dispatched by a communications center other than ECDC, such as North Comm, Heartland or MVU.

    2.   San Diego units should use "San Diego" along with their unit identifier during radio communications.

    3.   San Diego units must voice all status changes (responding, at scene, available, etc.).

    4.   The first arriving company officer or chief officer shall assume the role and responsibilities of incident commander (IC) at any working emergency incident until relieved by an officer from the agency having jurisdiction (AHJ).

G.   San Diego County Standardized Alert Tones

    1.   Alert tones are standardized by all county communication centers.

        a.   RIC Activation

            1)   At the onset of a RIC activation, the warble tone will be followed by an announcement to "clear the channel for emergency traffic only".

            2)   Following the warble tone and announcement, a short tone every ten seconds (the "10 second tone") will be activated to alert units that there is an emergency and to stay off the radio and/or limited traffic until directed otherwise.

        b.   Cover Now

            1)   Cover now will be dispatched with 3 short beeps followed by an announcement to "keep radio traffic to a minimum".

            2)   The 10 second tone will then be activated (as above).

        c.   Ten Second Tone

            1)   At the discretion of the IC, the command battalion chief, or the fire dispatch supervisor (FDS), the 10 second tone can be executed on any channel to remind units to maintain radio discipline until the emergency is mitigated and/or moved to a different tactical channel.

            2)   Once the emergency has been mitigated, the IC, command battalion chief, or the FDS can request to stop the tone.

            3)   The 10 second tone should be reserved for serious emergencies (for example, active shooter, firefighter down, building collapse etc.)

    2.   Dispatch will use the appropriate alert tone prior to any verbal radio traffic for the following purposes:

	Warble Tone	10 Second Tone	1 Long Beep	2 Short Beeps	3 Short Beeps
Emergency Button RIC Activation	X	X			
Emergency Button "Cover Now"		X			X
Dispatching Tones					X
Life Hazard Notification					X

H. <u>While Responding</u>

1. Unit mobile radios may be left in the scan mode to allow maximum information to be gathered.
2. Responding units should communicate with each other pertinent response and arrival information to assure the greatest coordination of effort.

   a. These communications will be on the assigned channel(s).
   b. Responding companies shall stay on the command channel until given an assignment.
   c. Once an assignment has been given companies shall switch to the tactical channel.

3. Any time radio channel assignments are changed during a dispatch, a roll call will be initiated to ensure all the responding units received the change.

   a. When this occurs prior to IC being established, ECDC personnel will initiate the roll call.
   b. If IC has already been established, it will be the IC's responsibility to complete the roll call.

4. Units should notify ECDC immediately if they encounter conditions which will delay their response (e.g., delayed due to heavy traffic or trolley).
5. Any unit responding to an alarm from a location other than quarters shall state their location on the command channel to inform other responding companies of their general direction of response.

   a. ECDC will repeat their unit number and location.

3. If another emergency is encountered while enroute, personnel shall continue to their original destination, and report the new incident to ECDC.

   a. If required, explain to bystanders, the public, and/or patient(s) that you are obligated to continue the original response, and assure additional help is on the way.

TITLE O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 03	DEPARTMENT F I R E–RESCUE

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY COMMAND AND DATA CENTER DISPATCH, RESPONSE AND AVAILABILITY	SECTION 06	PAGE 6 of 7	EFFECTIVE DATE 11 June 2021

I. <u>Arrival</u>

1. Company officers must maintain awareness of arriving units and follow proper staging and communication procedures.

   a. The first-in unit will advise ECDC they are "at scene," complete an initial report, state initial actions taken, designate an incident specific name for their command, and establish IC on the command channel.
   b. Incident command will be established and announced upon arrival at any incident where two or more companies are dispatched.

2. The first arriving unit will remain as the IC until properly relieved by a chief officer or passing command to another arriving unit.

J. <u>Returning to Service</u>

1. The IC will advise all units at the incident or responding to the incident when they are no longer needed.

   a. The released units will notify ECDC that they are "available" by using their mobile device.
   b. A verbal statement to ECDC is not required.

K. <u>Availability</u>

1. Company officers will notify their respective battalion chief whenever there is a change in the status or response readiness of the unit or crew. This includes:

   a. Out of service
   b. Return to available from out of service status
   c. Out of district
   d. Return to district
   e. Reduction in crew or unit capability

2. All units in the field will monitor the dispatch channel when they are out-of-quarters and available for responses.

3. If a unit hears another unit dispatched to an incident, and the officer feels their response will significantly enhance public and firefighter safety (will be one of the first two arriving units), the officer should request to be added to the call and proceed no code toward the incident until assigned.

4. Company officers shall contact their respective battalion chief to obtain approval any time there is a need to travel out of their administrative district for unscheduled needs.

   a. Approval will be obtained prior to units leaving their assigned district.
   b. The company officer will advise ECDC over the radio of their unit status, the purpose of the travel and confirmation that the respective battalion chief has approved the request when travelling out their administrative district.

   "Metro, Engine 1 available, in route to station 4 for personnel swap, approved by B1"

5.   Battalion chiefs should explore all available options prior to authorizing unit to leave districts uncovered and be able to justify the need versus the risk.