	Williamson County Fire Chiefs Association **Capitol Area Fire Chiefs Association** **Central Texas Regional Procedures**	
#02	**REGIONAL RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**	Adopted October 1, 2021 UPDATED December 6, 2023

PURPOSE

To establish procedures for radio communications and for the assignment and use of radio channels for Central Texas Regional auto aid incidents.

POLICY STATEMENT

A. All radio communications will adhere to this policy and be professional in nature.

B. When assigned to an emergency incident, Companies will change their radio to the channel designated by their dispatch for the incident.

C. All Companies must be able to access their radio template to ensure utilization of the appropriate radio channels.

D. When assigned to an incident with resources from both Travis and Williamson County or when communicating on the other county's radio channels, Companies shall include their jurisdiction name before radio designation. For example: Austin Engine 1, Cedar Park Engine 1, Lake Travis Engine 601, etc.

PROCEDURE

A. Radio Channels
　　1. Both Travis and Williamson County fire departments have each other's radio channels in their radio template for the purpose of interoperability.
　　2. All personnel should be familiar with the location of Travis and Williamson County channels in their radios.
　　3. Companies shall utilize radio channels appropriately for their designated use, refer to Table 1.
B. Radio Emergency Identification

　　1. Radios in both counties have an emergency ID button. When activated on a Travis County or a Williamson County tactical channel, the radio will automatically transmit with a "hot microphone" for eight to ten seconds pre-empting all other radio transmissions except from a dispatch center. Radios will remain on the current channel when activated and will continue to transmit on the selected tactical channel, pre-empting other transmissions until the radio is reset by holding down the emergency ID button. The emergency ID function is not enabled for

Regional Operation Channels (the lettered zones). Refer to the Greater Austin-Travis County, Texas Regional Radio System (GATRRS) plan for more information.

2. When an emergency ID activation is received by a dispatch center, the Incident Commander and/or Company Officer will be notified as required by department policy. Emergency ID activations that occur on a channel not being monitored by the home dispatch may not be received by a dispatch center. Jurisdictions are responsible for training their dispatch centers with phrases used in response to status checks from emergency radio activations for radios not on a scene with an Incident Commander.

C. Communication Terminology

1. All radio communications shall utilize "plain English." Ten codes or agency specific codes should not be used except for declaring a status to dispatch in response to an emergency radio activation.

2. Radio communications with a Company Officer assigned to an apparatus shall be directed to the "apparatus number" of the Company the Officer is assigned to. Communications directed to the Driver/Operator shall be directed to "apparatus number + driver", and the communications with an apparatus' firefighter shall be directed to "apparatus number + firefighter + task" (if task is appropriate to distinguish between firefighters).

3. All individuals should use standard department format and terminology when communicating on the radio.

   a. When beginning communication with another Company or an individual, the radio traffic will start by identifying the Company or individual to which the message is intended. It will be immediately followed by identifying the Company or individual initiating the communication. For example: "Engine 6, from Fire Dispatch."

   b. When a Company or individual is identified for a radio communication, that Company or individual shall identify themselves on the radio to indicate that they are ready to receive the message. For example: "This is Engine 6." During periods of heavy radio traffic, the Company or individual may also identify the Company or individual they are to receive the message from. For example: "Go ahead Fire Dispatch, this is Engine 6."

4. The following are standard radio communication terms to be used:

   a. Received: This term should be used to indicate that a message was understood and would normally be followed by a summary of the message received.

   b. Direct copy: This term indicates that a message was received by a Company or individual by listening to a radio communication transmitted to another Company or individual and would normally be followed by a short summary of the message "direct copied."

   c. Clear: This term indicates that a Company is leaving an incident and returning to service. This term should not be used to indicate that a message was understood (i.e. "I'm clear on that").

   d. Priority Traffic: This term should be used to clear the air and allow for the transmission of critical, high priority information. It can be used for a single transmission, such as "Command from Alpha Division Priority Traffic." Or it can be used to reduce radio transmissions during a critical operation. In this type of situation, Command can order "Priority Radio Traffic Only." When that order is given, only critical information should be transmitted on the radio,

usually to and from Command (or Operations if established). To end the "Priority Radio Traffic Only" order, Command will announce "Resume Normal Radio Traffic."

e. Emergency Traffic: This term should be used to communicate an imminent danger to personnel and as a designation to clear radio traffic.

f. Mayday, Mayday, Mayday: This term shall be used to alert responders that a member(s) need immediate help.

g. Vacate, Vacate, Vacate: This term shall be used as an order to immediately leave the IDLH or structure, leaving hose lines and equipment.

h. Tactical Withdrawal: This term shall be used as an order to leave the IDLH or structure, safely and quickly, taking hose and tools while exiting.

Table 1

Channel Use	Travis County	Williamson County	Comments
Station Alerting	Indicated by LOCU for the Locution system.	Indicated by DSP for dispatch.	Both of these channel types should only be monitored and not used for any communication other than alerting.
Non-Emergency	FCOM (FireCom) channels.	ADM (Admin) channels.	Used when not assigned to an incident.
Tactical Channels for Multiple Unit Response (normally three or more units)	Assigned in sets of two. For example: FTAC201 - primary tactical channel FTAC202 - alternate channel for use at the incident as determined by Command.	Assigned in sets of two. For example: FIRE 1 - primary tactical channel SCN1 - channel for use at the incident as determined by Command.	
Medical Response	Indicated by the letter M. For Example: MCOM N, MCOM C, etc. Used to communicate with EMS resource(s) assigned to the incident.	Indicated by MED. For example: W Med 2, E Med3, etc. Used to communicate with EMS resource(s) assigned to the incident.	When needing to communicate with EMS Dispatch (either ATCEMS or Williamson County), a MCOM channel must be used.
Non-Medical One or Two Unit Response	Use the assigned FCOM channel.	Use the assigned FIRE channel.	
Vehicle Accident Response	Use FCOM, vehicle rescues moved to tac channel	Use W Med, E Med channel assigned.	
Move-up Coverage	Use appropriate FCOM channel.	Use appropriate ADM channel.	The dispatch for the jurisdiction requiring move-up coverage will alert Companies providing coverage to respond to incidents on the appropriate channel.