

Subject:	Fire Resource Response & Check Back	
Effective:	10/27/2015	Procedure
Update:	5/1/2018, 7/11/2018	
Reference:		

PURPOSE

To outline the procedures for dispatching fire resources on incidents, ensuring that all resources are responding immediately, assigning an Incident Dispatcher, conducting a check back and assigning radio channels.

PROCEDURE

1. Resources are required to respond within 120 seconds (2 minutes) to dispatched incidents and advise the name of the responding apparatus (or advise if they are unable to respond).
 - a. CAD will recommend the resource(s) to be dispatched.
 - b. The dispatcher will select “commit” and CAD will encode the resource(s) recommended on Fire Channel 1.
 - c. When the tones are complete, verbally dispatch the resource(s) as listed.
 - d. At 120 seconds (2 minutes), if there has been no radio or MDT response from the first dispatched resource, the dispatcher will query the resource on the air as to their response (i.e., “E-13 confirm response”).
 - e. The dispatcher will wait 30 seconds. If no response, the dispatcher will continue check-backs on multi-unit incidents and then landline the station that failed to answer (or ask another dispatcher to call the station while continuing with the check-back).
 - f. If there is still no response (i.e. no one answers the phone), the dispatcher will landline, encode, or contact the on duty Battalion Chief over the air and request direction (i.e., dispatch the next recommended resource, encode again?)
 - i. The dispatch of the next recommended resource will be documented in the CAD incident history with the notation that the original unit did not respond within 2 ½ minutes.

2. The dispatcher will notify on duty Battalion Chief (BC) on the initial dispatch anytime a fire resource is responding to any incident where any law enforcement officer is responding to establish scene safety (i.e., shooting, stabbing, domestic violence, barricaded subject, fight, serving felony warrants, etc.) *This does not apply to the standard day-to-day informational notifications to law enforcement of fire responses.
 - a. Add the affected BC to the call so s/he is encoded and the information will go to the MDC.

- b. The BC will either respond or acknowledge the information. Notate in CAD the response from the BC (i.e., “513 copies, monitoring”, or “513 copies, responding”).
- 3. Medical responses where two fire department resources respond from the same station, such as Medic Engine 51 and Rescue 51, Medic Engine 11 and Truck 11, Medic Engine 17 and Rescue 17, will be handled over the radio as if it were a single resource response (on Channel 1).
- 4. All responses involving a medical helicopter should be assigned a Command Channel and a Tactical Channel (CalCord). The dispatcher will update CAD to reflect the assigned channels for the incident.
- 5. If more than one resource is generating substantial radio traffic handling an incident or the incident requires additional resources, an incident channel should be assigned and a Chief Officer responded.
 - a. **Battalion 1 (South County)**
 - i. For “All Hazard” Incidents (Structure Fire, Vehicle Accident, Rescue, Multi-Engine Response, etc.) assign Command Channel 4.
 - 1. If Command Channel 4 is not available, assign Command Channel 5 (secondary).
 - ii. For “Vegetation Fires,” assign Command Channel 2.
 - 1. If Command Channel 2 is not available, assign Command Channel 3 (secondary).
 - iii. For Tactical Channel assignments, refer to the “Dispatch Frequency Criteria” spreadsheet.
 - b. **Battalion 2 (North County)**
 - i. For “All Hazard” Incidents (Structure Fire, Vehicle Accident, Rescue, Multi-Engine Response, etc.) assign Command Channel 3.
 - 1. If Command Channel 3 is not available, assign Command Channel 5 (secondary).
 - ii. For “Vegetation Fires” assign Command Channel 3.
 - 1. If Command Channel 3 is not available, assign Command Channel 2 (secondary).
 - iii. For Tactical Channel assignments, refer to the “Dispatch Frequency Criteria” spreadsheet.
 - c. **Battalion 2 (Coastal areas of Gaviota, Hollister Ranch and Jalama)**
 - i. Assign Command Channel 3 if possible. This channel provides better coverage in those areas.
- 6. A significant multi-resource incident should have an “Incident Dispatcher” (I.D.) assigned to handle the incident, if available. The I.D. is provided to ensure the safety of the resources assigned to the incident by monitoring the Command

Channel without distraction. It can be the original fire dispatcher, or another qualified fire dispatcher on duty. The I.D. will handle all radio traffic on the assigned Command Channel and another qualified fire dispatcher will handle dispatching other incidents on Command Channel 1. An I.D. should be assigned when the incident is determined to be significant. If the first resource arrives on scene and advises they can handle, and cancels all incoming equipment, an I.D. is not necessary.

- a. The Incident Commander (I.C.) will be advised on the Command Channel that an I.D. has been assigned to the incident as soon as one has been assigned. This will alert the I.C. that he does not need to return to Channel 1 to contact Control and that he can direct his radio traffic to Control on the Command Channel assigned to the incident.
 - i. A comment will be added to the incident when an I.D. has been assigned.
 - b. The I.D. will only be responsible for the radio traffic on the assigned Command Channel and avoid answering any phones unless necessary.
 - i. If a phone call is answered and it is related to the incident, the I.D. will handle the telephone call, if available.
 - c. When the Incident Commander advises "Command Dissolved", this will allow the I.D. to resume their normal duties.
7. If the incident is a vegetation fire, give the pre-alert, transmit the type of incident and location on Channel 1. (All other multi-resource incidents do not require a pre-alert.)

EXAMPLE: (Control) *"Vegetation Fire, Highway 101 at Refugio"*

- a. CAD will recommend the resources to be dispatched.
- b. Commit the recommendation made by CAD, which will encode (page) the recommended resources on Channel 1.
 - i. CAD does not recommend Type 3 engines. When an engine is recommended, dispatch will say "**Station XX**" rather than the recommended engine. An exception to this is any specialized equipment, such as a water tender. The station crew will respond with the name of the apparatus they are taking to the incident.
- c. When the tones are complete, dispatch the resources as listed and assign a Command Channel, Tactical Channel and an Air to Ground Channel, according to the "Dispatch Frequency Criteria" spreadsheet. The dispatcher will update CAD to reflect the assigned channels.

EXAMPLE: (Control) *"Station 11, Station 14, Station 18, Water Tender 18, Station 12, Water Tender 32, Crew, Dozers, Copter 308, Air Attack, Battalion 512, vegetation fire, Highway 101 at Refugio, Refugio at Highway 101, respond on Command 2, CDF Tac 4 and CDF Air to Ground 1"*

- d. The resource that is recommended first on the incident will acknowledge their response by notifying Control that they are responding on the assigned Command Channel. Control will then use the check back system to confirm the response of any additional resources dispatched on the assigned incident channel.

EXAMPLE: (Medic Engine 11) "*Medic Engine 11 responding*"
(on Command Channel 2)

(Control) "*Station 14?*"

(Eng. 314) "*Engine 314*"

(Control) "*Station 18?*"

(Eng. 318) "*Engine 318*"

(Control) "*Water Tender 18?*"

(WT-18) "*Water Tender 18*"

- e. Control will continue with the check back procedure until all resources have acknowledged their response on the assigned incident channel. If any resource fails to acknowledge within the required time frame, the procedures listed in Section 1 will be followed.
 - i. Dispatch is responsible for placing the equipment that the station advises they are responding in on the incident, generally using the NTONE command (i.e., CAD recommends "ME14", dispatcher verbalizes "Station 14", Station 14 acknowledges by saying "E314 responding").
 - ii. When time allows, the dispatcher will remove the equipment that is not responding and place it out of service (OOS) until the incident is complete or the station is back-filled.
- f. Once all resources are on scene, the Incident Commander is required to use Channel 1 for communicating with Control. Dispatch will not monitor the incident channel after all resources have arrived on scene (unless staffing allows for an I.D. to be assigned to the incident.) See Section 6.