



<b>Deschutes County 9-1-1 Service District Operations Manual</b>	
<b>Procedure:</b> Radio Communication and Terminology	
<b>Procedure Number:</b> 4.24	<b>Issued Date:</b> June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2011 <b>Revised Date:</b>
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## 4.24 Radio Communication and Terminology

Deschutes County 911 dispatches for 8 different fire departments over 5 different radio frequencies. This procedure is aimed at standardizing radio communication and terminology between DC911 and Fire/EMS units in an effort to increase interoperability and efficiency for both DC911 and its partner agencies.

All radio communication between Fire/EMS field units and DC911 will be conducted as follows:

- Any apparatus change of status shall be conducted over the air and in the following way:
  - All radio transmissions will begin with a pre-call and apparatus numbers will be stated in order to notify DC911 you have information to transmit.  
Example: “Dispatch, 771”
  - Once DC911 has acknowledged your apparatus number, state your new status.  
Example: “771 in quarters”
  
- Unit status shall be verbalized over the air as follows:
  - Once apparatus have advised their status change, DC911 will copy the units and announce a time stamp.  
Example: “Copy 324 at 13:24”
  
- DC911 will assume apparatus are available for calls when unit status is changed to in quarters, out of quarters, or available unless otherwise transmitted over the air.
  
- Patient information shall be transmitted over the air by DC911 according to procedure 4.12
  - After patient information is transmitted, responding units will copy and state their apparatus number.  
Example: “421 copies”
  - Units may decline patient information be transmitted if there is not a need for that info. (ie: patient info read on MDT or copy notes)
  
- Responding unit traveling Code 3 through or into another agencies jurisdiction, will advise DC 911 so that other public safety apparatus in the area can be alerted.
  
- **Multiple Apparatus Status Change:**
  - When there is a status change involving multiple units, a single unit may transmit status for multiple units. Additionally, Dispatch may cancel all units

or specifically call out individual units based on their need for control and clarification of radio traffic.

➤ **Arrival Report and Size-Up:**

- First arriving units on calls must transmit an “arrival report” to dispatch and responding units. Then if the incident dictates transmit a size-up to responding units. DC911 will document the “arrival report” and scene size-up details in the notes of the call but will not parrot the information, only copy the unit with a time stamp. DC911 dispatchers may ask for additional scene information if necessary. Arrival reports and size-up transmissions should include the following:
- Arrival report – Unit number, type and condition of incident, name the A side of the building, Establish command and designate a name for the incident, announce tactical channel if appropriate.
- Size up – 360 assessment of the scene including tactical strategies, assignments, and state a plan. Size-up should include updates on conditions of the incident as deemed necessary by command.

➤ **Air Ambulance:**

If on-scene or responding crews recognize the need for air ambulance support, contact DC 911 and request an air ambulance and DC 911 will locate the closest air ambulance and activate them. Air Link will always be first call but if their service is not available DC 911 will go directly to the air ambulance matrix to activate the next due air ambulance. Placing the air ambulance on stand-by is not recommended. Only Air Link utilizes a stand-by mode and the stand-by concept defeats the purpose of rapid response.

➤ **Standardized Radio Terminology:**

- In station – “In Quarters”
- Out of station – “Out of Quarters”
- Transporting to hospital – “Transporting to St. Charles Bend/Redmond”
- Responding to the dispatched call – “Responding”
- Arrival on scene of the dispatched call – “Arrival”
- Arrival on scene of the hospital – “Arrival at St. Charles Bend/Redmond”
- Out of service – “Out of Service” + reason
- Available – “Available”
- Transmission received and understood – “Copy”
- No further response needed - “Cancel”
- Air medical helicopter – Air Ambulance

➤ **Priority Traffic:**

- “*Priority Traffic*” is non-life threatening high priority radio traffic that may be used by dispatch or field units.

➤ **Emergency Traffic:**

- Critical high priority life safety radio traffic. Firefighters will utilize “*Emergency Traffic*” for all high priority life safety radio traffic.

➤ **Mayday:**

- The term “*Mayday*” is the signal word used in Fire and EMS radio communications to indicate a missing, trapped or injured firefighter in need of immediate assistance. *Mayday messages shall be considered emergency life-safety related radio traffic and shall have absolute priority over all other radio communications.* DC911 Fire Dispatchers will relay Mayday information to on scene command when it is heard on any channel if the info appears to have been missed by on scene personnel.
- For Mayday procedures, refer to Mayday Procedure 4.32