

Truro Police Department

COMMUNICATIONS

Policy Number: ADM-2.02
REFERENCE: 911 Manual

Effective Date: June 1, 2000
Revised Date: March 29, 2006

Accreditation Standards: 81.2.7

Mass. Gen. Law:

Other:

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Truro Police Department to maintain an efficient flow of information essential to the functions of the department and the community it serves. The communications component must ensure that the communications system facilitates the operations of all other components of the Department.

The communications procedures of the Truro Police Department are an important part of the support mechanisms necessary for the effective and safe conduct of department business. Department communications involve the use of telephones, computer terminals, and radio. The department has established a number of communications procedures so that communications will be orderly, documented, and effective. For the purposes of this policy, the term Telecommunicator shall also refer to a police officer assigned to desk duty. This policy should be used with all other relevant policy and procedure, rules or regulations, as they pertain to this policy.

PROCEDURES:

1. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION:

- A. RESPONSIBILITY OF PATROL DIVISION:** The communication component for the Truro Police Department will be located and operated from the E911 Dispatch Center under the command of the Communications Supervisor, and shall include: radio communications, telephone communications, automated data communications, various administrative duties, and cell block audio and visual monitoring. This communication component still is the basis for the operation of the patrol division of the Truro Police Department. As a result, it shall be the responsibility of the Communications Supervisor, and the Shift Commanders of the Truro Police Department to ensure that the policies and procedures of the department are followed and maintained by the Telecommunicators. *(Revised September 12, 2003)*

- B. Responsibility of the Administrative Assistant:**
He/she shall handle matters regarding technical, software or administrative issues. He/she processes records requests, FID's, payroll, accounts payable and receivable, and is in charge of office equipment, maintenance and service.
(Revised October 10, 2002)
- C. Responsibility of the Shift Commanding Officer on duty:**
The Shift Commander has secondary command responsibilities He is directly responsible for the operations of all officers assigned to that given shift. He is also responsible for ensuring that the appropriate response is dispatched to every call for service. He is in a position to impart any unique or prior knowledge concerning a person, location, or call for service. The Shift Commander shall also have the responsibility of informing the Communications Center of the need to decrease or increase the number of responding units.
- D. Responsibilities of Officers:**
Officers shall have the responsibility of answering promptly when called by the Communications Center. They shall also be responsible for keeping the Communications Center apprised of their location during those functions that may pose a danger to them or other officers responding to the scene. Officers shall also be responsible for informing the Communications Center of the need for additional or less units to respond. They shall also impart any unique or prior knowledge concerning persons, locations, or prior calls for service to the Communications Center in order to keep them properly aware of these or any other situations.
- E. Responsibilities of the Communications Supervisor**
He/she shall handle matters regarding technical, personnel or administrative issues for the Communications Division. He/she shall act as primary liaison between Telecommunicator's, and the Lieutenant and/or Chief of Police. He/she receives suggestions, and complaints regarding the E911 system, and works with the Chief to address these issues. *(Revised October 10, 2002)*
- E. Responsibilities of all Officers and Telecommunicators**
All officers and Telecommunicators shall be responsible for monitoring all radio transmissions. They Shall also impart any and all information that may enhance officer safety. *(revised September 12, 2003)*
- F. Responsible of all Telecommunicators**
Telecommunicators shall have the responsibility of answering promptly when called by the officers, other departments or agencies as assigned. Duties shall include radio communications, telephone communications, automated data communications, various administrative duties, and cell block audio and visual monitoring. They shall also be responsible for keeping the officers apprised of any incidents that may pose a danger to them. Telecommunicators shall also be responsible for informing officers of the need for additional or less units to respond as directed by the shift commander. They shall also impart any unique or prior knowledge concerning persons, locations, or prior calls for service to the officers in order to keep them properly aware of these or any other situations. *(Revised September 12, 2003)*

2. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS: The radio represents a police officer's primary source of communication with the station and/or other officers. Uniform radio procedures and the proper utilization of communications equipment are essential to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Each officer will have access to radio communications at all times and shall promptly notify the station in advance, if possible, whenever initiating any police action. Such actions include but are not limited to motor vehicle stops, field interviews, building searches, and group disturbances and/or situations that may require assistance.

A. 800 MHZ SYSTEM: The Truro Police radio system is primary radio communication system utilized by the department.

1. The current system consists of the following channels: *(Revised March 27, 2003)*

<u>scan</u>	<u>ZONE A</u>	<u>ZONE B</u>	<u>ZONE C</u>
XX	Truro Police	Admin 2	LOCPS 1
	Admin 1	Admin 3	LOCPS 3
	Provincetown Police	Barnstable Police	LOCPS 5
	Wellfleet Police	Bourne Police	LOCPS 7
	Provincetown Fire	Brewster Police	LOCPS 9
XX	Truro Fire	Chatham Police	
	State Police	Dennis Police	
	County	Eastham Police	
	Public Safety	Falmouth Police	
	Direct 1	Harwich Police	
	Direct 2	Mashpee Police	
	I CAL	Orleans Police	
	TAC 1	Sandwich Police	
	TAC 2	Yarmouth Police	
	TAC 3	REGROUP	
	TAC 4		

Truro Police is home channel

Portables are programmed the same without a home button.

2. All officers are required to identify themselves by their assigned BAKER number, not their cruiser number. If the cruiser officers are assigned to be changed for any reason during a tour of duty, the officer(s) involved in the change shall notify communications of their new designation.
(Revised Jan 1, 2003)
3. The communications center shall always be referred to as "700." Officers are referred to as Baker. At all times, officers will use their assigned BAKER numbers. When calling another station, other than the Truro Police Department while off duty or on a detail, officers will use their assigned radio number and identify our department. *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*

Examples: 700 from Baker 2
Baker 2 from 700
371 from 700
371 from Baker 2
371 from Baker 17
370 from Baker 17

C. OPERATING MODES: The Truro Police radio system allows both mobile and portable units to operate in either a "Repeat," "Direct," or "Emergency" mode.

1. **Repeat Mode:** Radio transmissions should be conducted in the repeat mode. The repeat mode boosts the strength of the signal and transmits it throughout the entire radio system allowing all other units to receive the transmission.
2. **Direct Mode:** In the direct mode, the range of portable radios is limited to approximately 500 yards and should only be used for covert or private messages. Physical obstructions may interfere with the transmission signal when on direct mode.
3. **Emergency Mode:** Mobile and portable radios are also equipped with an Emergency or Officer in Trouble button. When activated, the radio will transmit an alert tone and the Massachusetts State Police will identify the radio identification number. **THE EMERGENCY BUTTON WILL NOT WORK IF THE RADIO IS IN THE DIRECT MODE.**

D. RADIO OPERATION CHECKS:

1. All officers are assigned radios. They shall, prior to assuming their duties, initiate a radio check.

E. TRANSMISSION REQUIREMENTS: The radio is to be used for official

Department business only. Unnecessary communications will not be allowed.

1. All FCC rules and regulations (located in Communications Center) will be adhered to.
 2. Military time shall be used in all transmissions.
 3. Messages are to be clear, concise, and accurate so that transmission time is kept at a minimum, in plain English. *(Revised March 28, 2006)*
 4. Courtesy is most essential for the efficient and effective operation of the radio system. Discourtesy, sarcasm, or arguments will not be tolerated.
 5. **Personal names will not be used during transmissions.** Officers and Telecommunicators will use and identify each other and other stations by assigned call signs. *(Revised September 12, 2003)*
 6. Profane and obscene language is a violation of FCC rules and regulations. Employees must not use loud, uncivil, indecent, or profane language even under the greatest provocation.
 7. Officers and Telecommunicators will be responsible for proper radio communications. *(Revised September 12, 2003)*
 8. The names of complainants shall not be broadcast over the air unless it is necessary as a part of the call or assignment. Officers and Telecommunicators shall use discretion in the use of complainant names, keeping in mind that in order to prevent retaliation in some cases, we should maintain the confidentiality of the names of a complainant or witness. In doubtful cases the shift Commander should be consulted on this issue. *(Revised September 12, 2003)*
 9. In order to conform with *NIMS*, the Truro Police Department will use plain English for all radio traffic with the exception of signing on the air (ZERO-1). *(Added March 28, 2006)*
- F. TRANSMISSION PROCEDURES:** Before transmitting, officers and Telecommunicators should: *(Revised September 12, 2003)*
1. Plan the message before transmitting, when possible.
 2. Listen to make sure another message is not being interrupted.
 3. Hold the mike 1 - 3 inches from the mouth. Do not attempt to transmit with the mike still attached to the dashboard or radio console.
 4. Depress the transmit button and wait 3 seconds (it takes 2 - 3 seconds for

identification mode in the radio to transmit). Any verbal transmission during this time period will be lost.

5. Speak normally and clearly, using an evenly modulated tone of voice, as in a phone conversation. Avoid vocal displays of emotion such as loss of temper, nervous excitement, sullenness, etc., which tend to distort a radio transmission.
6. Identify the officer or station by using the proper call sign.. *(revised September 12, 2003)*
7. Officers should give Telecommunicators reasonable time to acknowledge the transmission, as well as giving officers reasonable time to answer. *Revised September 12, 2003)*
8. Avoid, if possible, lengthy messages. If the message is long, transmit a portion of it to ensure that it has been acknowledged, and then continue.
9. Acknowledge all calls promptly.
10. Report arrival at the scene promptly.
Example: 700, Baker 4 is on location. *(Revised March 29, 2006)*
11. Clear the call promptly.
Example: 700, Baker 4 is clear. *(Revised March 29, 2006)*
12. Officers shall advise the Telecommunicator when they are going out of service and returning to service. *The Telecommunicator shall record and track each officer's status.*

G. SPECIAL TRANSMISSION PROCEDURES: On those occasions when a sensitive message must be delivered over the radio and it is desirable to minimize outside monitoring, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. The Telecommunicator will contact a specific officer and instruct them to switch to channel 4 on CODE. This will enable encrypted conversations *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*
- c. Both the Telecommunicator and the unit will turn to Channel 4.
- d. The Telecommunicator will then contact the officer and deliver the message. *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*
- e. Both officer and desk will then return to normal channels. *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*

- H. PHONETIC ALPHABET:** The standard phonetic alphabet shall be used to clarify the spelling of words or when transmitting messages containing letters (e.g., vehicle registrations).

A - ALPHA	H - HOTEL	O - OSCAR	V - VICTOR
B - BRAVO	I - INDIA	P - PAPA	W - WHISKEY
C - CHARLIE	J - JULIET	Q - QUEBEC	X - X-RAY
D - DELTA	K - KILO	R - ROMEO	Y - YANKEE
E - ECHO	L - LIMA	S - SIERRA	Z - ZULU
F - FOXTROT	M - MIKE	T - TANGO	
G - GOLF	N - NOVEMBER	U - UNIFORM	

Example: BAKER 7 requests a listing on Mass. Reg. 123-Alpha Bravo Charlie (123-ABC), or BAKER 4 requests a listing on Mass. Reg. 123- A- Alpha, B-Bravo, C-Charlie (123-ABC). *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*

- I. CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENT:** The Shift Commander shall ensure that a sufficient number of officers are dispatched to a call.

The following are examples of calls for which two or more officers should be assigned.

- a. All code three response calls (see dept vehicle readiness and use)
 - b. Group disturbances
 - c. Request for assistance for an arrest for a felony or violent misdemeanor.
 - d. Medical assist (if two officers are on duty, otherwise request assistant from EMS.)
 - e. Fleeing suspect(s)
 - f. Domestic disturbances
- J. PURSUITS:** The communications procedures for pursuits are found in this manual under the department policy entitled Pursuits.
- K. NON-RESPONSE TO RADIO COMMUNICATIONS:** If, after calling an officer twice, and the Telecommunicator receives no answer, the Telecommunicator should continue the attempts. If the call requires an immediate response, another officer will be dispatched. If the officer cannot be reached after a reasonable period of time, the Telecommunicator should notify any other officer on duty and continue calling the officer, while paging/calling him/her, and notifying neighboring towns. If the officer does not answer after numerous and various attempts, the OIC shall be consulted for further instructions. *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*

- L. MULTI-VEHICLE RESPONSE TO CALLS:** When a call is given that involves

the response of more than one officer, or an officer and other emergency vehicles, such as fire apparatus and/or ambulance, the officer arriving at the scene first shall notify the station as soon as possible as update the necessity for the other responding units to slow down, accelerate their response time, or disregard. The Telecommunicator shall immediately relay this information to the responding officer or emergency vehicles and ensure that the units acknowledge receipt of the transmission. *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*

- M. STANDBY:** If the Telecommunicator finds it necessary to put an officer on standby for any reason (e.g., an urgent phone call, 911 calls), the Telecommunicator shall be responsible for re-establishing contact with the officer as soon as possible.
- N. BACK-UP POWER:** The electrical and radio system is backed up by a diesel-powered generator. This unit is automatically checked weekly.

In the event that the backup system fails the Control Center at Cellular One, the Police Chief and Fire Chief, shall be contacted immediately.

- O. MUTUAL AID RADIO PROTOCOL:** When the Truro Police Department calls another agency for mutual aid, the Truro Police working frequency (radio channel) shall be used unless otherwise directed by the shift commander. In the event that officers are contacted to assist another agency for a mutual aid incident, the requesting agency's radio channel shall be utilized, unless directed by the Shift Commander in that agency. The Telecommunicator shall closely monitor all radio traffic during these events. *At all other times monitor other department's radio traffic to ensure that officers are aware of any situation or incidents that may otherwise pose a danger or threat to them. (revised September 12, 2003)*

4. TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS: Efficient telephone communications is essential to the operations of the department. The following procedures are intended to ensure that information of vital importance to the department is received in a proper manner.

A. CALLS FROM VICTIMS/WITNESSES

1. Victims of crimes or witness to these, and other events may contact the Truro Police Department for information or additional services. Telecommunicators and/or desk officers shall determine if there is an emergency. If an emergency exists within the jurisdictional bounds of the department, the Telecommunicator shall dispatch the appropriate officers. If the call falls outside the jurisdictional bounds of Truro, the Telecommunicator shall notify the appropriate agency.
2. The background and training of the Telecommunicator shall be used to judge whether a call for service is indeed an emergency or not. The

Telecommunicator should listen for signs of stress, trauma, and listen background noises that would lead a prudent person to believe that a problem or danger may exist.

3. If no emergency exists, the Telecommunicator shall forward the call to the appropriate officer in the department. If the officer is on duty, the message will be relayed to that officer as soon as possible. If the officer is not on duty, a message will be left, and the offer should be made to talk to an on duty officer.
4. Every effort will be made to answer the questions of every caller.
5. All “*misdialed, accidental and hang-up*” 911 calls will be followed up with a police response, irregardless if contact with the caller is made verifying no problem. (*Revised October 10, 2002*)

B. ANSWERING OF TELEPHONES:

1. The telephone shall be answered promptly and courteously; priority shall be given to answering calls on the emergency lines. (See E911 Training Manual.)
2. The Telecommunicator shall identify the department and him/herself, and, in case of a recorded line, inform the caller that the call is being recorded:

EXAMPLE: ON EMERGENCY LINES – “911, this line is recorded, what is your emergency?” OR, if on a one way or two way PSAP line, “Truro Police Department recorded line.”

EXAMPLE: NON-EMERGENCY LINE(S) - “Truro Police Department, Officer Smith.”, OR “Truro Police Department, Bond.”

3. When a call is transferred to another section within the department, the receiving officer shall answer the phone by Name, Title,

C. INFORMATION TO BE RECEIVED AND RECORDED REGARDING CALLS FOR SERVICE: The following information shall be obtained and *entered into the Police Server System*, if known, when a request for service is received.

1. Name and address of complainant
2. Type and location of incident reported
3. *Identities of officers and additional support units dispatched, their time of arrival and return to service*
4. Disposition and/or status of incidents reported

The System will automatically, upon entering an incident, record incident number, date and time of request, time of dispatch, time of officer arrival and time of officer’s return to service. *The Telecommunicator on duty will log all calls to the department,*

regardless of the nature.

- D. EMERGENCY CALLS:** During emergency calls, the officer should obtain the basic information and then, keeping the caller on the line, dispatch the officers/cruisers as necessary, filling in additional information as it is received. Although speed is of obvious importance regarding the receipt of emergency information, reliability and accuracy are of primary importance. *(Revised Jan 1, 2003)*
- E. HOLD:** Callers should not be put on hold for any unreasonable length of time. If there is going to be a delay, the caller should be advised of the reason. ***Emergency calls should never be placed on hold.***
- F. CALLS MISTAKENLY MADE TO THIS DEPARTMENT:** In the event that a caller mistakenly reaches this department, the following will be done:
- 1. Emergency Calls:** If the call requires an immediate response, the Telecommunicator will take all pertinent information and then relay it to the appropriate agency. All “*misdialed, accidental and hang-up*” 911 calls will be followed up with a police response, irregardless if contact with the caller is made verifying no problem. *(Revised July 31, 2002)*
 - 2. Non-Emergency Calls:** In non-emergency cases, the caller will be referred to the appropriate agency.
 - 3. Police Agency Directory:** To facilitate this procedure, a directory of phone numbers for neighboring police departments and law enforcement agencies shall be maintained in the operations area.
- G. TELEPHONE FAILURE:** In the event the telephone system fails, the Shift Commander shall ensure that appropriate measures are taken. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, the following: *(Revised September 12, 2003)*
- 1.** Notify the telephone company and also relay calls to other available police and fire.
 - 2.** Notify local radio, television, and newspapers concerning alternative communications arrangements.
 - 3.** During emergencies, such as complete power failures during hurricane, etc., the emergency management director shall be notified.
 - 4.** The Chief of Police or the Lieutenant shall be notified.
- 5. AUTOMATED DATA COMMUNICATIONS:** Police and Communications personnel have immediate access to several automated data communications systems. The Shift Commander shall ensure that access is strictly limited to ***authorized personnel*** and is used for proper police functions. He shall also ensure that individuals accessing the systems do so

in accordance with the proper procedures as specified in the respective operations manuals.

- A. THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEM (CJIS):** Is the Massachusetts computerized record system for law enforcement agencies. The records are stored in nine separate files. Through this state system, users have access to F.B.I. National Crime Information Center (NCIC).
1. Stolen vehicles (including aircraft)
 2. Wanted persons
 3. Missing persons
 4. License plates
 5. Article files
 6. Gun files
 7. Boat files
 8. Security file
 9. Suicide file
- B. AUTOMATED LICENSE AND REGISTRATION SYSTEM (ALARS):** Stores and provides Registry of Motor Vehicle license and registration information.
- C. NATIONAL CRIMINAL INFORMATION CENTER (NCIC):** Stores records for Massachusetts as well as every other participating state and/or U.S. Territory. This gives the department access to an abundance of information from a variety of sources.
- D. NATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TELE-COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (NLETS):** Users are capable of communicating with other state systems via NLETS. NLETS is a computerized, high-speed message switching system created for and dedicated to the criminal justice community. Its purpose is to take messages from one state, prepare it for its destination, and send it to its destination.
- 6. RECORDING/PLAYBACK OF RECORDED TELEPHONE AND RADIO COMMUNICATIONS:** The Communications Console and equipment is located in the Communications Center. Located in this center is the manual which explains the operation of the radio recording device, which records all telephone calls in the dispatch center and on selected operations area telephones, and all radio communications. The manual also explains the process of using and storing of tapes for this machine.

All tapes will be kept for at least a period of 1 year or longer, and stored in a central, secure area by the Administrative Assistant.

Radio and telephone tapes shall be played back when a discrepancy occurs between the call and the reporting information, times, or any other time where the call taker feels that more information is needed. Radio and telephone tapes shall be recorded when an officer requests

that a copy of said conversation or radio traffic is needed for an investigation, internal or otherwise, or court use.

Radio and telephone tapes shall be reviewed periodically by the Chief of Police, or his designee, to ensure that calls are being professionally handled.

7. **RESPONSE TO ALARMS:** It is the policy of the department to respond to all alarms, even when an individual contacts the station and advises that we disregard the alarm.
 1. **Request to Disregard:** Occasionally a request is made to disregard an alarm by an individual claiming to have set off their alarm accidentally or by an individual claiming to be working for an alarm company. All such instances shall be responded to unless the Shift Commander determines otherwise.
 2. **Alarms Set Off by Power Failures, Electrical Storms, etc.:** Occasionally many alarms will be set off as a result of wide-ranging electrical disturbance. When this occurs, the Shift Commander shall be immediately advised. He shall determine what shall be the appropriate response.
 3. Trouble Alarms shall be handled in the same manner as a regular alarm. The cutting of a telephone line could cause a trouble alarm.
- A. **ALARM REPORTS:** Officers shall report all false alarms to communications for entry into the PoliceServer system. These reports shall be monitored and notifications shall be made in accordance with the Town's false alarm ordinance.
8. **MESSAGES:** All messages, regardless of the nature, received by the department will be relayed and/or acted upon as soon as possible by the Telecommunicator on duty.
9. **NOTIFICATION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT:** In all cases involving fire - and/or rescue-related calls, the fire department shall be notified immediately.
10. **OPERATIONAL MANUALS:** Special Operational Manuals outlining dispatch plans to extraordinary circumstances (i.e., Hazardous Materials, Hostages, etc.) shall be maintained in the Communications Center.
11. **REPORTS BY MAIL, EMAIL OR TELEPHONE:** If a report of a crime, complaint, other police matter or citizen concern, regardless of the nature, is made via the mail, or via any employees email, an incident will be created (per this policy) and an officer on duty at the time the information was received will be assigned to follow up on the call. All telephone reports of crimes, complaints and other police matters and citizen concerns received will be treated as a call for service, and an officer shall be dispatched. *(revised September 12, 2003)*
12. **WALK IN REPORTS:** If a person walks into the station to report a crime or any incident, an officer shall be assigned to speak to that person to keep the Telecommunicator free for their duties.