



# City of Winter Park Fire-Rescue Standard Operating Guideline

# 700.01

**Title: Dispatching / Communications  
Center Procedures**

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**Purpose:** To establish a communications procedure for Fire / Rescue personnel and for the Emergency Communications Operators that work at the Winter Park Communications Center.

**Scope:** This procedure is to be followed by all employees. Authority to deviate from this procedure rests with the Deputy Fire Chief or designee, who is solely responsible for the results of any deviation. This guideline was developed with the cooperation of the Communications Center Manager for the City of Winter Park and directly affects those employees.

**General:** All personnel should be aware that all communications over the airwaves are governed by the Federal Communication Commission. The City of Winter Park maintains a license to operate communication channels for emergency traffic and to conduct the business of the City. Other non-business related radio traffic is strictly prohibited. Employees found abusing the radio system will be considered in violation of Department policy and dealt with accordingly.

## **700.01.01. Operational Considerations - Radio Designations:**

For security and privacy purposes, at no time should names of employees be used over the air. If information of a personal nature needs to be transmitted, the use of land-based communications or cellular is encouraged. For this reason the following radio designation will be used by units of the Winter Park Fire Department.

"Winter Park"	=	Dispatch Center
"Engine 61"	=	ALS Engine at Station 61
"Engine 62"	=	ALS Engine at Station 62
"Engine 64"	=	ALS Engine at Station 64
"Truck 61"	=	ALS Ladder with Platform at Station 61
"Rescue 61"	=	ALS Rescue
"Rescue 62"	=	ALS Rescue
"Rescue 64"	=	ALS Rescue
"Squad 6"	=	Service Squad / Technical Rescue
"Engine 161"	=	Reserve Engine

"Truck 161"	=	Reserve ladder with no platform
"Battalion 61"	=	Battalion Chief on-duty / Shift Commander
"EMS 61"	=	EMS Supervisor / Lieutenant
"Marine Rescue 61"	=	Rescue Boat located at Station 61

STAFF

"Chief 61"	=	Fire Chief
"Chief 62"	=	Deputy Fire Chief
"Chief 63"	=	Officially Retired
"Chief 64"	=	Division Chief
"ADMIN 1"	=	Administration/Finance Specialist
"ADMIN 2"	=	Technical Specialist

OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

"FM 61"	=	Captain Fire Marshal
"Inspector 61"	=	Fire Inspector
"Inspector 62"	=	Fire Inspector
"Inspector 63"	=	Fire Inspector
"Pub Ed 1"	=	Public Fire Education Specialist

In addition to these designations, special incidents may require the use of additional command references. The Incident Commander will be required to notify the Communications Center of these designations.

All personnel should confirm contact with the unit they are attempting to communicate with, including "Winter Park", prior to the sending of any message. Completing this process will improve the chances that the message is received and will reduce repeat transmissions.

Standard "open" dispatch terminology will be used to avoid any confusion. Examples of this terminology include: "on the air", "available", "on the scene", etc.

**700.01.02. Special Notifications:**

It is very important to our operation that the Communications Operators notify the on-duty Battalion Chief when specific changes take place in the fire protection and rescue capabilities of the community. The following are areas of concern to the Department and notification is required when their status changes.

To advise personnel of these changes, the communications operator will utilize ONE ALERT TONE followed by the important information. Examples of when this procedure should be used are:

- Apparatus Out-of-Service / Back In-Service
- Street Closures / Openings
- Fire Alarm Systems / In and Out of Service
- Fire Hydrants / In and Out of Service
- Important Weather Statements
- Disaster Plan Information
- Other Vital Information

The following information should be obtained if a fire alarm system or sprinkler /standpipe system is involved:

- Who is placing system out of service?
- What is the purpose of the interruption?
- How long will the system be OOS?
- Name of the person calling in the report?
- Name of the person reporting the system back in-service?

### **700.01.03. Radio Frequencies / Talk Groups:**

The City of Winter Park operates all radio communications through what is known as an "intra-repeater site" off the Orange County 821 trunked radio system. Winter Park enjoys the ability to link our 5 stand-alone frequencies with Orange County. This provides all public safety units the ability to "roam" outside the actual Winter Park coverage area and utilize the Orange County system.

Under normal conditions, Winter Park Fire Department units will operate on one of the assigned "tactical" talk groups. These "TACS" are designated by the following names.

- 1 = "WPFDF TAC 1"
- 2 = "WPFDF TAC 2"
- 3 = "WPFDF TAC 3"
- 4 = "WPFDF TAC 4"
- 5 = "WPFDF TAC 5"
- 6 = "WPFDF TAC 6" (formerly designated as "WPFDF FLM")

"WPFDF TAC 1" will be monitored by all stations and available units. All emergency calls will be dispatched over Tac 1 and all available units shall monitor TAC 1 at all times.

"WPFDF TAC 2,3,4 " will be utilized for emergency scene operations. Once dispatched, units will be directed to a tactical Talk Group. The units shall remain on this assigned Tactical Talk Group for the remainder of their alarm unless otherwise directed.

Operators should attempt to place all incidents on separate TACs to help avoid overlapping communications.

"WPF D TAC 3" will be assigned first for ALL Joint-Responses INTO Winter Park.

"WPF D TAC 5" may be used for other operations such as training evolutions or non-emergency communications.

"WPF D TAC 6" will be used by the department's Office of the Fire Marshal for all normal operations.

All other talk groups that are available on the Fire Department radios should be used at the operator's discretion. Employees should be reminded that these other talk groups are utilized by other City workers and utilization of these TGs could interrupt their operations. Fire Department employees should first monitor the TG they wish to call upon for several seconds prior to calling for a particular individual.

#### **700.01.04. Emergency Alerting System:**

The alerting system currently in place utilizes a Zetron model encoder that is programmed to send a series of tones that activate the Station radios as desired.

Station monitors should remain on the talk group assigned for their particular station, for example; the monitor at Station 62 should read "STA 62" at all times.

**IF THIS MONITOR IS NOT IN THE CORRECT POSITION THE ALERTING SYSTEM WILL NOT OPERATE.** In addition, all station radios should remain at a volume level between 8-11 for adequate reception.

#### **700.01.05. Dispatching Emergency Calls:**

The following procedures will be followed by the communications operators for the handling and dispatching of all emergency calls in Winter Park.

Once information has been received about an incident that requires the Fire - Rescue to respond, the operators will process the address in the CAD system and determine the response assignment utilizing the "Run Card" feature of the system. If a joint response is required, the appropriate calls shall be made after the initial dispatch or another operator.

Calls will be announced in the following manner:

- Tone out of proper Station or Stations over "WPF D TAC 1"
- Manual Emergency Tones / 5

- List all units assigned to respond / Both Winter Park and any other First Response units
- Nature of Incident
- Location
- Assigned Tactical Talk Group
- Time

All dispatched units shall announce their response on the assigned Tactical Talk Group.

Once all units that were dispatched acknowledge their response, dispatch will repeat the above information and add any additional information they have discovered since the initial call was announced.

- List all units assigned to respond / Both Winter Park and any other Fire Response units.
- Nature of Incident with known details
- Location, with cross streets
- Any additional patient information that has just been received
- Time

If the Fire Department units do not respond within 90 seconds, they should be re-paged and a phone call should be made to the Station itself.

Once on the scene, it will be necessary that communications to "Winter Park" be relayed through the Incident Commander.

Fire-Rescue units will be dispatched immediately on all calls where there is a potential need for medical treatment. Due to the information received, units dispatched will determine whether an emergency response is required. Units will continue their response once dispatched to secure the scene and determine the actual nature of the incident. In cases where a Fire-Rescue response is not required, the assignment may be aborted by the officer in charge.

If information is received during a response that indicates the emergency is not in fact an emergency, the unit responding has the option to reduce the response to non-emergency. Units are required to continue their response and evaluate the scene. Once on the scene the Fire-Rescue units should provide a detailed situation report as soon as possible. This information should be relayed to other responding units.

#### **700.01.06. Still Alarms:**

If a Fire-Rescue unit comes upon an emergency and needs to notify the communications center of a potential alarm, a "Still Alarm" will be announced.

The unit in the field will announce to Winter Park they are on the scene of a "Still Alarm" and are requesting additional assistance. "Winter Park" will in turn announce the "Still

Alarm" by activating one (1) alert tone and announcing the still alarm, the location, reference to the call if known, and the assignment of the radio TAC to operate on.

An example of this would be any walk-in patient to a fire station. The units in the station would announce a "Still Alarm" and inform "Winter Park" what equipment will be needed and or committed to the alarm.

**700.01.07. Responses to Automatic / Trouble Fire Alarms:**

Dispatchers **WILL NOT** activate any response from the Fire Department for **TROUBLE ALARMS** received from any monitoring agency. A call will be made to notify the Battalion Chief of any TROUBLE ALARMS that are received.

Any other calls for a response to an automatic fire alarm will be handled as live fire situations. The Fire Department response assignment to All Automatic Fire Alarms is as follows: 2 Engine Companies, 1 Truck Company and 1 Battalion Chief. An Engine Company can be substituted for the Truck Company for automatic fire alarms if Truck 61 is not available to respond.

Responses to automatic fire alarms **MAY NOT BE CANCELLED ONCE INITIATED** by the alarm company. The responding Battalion Chief will be made aware of the call to cancel and only then may the assignment be downgraded. "PROPER CODES" do not exist for fire alarms.

**700.01.08. Emergency Response Assignments:**

The Battalion Chief has the ultimate authority on all responses to all emergencies. He may override the dispatched assignment at any time. They are solely responsible for any deviation of this SOG and are given this authority through the Assistant Chief / Operations.

Additional Alarms (Second, Third ETC.) shall reflect a complete second assignment of the particular incident. An example would be if a "Second Alarm" was requested for a structure fire, two additional engines, one additional truck, one additional rescue and another chief officer would be dispatched. Additional, specific units may be requested by the Incident Commander instead of a full assignment.

**Time Marks** will be made at 10-minute intervals for all **working** EMS calls and 20 minutes for all working FIRE calls. This time mark serves to remind those operating at the scene that time has passed since their arrival and certain benchmarks need to be achieved to move the incident to completion. Additional time marks may be requested at any time during the incident.

If the EMD system suggests a BLS response and the **FIRST DUE RESCUE UNIT IS NOT AVAILABLE, THE CLOSEST ENGINE COMPANY SHALL BE DISPATCHED AS PART OF THE ASSIGNMENT. REMEMBER RESCUE 61 is the FIRST DUE RESCUE**

FOR ALL OF ZONE 61. This means that Engine 61 will not be dispatched to known BLS calls in zone 61. Rescue 61 will handle the calls., If the responding Rescue requests an Engine Company, it is to be dispatched.

The following is a list of the assignments that are required to be dispatched to the types of alarms noted. Communication operators should be familiar with this list. Deviation from this list should be under the control of the Battalion Chief. The dispatcher will call for any additional units as requested by the Incident Commander.

### 1 Engine Company

- All Fires not involving Structures Including Automobiles
- Trash Containers
- Brush/Grass
- Power Lines
- Elevator Rescues
- Non- Medically Related Public Assists
- Assists back to bed / without injuries

### 1 Engine Company and 1 Rescue

- All potentially ALS Medical Responses / Medical Alarms
- All reported falls either known BLS or ALS
- All Auto Accidents

### 1 Engine Company, 1 Truck Company, 1 Rescue and 1 EMS Supervisor

- All Auto Accidents with Entrapment or Rollover

### 2 Engine Companies, 1 Truck Company, and 1 Battalion Chief

- Automatic Fire Alarms

### 1 Engine Company, 1 Truck Company, 1 Rescue, 1 EMS Supervisor and 1 Battalion Chief

- All Hazardous Materials Responses / Gas Leaks, Spills, Etc.
- All Industrial Accidents including falls, entrapments or collapse

### 1 Rescue

All obvious BLS related medical calls as noted in EMD Protocols

3 Engine Companies, 1 Truck Companies, 1 Rescue 1 EMS Supervisor and 1 Battalion Chief

- All structural fires
- All fires with any structural exposure
- All smell of smoke or electrical burning odors

**STORM STATUS**

The on duty Battalion Chief will advise the Communications Center to initiate Storm Status. Upon this notification, the Communications Center will send an FD Staff page with the subject line “Storm Status.” The main body of the page will advise that “WPFDD is operating under storm status.”

This will indicate that normal staff notifications will be limited to working incidents. These can be but are not limited to the following; employee injuries, structures fires, trauma alerts or staff notification requests made by the Battalion Chief.

The Battalion Chief has the option to abbreviate the response assignment to automatic fire alarms during periods of heavy weather. A single Engine Company or other Fire-Rescue unit may be substituted for a full-alarm assignment on all automatic fire alarms while this situation exists. The storm status declaration by the Battalion Chief will initiate this single-unit response to all automatic fire alarms.

While operating under storm status, communications operators are encouraged to put all calls on the same TAC with the exception of full-assignment calls. (This assists the units in knowing what each other are doing and reduces the potential for confusion.)

During storm status, it is not necessary to use the station tone(s) when the responding units are not in quarters.

Upon the Battalion Chief advising the return to normal operation, the Communications Center will send an FD Staff page with the subject line “Normal Status.” The main body of the page will advise that “WPFDD has returned to normal status operation.” Responses to automatic fire alarms will also return to a normal alarm assignment as outlined in this guideline.

**700.01.09. Joint Response Procedures:**

Under the current Joint Response (JR) agreement Winter Park has with Orange & Seminole Counties and the Cities of Maitland, and Casselberry the following procedures

shall be followed by the communications operators when a response with these agencies is required.

In the case of the City of Orlando, any units requested should be dispatched as if they were in the "Joint Response" agreement. Notification of the Battalion Chief is required, but standing approval is maintained.

#### **FOR CALLS THAT ORIGINATE IN WINTER PARK:**

- Determine from the "Run Card" that a joint- response is required for the alarm.
- Contact by phone the Orange County Fire – Rescue Communications Center for Orange County and Maitland calls and the Seminole County Communications Center for Seminole, Altamonte Springs and Casselberry calls.
- Request units needed from the Run Card and advise them what Tactical Talk Group we will be using for the incident. In **ALL** cases TAC 3 should be used first for **ALL** JR assignments.
- To dispatch Winter Park units:
  - Tone out proper Station or Stations over “WPFDD Tac 1.”
  - Manual Emergency Tones (5)
  - List all units assigned to respond / Both Winter Park and any other First Response Units. The agency name of any JR response unit should not be used in the dispatch.
  - Nature of Call.
  - Location
  - Assigned Tactical Talk Group 3 (Tac 3).
  - Time
  - Upon completion of the incident, Winter Park units will advise "Winter Park" that they have completed their assignment and are returning to "Winter Park TAC 1".

#### **FOR CALLS THAT ORIGINATE OUTSIDE OF WINTER PARK:**

If the call originates with the Orange County Fire-Rescue PSAP and Winter Park units are requested to respond into Orange County, the same procedures will take place with the exception that Winter Park units will call "Orange County" over the assigned Orange County "TAC" and answer to their dispatchers. When the incident is completed, Winter Park units shall notify "Orange County" they have completed their incident and are returning to "Winter Park TAC 1".

To dispatch Winter Park units:

- Tone out proper Station or Stations over “WPFDD Tac 1.”
- Manual Emergency Tones (5)

- List all units assigned to respond / Both Winter Park and First Response units. In the case that Winter Park units are responding with a full assignment from a JR agency, there is no need to list all JR units responding.
- Nature of incident.
- Location
- Assigned Tactical Talk Group (dependent on requesting agency)
- Time

**700.01.10. Mutual Aid Responses:**

Request for "Mutual Aid" from the Winter Park Fire Department are different than those responses made under the "Joint Response" agreement.

Should a request be made from an agency other than Orange or Seminole County, the City of Maitland, Eatonville, or Casselberry the request is considered "Mutual Aid" and must be approved by the Battalion Chief prior to dispatching.

In the case of the City of Orlando, any units requested should be dispatched as if they were in the "Joint Response" agreement. Notification of the Battalion Chief is required, but standing approval is maintained.

**700.01.11. System Hardware / Operations:**

All Portable Radios are to be used in the holsters provided.

All personnel should become familiar with the functions of their particular radio. Each radio is designed and programmed to perform different functions.

The EMERGENCY buttons (orange on portable and red on mobiles) shall only be activated when an operator has emergency traffic. If three calls are made to "Winter Park" with no response, the operator may initiate an EMERGENCY call only if the information to be transmitted involves an emergency incident in progress. To reset the EMERGENCY function the radio must be turned off and back on again. The EMERGENCY button may also be depressed and held for a reset.

**700.01.12. Hardware Service and Programming:**

All Motorola equipment will be serviced through the Winter Park Police and Fire Communications Center Manager.

Any problems with portable or mobile radios should be reported to the Assistant Chief / Administration as soon as possible.

Spare portable radios are available in the Battalion Chiefs office.

**700.01.13. "Emergency" Procedures / Operator Safety:**

Due to security reasons this area of the SOG will not be published on the website, please contact the agency if additional information is required.

**700.01.14. Hostile / Hostage Situation Response:**

Due to security reasons this area of the SOG will not be published on the website, please contact the agency if additional information is required.

**700.01.15. Response to Open Radio Transmissions:**

Communications operators do not need to respond to every open mic transmission. Many times the radios are keyed by accident and the unit has no traffic for the air. Please wait until a unit keys several times or has an extended open mic before responding to them over the air.

Remember, the system is designed only to allow open mics for 30 seconds. After 30 seconds the PTT (push-to-talk) button is deactivated and the user must re-key the radio before additional airtime is allowed.

**700.01.16. Console Talk Group Patch Procedures:**

Those other units working with Winter Park units who do not have a particular Winter Park Talk Group in their radio should be connected to the operation by-way of the Talk Group patch function in the Gold Series Elite console. Dispatchers have the ability to "patch" two or more Talk Groups together for the purpose of bringing different agencies into an operation.

**700.01.17. Use of the Designated Paging System / Staff Notification:**

A page shall be sent to all Fire - Rescue staff members upon the receipt of all working incidents. Notifications should include but are not limited to:

- A full assignment is dispatched
- Working structural fires
- When an Engine or Engine and Rescue are dispatched on a JR / Mutual Aid response on any call type other than EMS. In the case of an EMS response, it should fit the criteria listed below under EMS.
- Hazardous Materials Incidents (medium to large when more than one Engine responds).
- Employee Injuries / Serious in Nature (Transported to Hospital)
- Fire - Rescue involved auto accidents
- Terrorist threats to include bomb threats and detonations, as well as any other suspected acts of terrorism.

- Any call that deals with the Technical Rescue Team – high angle rescue, confined space rescue, and trench rescue.

### **EMS**

- Fatalities by means other than self-inflicted. This would include fatalities by auto crash, train crash, etc.
- Trauma calls – shootings, stabbings (of any significance), car crash with entrapment or rollover, vehicle vs. pedestrian (or bicyclist) where the injuries are serious.
- ALL trauma alerts.
- Any other medical call of major significance – this would be for information only.

The following formats will be used for FD pages:

#### **Initial Page**

- 'Location' will go in the subject line, i.e. 120 S Park AV.
- Body of email, start with call type, i.e. Car Crash with entrapment.
- Units responding, i.e. E62, R62 T61, EMS 61 and B61 responding.
- Any extraneous information, i.e. multiple patients.

#### **Update Page**

- 'Status Update' will go in the subject line, i.e. Status Update
- Body of email starts with location, i.e. 120 S. Park AV.
- Any updates pertinent for the page, i.e. working code on patient.

#### **Final Page**

- 'Final Page' will go in the subject line, i.e. Final Page
- Body of email start with location, i.e. 120 S Park AV
- Information indicating closing of the call, i.e. patient being transported to WPMH, all other units clearing the scene per B61.

There may be occasions where a second or third Update Page is necessary. Use the same format for those pages.

### **700.01.18. Hospital Status Notification**

In order to maintain up to the minute information concerning the status of local hospitals, the Emergency Communications Center uses the Web-based application, EMSsystem. The EMSsystem is designed to update area providers as to the status of the local emergency departments.

Communications operators will log in the EMSsystem at the start of each shift.

When the Communications Center is notified a Rescue unit is enroute to the hospital, they will determine the hospital status and advise the rescue of any status other than 'Normal off-load.'

If necessary, the Rescue unit will determine if they need to transport the patient to another hospital.

NOTE: Any hospital showing a "No Status" is not on the EMSsystem.

**700.01.19. Dispatched Requiring both Fire & Police Response:**

When the communications center receives a call that requires the response of both the fire and police departments, the communications operator will ensure that the incident is dispatched to both agencies as quickly as possible.

If a delay is occurring in the standard dispatching procedure, priority should be given to the agency with primary responsibility for the incident.

**700.01.20. Medical Transportation:**

The City of Winter Park Fire-Rescue Department is responsible for all 9-1-1 requested patient transports received at the Winter Park PSAP. We may also be requested to transport patients from areas within Orange and Seminole Counties, Altamonte Springs or Casselberry. These patients should also have requested service through the 9-1-1 system.

If a call is received requesting patient transport services on other than 9-1-1 lines, and it is determined through normal EMD protocols that the patient is not in any immediate danger, a private ambulance service may be called to provide transport service.

The EMS Supervisor shall be notified of each of these incidents at the time they occur. If any doubt exists as to whether the patient is stable or not, Fire-Rescue units shall be dispatched no matter the origin of the call.

**700.01.21. Emergency Evacuation Signal:**

While operating at the scene of an emergency the Incident Commander may request for the evacuation of all personnel in the immediate danger area. Upon receipt of the request, the communication operator shall announce the evacuation and utilize ALERT TONE TWO on the console. This signal and announcement shall be made over the TALK GROUP in use by the units on the scene of the particular emergency. A simulcast

of the TONE ALERT and Message may be requested by Command if units remain unaccounted for.

A Personnel Accountability Report or PAR of unit operating on the scene shall be requested by Command after the evacuation signals are sounded. The communications operator shall then call each unit on scene individually, i.e. Engine 61 PAR, Truck 61 PAR, until all units are accounted for. It is acceptable for Engine 61 to PAR for Truck 61 or any other unit on scene. If a unit gives a PAR for another unit, it is not necessary to call that individual unit. When PAR is completed, the communications operator will advise Command "all units are PAR."

At the scene, an Engine close to the building will be notified to activate their air horns in conjunction with this radio announcement.

**700.01.22. Emergency Radio Traffic:**

In cases where a unit requires emergency radio traffic, the operator will call to "WINTER PARK" and request emergency traffic. "WINTER PARK" will, in response to the request, sound one single ALERT TONE (alert 1 tone on the console) and advise that the requesting unit has emergency traffic, i.e. "All units standby, Rescue 61 has emergency traffic.". At that point, the individual requesting the emergency traffic will have exclusive rights to the TAC until they indicate completion of their transmission.

**700.01.23. Mobile Command Post:**

It will remain the discretion of the Incident Commander to summon to a scene the City's Mobile Command Post.

The communications operator will be responsible for alerting the Communications Manager and any dispatch personnel assigned for the operation of the Command Post.

A courtesy notification will be made to either the Police or Fire Department's Command Staff to alert them to the use of the Command Post by the other.

**700.01.24. Media/Citizens request for information:**

During emergency and non-emergency situations, the news media may call requesting information on the incident. All media inquiries shall be referred to the agency's Public Information Officer (PIO). In the event that the PIO can not be reached by the Communications Center, then media inquiries shall be referred to the Incident Commander. Further guidelines pertaining to Public Information are outlined in Standard Operating Guideline 700.05.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James E. White', is written over a horizontal line.

James E. White  
Chief of Department