Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 06-07

August 29, 2006

TO: **All MCFRS Personnel**

FROM: **Fire Chief Thomas W. Carr, Jr.**

SUBJECT: **Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid Responses**

Automatic and Mutual Agreements are both important aspects in delivering quality service to the community. ***Automatic Aid*** refers to agreements that set automatic response assignments for neighboring jurisdictions, based on the ***geographic proximity*** to an event. ***Mutual Aid*** refers to aid that is requested by neighboring jurisdictions based on a ***specific need or service requirement***.

The benefits of both Automatic and Mutual Aid have far-reaching implications that serve Montgomery County, as well as neighboring jurisdictions. As technology changes, common business practices and processes must also be evaluated. Procedures for dispatching Montgomery County units to Automatic Aid events are being considered.

Effective at 0700 hours on September 1, 2006, this Fire Chief's Order authorizes a 6-month pilot program for dispatch and response to requests for Automatic Aid. During this pilot program, MCFRS will evaluate the effectiveness of the process, and its impacts on service within Montgomery County. We will also address all unanticipated issues that this process may create. ***All MCFRS personnel are required to review this General Order, and fully understand the process***. The changes below will be authorized during this evaluation period:

1. ECC will continue to make every effort to dispatch Montgomery County units to Automatic Aid events as soon as the need for that aid is recognized or requested. These requests can be made by direct line, traditional Mutual Aid frequencies, or by monitoring neighboring jurisdictions' dispatch frequencies.

2. Montgomery County events will continue to receive a higher dispatch priority than Automatic or Mutual Aid events.

3. When field personnel receive a request for Automatic Aid by monitoring the neighboring dispatch frequency, they may initiate their response based on that dispatch.

4. *As soon as the response is initiated, the Unit Officer <u>MUST</u> notify the Alpha Dispatcher of this response*.

5. The Alpha Dispatcher will determine if another unrelated event is in Queue for that unit, and if not, acknowledge the response. ECC will then create the event in CAD for the Automatic Aid event, and make the appropriate status changes.

6. Once acknowledged, the Unit Officer may switch to the appropriate talk group for the Mutual Aid jurisdiction, and continue with normal operations.

7. If an event is already pending in the Queue for that unit, the Alpha Dispatcher will advise the Unit Officer to stand by for another event. *A Unit Officer receiving this message MUST IMMEDIATELY disengage the unit's response, remain on the Alpha Talk Group, and remain in service for the event in Queue*.

8. *Once the unit is advised to remain in service, no further discussion will be permitted between the Unit Officer and ECC personnel*.

9. *This response procedure is suspended when ECC operates in Condition Red.*

If additional information is needed, please call Division Chief Philip Guercio at (240) 777-2471.

Issued:	Revised:	Rescinded: