



SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



510.01 RADIO COMMUNICATION 03-19-2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures for effective radio communication and operation of police radio channels.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Sacramento Police Department (SPD) that the use of radio communication systems promotes officer safety, maximizes operational effectiveness, and adheres to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations.

PROCEDURE

A. DEFINITION

1. CONTROL 1 – The radio designator assigned to Communications Division employees staffing a main radio channel during normal operations or a dedicated radio channel during a special detail.
2. RADIO INTERFERENCE – Any noise, bleed-over, or unauthorized transmission disrupting normal transmissions.
3. SIMUL-SELECTING – When more than one channel is selected for disseminating information.

B. GENERAL

1. Employees utilizing the department's radio system shall:
 - a. Adhere to specific channels of operation and identifiers assigned while maintaining brevity of message content.
 - b. Comply with department policies, procedures, and FCC rules.
 - c. Exchange equipment that is malfunctioning and submit all applicable repair forms to appropriate communications employees or vendor personnel.
2. The FCC periodically monitors the department's radio transmissions for violations, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Transmissions of obscene language.
 - b. Failure to identify radio transmissions with assigned radio designators.
3. Employees shall, when broadcasting on any approved radio frequency in the course of their assigned duties:
 - a. Use the department authorized phonetic alphabet to differentiate sound-alike letters, names, street addresses, and vehicles.
 - b. Project a professional demeanor.
 - c. Speak in a distinct and clear manner.
 - d. Use clear and brief speech.
 - e. Comply with regulations established by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the California Department of Justice (DOJ) that aim to protect Criminal Justice Information (CJI) and Personal Identifying Information (PII).
 - (1) California law defines PII as an individual's first name, or first initial, and last name in combination with any one or more specific data elements (see table for combinations that constitute PII).
 - (2) Broadcasting any combination of information from the left and right columns below in a single radio transmission is a violation of FBI CJIS Security Policy §§ 5.10 and 5.13 and CLETS Policies, Practices and Procedure § 1.6.4.
 - (3) To comply with DOJ Information Bulletin CJIS 20-09, anyone broadcasting PII on an unencrypted radio frequency must break up PII into multiple radio transmissions.



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INDIVIDUAL NAME	DATA ELEMENT
Last Name and First Name (Doe, John or John Doe) <i>Or</i> Last Name and First Initial (Doe, J or J. Doe)	Driver license number (DL) Identification card number (ID) Social security number (SSN) Passport number Military ID number Other government-issued document numbers

4. Patrol and Communications Division supervisors shall monitor assigned radio channels to ensure proper radio protocol.
5. The following codes shall substitute for clear speech transmissions of the following circumstances:

Code 1 – Limits self-initiated activity and dispatched calls to priority 1, 2 and 3 incident types.	Code 12 – Units unavailable for priority call.
Code 3 – Emergency response. Red lights and siren.	[REDACTED]
Code 4 – NO further assistance needed (give reason).	Code 93 – Code 3 Cover – Outside Agencies.
Code 6 – Out of the vehicle, available. Voice any calls (give location).	[REDACTED]
Code 7 – Out of service for meal period.	[REDACTED]
Code 8 – Request to transmit on a specific channel.	Code 939 – Ready to copy information confidential to officer.
Code 10 – Return to normal duty.	Code 939B – Communicable Blood Disease caution.
Code 11 – Emergency at the Communications Division.	

C. INTER-AGENCY RADIO COMMUNICATION

1. While utilizing department radios for interagency communication, employees shall:
 - a. Notify the SPD Communications Division prior to switching to an outside agency frequency (e.g., Sacramento Sheriff's Office, Elk Grove Police Department, California Highway Patrol, etc.).
 - b. Monitor the channel before transmitting routine traffic.
 - c. Use plain language when transmitting on an outside agency frequency.
 - d. Preface their unit identifiers with "Sac PD" (e.g., Sac PD Lincoln 10).
2. Inter-agency radio communication shall not replace telephonic contact. Telephonic contact shall be used when possible.
3. Dispatchers shall ensure operating channels and the investigations channel are clear of emergency traffic before transmitting a routine multi-channel broadcast.
4. When it becomes necessary to contact a particular outside agency employee for conversation or information, SPD Communications Division employees shall verify if the employee is on duty and request that the employee switch to the appropriate SPD channel.
5. When officers need tactical or operational assistance from an outside agency, they shall advise their supervisor of the nature of the request.
6. Radio traffic during emergency and tactical situations shall be on the channel of the department from which it originated. These situations include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Pursuits.
 - b. Crimes in progress.
 - c. Supervisor discretion.
 - d. COMM Link/Patch.
7. Use of interagency radio channels shall be limited to mutual law enforcement matters or emergency situations.



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8. For interagency involvement in a non-emergency joint field operation, a supervisor from each agency shall determine which channel will be utilized.

D. RADIO INTERFERENCE

1. During the course of an employee's duties, if radio interference is detected, they shall notify the on-duty supervisor as soon as practical.
2. When a supervisor is advised of or detects radio interference, they shall evaluate whether it creates an officer safety concern or the level of disruption of normal dispatching procedures.
3. If radio interference is an officer safety issue, [REDACTED]

E. LOSS OF RADIO COMMUNICATION

1. During a loss of radio communication lasting longer than five minutes or loss of radio communication during an emergency, dispatchers shall notify employees, via mobile data computer (MDC).
 - a. Field Supervisors shall:
 - (1) Contact their assigned units and obtain their status.
 - (2) Contact the Communications Division, provide their units' status, available resources, and information on pending calls.
 - (3) Assign employees to pending calls.
 - b. Employees shall:
 - (1) Immediately contact their supervisor via telephone.
 - (2) Provide their location, contact number, and stand by for assignments.
 - (3) If the supervisor's phone number is unknown, employees shall obtain the number from either their MDC or the Communications Division.
 - (4) Upon completion of an assignment, employees shall update their supervisor with call information and disposition.
 - (5) Operate in Code 1 status.

F. CHANNELS OF OPERATION

1. The city is geographically divided into seven operational areas, identified as districts, which are further divided, identified as beats.

OPERATIONAL AREA	BEATS
District 1, North	Beats 1A, 1B and 1C
District 2, North	Beats 2A, 2B and 2C
District 3, Central	Beats 3A, 3B and 3M
District 4, South	Beats 4A, 4B and 4C
District 5, South	Beats 5A, 5B and 5C
District 6, East	Beats 6A, 6B and 6C
District 7, East	Beats 7A, 7B and 7C

2. Districts operate on a combination of two to four main operating channels depending on operational needs, call volume and staffing.

OPERATING CHANNEL	RADIO DISPLAY
CHANNEL 1	SP1
CHANNEL 3	SP3
CHANNEL 4	SP4
CHANNEL 6	SP6

3. The Department operates on auxiliary and designated radio channels including, but not limited to, the following:

OPERATING CHANNEL	RADIO DISPLAY	PURPOSE
CHANNEL 2	SP2	CODE 8 channel
CHANNEL 5	SP5	CODE 8 channel
CHANNEL 7	SP7	CODE 8 and special details



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CHANNEL 8	SP8	CODE 8 and special details

4. Specialized units requiring emergency assistance while operating off the four main operating channels, shall switch to the main operating channel closest to their location.
 - a. If that channel is not available, specialized units shall transmit on any available main channel.
 - b. Once the situation is stabilized, specialized units shall switch to the main operating channel closest to their location.
 - c. Specialized units requiring non-emergency assistance, should coordinate with the district supervisor of the geographic area (e.g., execution of search warrants, pick-up of felony suspects, transportation, etc.).
 - d. Specialized units working outside of the city shall utilize the local jurisdiction's main channel to request emergency assistance. Once the situation is stabilized, the unit shall contact the on-duty watch commander and provide an update.
5. Specialized units requiring radio communication for a preplanned operation shall notify the Communications Division prior to the operation to coordinate the radio needs (e.g., parade, operational outline, dedicated channel, tactical dispatcher).

G. CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION (CORI)

1. CORI shall not be requested nor provided over the police radio except when necessary to take imminent enforcement action or during an emergency requiring immediate dissemination.
2. Non-emergency field requests for CORI shall be directed to the Records Division and shall be:
 - a. Made in person, by telephone, or by sending an email to the Records Supervisors group.
 - b. Provided after noting the requesting employee's badge number and reason for the request.
 - c. Provided from the Records Division in person, by telephone, or via the Versadex® V-mail system.

H. SENSITIVE INFORMATION

1. Sensitive information shall not be transmitted over the radio to units except when necessary to take imminent enforcement action or during an emergency requiring immediate dissemination. Employees needing sensitive information should telephone the Communications Division or use an MDC to obtain the information. The following are examples of sensitive information:
 - a. The name of any sex crime victim.
 - (1) If the victim is within a medical facility, the name of a doctor or nurse may be transmitted to enable the responding unit to locate the victim.
 - b. The name and address of the suspect in an attempt pickup when officers are either enroute to or on scene.
 - (1) If the officer on scene of the call requests the name and address information be transmitted, then dispatch should comply and note the request on the incident.
 - (2) If another unit requests the information, only voice where they may obtain the information.
 - c. Any information regarding incident action plans or directed patrols with confidential information (e.g., unmarked surveillance, undercover officers, etc.).
 - d. The full names, addresses, or phone numbers of SPD employees, outside law enforcement agency employees, or fire department employees.
 - (1) Employees requesting the name of an employee entering an incident, the dispatcher shall verbalize the employee's identifier or badge number.
 - e. Premise histories containing confidential information.
 - f. Information regarding communicable diseases (939B).
 - g. Any caller's name, address, or phone number.

I. MULTI-CHANNEL BROADCASTS

1. The dispatcher may select any combination of the main operating radio channels, auxiliary radio channels, and hotline for disseminating information of major occurrences, as received, or upon the request of the district supervisor.
2. If officers have information that requires dissemination on more than one channel, the request shall be made by using the following multi-channel broadcast terms:



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- a. Zone Broadcast – Transmitted on at least one and up to four main operating channels, any additional main operating channels, investigations channel as necessary, and hot line.
- b. Division Broadcast – Transmitted on any two or more main operating channels and investigations channel as necessary.
- c. Unit Broadcast – Transmitted on main operating channel.

J. EMERGENCY IN PROGRESS (EIP) SIGNAL SYSTEM (BEEPER)

- 1. The Emergency-in-Progress Signal System (EIP), commonly referred to as the beeper, is activated on any operating channel from the channel dispatcher’s radio console.
- 2. The EIP signal is an evenly spaced “beep” alerting officers to maintain silence of routine air traffic.
- 3. When activated during four channel operation, officers with routine requests shall switch to their alternate area channel. During two channel operation, officers shall switch to the alternate operating channel and voice their request.
- 4. The EIP signal shall be canceled by the involved unit or the area supervisor as soon as event has stabilized.
- 5. Officers or dispatchers having an additional emergency during the activation of the EIP signal shall not hesitate to broadcast a second emergency.

K. PERSONAL MESSAGES FOR EMPLOYEES

- 1. Personal calls or messages for employees in non-emergency circumstances shall be made by contacting the appropriate administrative office to leave a message.
- 2. Employees in the appropriate administrative office shall commit the message to writing or attempt to relay it via radio or email, as appropriate.
- 3. Emergency calls can be made by contacting the Communications Division.

L. RADIO CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	CODE	DESCRIPTION
901	Vehicle Accident	940A	Meet the citizen
901A	Vehicle Accident w/Injuries	940S	Meet the supervisor
901AB	Vehicle into a building	941	Prisoner in custody
901COP	Vehicle Accident w/Injuries, No Medical Aid Required	941P	Prisoner in custody / resisting
903	Abandoned Vehicle	945	Medical aid request
905	Traffic Control	952	Incomplete call for police
906	On Scene	952A	Silent panic alarm – residence
907	On Reports	952M	Panic from mobile device
908	Out of service / unavailable	952R	Ringling panic alarm – residence
908A	Out of service / available	952PP	Incomplete call for police from payphone
909	In service / available	952V	Panic alarm – vehicle
910	Prowler	970A	Vehicle parked in violation zone
912	Vehicle license status	970B	Vehicle blocking a driveway
913	Vehicle registration information	971	Suspicious vehicle
914A	Private residence	971W	Suspicious vehicle / Weapons involved
914E	Urgent Phone Message	972	At risk missing person
921	Car Clout	972FAX	Faxed missing person report
922	Intoxicated subject	972R	Missing person report
923	Indecent exposure	978	Driver’s license check
924	Enroute headquarters of jail	981	Welfare check
925	Location	983	Check on hazard
926	Dead body	992	Transportation
927	Suspicious	992E	Errand
928	Narcotic activity	992X	Transportation of female



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933	Burglary alarm	994	Bomb threat
936	Warrant hit (F or M)	994D	Explosive device
939	Confidential information for officer only	995	Fire for non-structure fire, no medical aid needed
940	Meet the officer	996	Found Property