GENERAL ORDER

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Subject
MPD Emergency Communications Operating Plan During Major System Failures
Number
GO-HSC-803.08
Effective Date
July 7, 2014
Replaces: General Order 803.08 (MPD Emergency Communications Operating Plan During Major System Failure), Effective Date November 23, 2011

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I. BACKGROUND

The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) recognizes that the use of communication systems and devices including mobile and hand held radios, telephones, and iMobile/CAD is crucial to its operations. Any failure or interruption in service must be prepared for in order to achieve continuity of operations and provide safety to members.

The District of Columbia's radio, 911 telephone and CAD systems are managed by the Office of Unified Communications (OUC). The District of Columbia's telephone systems are managed by Verizon Communications Inc., and DCNet. While system failures will involve several levels of technical and engineering response, this order delineates levels of failure and procedures to allow members to maintain communications during system failures.

II. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this order, the following terms shall have the meanings designated:

1. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) – Software enabling both OUC and MPD to assign and monitor calls for service.

2. Failsoft – Mode in which the radio system is capable of operating at a reduced level of efficiency after the failure of a component or power source.

    a. Failsoft is an automatic process and will be initiated immediately upon system failure.

    b. During failsoft, members on different talk groups will be paired together. For example, Members on 5D-TAC will be able to hear conversations from members on 6D-TAC.

    c. Members shall be mindful and limit conversations during failsoft.

    c. Members shall refer to Attachment A for the failsoft channel grouping.

3. National Capital Region (NCR) Radio Cache – Pre-designated number of radios kept to activate for incidents and mutual aid with ancillary support equipment stored in three (3) individual, self-contained, field deployable caches of twelve-hundred and fifty (1,250) radios each divided between Fairfax County, VA, and Montgomery County, MD. In addition to containing portable radios, the cache contains audio switches that permit interconnection of disparate radio infrastructure to support public safety operations (See Attachment B).

4. OUC Radio Cache – Four-hundred (400) radios programmed to operate on other jurisdictions' systems.

5. Push to Talk – Ability to successfully transmit on either a hand-held or mobile radio by pressing a momentary button to switch from voice reception mode to transmit mode.

6. Radio System Failure – Circumstances where a critical system collapse has affected the radio network beyond the abilities for all redundancy and failsoft plans.

7. Simplex Mode (also "Talk-Around-Mode") – Ability for a handheld radio to transmit and receive to other radios in a limited area on a separate channel for that use.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Failsoft Mode

1. When the radio system defaults to failsoft mode, members will hear a single tone broadcast at intervals. Members will be able to transmit in between the tones.

2. Members shall:

   a. Transmit during failsoft when appropriate (e.g., priority assignments).

   b. Attempt to use their Mobile Data Computer (MDC) as much as possible for communicating with dispatchers to acknowledge non-priority assignments and report dispositions.

3. Watch Commanders shall monitor calls for service via CAD and ensure pending assignments continued to be handled.

4. The Watch Commander, Command Information Center (CIC), shall ensure:

   a. Situation reports are paged out on the system's condition to command staff, watch commanders and the IT Group.

   b. CAD is monitored to ensure all calls for service are handled.

B. Radio System Failure

1. Catastrophic Radio System Failure assumes the entire system has been affected so that individual radios cannot communicate with the District's radio system as a city wide network. A user's coverage will be limited to the range of the individual talk-around mode on their radio. This is similar to a local "walkie talkie" mode. Once determination is made that a Radio System Failure has occurred, a radio technicians will be dispatched immediately to pre designated sites by OUC for trouble shooting and repair. This process can take up to one (1) hour depending on time and conditions. Normal coverage and operations will be gradually increased. It is recommended that radios continue to utilize talk-around mode until normal operations are resumed.

2. Members shall:

a. Confirm their radio is receiving power or is charged by checking the LED display.

b. If it is determined that the problem is system-wide and not isolated to one user, switch their radio's channel to [redacted] for primary dispatch. [redacted] can be found in [redacted] on MPD radios. If authorized by the on-duty OUC 911 Supervisor, members shall use [redacted] for Tactical Communications during a system outage. [redacted] can be found in [redacted] on MPD Radios. (See Attachment B).

NOTE: The use of any other interoperable channel shall be made at the direction of the on duty OUC 911 Supervisor.

c. Use the channel for priority communications as outlined in this order.

d. As a secondary backup solution, use the conventional/talk around talk groups. Refer to Attachment C on the location of those talk groups as well as how to switch to those talk groups. It is recommended that the portables be on the [redacted] talk group and the mobiles on the conventional talk groups as determined by the Watch Commander.

3. The Watch Commander, CIC, shall:

a. Assign a member to coordinate with the OUC 911 Supervisor to ensure that priority assignments are handled.

b. Ensure each Patrol District is coordinating assignments with the appropriate OUC Dispatcher.

c. Notify:

(1) The Chief of Police;

(2) The Command Staff;

(3) The Field Commander;

(4) The District Watch Commanders;

(5) The Watch Commander, Special Operations Division (SOD);

(6) The Watch Commander, Criminal Investigations Division (CID);

(7) The MPD Chief Technology Officer; and

(8) The Operations Center, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency.

d. Coordinate radio assignments with watch commanders every thirty (30) minutes to ensure calls for service are handled.

e. Page out any new information including instructions for an additional alternate channel or instructions regarding radio cache distribution.

f. Ensure dispatching is available on the alternate channel until OUC provides a dispatcher.

4. District/Division Watch Commanders shall:

a. Once it is determined a radio failure is occurring, obtain from the OUC Dispatcher the last known location of field units.

b. Immediately conduct a review of CAD regarding current and pending assignments.

c. Establish a desk contact phone in their element's station to maintain communication with the appropriate OUC Dispatcher and monitor assignments via CAD.

e. Ensure members notify the station either by phone or via backup Arlington County Public Safety (ACPS) channel with their current location, availability, and telephone number if applicable.

f. Ensure the roll call sergeant documents and records the information on the members.

g. Continue to provide timely responses to calls for service by:

(1) Ensuring a member with a MDC responds to the station to assist the Watch Commander with monitoring calls for service.

(2) Ensuring members are engaged in silent dispatching by attaching themselves to pending assignments.

(3) Ensuring that members not equipped with a personal data assistant (PDA) who are on foot, bike or motorcycle patrol provide the station desk with thirty (30) minute updates of their current location.

h. Account for all members on their shift working outside employment in their district or division by:

(1) Having patrol units in the appropriate PSA contact the members and advise the members to contact the station with their location and telephone number.

(2) Ensuring the roll call sergeant documents and records the information on the members working outside employment.

i. Combine single (i.e., 10-99) units during an outage at their discretion.

5. The Special Operations Division Watch Commander shall:

a. Account for all members on their shift in their division by initiating a page to all SOD units, directing all on-duty units to contact SOD Headquarters Station with their current locations and assignments.

b. Ensure continued operations if the event occurs during a high level motorcade [e.g., President of the United States (POTUS)] by:

(1) Ensuring representatives of the United States Secret Service (USSS) and/or State Department in the MPD pilot vehicle for the Motorcade relay any information needed regarding the route to the MPD members on the motorcade.

(2) Giving route officials a pre-determined time to cut and pull traffic if the route has intersection control.

(3) Ensuring members in the pilot vehicle use the public

address (PA) system on the vehicle to communicate with the other motorcade vehicles as to their configuration to ensure they are provided up-to-date information.

(4) Ensuring the detail official rides ahead of the motorcade and closes the route using the PA.

6. The MPD OUC Liaison shall:

a. In consultation with OUC, estimate to the best of their ability the projected length of the failure.

b. Determine if a request for radio cache assistance should be recommended, and if so, coordinate the request.

c. Ensure OUC provides a dispatcher for alternate channel [redacted] if necessary because of the failure.

d. Ensure members are notified if alternate [redacted] is to be used using MDC and PDA messaging. .

7. The Field Commander shall:

a. Ensure each element watch commander maintains regular contact with OUC and the CIC as described in this order.

b. Ensure a blast broadcast is sent utilizing iMobile to all units with MDCs or PDAs advising of the failure and the need to utilize a designated back-up radio channel. The message will designate ether [redacted] or [redacted] as the backup channel.

c. In the absence of the OUC Liaison, ensure all measures listed in Part III.B.6 of this order are completed.

C. iMobile/CAD Communication Outage

1. If the duration of an iMobile outage extends beyond ten (10) minutes, silent dispatching will terminate and all calls for service will be dispatched by an OUC dispatcher.

2. The OUC dispatcher will run all tag and information inquires if the system is accessible.

D. Telephone Communication Outage

1. In the event of a telephone communication failure, OUC will implement the OUC contingency plan to establish communications.

2. If OUC is unable to establish communications, OUC will notify the MPD Field Commander through the CIC.

3. The Field Commander shall notify MPD Command Staff and the Public Information Officer (PIO).

4. If the telephone communication outage is such that 911 telephone services cannot be established at the Unified Communications Center, OUC, then the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) will be utilized per OUC guidelines and policy.

5. If telephone communications cannot be established at the PSCC, then MPD will assist OUC with the intake of emergency calls.

6. Citizens shall be directed to call the CIC with any 911 emergency calls and to call their police district for non-emergency calls as follows:

   a. The Public Information Officer (PIO) shall:

      (1) Contact the media to request they relay the contact information for the CIC and police districts to the public.

      (2) Ensure CIC and police district contact information is distributed via MPD social media accounts (e.g., Twitter, Facebook).

   b. Watch commanders shall ensure CIC and police district contact information is posted on MPD Email List Groups.

   c. Members in the field shall provide citizens with the CIC and relevant police district contact information (e.g., by use of their public address system, distribution of handouts).

IV. ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment A: MPD Failsoft Channel Grouping

2. Attachment B: Instructions to access [redacted] and [redacted] on the MPD Fleet map

3. Attachment C: Conventional Channel Access Instructions

4. Attachment D: Fleet Map

Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

CLL:PAB:MOC:JC

MPD Failsoft Channel Grouping

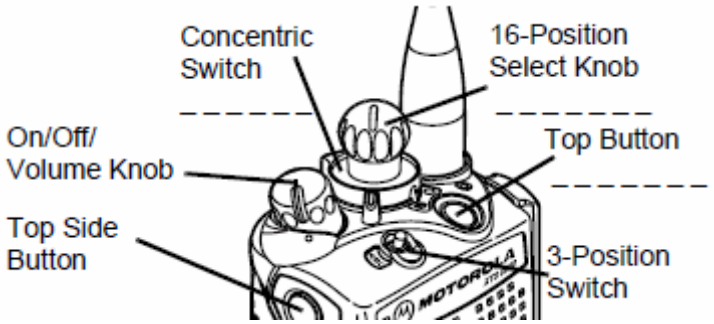
Ch 1	Ch 2	Ch 3	Ch 4	Ch 5	Ch 6	Ch 7	Ch 8
460.02500	460.10000	460.15000	460.20000	460.25000	460.27500	460.32500	460.35000
1D	DC UCC1	3D	4D	5D	6D	7D	2D
1D-SEC	DC UCC2	3D-SEC	4D-SEC	5D-SEC	6D-SEC	7D-SEC	1D-TAC
	DC UCC3						2D-TAC
	DC UCC4						2D-SEC
	DC MA1						3D-TAC
	DC MA2						4D-TAC
	DC MAF1						
	DC MAF2						
	DC EMA1						
	DC EMA2						
	DC EXEC2						
	DC PMARS						
	DC SPARE1						
	DC SPARE2						
	DC IO1						

MPD Failsoft Channel Grouping

Ch 9	Ch 10	Ch 11	Ch 12	Ch 13	Ch 14	Ch 15	Ch 16
460.40000	460.42500	460.45000	460.47500	460.50000	453.45000	460.37500	489.51250
5D-TAC	OSD-1	SR CMND	FIT-OPR	CW-1	PG HYATTSVILLE	SD2-ERT	EBS1
6D-TAC	MND-1	DC EXEC 1	OIA	MPD-3	PG LANDOVER	SD4-SEC	EBS2
7D-TAC	MND-2	EPU		WM-DC2	PG SUITLAND	HSCTSEC	
MPD-1				HRBRPD	PG OXON HILL		
MPD-2				DC FIRE	DC MIRS		
				PSPD	DC MA3		
				DCHAPD	DC MA4		
				SD1EVT	US CAP1		
				SD3OPS	US CAP2		

Instructions to access [redacted] and [redacted] on the MPD Fleet map:

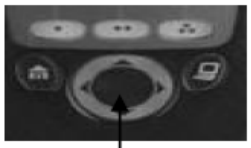
- All handheld portable radios currently have two talk groups that work on the [redacted] and [redacted].
- In case of an outage, those two channels will be used as follows:
  I. [redacted].
  II. [redacted].
- [redacted] can be found in [redacted].
- [redacted] can be found in [redacted].
- [redacted].
- Directional Keys on the XTS 3000 are the left and right buttons on the second row.
- Directional Keys on the XTS 5000 are the left and right buttons on the circular button in the center.
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]



APX 7000

Directional Keys

XTS 5000



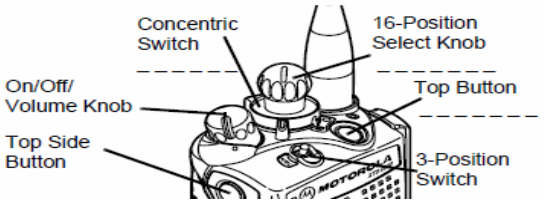
Directional Keys

XTS 3000

Directional Keys

Instructions to access Talk Around/Conventional Talk Groups:

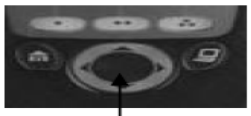
- All handheld portable radios have access to conventional/talk around talk groups.
- In case of an outage, these channels will be used as the secondary backup solution.
- A set of 3 conventional channels, namely CW-SV1, CW-SV2 and CW-SV2 can be found in Zone 2 (Channels 8, 9 and 10 respectively).
- A set of 7 conventional channels, namely 1D-SRV through 7D-SRV can be found in Zone 5 (Channels 1 through 7 respectively).
- National Interoperability channels are programmed in Zones 9 (XTS-portables, APX Portables and Mobiles) and Zones 10, 11 and 12 (APX portables only).
- For XTS – Portable Radios: To go to a specific zone, press the Key right below the word “ZONE” that appears in the display of the radio. The number (1 through 9) will start blinking. Use the direction keys on the radio to get to the correct Zone. Use the channel select switch to get to the right channel.
- Directional Keys on the XTS 3000 are the left and right buttons on the second row.
- Directional Keys on the XTS 5000 are the left and right buttons on the circular button in the center.
- For APX 7000 Portable Radios: Press the Key right below the word “ZONE” that appears in the display of the radio. Use the directional arrows on the Central Square button to move up or down the Zone List to reach required zone. Once you highlight the required zone Number, press the Key right below the word “Sel”. Use the channel select switch to get to the required channel.
- If the keypad is locked and you are unable to change the zones, press the purple button on the side to unlock the radio keypad (Top Side Button).
- Conventional channels programmed in Zone 9, 10 and 11 have an alphabet designation of “D” or “R” at the end. As a backup, always use the talk around channel that has the “D” designation at the end.
- Please note, all talk around channels have a distance limitation of approximately 2 miles.
- For the mobiles, one can go to the correct zone by using the “ZN UP” or the “ZN DN” button to get to the right zone.



APX 7000

Directional Keys

XTS 5000



Directional Keys

XTS 3000

Directional Keys