

	TRAVIS COUNTY ESD #5 MANCHACA FIRE RESCUE Department Best Practices	B403
	Authorized by:  Fire Chief Chris Barron	Effective: 2/13/2018 Rescinds:
Emergency ID Activation		Reference: AFD 403 Application: Shift Personnel

I. Purpose

To establish a policy and procedures for the activation of a radio Emergency ID.

II. Background

The possibility exists for MFR units and/or individuals to be in situations where their lives are endangered and they require immediate assistance. All mobile and portable radios are equipped with an Emergency ID feature that can be activated when the radio is selected to an Austin/Travis County radio zone (zones that begin with a number).

This document is a direct adaptation of the Austin Fire Department Policy on Emergency ID Activation. It has been adopted by Manchaca Fire Rescue as an Auto Aid partner to maximize standardization between partner agencies. Variations and additions to the language from the parent AFD document will be signified by text in italics. Generic changes that do not affect content such as formatting and changing “AFD” to “MFR” will not be noted.

III. Policy

A. **Scope.** Any MFR unit or individual operating on an Austin/Travis County radio zone and requiring immediate assistance can activate either the unit’s mobile or their portable radio’s Emergency ID. Fire Dispatch is immediately notified and will follow the procedure outlined in this policy. “Signal 4” is the radio term used for Emergency ID activations.

Units or individuals operating radios selected to other than Austin/Travis County zones (zones that begin with a letter) will NOT have access to the emergency ID feature. Examples of zones without emergency ID access include regional Public Safety and Interop talkgroups.

IV. Best Practices

A. **Activation behavior.** Members may activate their radio’s Emergency ID when needing immediate assistance or when reporting “Firefighter Down” (refer to MFR Best Practices B104 Lost Firefighter

Survival Strategies). When the Emergency ID is activated, the radio switches automatically to the associated Emergency talkgroup. Activating the EMERGENCY ID on a PORTABLE radio will cause the radio to automatically transmit with a 'hot microphone' which will broadcast any voice and/or ambient sound for 8-10 seconds after activation. The 'hot microphone' feature is only available on the mobile radio's hand microphone; not through the David Clarke intercom system. Any transmissions after the first 10 seconds must be initiated by keying the push to talk button. The radio will continue to transmit and receive on the Emergency talkgroup until the radio is reset.

- B. **Activation at multi-company incidents.** When an Emergency ID is activated, Fire Dispatch will alert Command that an Emergency ID has been activated. If possible, Fire Dispatch will include the unit and the specific radio broadcasting the Emergency ID (i.e. Command, Signal 4 from Engine 501 Lieutenant). It will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander to determine if an emergency exists with the unit.
- C. **Activation with Single Company Operations and/or Individual Radios.** Should an Emergency ID be activated on a single company response or by a member with an individually assigned radio, Fire Dispatch will attempt to contact the unit with the unit number or individual and SIGNAL 4 (i.e. Engine 501, Signal 4 or Lt. Travis, Signal 4).

- 1. **No answer.** If there is no answer law enforcement will be requested Code 3 to the last known location of the unit, for investigation. If the location is not known, Fire Dispatch will try to ascertain any information possible to establish the location of the individual. This includes any information broadcast during the 8-10 seconds of 'hot microphone.'

NOTE: When endangered by a person or persons threatening violence the best course of action may be to not answer the radio as it may escalate the situation. Immediately after the Emergency ID activation the portable radio will automatically transmit any voice and/or ambient noise for 8-10 seconds. You may use this time to make any announcements for the dispatcher to indicate a true emergency does exist.

- 2. **Acknowledgment.** If the unit responds to the signal 4, Fire Dispatch will determine the nature of the emergency and send the appropriate resources.
- 3. **Accidental activation.** If the activation was inadvertent or assistance is not needed, the unit shall respond to the signal 4 with the phrase "Negative Signal 4" (i.e. Fire Dispatch, Engine 501, Negative Signal 4, or Fire Dispatch, Lt. Travis, Negative Signal 4). This negative statement may be made during the 8-10 second 'hot microphone' to announce early on that this is a mistaken activation or a test.

D. **Emergency ID activation procedure.**

1. **Portable Radio.**

a. **Radio with collar microphone attached.**

- 1) **Activation.** To activate Emergency ID, depress and hold the orange button on the top of the radio or on the collar microphone for approximately 1 second.

b. **Radio only procedures.**

- 1) **Activation.** To activate Emergency ID, depress and hold the orange button on the top of the radio for approximately 1 second.

2. **Mobile radio.**

a. **Mobile radio with or without intercom system.**

- 1) **Activation.** To activate the Emergency ID, depress and hold the Emergency Button located on the radio face for approximately 1 second.

E. **Emergency ID de-activation procedure.**

1. **Portable radio.**

a. **Portable radio with collar microphone attached.**

- 1) **Preferred Method.** Depress and hold the orange button on the top of the radio or on the collar microphone for approximately 5 seconds or until it BEEPs once.
- 2) **Alternate Method.** Turn radio off and then back on. The last zone the radio was set on will be the zone to which the radio defaults, but the talkgroup selected on the Collar Microphone will be the default talkgroup regardless of the talkgroup chosen on the radio. This underscores the importance of having the channel selector on the radio match the channel selector on the collar microphone. Recommend that the talkgroup always be selected from the collar microphone.

b. **Portable radio without collar microphone.**

- 1) **Preferred Method.** Depress and hold the orange button on the top of the radio for approximately 5 seconds or until it BEEPs once.
- 2) **Alternate Method.** Turn radio off and then back on. The radio will default to the last talkgroup and zone selected.

2. **Mobile Radio.**

a. **Mobile Radio with or without Intercom.**

- 1) **Preferred Method.** Depress and hold the button on the face of the radio for approximately 5 seconds or until it resets.

- 2) **Alternate Method.** Turn radio off and then back on. The radio will default to the last talkgroup and zone selected.