

# Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

## Fire Chief's General Order

NUMBER: 12-06

April 9, 2012

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Richard Bowers



SUBJECT: Radio Failure Procedures

When units experience problems with the 800 MHZ radio system coverage to the point it adversely affects their operation and or safety, the following steps must be performed whenever possible:

- Switch to 7-November and utilize a Vehicle Repeater System (VRS) if on-site.
- Establish a communications relay using 7-Oscar until Command advises it is no longer necessary.
  - o *Personnel should refer to the attached PowerPoint on the best practice procedure for establishing and maintaining a radio relay.*
- Request tactical radio solutions via ECC supervisor.

At the conclusion of the event, the Incident Commander must notify the Telecomm Office of the radio troubles using the on-line, fillable form located at:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dHNLbjFvNlVfOTNrVhnMjVDbmRZYnc6MQ>

For questions or further clarification contact the ECC Chief at (240) 773-7101

# Overcoming Radio Difficulties

What responders can do.

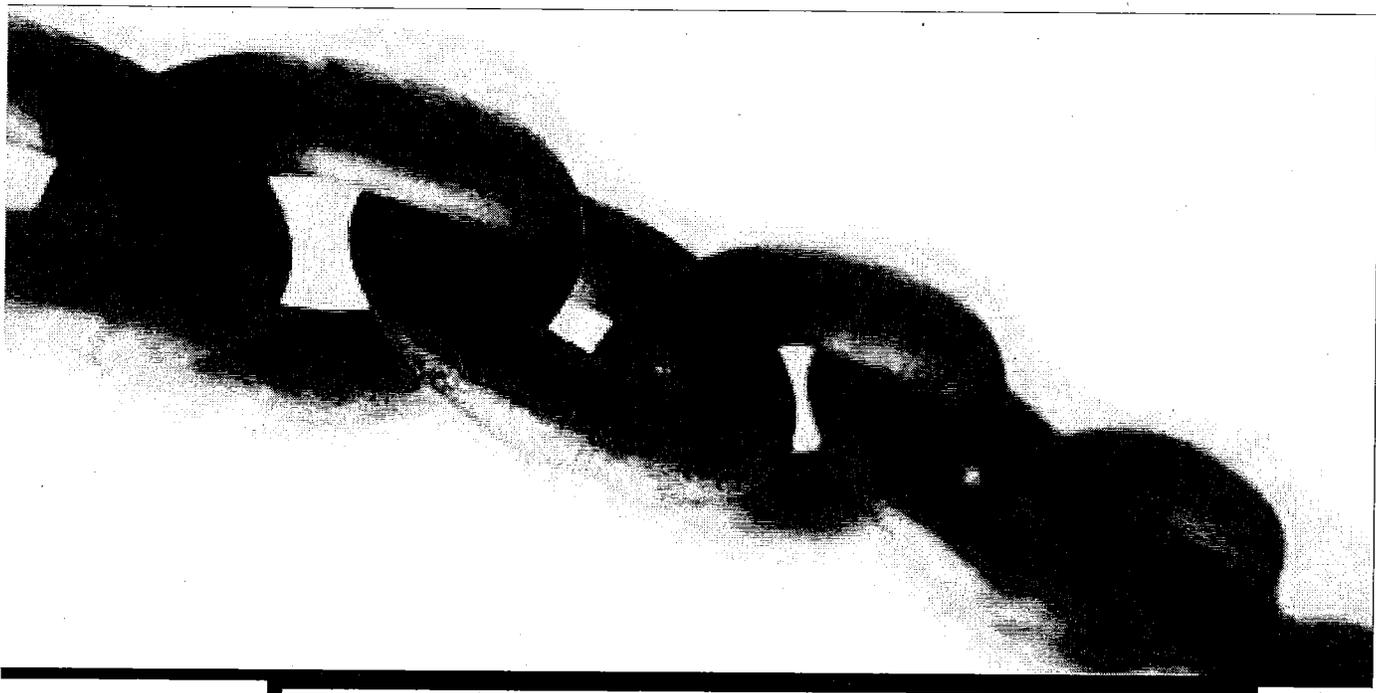
## The Conventional Channel Basics

- 7 Oscar is a conventional channel it is not repeated
- 7-Oscar has a finite range-the signal can only go so far
- Many things affect the range including concrete, steel, and the power of the radio
- METRO has a lot of concrete and steel and the portables are “relatively” low power

# A Radio Relay

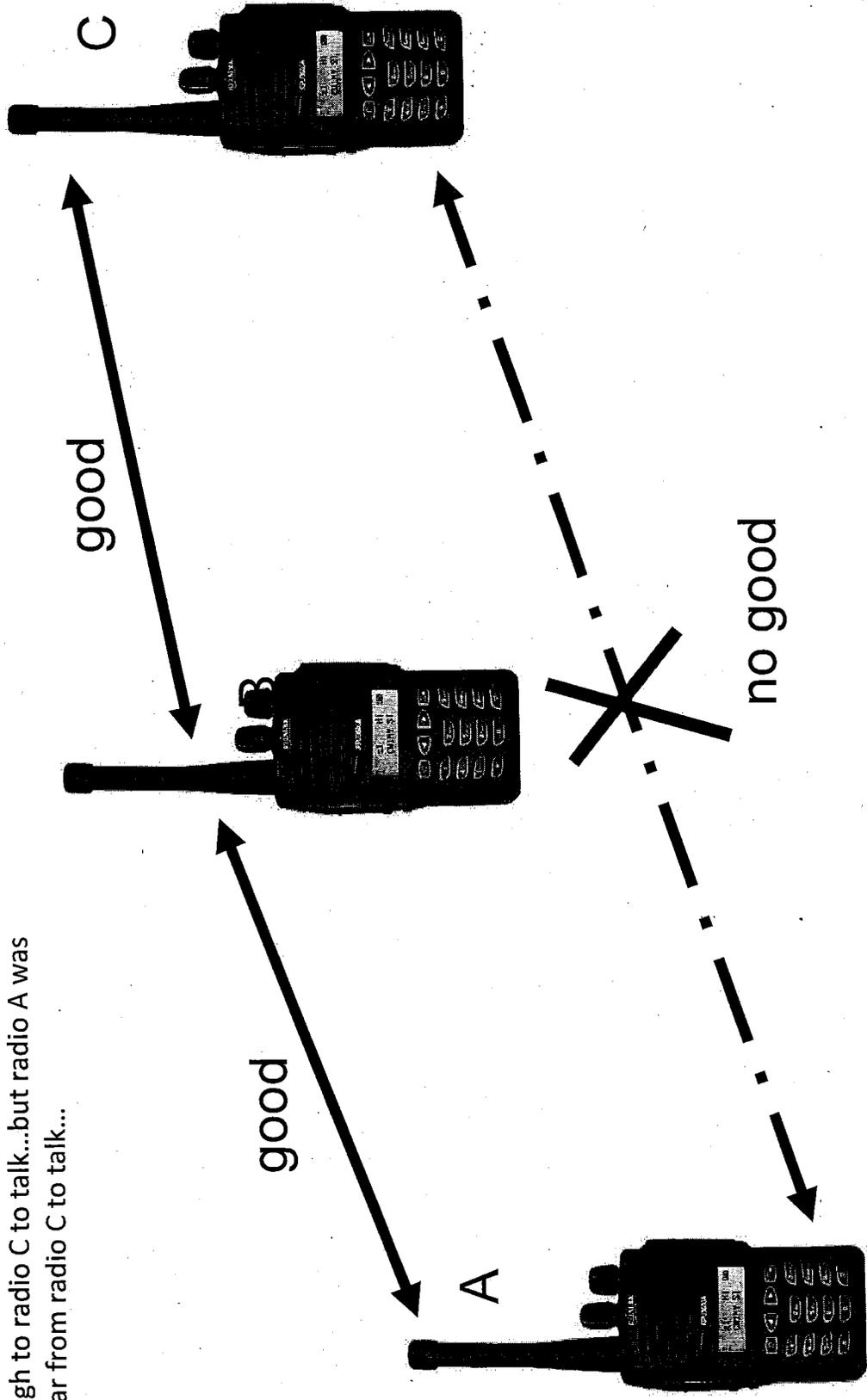
A radio relay is a communications chain that bridges distances over which one could not usually talk....

Build a chain of people with radios to bridge large distances full of concrete and metal...

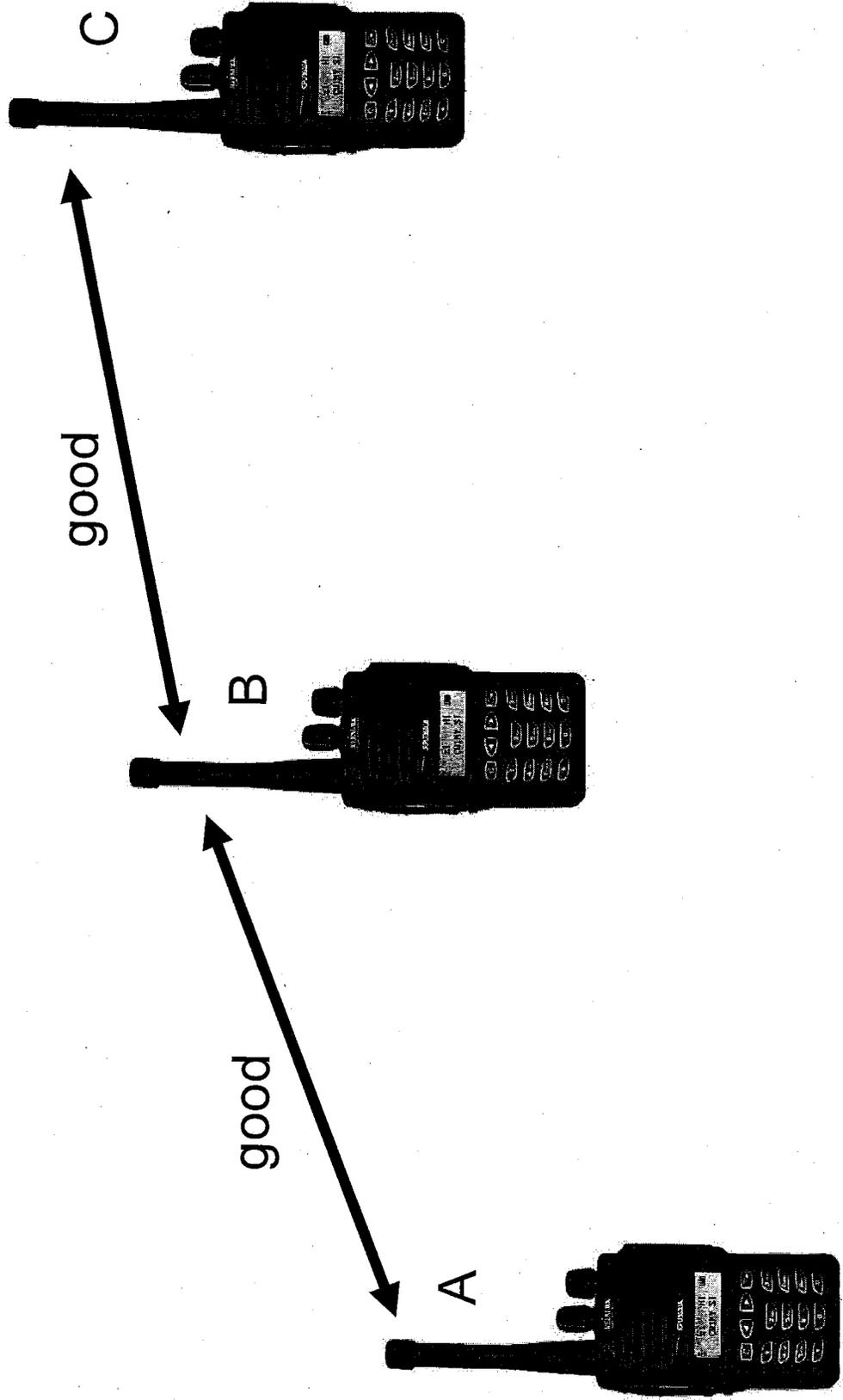


# Relay Basics

Imagine that radio A was close enough to radio B to talk and radio B was close enough to radio C to talk...but radio A was too far from radio C to talk...

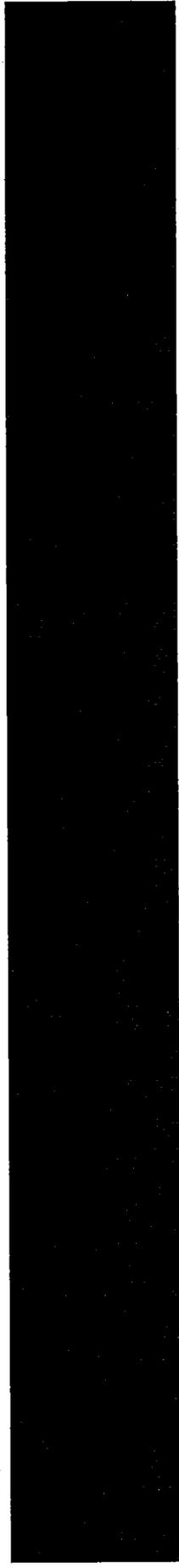
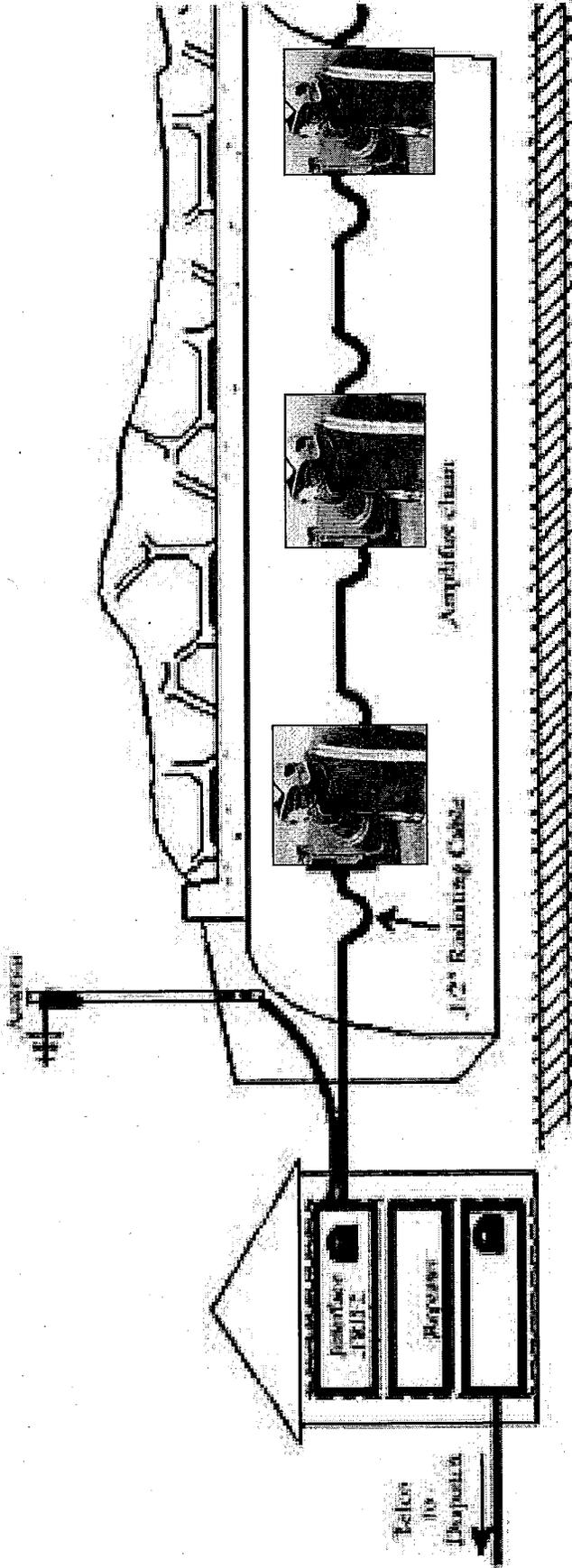


The way to get a message from A to C is for A to send it to B and B to relay it to C



# Another way to look at the relay

*Take out the amplifiers and insert firefighters with radios*



# Viabile Practice

## General Behavior

- When assigned to a METRO event in the ROW...
- As the first arriving major unit is gathering incident information they are listening for their radio to “honk” or display “Out of Range”
- If the radio honks then they should consider the tunnel bore an IDLH and follow two-in-two-out rules until radio relay can be established

# Viabile Practice

## General Behavior

- Crews stop at each turn or bend in the ROW to confirm communications
- If the radio honks then they should consider the tunnel bore an IDLH and follow two-in-two-out rules until radio relay can be established

# Viabile Practices

## Radio Relay

### Example set-up

- Make the guy at the top  
“mezzanine comm”
- Make the guy at the platform  
“platform comm”
- When transmitting a message that needs to be repeated begin with  
“message for relay”

If you are in the operational area and you hear, “..message for relay...” that would be your clue to stop talking so the message could get out...

Ex. Platform Comm to Mezzanine Comm, message for relay...  
“Mezzaning comm to platform comm ready for message...” “Platform comm to Mezzanine comm, advise command rescue group supervisor is requesting two additional companies for support.” etc...

# Limitations

**DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE  
COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE PERFECT  
ON CONVENTIONAL CHANNELS**

**YOU STILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH WAVE  
PROPAGATION ISSUES**

# Things to think about

- A train in the station affects communications
- There was no IDLH so we could all hear and speak clearly...
- It would take an entire 4-person engine crew to set up this relay while assuring that no-one was alone...
- The mobile is more powerful than the portable..if you can get a mobile close on 7-Oscar top side and leave the drive with it that would help
- Think about all the talking the relay radios will have to do you will need more batteries
- Prioritizing and sending quality relay messages is not the job for a rookie!

# Forest Glen

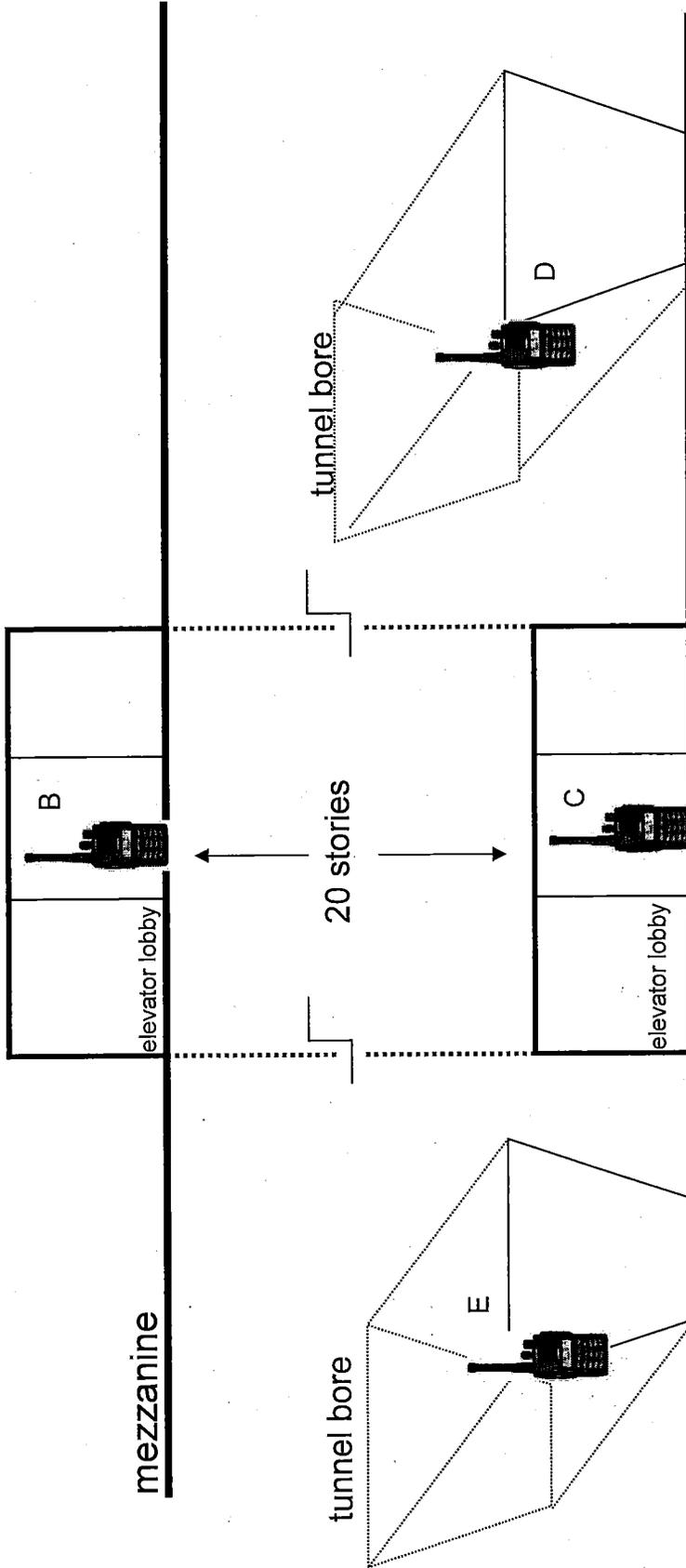
# The Layout

- Street level where command is
- Kiosk... where command could be
- Mezzanine elevator lobby (area between the two elevator banks on the mezzanine level)
- Platform elevator lobby (area between the two elevator banks on the platform level)
- The mezzanine and platform are separated by 20 stories

Forest Glen... radio A is top side in  
Command Buggy



A



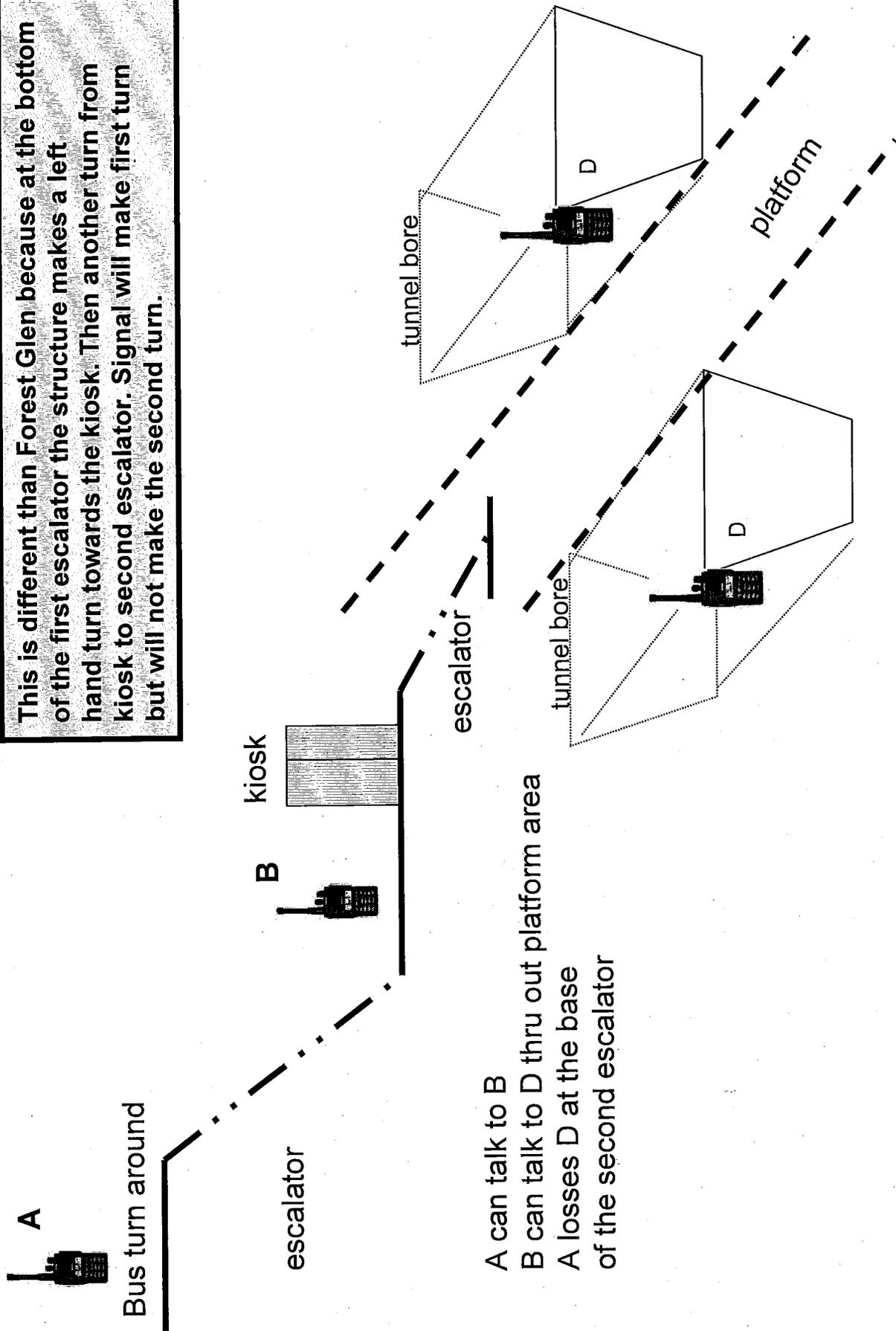
platform

The Findings:

- Radio A can talk to radio B
- Radio B can talk to radio C IF both stay in the elevator lobby
- Radio C can talk to radios B, D, & E but not to radio A
- Radio D can talk to radio C and MAYBE radio E
- Radio E can talk to radio C and MAYBE radio D

**Bethesda**

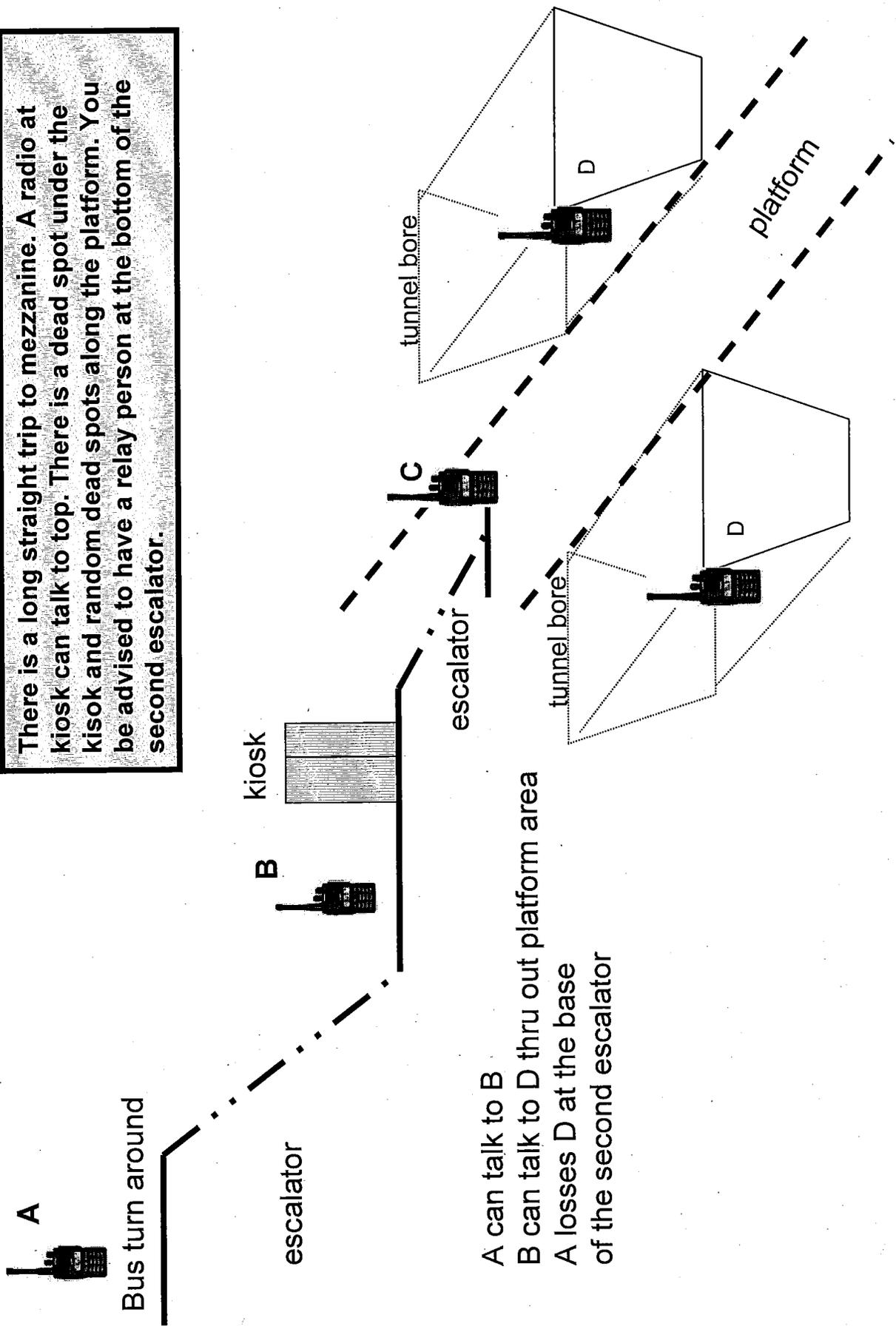
This is different than Forest Glen because at the bottom of the first escalator the structure makes a left hand turn towards the kiosk. Then another turn from kiosk to second escalator. Signal will make first turn but will not make the second turn.



- A can talk to B
- B can talk to D thru out platform area
- A losses D at the base of the second escalator

# Medical Center

There is a long straight trip to mezzanine. A radio at kiosk can talk to top. There is a dead spot under the kiosk and random dead spots along the platform. You be advised to have a relay person at the bottom of the second escalator.



A can talk to B  
 B can talk to D thru out platform area  
 A losses D at the base of the second escalator

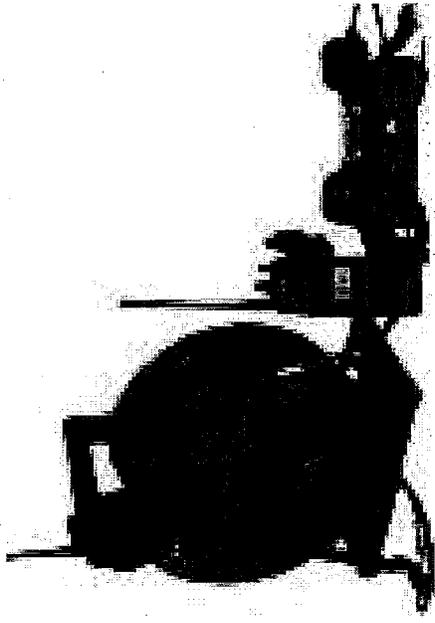
## VRS?

7O and 7N(F/J) are similar enough that if 7-O cannot reach all the way back to the top it is unlikely that 7N (F/J) will.

# Tactical Comm Options

## Options Include:

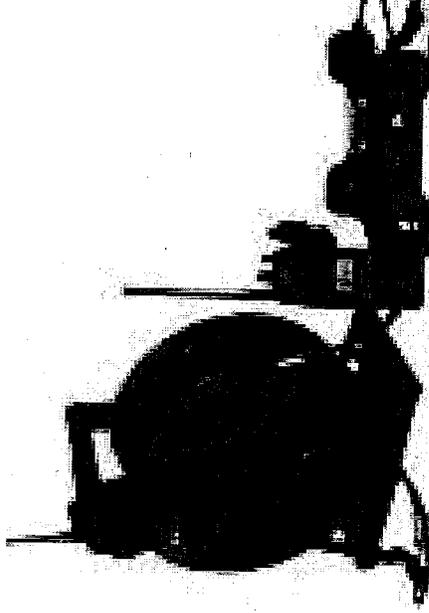
- Telecomm Section
- Communications Interoperability Group (NCR-CIG)
- Request via contacting ECC



# NCR-CIG

They bring:

- Advanced understanding of wave behavior
- Portable repeater devices
- Practice operating in tunnel spaces



# NCR-CIG

- Consider reflex time for deployment
- Consider reflex time for set-up
- Consider the need to conduct operations in smoke filled tunnel with zero visibility

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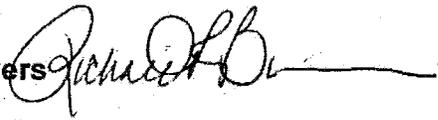
# Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

## FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 12-11

May 9, 2012

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Richard Bowers 

SUBJECT: Tanker Dispatch to Adaptive Responses in Non-Hydranted Areas

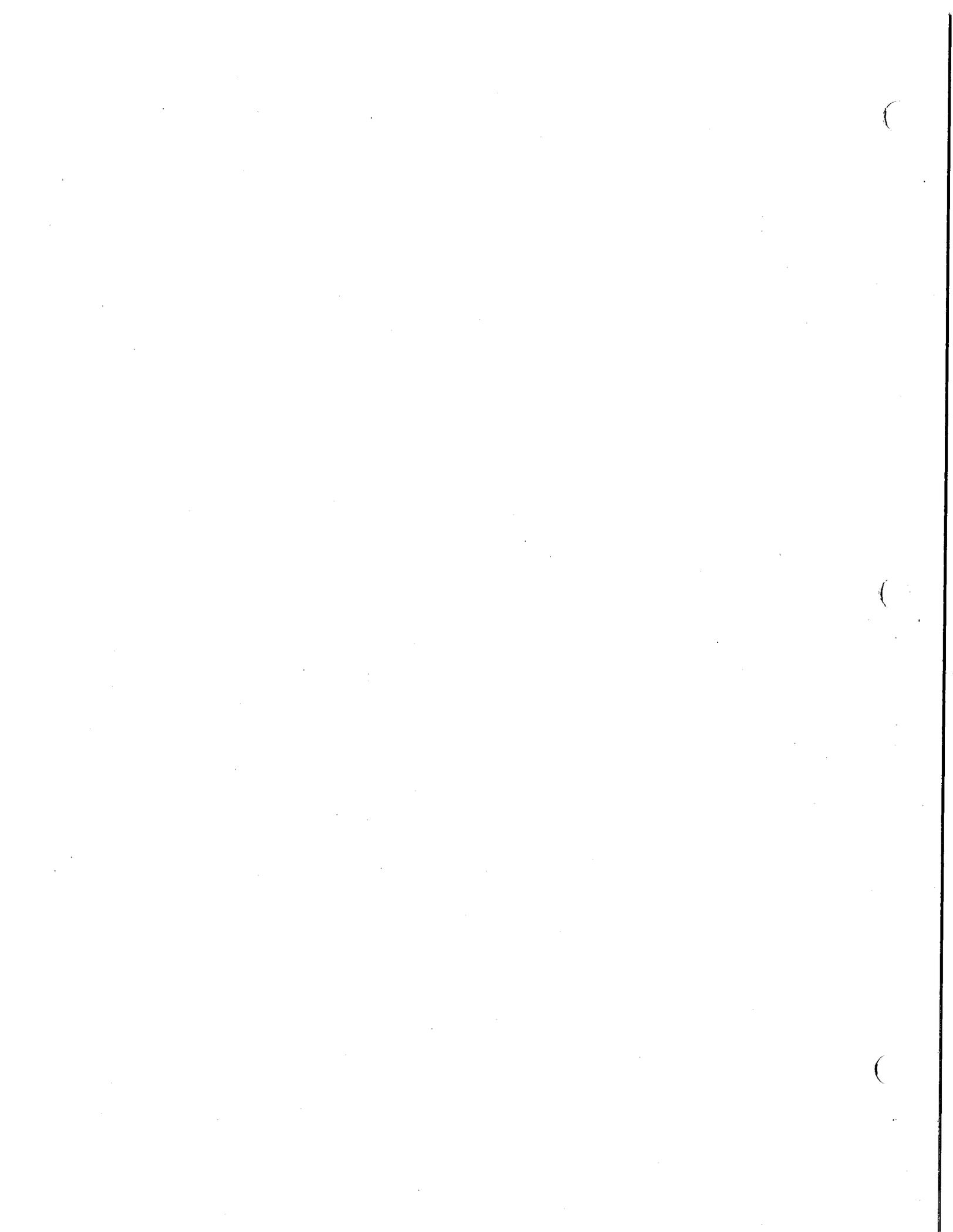
One tanker will be added to the response plans in all non-hydranted areas, and dispatched for all adaptive assignments consisting of two engines and one special service.

The first due engine must initiate the water supply process by laying a supply line connected to the unit's clappered Siamese. This hose lay must begin at the driveway entrance to the involved structure, or from the nearest area suitable for dump site operations. Units must continue to follow the **Standard Operating Procedure for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations**, MCFRS Policy # 24-07AMII, for all of these events.

The dispatched tanker must respond as dispatched and position near the first due engine upon arrival, setting up as a nurse tanker unless Command directs otherwise.

Minimum staffing of primary units will not drop below three personnel in order for a tanker to respond.

This required change ensures that first arriving engine companies can establish an initial water supply greater than the booster tank(s) in all response areas.



Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

**FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER**

**NUMBER: 12-12**

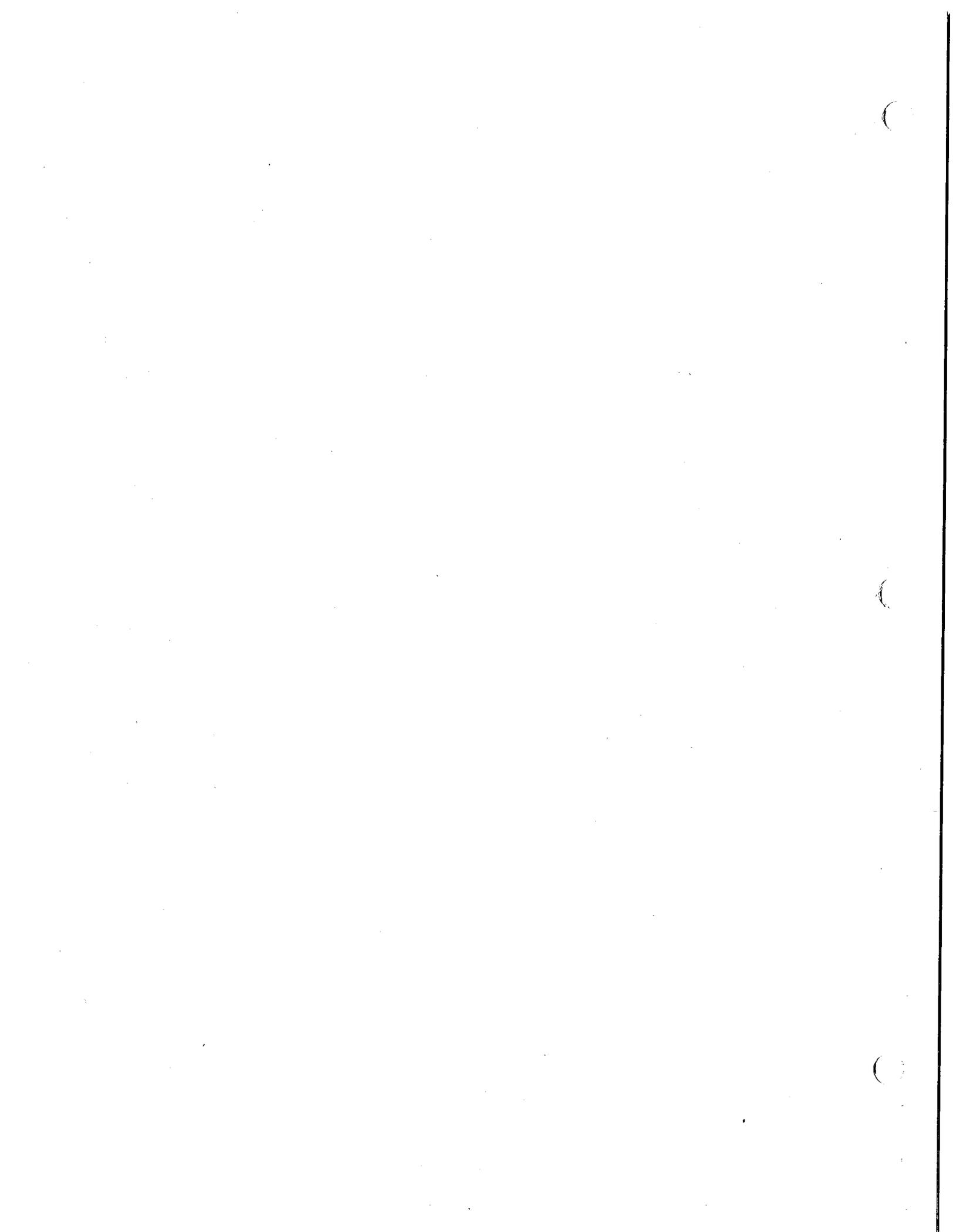
May 11, 2012

**TO:** All MCFRS Personnel  
**FROM:** Fire Chief Richard Bowers   
**SUBJECT:** MDC, ePCR, and Portable Radio Security

Reserve apparatus will no longer be equipped with MDC terminals. When personnel switch from one piece of apparatus to another, they must transfer the MDC from their *original* apparatus, to the apparatus to which they are moving. Similarly, when returning to their original unit, they must restore the MDC terminal to that unit.

The Station Officer must remove the MDC/portable radio/ePCR computer from second-line apparatus, or from apparatus that is being transitioned into a reserve unit. When apparatus is sent out for repair or maintenance requiring it to be out of the station overnight or longer, the MDC/portable radio/ePCR computer must be stored in the Captain's office. The Station Officer will re-install the MDC/portable radio/ePCR when the apparatus is returned to County control or to its home station.

Please direct any questions to the ECC Section Chief at (240) 773-7101.



Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

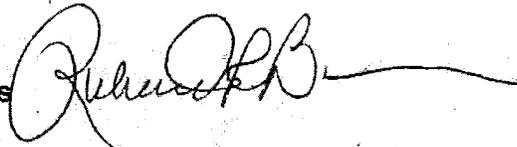
**FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER**

**NUMBER: 12-13**

May 16, 2012

**TO:** All MCFRS Personnel

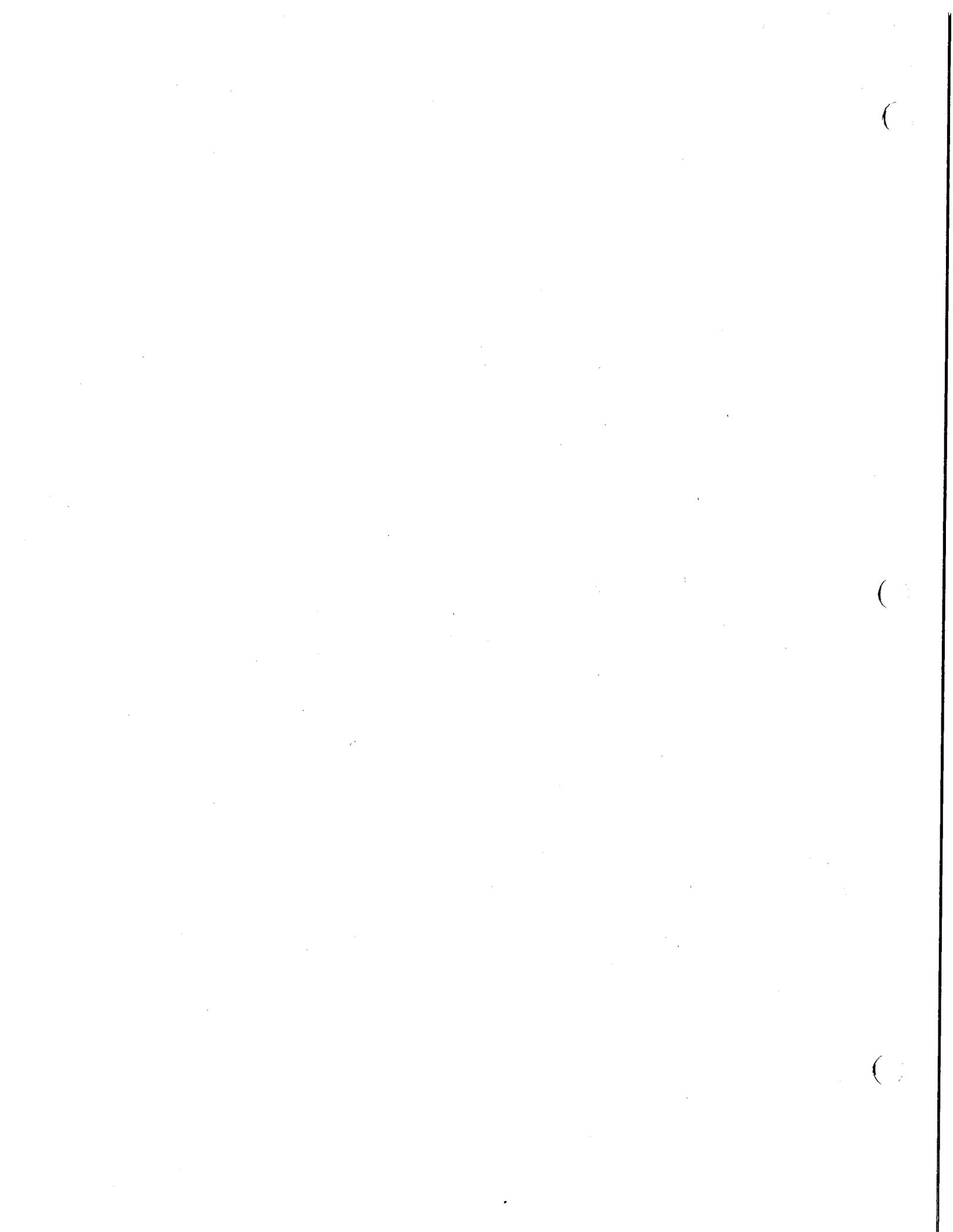
**FROM:** Fire Chief Richard Bowers



**SUBJECT:** Actions on Events Dispatched as "Unknown Rescue" or "Unknown Emergency"

MCFRS units and personnel are occasionally dispatched to event types classified as *Unknown Rescue* or *Unknown Emergency*, and upon arrival, find nothing to confirm a request for fire/rescue service (e.g., no patient found). Unit officers usually consider this a "nothing found" or "good intent" event.

The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) must provide all relevant information to units dispatched to an *Unknown Rescue* or *Unknown Emergency*. A unit officer who arrives at the dispatched location of an *Unknown Rescue* or *Unknown Emergency* and finds no emergency situation must contact the ECC to report that "nothing was found," and request any additional information from ECC, or a call back to the original 911 caller requesting more information.



# Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

## FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 11-03

February 1, 2011

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Richard Bowers 

SUBJECT: Rapid Intervention Company - Amendment to the *Standard Operating Procedures for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations*

This FCGO amends and supersedes in its entirety Section VII STRUCTURAL FIRE ASSIGNMENT, Section VIII STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING IN AREAS WITHOUT MUNICIPAL WATER SUPPLY, and Section IX OPERATIONS AT HIGH RISE STRUCTURE FIRES (pp. 14 – 37) of MCFRS Policy and Procedure 24-07AMII, *SOPs for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations*, dated 12/1/05. **This FCGO will be effective on April 3, 2011, after a 60-day training period.** All MCFRS personnel must become familiar with, and when appropriate, implement the procedures in this FCGO.

The purpose of this change is to reduce the risk to firefighters by deploying the Rapid Intervention Company (RIC) earlier in an incident. Lessons learned from previous MAYDAY events demonstrate the need to move the RIC to the third-due engine company, as Mayday events typically occur during the first few minutes of an incident.

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**VII. STRUCTURAL FIRE ASSIGNMENT.** The standard dispatch assignment for a structure fire (except for a shed or detached garage) is five engines, two aerial units, one rescue squad, one EMS unit, and four Command Officers. At least two Command Officers must respond on the assignment. All **personnel** must use the procedures below during structure firefighting operations. **Personnel** must not take action until their **Unit Officer** in charge directs them to do so. All drivers who are not specifically assigned to **apparatus** operations will assemble with their **crew**. **Fireground discipline is critical during all incident responses.** In addition to the listed responsibilities, **Unit Officers** must maintain **crew** integrity, ensure that **personnel** and **apparatus** take their assigned positions, and follow this and other applicable policies, including the MCFRS *Incident Command System*. The **IC** may modify these assignments as necessary.

Crews responding on a reduced assignment of two engines and a special service will follow the SOP for the first two engines and the first special service indicated below.

a. **First Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Initiate water supply by laying a supply line from the most suitable hydrant, or begin a split lay. Position the engine on Side A, reserving adequate space for the aerial unit to position. Connect to the Fire Department Connection (standpipe and/or sprinkler system), if so equipped, on or closest to Side A. If the first due engine is required to position elsewhere, this must be reported immediately to all other responding **units** and Command Officers.
2. **Unit Officer.**
  - A. Provide water supply instructions by radio while en route to the incident location.
  - B. On arrival, give reports as required in Section 4.IV. of this SOP.
  - C. Follow the **IDLH** operations provisions of this SOP.
3. **Crew.** Advance a hose line to the fire floor and begin fire attack/confinement, with attack line placement to best support the search function.
4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

b. **Second Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Ensure and expand upon the water supply as necessary for the first due engine, by connecting to the hydrant and improving the intake pressure of the first due engine, and/or laying additional supply lines as necessary.
2. **Crew.** Advance a hose line and back up the first due engine.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

c. **Third Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Position as close to the incident as possible without impeding access for other incoming **units** requiring a tactical position. Do not lay any supply lines.
2. **Crew.**
  - A. Report to the **IC** and advise that you are the **RIC**, unless specifically **ordered** otherwise, and assume the operations of the **RIC**.
  - B. Secure an additional hose line and immediately relieve the **Standby Team** to become the **RIC**. This is usually done face-to-face, but may be done by radio on larger scale incidents.
  - C. Monitor all critical operational talk groups and the FDTA channel.
  - D. Determine the location of the fire and its progression.
  - E. Observe fire conditions, note attack progress, and determine the location of **crews** working in the building.
  - F. Determine the occupancy type and building construction.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics, and any additional **equipment** specific to the **RIC** function.

d. **Fourth Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Initiate water supply by laying a supply line from an unused hydrant, when possible, or begin a split-lay to Side C. Position the unit to reserve adequate space for aerial unit positioning. Connect to the Fire Department Connection (standpipe/sprinkler system), if so equipped, on or closest to Side C.
2. **Unit Officer.**
  - A. Give water supply instructions by radio while en route to the incident location.
  - B. On arrival, give reports in accordance with Section 4.IV. of this SOP.

3. **Crew.** Advance a hose line to floor **above** the fire floor, or to the exposure most threatened by horizontal extension, and initiate operations. Check the basement and the floors below the fire while en route to the floor above.
4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose line, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

e. **Fifth Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Ensure, and as necessary, expand upon the water supply for the fourth due engine by connecting to the hydrant and improving the intake pressure of the fourth due engine, and/or laying additional supply lines as necessary.
2. **Crew.** Report to the IC for assignment; do not engage in any job task until assigned by the IC.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose line, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

f. **First Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side A.
2. **Crew.**
  - A. Perform rapid outside horizontal ventilation coordinated with the fire attack.
  - B. If necessary, perform initial forcible entry for the first due engine.
  - C. Provide secondary exit(s) for interior **crews** with ground and/or aerial ladders on buildings more than one story high.
  - D. After completing the duties outlined above, report to the fire floor. Initiate or assist the assigned rescue squad with search and rescue. Begin checking for extension by opening concealed spaces as necessary after the bulk of the fire has been extinguished.
  - E. Support the fire attack by providing lighting, and perform ventilation, overhaul, and salvage operations.

3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

g. **Second Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side C.
2. **Crew.**
  - A. Assist first due aerial unit with outside horizontal ventilation that is coordinated with, and supports, the fire attack plan.
  - B. Perform initial forcible entry as necessary for the fourth due engine.
  - C. Provide secondary exit(s) for interior **crews** with ground and/or aerial ladders for buildings more than one story high.
  - D. Provide vertical ventilation when ordered or approved by the **Incident Commander.**
  - E. After completing the duties outlined above, report to the floor above the fire. Initiate or assist the assigned rescue squad with search and rescue on that floor. Begin checking for extension by opening concealed spaces as necessary after the bulk of the fire has been extinguished.
  - F. Support the fire attack by providing lighting, and performing ventilation, overhaul, and salvage operations.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

h. **Rescue Squad**

1. **Unit.** Position to avoid impeding responding or departing apparatus.
2. **Unit Officer.** Report to the **IC** or division/group supervisor as soon as the primary and all subsequent secondary searches are completed and utilities are controlled.
3. **Crew.** Ensure completion of a systematic search of the building; control the building's utilities and assist, in coordination with the assigned aerial units, with ventilation, overhaul, and salvage activities.

4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

i. **Ambulance or ALS Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side A, ensuring that the vehicle can leave the fireground, if necessary. The vehicle does not have to be included in the aid station.
2. **Crew.** Establish an aid station on Side A.
3. **Equipment.** Includes portable radios, hand lights, cot, oxygen equipment, first aid kit, a burn kit, and ALS **equipment** (ALS Unit only). If the **crew** is used as a **Standby Team**, all **personnel** must wear full **PPE** and **SCBAs**.

j. **First Arriving Command Officer**

1. **Unit.** Normally, position on Side A, allowing space for the engine, aerial **unit**, and rescue squad to implement tactical operations.
2. **Officer.** Establish a Command Post and assume Command of the incident scene, in accordance with Section 4.VI. of this SOP and the MCFRS *Incident Command System*.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest and have immediate access to full **PPE** and **SCBA**, a portable radio and a hand light.

k. **Additional Command Officers**

1. **Unit.** Position vehicles to allow access of responding engines, aerial **units**, and rescue squads.
2. **Officer.** Report to the IC for assignment.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest and have immediate access to full **PPE** and **SCBA**, a portable radio and a hand light.

**VIII. STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTING IN AREAS WITHOUT MUNICIPAL WATER SUPPLY.** The standard dispatch for a structure fire in a non-hydranted area is five engines, two aerial **units**, one rescue squad, three tankers, one EMS **unit**, and four Command Officers. Three Command Officers is the minimum Command Officer response. This Section of the SOP establishes a procedure for structure firefighting in areas of the County that lack fire hydrants close to the

fire. The procedure is a modification of the SOP for hydranted areas, and emphasizes supporting the fire attack of the initial arriving engine, with an uninterrupted, expandable water supply using rural water supply tactics.

**NOTE:** Units arriving on a scene where large diameter hose (LDH) is deployed should move the LDH to the side of the road, driveway, etc., before charging the line.

a. **First Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Initiate the water supply process by laying a supply line connected to the **unit's** clappered Siamese. This hose lay must begin at the driveway entrance to the involved structure, or from the nearest area suitable for dump site operations. The location of this site must be identified in the **unit's** on-scene report.
2. **Unit Officer.**
  - A. Determine and advise whether a tanker shuttle or relay operation will be implemented for the water supply. Advise the water source for the shuttle or relay operation so the fifth due engine can position there and establish a fill site or relay water source.

**NOTE:** If the water source is accessible and located within 3000 feet of the first engine's Siamese, a relay operation is the preferred water supply option.
  - B. Direct other incoming engines and tankers to support the initial attack until a water shuttle or water relay is developed.
  - C. On arrival, give reports in accordance with Section 4.IV. of this SOP.
  - D. All firefighting operations must adhere to the requirements of Section 4.I. of this SOP.
3. **Crew.** Advance a hand line to the fire floor and begin fire attack/confinement, with attack line placement to best support the search function.
4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

b. **Second Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Position the engine close to the attack engine, and supply tank water to the attack engine as necessary. Leave clear access to the driveway for the first arriving tanker and aerial **unit**.

**NOTE:** As the second due engine positions, the **crew** may need to move the supply line(s) from the middle of the road or driveway.

1. **Unit Officer.** Quickly assess the availability of a water source (e.g., a swimming pool or a pond near the involved structure).
2. **Crew.** Advance a hose line and back up the first due engine.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

c. **Third Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Locate in an uncommitted position as close to the incident as possible, without impeding other apparatus for planned water supply operations. The **unit** may be directed to:
  - A. operate as a draft engine to support the initial attack from a static water source; or
  - B. begin laying supply lines for water relay operations, as directed.
2. **Driver.** Be prepared to pump water to the clappered Siamese to support the attack engine, and stand by for instructions from the Water Supply Group Officer (WSGO). Be prepared to assist the driver of the fourth due engine to create a dump site.
3. **Crew.**
  - A. Report to the **IC** and advise that you are the **RIC**; unless specifically ordered otherwise, assume the operations of the **RIC**.
  - B. Secure an additional hose line and immediately relieve the **Standby Team** to become the **RIC**. This is usually done face-to-face, but may be done by radio on larger scale incidents.
  - C. Monitor all critical operational talk groups and the FDTA channel.
  - D. Determine the location of the fire and its progression.

E. Observe fire conditions, note attack progress, and determine the location of **crews** working in the building.

F. Determine the occupancy type and building construction.

4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics, and any additional equipment specific to the **RIC** function.

d. **Fourth Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Position the engine to allow the first tanker and the first aerial **unit** to position close to the structure, while best positioning either for dump site, or relay operations, as directed.

A. **For Dump Site Operations:** Position the unit to draft from folding tank(s). This position must allow the engine to draft from the folding tanks, and enable the tankers to fill the folding tanks, preferably using their side dumps.

Connect to the clappered Siamese and leave the supply line uncharged until ordered to charge. Try to enable first due tanker and aerial **unit** to position close to the structure before charging the supply line.

B. **For Relay Operations:** Position as necessary to initiate the relay.

2. **Unit Officer.** Place into operation the initial dump site operations, or perform relay operations.

3. **Crew.** Manage dump site operations.

4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

e. **Fifth Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Establish the first fill site; do not respond directly to the scene.

2. **Unit Officer.** Place into operation the initial fill site, or relay water source as identified.

3. **Crew.** For fill site operations, set up at least two LDH supply lines with quarter-turn ball valves attached, capable of filling tankers at a minimum rate of 500 GPM each. Maintain fill site operations, and establish water supply connections for incoming **apparatus**.

4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

f. **First Due (Nurse) Tanker**

1. **Unit.** If staffing permits, drop off portable tank at the end of the driveway or near the clapped Siamese. Position the **unit** near the first due engine and connect the supply line to the tanker, and from the tanker to the first arriving engine. Supply the first due engine with tank water, and transition to supplying water from the dump site or relay source as one becomes established. Try to maintain a full tank of water in case the supply is interrupted
2. **Crew.** Assist the driver with water supply operations.

g. **Second Due Tanker**

1. **Unit.** The primary responsibility for this **unit** is to support the fire attack by immediately pumping the Siamese, and continuing to pump the Siamese until it runs out of water.

The tanker will leave its folding tank and all appropriate appliances to be used in developing dump site operations at the dump site.

If the fourth engine is not in a position to set up the dump site, the second tanker should supply the Siamese from a position that allows the fourth engine and third tanker access to the dump site.

2. **Crew.** Assist the driver with water supply operations.

h. **Third Due Tanker**

1. **Unit.** Support the fire attack by pumping the Siamese until the dump site is operating.

If the fourth due engine is in position to begin developing the dump site, the third due tanker should position to set up the folding tank and dump enough water for the fourth due engine to achieve a draft. If the fourth due engine is successful in drafting, then transition from tankers supplying the Siamese, to the fourth due engine supplying the Siamese from folding tanks. When the fourth due engine is successfully drafting, dump remaining water into the folding tank and move to the fill site.

If in relay operations, support the Siamese until the relay is in service.

2. **Crew.** Assist the driver with water supply operations.

i. **First Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side A, or in the area of highest priority to accomplish rescue operations. Provide roof access/egress, or deploy a defensive, elevated stream. If this location impedes incoming water supply units, position the unit elsewhere, e.g., in an adjoining driveway.
2. **Crew.** Perform duties outlined in Section 4.VII.f. of this SOP.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

j. **Second Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on the main road, or in a location that does not impede the access/egress of tankers.
2. **Crew.** Perform duties outlined in Section 4.VII.g. of this SOP.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

k. **Rescue Squad**

1. **Unit.** Position on the main road, or in a location that does not impede the access/egress of tankers.
2. **Crew.** Perform duties outlined in Section 4.VII.h. of this SOP.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

l. **Ambulance or ALS Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position at the incident scene to facilitate the positioning of other **apparatus**, assuring that the vehicle can leave the fireground if necessary. The vehicle does not have to be included in the aid station.
2. **Crew.** Establish an aid station on Side A.
3. **Equipment.** Includes portable radios, hand lights, cot, oxygen **equipment**, first aid kit, a burn kit, and ALS **equipment** (ALS Unit only). If the crew is used as a **Standby Team**, all personnel must wear full **PPE** and **SCBA**.

m. **First Arriving Command Officer**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side A, allowing space for the first and second due engine, tanker, and aerial unit to implement tactical operations.
2. **Officer.** Establish a Command Post and assume Command of the incident scene, in accordance with Section 4.V. of this SOP and the MCFRS *Incident Command System*. Once a formal Command Post has been established, assign a Water Supply Group Supervisor as soon as possible.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest and have immediate access to full PPE and SCBA, a portable radio and a hand light.

n. **Water Supply Group Supervisor**

1. **Officer.** Locate available water sources and position to coordinate water supply operations. The Water Supply Group should operate on a separate tactical Talkgroup assigned by the IC.
2. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest and have immediate access to full PPE and SCBA, a portable radio, and a hand light.

o. **Water Supply Task Force**

Upon the indication of a working structure fire in a non-hydranted area, or at the request of the IC, ECC will dispatch a Water Supply Task Force consisting of one additional engine and three additional tankers.

p. **Water Supply Task Force Engine**

1. **Unit.** Report to and develop the second designated fill site location as directed by the WSGO.
2. **Crew.** Set up at least two LDH supply lines with quarter-turn ball valves attached, capable of filling tankers at a minimum rate of 500 GPM each. Maintain the fill site operation; establish water supply connections for incoming apparatus.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate PPE for fill site operations.

q. **First Due Tanker from Water Supply Task Force**

1. **Unit.** Support the fire attack by supplying the clappered Siamese, or by dumping into the portable tanks at the direction of the WSGO. Drop off the portable tank, water, and appliances as directed; proceed to the fill site.
2. **Crew.** Assist the driver with water supply operations.

- r. **Second Due Tanker from Water Supply Task Force**
  - 1. **Unit.** Support the fire attack by supplying the clappered Siamese, or by dumping into the portable tanks at the direction of the WSGO. Drop off the portable tank, water, and appliances as directed; proceed to the fill site.
  - 2. **Crew.** Assist the driver with water supply operations.
  
- s. **Third Due Tanker from Water Supply Task Force**
  - 1. **Unit.** Support the fire attack by supplying the clappered Siamese, or by dumping into the portable tanks at the direction of the WSGO. Drop off the portable tank, water, and appliances as directed; proceed to the fill site.
  - 2. **Crew.** Assist the driver with water supply operations.

**IX. OPERATIONS AT HIGH RISE BUILDING INCIDENTS (Generally follow the same SOPS as Section VII., Structure Fire Assignment.)** This Section directs operational activities on the scene of emergency incidents in **high rise structures**. The standard dispatch is five engines, three aerial **units**, one rescue squad, one EMS **unit**, and four Command Officers. At least two Command Officers must respond on the assignment. All **personnel** must use the procedures below when responding to a **high rise structure** fire.

**DIVISION/GROUPS IN HIGH RISE BUILDING INCIDENTS.** In addition to the divisions/groups normally used in the MCFRS *Incident Command System*, the division/groups below may be useful during **high rise building** incidents. The **IC** should request additional **units** to adequately support the suppression/emergency operation, and to cover the required division/groups and support functions.

- a. **Building Access/Use of Knox Box.** If a Knox Box is available, **unit personnel** will use the access key to open it, remove one set of keys, and re-lock the Knox Box.
  - 1. Access keys must not be left in the Knox Box, nor may the Knox Box be left open under any circumstances.
  - 2. One set of keys must remain available for the Lobby Control Group.
  - 3. The keys are color coded and labeled:
 

Main Entrance Doors	Green Tag
Fire Control Room	Blue Tag
Elevator Control	Red Tag
Boiler/HVAC Control Room	Yellow Tag
Other keys (roof, et. al.)	Black-labeled Tag

4. The first arriving **unit officer** must ensure that all keys have been returned to the Knox Box at the conclusion of the incident.
- b. **Stairways.** Identify, establish, and maintain stairways as safe corridors of operation to be used as main evacuation/escape routes and fire attack points. When using stairways as fire attack points, consider evacuating the upper floors by a different stairway.
1. The first arriving engine company will designate the stairway to be used for fire attack and advise the **Incident Commander**.
  2. The **IC** should immediately try to identify and communicate both the preferred evacuation route, and the evacuation shelter location.
- c. **Location Unknown Procedure.** If the location of the fire/emergency is unknown or uncertain, the first arriving engine and special service will use the stairway to check the building, beginning on the lowest floor and moving upward. **PERSONNEL MUST NOT USE ELEVATORS UNDER THIS CONDITION.**
- d. **Elevator Procedures.** Avoid the use of elevators whenever possible. Individuals who are not emergency service providers must not ride elevators under actual or potential fire conditions. **Personnel** must:
1. note the location of the nearest stairwell before entering an elevator;
  2. note the location and method of operation of the emergency stop switch, if available;
  3. wear full **PPE** and **SCBAs** with the cylinder valve open and face pieces on, with the regulator in hand for rapid connection;
  4. connect the regulator if the elevator car fails to stop at the midway point; and
  5. confine the operation of the elevator to upper floors between entry level(s) and at least two floors below the fire, until the fire is under control and the **IC** has suspended this restriction.
- e. Elevators must not be used in Independent Service mode under fire conditions. **FIRE AND RESCUE PERSONNEL MUST NOT USE ELEVATORS:**
1. if fire, smoke, or heat is detected in the hoist way or elevator shaft or reported in the elevator machine room;
  2. if Fireman's Service is unavailable, or cannot be confirmed as operating reliably; or

3. on any incident that is located or reported on or below the fifth floor.
- f. When Fireman's Service mode is confirmed to be usable, the **unit officer** must:
1. check the shaft for evidence of fire, smoke, or heat before boarding the elevator;
  2. ensure the elevator is not overcrowded;
  3. ensure that at least one **crew** member has a portable radio and forcible entry tools; and
  4. stop the elevator car at a point midway to test the Fireman's Service operation, check orientation, and re-check the shaft for fire, smoke, or heat.
- g. **Ventilation Procedures.** The ventilation procedures below apply to **personnel** during **high rise building** incidents.
1. Immediately ventilate stairwells that are charged with smoke, using hatches and bulkhead doors. Initially try to ventilate all stairwells; then pressurize those stairwells used for occupant evacuation.
  2. Use smoke ejectors, blowers, and positive pressure units to channel smoke and pressurize stairwells. Consider establishing a Ventilation Group, and place that Group on a separate radio talk group when appropriate.
  3. Until specific operational information on the air handling systems and their effects on the smoke and fire is known, the **IC** should consider shutting down the air handling systems to curtail the spread of fire, smoke, and toxic gases throughout the building. When possible, the **IC** should consult with the building engineer before shutting down, activating, or reactivating any portion of this system.
  4. Notify all Division and Group supervisors before reactivating the system, and carefully monitor the air and smoke within the building. Monitor Interior Staging areas or other operational areas inside the building for possible carbon monoxide accumulation.
  5. Recognize that breaking glass to ventilate the upper floors of a **high rise building** is extremely dangerous, and should be done only as a last resort, preferably after warning is given.

- h. **Lobby Control Group.** At high rise building fires, this Group is responsible for:
1. securing the lobby area, and ensuring that all elevators are returned to the lobby area or the designated floor; and
  2. acquiring information needed by the IC, including: floor plans and approved evacuation plans; type of occupancy; a list of disabled occupants, their names and phone numbers, for building engineers and building management; information concerning the HVAC, utilities, mechanical rooms, and fire pumps; any unusual conditions; and items including master keys, window keys, and elevator keys, etc.
- i. **Interior Staging Group.** At all high rise building fires, the IC should establish an Interior Staging Group two or more floors below the fire floor, but as close to the fire floor as conditions permit.
1. Identify the Interior Staging Group by its floor location. E.g., staging on the seventh floor would be known as "Staging 7."
  2. This Group may be divided into two areas -- one to provide logistical support (e.g., equipment, SCBA re-supply) -- and the other for **personnel** staging.
  3. If an Operations Section is established, the Section Chief may operate from or near this location.
  4. A Stairwell Support company may be established to move required equipment up/down the building. One firefighter should be placed at two floor intervals, and each firefighter should carry **equipment** not more than two floors. If activated, this function will report to the Interior Staging Group Supervisor.
- j. **Fire Control Room.** The IC may assign an officer to the **Fire Control Room** in buildings so equipped. **Personnel** assigned to the **Fire Control Room** are responsible for:
1. establishing telephone communications with division/groups operating in the building;
  2. providing occupants and/or fire and rescue **personnel** with special instructions for evacuating endangered areas via a public address system;
  3. assisting with stairway ventilation and pressurization at the direction of the IC/Ventilation Group;

4. monitoring various annunciator and control panels, and keeping the IC informed; and
5. resetting and silencing alarms as directed by the IC.

k. **First Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Initiate water supply by laying a supply line from the most suitable hydrant, or beginning a split lay. Position the engine on Side A, reserving adequate space for the aerial unit to position. Connect to the Fire Department Connection (standpipe and/or sprinkler system), if so equipped, on or closest to Side A. If the first due engine is required to position elsewhere, this must be reported immediately to all other responding **units** and Command Officers.
2. **Unit Officer.**
  - A. Give water supply instructions by radio while en route to the incident location.
  - B. On arrival, give reports in accordance with Section 4.IV. of this SOP.
  - C. Follow the provisions of this SOP regarding **IDLH** operations.
3. **Crew.** Advance a hose line to the fire floor and begin rescue, fire attack, confinement, or exposure protection, as appropriate. The driver should pressurize the standpipe and/or sprinkler systems.
4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

l. **Second Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Ensure and expand upon the water supply as necessary for the first due engine, by connecting to the hydrant and improving the intake pressure of the first due engine, and/or laying additional supply lines as necessary.
2. **Crew.** Advance a hose line and back up the first due engine.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

m. **Third Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Position as close to the incident as possible without impeding access for other incoming units requiring a tactical position. Do not lay any supply lines.
2. **Crew.**
  - A. Report to the **IC** and advise that you are the **RIC**, unless specifically **ordered** otherwise, and assume the operations of the **RIC**.
  - B. Secure an additional hose line and immediately relieve the **Standby Team** to become the **RIC**. This is usually done face-to-face, but may be done by radio on larger scale incidents.
  - C. Monitor all critical operational talk groups and the FDTA channel.
  - D. Determine the location of the fire and its progression.
  - E. Observe fire conditions, note attack progress, and determine the location of **crews** working in the building.
  - F. Determine the occupancy type and building construction.
  - G. Usually, locate on the floor below the fire floor.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics, and any additional **equipment** specific to the **RIC** function.

n. **Fourth Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Initiate water supply by laying a supply line from an unused hydrant, when possible, or beginning a split-lay to Side C. Position the unit to reserve adequate space for aerial **unit** positioning. Connect to the Fire Department Connection (standpipe/sprinkler system), if so equipped, on or closest to Side C.
2. **Unit Officer.**
  - A. Give water supply instructions by radio while en route to the incident location.
  - B. On arrival, give reports in accordance with Section 4.IV. of this SOP.

3. **Crew.** Advance a hose line to floor **above** the fire floor or to the exposure most threatened by horizontal extension, and initiate operations.
4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

o. **Fifth Due Engine**

1. **Unit.** Ensure, and as necessary, expand upon the water supply for the fourth due engine by connecting to the hydrant and improving the intake pressure of the fourth due engine, and/or laying additional supply lines as necessary.
2. **Crew.** Go to the lobby and establish the Lobby Control Group. Secure a set of building keys from the Knox Box.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, hose lines, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

p. **First Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side A.
2. **Crew.**
  - A. Perform rapid outside horizontal ventilation coordinated with the fire attack.
  - B. If necessary, perform initial forcible entry for the first due engine.
  - C. Provide secondary exit(s) for interior **crews** with ground and/or aerial ladders on buildings more than one story high.
  - D. After completing the duties outlined above, report to the fire floor. Initiate or assist the assigned rescue squad with search and rescue. Begin checking for extension by opening concealed spaces as necessary after the bulk of the fire has been extinguished as needed.
  - E. Support the fire attack by providing lighting, and perform ventilation, overhaul, and salvage operations.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

q. **Second Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position on Side C.
2. **Crew.**
  - A. Assist the first due aerial **unit** with outside horizontal ventilation that is coordinated with, and supports the fire attack plan.
  - B. Perform initial forcible entry as necessary for the fourth due engine.
  - C. Provide secondary exit(s) for interior **crews** with ground and/or aerial ladders for buildings more than one story high.
  - D. Provide vertical ventilation when ordered or approved by the **Incident Commander**.
  - E. After completing the duties outlined above, report to the floor above the fire and initiate or assist the assigned rescue squad with search and rescue on that floor. Begin checking for extension by opening concealed spaces as necessary after the bulk of the fire has been extinguished as needed.
  - F. Support the fire attack by providing lighting, and perform ventilation, overhaul, and salvage operations.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

r. **Third Due Aerial Unit**

1. **Unit.** Position to avoid impeding responding or departing **apparatus**.
2. **Crew.** Go to top floor (or roof) of the building and immediately ventilate all stairwells charged with smoke. Coordinate all ventilation efforts with the IC or Ventilation Group Supervisor, as appropriate.
3. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools, and other **equipment** appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

s. **Rescue Squad**

1. **Unit.** Position to avoid impeding responding or departing apparatus.
2. **Unit Officer.** Report to the IC as soon as the primary and all subsequent secondary searches are completed and utilities are controlled.
3. **Crew.** Ensure the completion of a systematic search of the building, control the building's utilities, and, in coordination with the assigned aerial units, assist with the ventilation, overhaul, and salvage activities.
4. **Equipment.** Includes SCBA, portable radios, hand lights, thermal imaging camera, tools and other equipment appropriate for the structure's construction and operational tactics.

t. **Ambulance or MICU**

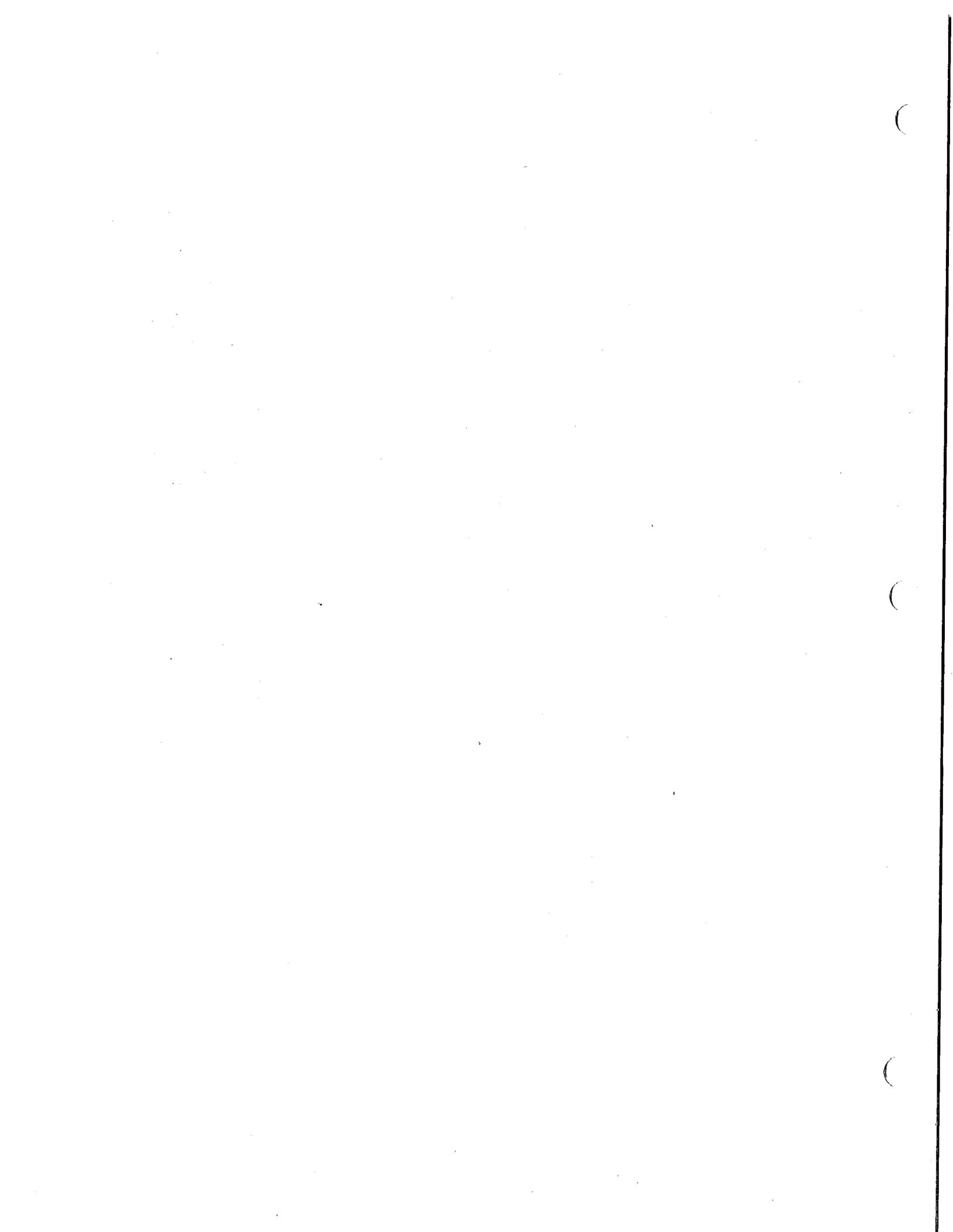
1. **Unit.** Position on Side A, ensuring that the vehicle can leave the fire ground if necessary. The vehicle does not have to be included in the aid station.
2. **Crew.** Establish an aid station on Side A.
3. **Equipment.** Includes portable radios, cot, oxygen equipment, first aid kit, a burn kit, and ALS equipment (ALS Unit only). If the crew is used as a Standby Team, all personnel must wear full PPE and SCBA, and carry hand lights.

u. **First Arriving Command Officer**

1. **Unit.** Normally, position on Side A, allowing space for the engine, aerial unit, and rescue squad to implement tactical operations.
2. **Officer.** Establish a Command Post and assume Command of the incident scene, in accordance with Section 4.VI. of this SOP, and the MCFRS *Incident Command System*.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest, and have immediate access to full PPE and SCBA, a portable radio and a hand light.

v. **Additional Command Officers**

1. **Unit.** Position vehicles to allow access of responding engines, aerial units, and rescue squads.
2. **Officer.** Report to the IC for assignment.
3. **Equipment.** Wear appropriate identifier vest and have immediate access to full PPE and SCBA, a portable radio and a hand light.



# Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

## FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 11-04

February 1, 2011

**TO:** All MCFRS Personnel

**FROM:** Fire Chief Richard Bowers 

**SUBJECT:** Creation of an All Hazards MAYDAY Procedure - Amendment to the *Standard Operating Procedures for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations*

This FCGO amends and supersedes in its entirety, Section III., **MAYDAY** (pp. 8 – 11) of MCFRS Policy and Procedure 24-07AMII, **SOP for Safe Structural Firefighting Operations**, dated 12/1/05. **This FCGO will be effective on April 3, 2011, after a 60-day training period.** All MCFRS personnel must become familiar with, and when appropriate, implement the procedures in this FCGO.

The purpose of this amendment is to emphasize that a MAYDAY can occur at any type of incident. Therefore, an All-Hazards MAYDAY Procedure is warranted. This new procedure incorporates lessons learned from previous MCFRS Mayday incidents.

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**III. MAYDAY.** A MAYDAY is an emergency distress signal indicating that one or more fire/rescue personnel need emergency assistance to escape an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) atmosphere, or another life threatening situation.

This FCGO describes: a. Conditions that warrant a MAYDAY; b. Procedures for declaring a MAYDAY; and c. Incident Commander Actions during a MAYDAY.

a. **Conditions that Warrant a MAYDAY**

All personnel must be able to recognize situations where they, their crew, or another crew may be in imminent danger. Personnel must declare a MAYDAY when they are involved in, or witness other personnel involved in distress, including any of the conditions below.

1. A crew member has fallen through a roof or floor;

2. A crew member has been caught in a catastrophic event such as a flashover, explosion, backdraft, or collapse;
3. A crew member has become entangled, trapped, pinned, stuck, or separated from their crew in an IDLH atmosphere;
4. A crew member may be disoriented, missing, lost, or off a hose line or tag line in a large/open area with limited visibility;
5. A crew member's primary exit is blocked by fire or structural collapse and an alternate exit is not immediately available;
6. A crew member's low air alert activates and an immediate exit is not available; or
7. Any other situation when the life safety of a crew or a crew member may be immediately at risk.

b. **Procedures for Calling a MAYDAY**

1. The crew member(s) declaring a MAYDAY must immediately notify the Incident Commander by:
  - A. depressing the Emergency Button (EB) to activate the radio's ruthless preemption feature (enabling that radio to override all other voice transmissions on a trunked Talkgroup); and
  - B. verbally transmitting on the assigned tactical Talkgroup "**MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY**," followed by their unit number, their location, the nature of the MAYDAY, and their resource needs.
2. The acronym **LUNAR** may be used as a memory aid for transmitting critical MAYDAY information to the Incident Commander. **LUNAR** stands for:
  - L** – Location
  - U** – Unit
  - N** – Name
  - A** – Assignment and air supply
  - R** – Resources needed
3. After successfully transmitting the MAYDAY, crew member(s) must activate their Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) device(s) to assist rescue crews in finding their location.
4. When the crew member cannot successfully transmit a MAYDAY on a trunked Talkgroup, the two additional actions below may be taken.

- A. Depress the EB and transmit the MAYDAY on the NOVEMBER Talkgroup to reach the closest Battalion Chief's active Vehicle Repeater System (VRS). If the closest Battalion Chief's VRS is in STANDBY mode, the EB signal will activate the VRS.
- B. Transmit the MAYDAY on the OSCAR Talkgroup. The Incident Commander may not be able to receive the MAYDAY on OSCAR Talkgroup, so other units on the scene must be prepared to relay the MAYDAY message to the Incident Commander. By pressing the PTT and then the EB, a distinct warble tone is transmitted over the OSCAR Talkgroup to alert listeners of the MAYDAY; however, ruthless preemption and transmitting the radio ID does not work on the OSCAR Talkgroup. **For these reasons, all portable radios must be kept in the programmed SCAN mode, and the Incident Commander, Rapid Intervention Company (RIC), and Rapid Intervention Group (RIG) must monitor the OSCAR Talkgroup.**

5. When an EB is activated with no MAYDAY voice transmission, the ECC must notify the Incident Commander of the EB activation. The Incident Commander must attempt to verbally contact the crew member with an activated EB. If no response follows two requests, the Incident Commander must declare a MAYDAY.
6. The Incident Commander must declare a MAYDAY for any crew or crew member that is unaccounted for during a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) after two requests.

c. **Command Actions During a MAYDAY**

1. Upon receiving a MAYDAY, the Incident Commander must acknowledge the MAYDAY, and then declare radio silence on all appropriate tactical Talkgroups in use on the incident.
2. All units must continue to conduct their tactical assignments until the Incident Commander instructs them otherwise, with due consideration for the existence of an active MAYDAY.
3. The Incident Commander must attempt to determine the exact location of MAYDAY crew members, the nature of the MAYDAY, and the resources needed to conduct rescue operations.
4. The Incident Commander must direct the Stand-By Team, the RIC, or the RIG to intervene and conduct rescue operations. The Incident Commander may reassign any units near the MAYDAY crew members to assist in rescue operations.

5. The Incident Commander may request units not directly involved in the MAYDAY to switch to an alternate tactical Talkgroup, if the command team has adequate personnel and voice radios to manage operations on multiple Talkgroups. If the Incident Commander instructs it to do so, ECC must transmit an Alert Tone (CentraCom Tone #1), and then announce the alternate tactical Talkgroup.
6. The Incident Commander must ensure a PAR is rapidly conducted when a MAYDAY has been declared, beginning with the units in the greatest danger. Any crew or crew member not accounted for during the PAR must be considered an additional MAYDAY.
7. When the MAYDAY situation has been stabilized and all operations return to normal, the Incident Commander must transmit a "MAYDAY ALL CLEAR" announcement.
8. The Incident Commander must conduct and document a Post-Incident Analysis for the MAYDAY Incident, in accordance with MCFRS Policy and Procedure # 20-02, *Incident Command System, Attachment – Post Incident Analysis*.

# Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

## DIVISION OF OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

**NUMBER: 10-15**

November 3, 2010

**TO:** All Operations Division Personnel

**FROM:** Division Chief Steve Lohr 

**SUBJECT:** Guidelines for the Use of All-Wheel Drive Pumpers, Brush Trucks, and ATVs

The purpose of this Directive is to provide guidelines regarding the appropriate use of all-wheel drive (AWD) pumpers, brush trucks, and ATVs for off-road incidents. Demand for all-wheel drive vehicles typically occurs off paved roads, or on trails, tow-paths, or other areas where access may be unsuitable for heavy vehicles that are designed to be used on paved roads. Also, AWD vehicles often are used during various types of stormy weather, including snow, ice, high water, and other inclement weather events.

For several reasons, it is rarely appropriate to take a structural pumper, tanker, or aerial off a hard-surfaced road. First and foremost, these units are too heavy; they are equipped with highway tread tires, and have low ground clearance. They lose traction when they are inappropriately deployed off hard-surfaced roads; become disabled and are unnecessarily damaged; and pumpers leak water under the unit while they are pumping, further softening the ground.

Some LFRDs and Station Officers have provided specific guidelines regarding deploying resources that are not available in every station. ECC has problems with these dispatches, since CAD call types and response plans are generic, and *cannot* be individualized by station. Station Officers become frustrated because the structural pumper is *always* recommended in CAD, and is dispatched even though a unit that is designed and built for off-road use may be available and is considered a better choice. As a result, many company officers choose to take only the apparatus as *dispatched*. However, ECC *does support* the post-dispatch deployment of AWD assets as a station-level decision. To facilitate these decisions, on-duty station officers must consider the "best practice" guidelines offered below.

1. Take or request an AWD vehicle for fires and rescues to *known locations*, where you expect crews will need to leave the roadway by a distance greater than any reasonable "made-up" supply or attack line. These are usually brush, field, hay bales, or other vegetation fires; debris or illegal fires in remote locations; and EMS incidents where patient(s) are likely to be transported a distance greater than crews can be expected to carry someone on a stretcher.
2. The AWD drive pumpers available at FS09, FS13, FS14, and FS17 may *replace* the structural pumper, *or may be added to response plans* at the discretion of the company officer or Incident Commander, as needed. *ECC cannot modify response plans in CAD before dispatch, but must be notified, and will manually adjust the units assigned to the incident.*
3. Personnel may take structural pumpers off road **only** if the risk/benefit analysis requires that action. In many locations, the structural pumper may be the *only* resource available and *should* respond. However, this does not mean that personnel should *inappropriately* take it off-road when other, *more suitable resources are available*. If this occurs, the unit officer has several alternatives:
  - a. stretching a line(s) to the fire from the hard-surface road, if possible;
  - b. requesting additional resources to mitigate the incident; or
  - c. taking an AWD asset *in addition to, or in place of* the structural pumper, if your station houses one.

Station Officers and LFRD Chiefs must ensure that their respective personnel are properly trained and certified to operate the AWD units assigned to their station. To facilitate the use of the appropriate apparatus where an alternative is available, *all structural pumper drivers should be cross-trained on the available AWD assets in their respective stations. Also, FFIIIs and FFIIIIs who meet minimum experience and qualifications should be trained on light duty brush trucks where possible.*

Using off-road vehicles when appropriate will reduce the occurrence of damage to units that are *not designed* for off-road function, and ensure that incidents are mitigated as efficiently as possible.

Please refer any specific training questions to the PSTA Driver Training Coordinator.

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

**FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER**

**NUMBER: 09-02**

February 23, 2009

**TO:** All MCFRS Personnel

**FROM:** Interim Fire Chief Richard R. Bowers



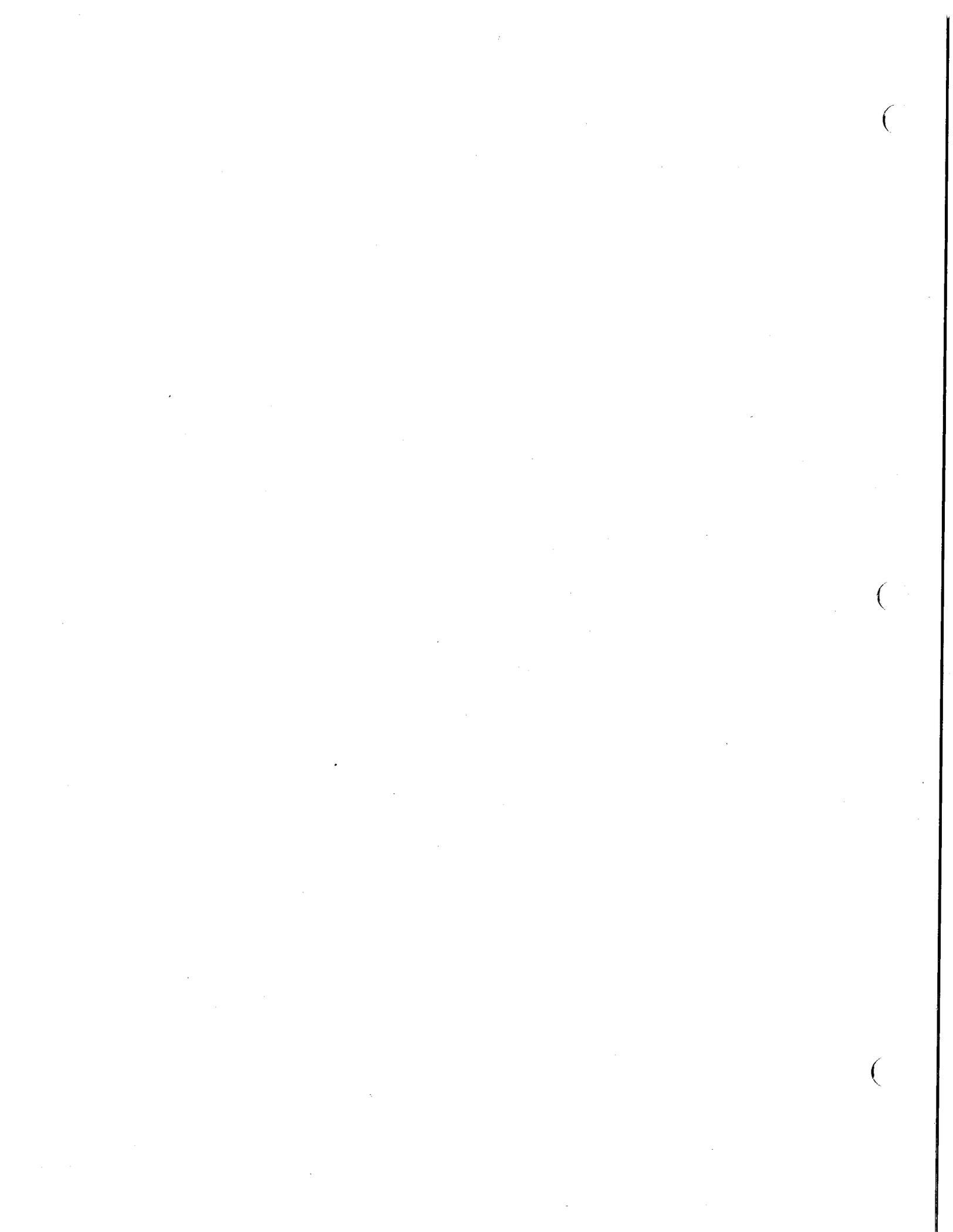
**SUBJECT:** Traffic Safety Vest

This FCGO amends MCFRS Policy 26-07AM entitled *Use and Wearing of Traffic Safety Vests during Incidents on Arterials, Highways, and Streets*, dated June 1, 2005.

The Federal Highway Administration has issued new Regulation Number 23 CFR 634, effective November 24, 2008, requiring the use of ANSI/ISEA compliant high-visibility safety vests on Federal-aid highways. In order to comply with this new regulation, all MCFRS personnel **must** wear an ANSI/ISEA 107-2004 Class II or III garment, or the ANSI 207-2006 Public Safety Vest, when exposed to traffic on arterials, highways, or streets. ***The MCFRS structural firefighting coat and EMS PPE do not comply with applicable ANSI or ISEA standards.***

***However, personnel who are engaged in emergency operations that directly expose them to flame, fire, heat, or hazardous materials are exempt from this Safety Vest requirement while MCFRS-approved structural firefighting gear is being worn.***

Please direct any questions to Assistant Chief Michael E. Nelson, Jr., at (240) 777-2219.



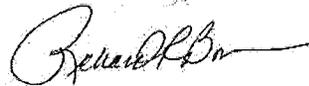
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

**FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER**

**NUMBER: 09-11**

June 12, 2009

**TO:** All MCFRS Personnel  
**FROM:** Fire Chief Richard Bowers  
**SUBJECT:** Third Rail Voltage Testers



This FCGO clarifies MCFRS Policy 24-06AMII *Metro Incident Standard Operating Procedures*, dated January 20, 2003.

**Effective immediately:**

1. **MCFRS personnel must not use the Amprobe voltage tester for testing for the presence or absence of third rail power within the METRO System.**
2. **Remove Amprobe voltage testers from all METRO Bags.**
3. Amprobe voltage testers may still be carried on apparatus and used for purposes other than testing the third rail.

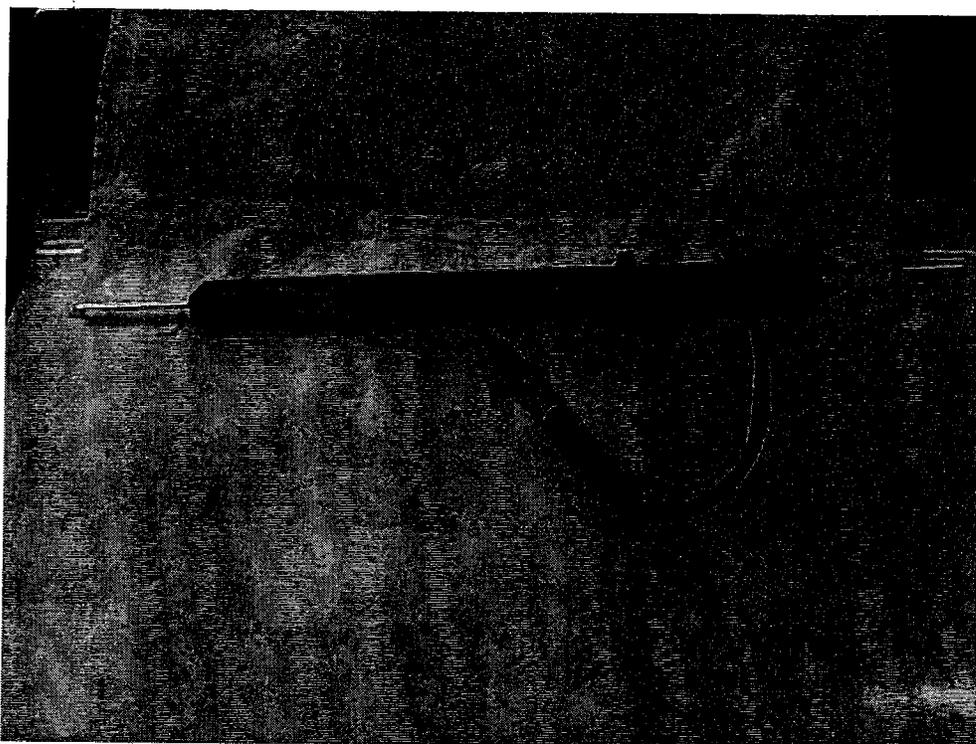
The **only** approved voltage tester for testing the third rail is the Knopp Model 4E2-1 voltage tester ("hot stick" or "BART" tester). This voltage tester is designed **specifically** for detecting high voltage electricity in electrified transit systems. Please refer to MCFRS Safety Bulletin 01-08 and the links below for the manufacturer specifications and operating instructions.

[www.knoppinc.com/Specifications/4E2-1%20Tester%20Bulletin%20No%20717%20Aug%202000.pdf](http://www.knoppinc.com/Specifications/4E2-1%20Tester%20Bulletin%20No%20717%20Aug%202000.pdf)

[www.knoppinc.com/Specifications/Instructionsfor4E2-1VoltageTester.pdf](http://www.knoppinc.com/Specifications/Instructionsfor4E2-1VoltageTester.pdf)

Any future developed voltage tester for use in the WMATA ROW **must** be approved by WMATA, the MCFRS Rail Liaison Officer, and the MCFRS Safety Section.

Knopp Model 4E2-1 Voltage Tester



Please direct any questions to A/C Michael E. Nelson, Jr. at 240/777-2219

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

# FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 09-20

October 20, 2009

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Richard Bowers 

SUBJECT: Dispatch Changes – Polling Units for Events

Beginning **November 1, 2009**, the Emergency Communication Center (ECC) will cease the **routine polling** of units **available on the air (AOR)** before dispatch. ECC defines polling as the "...verbal querying of a unit that is AOR, preceded by an alert tone, to which the unit officer responds with its location." Polling delays the dispatch process at ECC, and the purpose of this *Fire Chief General Order* is to expedite the dispatch process, and reduce overall response times. To achieve this goal, the ECC Section Chief will implement the necessary internal operating procedures at the ECC to reduce dispatch delays associated with polling units. To enact this change, ECC will apply the guidelines, statements, and/or adjustments below.

1. The 800 MHz voice radio system is the primary means of dispatch for MCFRS. Station alerting, personnel paging, MDCs, and other methods of event notification are secondary dispatch systems. All on-duty MCFRS personnel must maintain situational awareness by monitoring the primary dispatch Talk-Group (7-Alpha), and being prepared for a timely response, even when engaging in station training, in-service training, public education details, or similar duties.
2. ECC will *no longer routinely poll* units that are AOR before dispatch. ECC will normally prompt the first due unit(s) that is AOR by saying, "**Attention Unit xx,**" and then dispatch the event. However, *at the discretion of the ECC supervisor*, there may be circumstances when polling units that are AOR is both prudent and acceptable.
3. When dispatching *full assignments*, ECC will **not** poll units that are AOR, and will **not** announce the units due on the event that are AOR. ECC will activate the pre-alert tone and give the pre-alert information, then dispatch the event and give the Initial Vocal Announcement.
4. ECC will announce the box area for all dispatches.

5. When a station watch is required, ECC will not manually alert stations. Station officers must assign personnel to remain at the watch desk to monitor the primary dispatch Talk-Group (7-Alpha) and the ECC telephone line for dispatches. That person must record the address and nature of the event for the dispatched unit(s) for that station, and then alert the crew for response. ECC will normally prompt a station to prepare for recording by saying, "**Attention Station xx**," and then dispatch the event.
6. Unit officers must ensure that *ECC has their correct unit status at all times*. For all units that are AOR, unit officers must accurately status their location on their MDCs, or verbally status them with ECC. When in-service units are moving through multiple response areas (e.g., E712 is moving to the PSTA), unit officers must appropriately status their destination location on their MDCs, or verbally status them with ECC.
7. Medic units and ambulances clearing the hospital should status AOR **only** when they have returned to their assigned battalion.
8. Unit officers are reminded that it is their duty to respond to emergency incidents. If a unit officer hears an event dispatched and knows the unit is *significantly* closer, the unit officer must advise ECC by bidding on the event.
9. Unit officers must refrain from bidding on events by *asking ECC* if they are closer than another unit. When a unit officer bids on an event, *ECC will assume* that the bidding unit officer *knows* where the event is, and *knows* that the unit is significantly closer than the dispatched unit. The unit bidding will be assigned to the event, and the other unit will be placed in service.
10. Unit officers must refrain from bidding on *full assignments*, unless: 1. they will be the first or second due unit at the event; or 2. they are *significantly closer* than a similar dispatched unit; or 3. there is an obvious error in dispatch. Ambulances and medic units **must not** bid on *full assignments*.
11. When a unit officer bids on a *full assignment*, or on any other assignment for which a Chief Officer is responding, the bid request will be referred to the tactical talk group of the response. The first due Battalion Chief or rostered LFRD Chief will determine whether the unit may respond on the incident, and what position it should take in the response order. Other Chief Officers can adjust assignments/approve requests to respond **only** if they are on the scene and have assumed command.

This *Fire Chief's General Order* modifies several sections of FRC Policy 22-03AM, **Communications Manual**, including: *Pre-Alert; Initial Vocal Announcement - Single/Multiple Unit Responses, Non-Full Assignments; Initial Vocal Announcement - Full Assignments; Second Vocal Announcement - All Dispatched Events; and Bidding on an Event.*

If you have questions, call ECC Battalion Chief John Kinsley at (240) 773-7101, or email [john.kinsley@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:john.kinsley@montgomerycountymd.gov).