

Tempe Fire Department Policies and Procedures
Communications
204.00
Rev 6-25-93

DISPATCH POLICY

The Tempe Fire Department will respond to emergency situations which threaten life, safety, or property. The Tempe Fire Department will dispatch the closest available unit(s) with the capability to control an emergency situation. The judgment of both dispatch and emergency response personnel is an integral part of the decision process, considering both information received and potential. The timely response and effective management of EMS, rescue, hazardous materials, and fire control situations represent the most immediate priorities of the Fire Department. Upon receipt of adequate information (location and nature of the emergency) Alarm will dispatch the appropriate assignment. Alarm will upgrade the response, as required, until the situation is stabilized.

JURISDICTION

Emergency incidents within the city limits of Tempe, Phoenix, Glendale, Peoria, Laveen, Sun City, Daisy Mountain and Tolleson will be dispatched without regard to jurisdiction. Units will also be dispatched to borderline locations, when accurate determination of the jurisdiction cannot be made by Alarm personnel.

Calls for assistance from public or quasi-public agencies outside the City limits will be dispatched as mutual aid incidents when appropriate.

Calls for assistance from citizens outside the City limits will be transferred to the appropriate agency. If that agency requests mutual aid assistance, the appropriate protocol will be followed.

CALL ROUTING

Determination of the nature of the problem may indicate that a caller does not have a true emergency and that Fire Department response is inappropriate. The avoidance of unnecessary responses is a basic part of the dispatch function. When a positive determination of need for emergency response cannot be made, THE FIRE DEPARTMENT POLICY IS TO DISPATCH.

ASSIGNMENTS

Alarm will dispatch the following standard types of assignments to incidents:

EMS Assignments	Alert 1, 2 or 3
Still Assignments	Special Duty Assignments
Brush Assignments	Hazardous Materials Assignments
2-1 Fire and Medical Assignments	Rescue Assignments
1A Fire and Medical Assignments	
Greater Alarm Assignments	

UNIT SELECTION

The CAD System selects units for dispatch according to their distance from the location of the call and the service delivery capabilities of each company.

Measurements are based on travel distance from a company's regular station or where a company is listed as

"moved up."

EMS ASSIGNMENTS

Alarm will dispatch the following types of emergency medical service incidents, depending on the reported situation:

EM BLS incident
EM-A ALS incident, AMB
EM-V Vehicle Accident, BLS (requires engine company)
EM-VA Vehicle Accident, ALS (requires engine company) AMB
EM-VP Vehicle Pedestrian Accident (requires ALS unit) AMB
EM-VX Vehicle Accident, ALS and Extrication (requires engine company) AMB
EM-X Extrication for incidents other than vehicular (requires ALS, extrication and AMB)
2-1-M Two - One Medical Incident (two ALS units required) AMB
1A-M 1st Alarm Medical Incident (three ALS units required) AMB AMB

STILL ASSIGNMENT (ST)

A Still (ST) assignment will be dispatched for non-structure fires, including vehicle fires. A still assignment calls for one engine company.

TWO-ONE ASSIGNMENTS (2-1)

A Two-One assignment will be dispatched for structure fires which do not indicate the need for a First Alarm assignment. A 2-1 assignment consists of two engines, one ladder company and one command officer.

A 2-1 assignment may also be dispatched for other situations where the need for this level of resource is indicated.

Alarm will dispatch a utility truck to 2-1 assignments when reports indicate that companies are engaged in active fire suppression efforts.

FIRST ALARM ASSIGNMENTS (1A)

A First Alarm will be dispatched for structure fires when reports indicate this level of resource may be needed. This may be based on reports which indicate an actual or potential major situation.

A 1A consists of four engine companies, two ladder companies, one utility truck and two command officers. At least one ALS unit and one ambulance will be dispatched on all First Alarms.

A First Alarm may be dispatched for other types of incidents at the discretion of Alarm personnel.

GREATER ALARM ASSIGNMENTS (GA)

Greater Alarms are dispatched at the request of command, when the need is indicated.

The units dispatched on Greater Alarms are indicated below:

1A Engine, Engine, Engine, Engine
 Ladder, Ladder
 Utility

	Command Officer (2) ALS, AMB
2A	Engine, Engine, Engine, Engine Ladder, Ladder Utility
3A	Command Officer (2) Engine, Engine, Engine, Engine Ladder, Ladder Utility
	Command Officer (1)
4A	Engine, Engine, Engine, Engine
5A	Engine, Engine, Engine, Engine

SPECIAL DUTY ASSIGNMENTS (SD)

Alarm will dispatch one company on a Code 3 Special Duty for automatic alarm system incidents with no other report of fire.

A Special Duty assignment will also be dispatched for non-emergency situations. Alarm will dispatch whichever units are capable of providing the needed service. Alarm will designate Code 2 or Code 3 response.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ASSIGNMENTS (SD-H, 2-1-H, 2-1-HM, 1A-H, 1A-HM)

Hazardous Materials assignments will be dispatched for incidents reported to involve hazardous materials. These assignments call for the response of the Hazardous Incident Response Team in addition to the closest unit(s) response.

A Special Duty-Hazardous (SD-H) assignment will consist of the closest four man Fire Department unit and the Hazardous Incident Response Team. A Special Duty Hazardous assignment will be dispatched on calls that involve hazardous materials of a minor nature.

A Two-One-Hazardous (2-1-H) will consist of the closest two engines and one ladder in addition to the Hazardous Incident Response Team. A Two-One-Hazardous assignment should be dispatched on most situations involving leaks or spills of hazardous materials. This includes situations which appear to be manageable and do not create a major risk to the public by virtue of location, amount, or type of hazard.

A Two-One-Hazardous-Medical (2-1HM) will consist of closest two engines and one ladder in addition to the Hazardous Incident Response Team, including medical units and one ambulance. A Two-One-Hazardous-Medical assignment should be dispatched to incidents involving hazardous materials with several patients reportedly affected. A 2-1-HM provides additional ALS units and ambulances on initial dispatch.

A First Alarm-Hazardous (1A-H) will consist of the closest First Alarm units in addition to Hazardous Incident Response Team and medical units. A First Alarm-Hazardous assignment should be dispatched for incidents which indicate a major potential danger by virtue of materials involved, quantities, location, fire or explosion danger, and number of people exposed.

A First Alarm-Hazardous-Medical (1A-HM) will consist of the closest First Alarm units in addition to the Hazardous Incident Response Team including medical units and two ambulances. A First Alarm-Hazardous-Medical should be dispatched to incidents involving hazardous materials with a large number of patients reportedly affected. A 1A-HM provides additional ALS units and ambulances on initial dispatch.

The Hazardous Incident Response Team and medical units consist of: E72, EP76, HM72, E4, L4, HM4, EP38, HM38, EP41, and HM41.

RESCUE ASSIGNMENTS (SD-R, 2-1-R, 1A-R)

A Rescue assignment will be dispatched for trench/tunnel collapses, scaffold, structural collapses, water, and similar situations requiring special skills and equipment.

A trench assignment will consist of a 2-1 assignment (includes Sta. 73), one ambulance, one command officer plus EP11, L11, and TR11. The assignment will have a total of two ALS units. EP11 will be the third ALS unit in the assignment, but is dedicated to specialized trench rescue operations. The Safety Officer is also notified to respond on all trench assignments.

SPECIAL CALL (SC)

Command at any incident may call for the dispatch of specific units, or types of units, at any time. These are in addition to any normally structured response.

UPGRADING ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments may be upgraded at any time by requesting the "Balance of..." and specifying the desired level of assignment.

SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

Alarm will dispatch additional specialized equipment on any incident where the need is indicated, i.e., a foam unit will be dispatched on incidents involving flammable liquids.

DISPATCHER

The dispatcher (Channel 1 Operator) is responsible for verifying the suggested unit dispatch for each incident, as recommended by the CAD system. The dispatcher may modify the unit selection based on additional information or circumstantial factors.

The dispatcher transmits the call to the assigned units, sending the information to their fire station terminals and Mobile Digital Terminals (MDTs).

The Voice dispatch message is broadcast over FIRE CHANNEL 1 giving:

- . Dispatch Tone
- . Companies Assigned
- . Tactical Radio Channel
- . Type of Assignment
- . Location
- . Nature of Incident

The voice dispatch message is given twice, during normal activity. DURING PERIODS OF HIGH ACTIVITY THE DISPATCH MESSAGE MAY BE ANNOUNCED ONLY ONE TIME OR MAY BE MODIFIED TO ADVISE UNITS TO CHECK MDTs/TERMINALS FOR DISPATCH.

SELF DISPATCH

Units may add themselves to an incident by an AU function on their MDT. Companies adding on to an assignment must advise the TRO on the assigned tactical channel if they are substituting for another unit. Units

adding onto a call will advise the TRO of their current location. The TRO will cancel the dispatched unit if the substituting unit is closer to the scene.

The TRO will advise Command of units which are responding in addition to the dispatched assignment. The updated dispatch message will be transmitted to all responding units via MDT.

INITIATING INCIDENTS

Units initiating new incidents should request the desired assignment and give the nature and location to the Channel 1 Dispatcher. Additional information and reports should be given on the assigned tactical channel after dispatch.

USE OF MDT

Units changing status or performing routing transactions should use MDTs to communicate with the CAD system directly. This relieves traffic on voice channels and increases efficiency of the entire system. If the MDT is inoperative, transmit over the appropriate radio channel.

WORKING INCIDENT NOTIFICATION

Alarm will sound the ALL CALL tone and make a general announcement over Channel 1 of the following incidents:

- . Greater Alarms
- . Working 1st Alarm fires
- . EMS incidents, brush fires, hazardous situations, etc., which involve four or more companies
- . Other unusual incidents (plane crashes, overturned tankers, etc.)
- . When advised by Command or the Public Information Officer

CONDITION ONE

Condition One refers to the normal mode of operation for the communications system. Under these conditions, Channel 1 may be utilized for non-emergency communications of an official nature. Incident related communication always takes priority over other traffic.

CONDITION TWO

During periods of extremely heavy traffic, it becomes impossible for Alarm to carry on all normal functions. It is necessary in such circumstances to restrict non-essential communications.

The Alarm Supervisor will make the determination when it becomes necessary to restrict communications and when normal communications can be resumed.

The announcement "ALARM IS ON CONDITION TWO" will be made over radio channels and the appropriate command will be entered to disable all non-emergency transactions in the computer system.

While Alarm is on CONDITION TWO:

- . All non-incident related radio messages and MDT messages will be restricted and units will transmit only essential communications.
- . All non-emergency paging will be suspended.
- . Units out of service will return to available status as soon as possible. Units engaged in training or

- non-essential maintenance will be released.
- . Units will avoid calling Alarm unless necessary.
- . CAD terminals shall not be used to enter reports or conduct non-essential transactions.
- . Companies must be prepared to respond to dispatches without vocal alarm message.

At the end of the heavy traffic situation, Alarm will announce "ALARM IS ON CONDITION ONE" and the appropriate command will be entered to return the computer system to normal operation.

MOVE-UP POLICY

The Alarm Supervisor is responsible for relocating units to maintain the best available coverage for the system. This responsibility includes the authority to request companies from neighboring cities and to control or cancel scheduled and non-scheduled non-emergency activities. Moved-up companies retain their normal identity ("Engine-72 out of Station 23").

The need for move-up companies should be evaluated whenever:

- . A working fire is declared.
- . Three or more units are committed to an incident in an outlying area.
- . Greater alarms are dispatched.
- . Simultaneous incidents occur in one area of the city.

Move-ups should be made if it appears an area of two or more adjacent first due areas will be uncovered for more than 30 minutes.

Move-ups should be Code 2 unless advised to respond Code 3 due to critical gap in coverage.

CHANGE OF STATUS

All companies are in either AVAILABLE or UNAVAILABLE status at all times. The status refers to the company's availability to accept a dispatch. Units assigned to an incident are considered UNAVAILABLE until released.

Units which are Available on Radio (AOR) shall monitor Channel 1.

Units changing their status to UNAVAILABLE should report to Alarm by radio or telephone the reason and the length of time they will be unavailable. When becoming available again, units are responsible to report this status change to Alarm.

TACTICAL RADIO OPERATOR (TRO)

The Tactical Radio Operator handles all communications between units assigned to an incident and Alarm, on the assigned tactical channel. All units responding to an incident shall switch to the assigned channel immediately after dispatch.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All units responding to alarms shall acknowledge dispatch by station switch or by Mobile Digital Terminal (MDT).

If Alarm does not receive an acknowledgment within one minute, the (TRO) will request acknowledgment by radio.

Alarm will dispatch a cover company if no reply is received after three attempts, while continuing attempts to contact the original company on other radio channels. If unable to contact, the company will be placed

unavailable and the appropriate Deputy Chief notified of the circumstances.

WHILE RESPONDING

All fire and EMS responses will be Code 3 unless otherwise indicated by Alarm or Command. On Special Duty responses, Code 2 or 3 response will be specified by Alarm. Units responding to calls on the freeways will proceed Code 2.

While responding, companies may communicate with one another if radio traffic permits. Effective communications during this period can set the stage for effective actions and improve the overall rescue and fire attack effort. Factors such as occupancy hazards, access, traffic conditions, and response routes may be communicated.

Company officers should review tactical information on their MDT, map books, and any pre-fire planning information carried on the vehicle for specific tactical information. Subsequent arriving units should monitor radio traffic to be fully informed of the situation based on reports of the first arriving units.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/SUBSEQUENT CALLS

The TRO will relay any additional information gained from subsequent calls as soon as possible. Additional information and updates will be transmitted to the MDTs on all responding units.

Companies needing specific additional information shall request it from the TRO.

SIZE-UP REPORT

The first unit arriving at the scene of an incident will give a brief size-up report describing the situation.

For structure fires, the report should include:

Apparent Conditions

- Nothing showing (indicated checking)
- Smoke showing (amount, color, location)
- Fire showing (amount and location)
- Working fire
- Fully involved

Structure Type

- Occupancy
- Size (large, medium, small)
- Height (assumed one story unless reported)

Action Taken

- Assuming command
- Laying line
- Attacking with..., etc.

COMMAND

Once command has been established, all routing communication between Alarm and an incident will be directed through Command.

PROGRESS REPORTS

During active firefighting operations, Command will provide Alarm with regular progress reports when significant tactical plans are changed or unusual situations are encountered. The first progress report should be given after initial action has been implemented and should include the correct address and an improved description of the building and fire conditions if the arrival report was incomplete. The first report should include the declaration of a working fire when appropriate and give an indication of the time companies will be held at the scene. This will help Alarm in making move-up decisions. Alarm will repeat the significant facts from all progress reports for the information of monitoring units.

WORKING FIRE

The term Working Fire indicates a situation which will require the commitment of all responding companies. This report advises Alarm that the companies will be engaged in tactical activities and will be held at the scene for an extended period of time.

When notified of a Working Fire, Alarm will:

1. Confirm that the District and/or Emergency Duty Chief is notified and/or responding.
2. Change tactical channel assignment for other incidents to provide a clear channel, if requested by Command.
3. Dispatch a Utility Truck (if not already responding).
4. Dispatch Police Department for traffic and crowd control.
5. Dispatch a Fire Investigator.
6. Dispatch gas and electric utilities when the need is indicated.
7. Be prepared to dispatch further assistance.
8. Be prepared to dispatch any special agencies or equipment when the need is indicated.
9. Evaluate the need for move-up assignments.

Alarm will monitor radio traffic on all incidents to anticipate the needs of Command.

ELAPSED TIME NOTIFICATION

When working structure fires occur, the TRO will notify Command at 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 minutes. The TRO will use the order model and announce:

"Command, 15 minute elapsed time notification."

The time frame used is based upon receipt of the incident and will cease upon "fire under control."

STAGING

Units arriving in Staging, Level I or Level II, will depress the "STG" key on their MDT. If assigned to a sector or task on the fireground the "ON-SCENE" key shall be depressed.

Units arriving in Level I Staging will report their identity and direction from the scene on the assigned tactical channel.

If Level II Staging is requested by Command, Alarm will announce the staging location and dispatch all further assistance to that location. Units arriving at the Level II Staging Area will report in person to the Staging Officer. The Staging Officer will manage all radio communications to and from the Staging Area.

ALL CLEAR, UNDER CONTROL, AND CO BELOW 50 PPM

Alarm will acknowledge "ALL CLEAR," "UNDER CONTROL," and "CO BELOW 50 PPM" reports from Command only. The time received will be announced as the reports are given.

To avoid confusion between ordering primary search and reporting "ALL CLEAR," the following standard terminology will be used:

"SEARCH AND RESCUE" refers to the function of performing primary search.

"ALL CLEAR" is a completion report for a primary search.

EXAMPLE: "Ladder 71, perform search and rescue" - order.

"Ladder 71 has an ALL CLEAR" - indicates primary search completed

RETURNING COMPANIES

Only Command can release companies from an incident. Command will indicate the units to "HOLD" at the scene and release the remainder of the assignment. Alarm will automatically return to service, changing status to AOR. Committed companies returning back to service will change status to AOR when ready.

When transmitting a "HOLD" or "RECALL" message, Command will report the nature of actual situation found. Alarm will retransmit this report.

SECTORS

Sector officers should use a non-radio code with assigned companies as much as possible, but will keep Command informed of progress via radio on any problems encountered and significant progress.

Command may assign sector officers to UHF radios to relieve traffic on the tactical channel.

STAFF

Staff members with fireground responsibilities will respond to greater alarms for assistance with various sector functions.

Staff members will report in person to Command Post and will automatically assume sector duties in their area of responsibility unless ordered otherwise. Communication from staff personnel should be with Command as much as possible; however, there will be situations that require direct communications with Sector Officers. Staff communications should be face-to-face as much as possible.

RADIO CHANNEL ASSIGNMENTS

	Tx Freq	Rx Freq	TCS Hz	
Ch 1	154.190	154.190	173.8	Dispatch
Ch 2	154.250	154.250	173.8	Tactical (East Phx)
Ch 3	154.070	154.070	173.8	Tactical (West Phx)
Ch 4	154.280	154.280	None	Mutual Aid (Inter Agency)
Ch 5	153.830	153.830	173.8	Tactical
Ch 6	154.310	154.310	173.8	Tactical (Glendale)
Ch 7	154.145	154.145	173.8	Tactical (Tempe)
Ch 8	153.770	153.770	173.8	Tactical (Tempe)

Ch 9	155.670	155.670	173.8	Tactical (Glendale)
Ch 10	151.370	154.355	173.8	Tactical (Daisy Mountain)
Ch 11	154.025	154.025	173.8	Training/Fireground
Ch 12	155.775	155.775	173.8	Haz Mat
Ch 13	154.130	154.430	100.0	Chandler (Repeated)
Ch 14	155.715	155.955	100.0	Chandler (Tactical)
Ch 15	None	162.550	None	Weather
Ch 16	159.015	154.340	167.9	Mesa 1
Ch 17	159.045	154.235	167.9	Mesa 2
Ch 18	153.950	153.950	167.9	Mesa 3
Ch 19	154.010	154.010	167.9	Mesa 5
Ch 20	153.905	156.150	100.0	ASU Police
Ch 21	155.490	155.490	100.0	ASU Police
Ch 22	155.475	155.475	None	Police Interagency
Ch 23	153.890	154.370	114.8	Rural
Ch 24	154.400	154.400	114.8	Rural

A tactical channel will be assigned by Alarm for each incident. Command may request a "CLEAR CHANNEL" for a working incident. When requested, Alarm will direct units on other incidents to an alternate Tactical Channel.

Command may also assign units to UHF-1. This channel is primarily assigned to command officers and FITS.

The REPEATER FUNCTION on UHF-2 should be used only for long-range communications (beyond portable-to-portable range).

ORDER MODEL

Radio communications will be regulated by the following order model guidelines.

1. Sender will give unit ID and call the receiver by their unit ID.
2. Receiver will give their ID to indicate they are ready to receive.
3. Sender will then extend message, order, etc.
4. Receiver will give ID and acknowledge receipt of message. A brief restatement is the best acknowledgment.
5. Alarm will acknowledge all communications directed to it by a brief restatement of the message, with particular attention given to repeating on the scene, size-up and progress reports, recall reports, requests for additional resource and "All Clear," "Under Control," and "Carbon Monoxide below 50 parts per million (CO below 50 PPM)."

EMERGENCY TRAFFIC

The term "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" will be utilized by any unit encountering an immediately perilous situation and will receive the highest communications priority from Alarm, Command, and all operating units. Units may initiate emergency communications by depressing the "E" (emergency) button on their MDT, or by verbally contacting Alarm.

EXAMPLE: "E71 to Alarm with emergency traffic." Alarm will immediately activate special tone. The unit will transmit their message. Alarm will repeat message one time.

If Alarm does not acknowledge (special tone not activated) unit will then establish contact with Command and transmit the emergency message. Command will then reinitiate emergency

traffic sequence with Alarm.

THE AIR ABSOLUTELY BELONGS TO ANY UNIT GIVEN THE "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" CALL.

UNIT DESIGNATION

For radio communications, the following designations will be recognized as standard:

Fire Communications.....	Alarm
Officer of any unit.....	Unit ID
Engineer of any pumper.....	Pump
Engineer of any ladder.....	Truck
Add'l portable assigned to company.....	Firefighter
Deputy Chiefs.....	Battalion
District Commander.....	Deputy
Field Incident Technician.....	Battalion

RADIO CODE

"Plain language" radio message should be used in preference to numerical codes to facilitate understanding. There is no official Tempe Fire Department radio code.

The following code messages (from the Police radio code) may be used in sensitive situations, when a plain language message could cause a problem at the scene:

261.....	Rape
901-H.....	Dead body
906*.....	Need Police assistance URGENTLY
918.....	Insane person
961.....	Vehicle accident, no injuries
962.....	Vehicle accident, with injuries
963.....	Vehicle accident, with fatality

- * Units should advise Alarm of nature of request - Alarm personnel should be aware of possible sensitive situations and word messages to units accordingly.

GOOD RADIO PROCEDURE

Short - Specific

Before transmitting know what you are going to say; don't make it up as you go along. Choose precise terms to communicate the desired message as clearly and briefly as possible without wasting air time.

Task-Oriented/Company-Oriented

Orders received by companies should indicate a specific task which is assigned to the company. It should be of a magnitude reasonably performed by a single company alone or in concert with other companies.

Indicate Objectives

In addition to being task and company oriented, assignments should indicate an objective to the action. The company should know exactly where to go, to whom to report, what is the task, what is the objective of the task. Orders should tell what to do - not how to do it.

Clear Tone/Self-Control/Effective Rate

Speak clearly at a practiced rate... not too fast... not too slow. Control your emotions and excitement deliberately. If you do not consciously control your voice, it will become garbled under stress.

Well-Timed/Spaced

- . Prioritize your messages. Do not use up valuable air time with unimportant messages and insignificant details. Let critical messages go first. Maintain an awareness of the overall situation and how you fit into it.
- . Do not interrupt conversations unless you have emergency traffic. Listen before transmitting and wait until a message transaction has been completed.
- . Pause between consecutive messages. This will make it clear when one message has been completed and another started. It will give other units a chance to get on the air with important messages.