



Burlington Fire Department



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Section: 06 - Communications/Dispatch	
SOG Number: 06.26	Effective Date: Sept. 18, 2017
Subject: Use of Tactical Channels	
By Order of Fire Chief Steven A. Locke	

I. Purpose:

To establish a consistent method for the use of tactical channels at response incidents.

II. Scope:

This guideline pertains to all uniformed members of the Burlington Fire Department and the Emergency Communications Specialists who operate within the Burlington Emergency Communications Center (Dispatch).

III. Definitions:

BFD Channel 1: Repeated primary dispatch channel.

BFD Channel 3: Simplex tactical channel.

BFD Channel 4: Alternate tactical channel.

BFD Channel 5: Simplex “talk around” of BFD Channel 1.

UVM MC Channel 15: Alternate tactical channel for use at the University of Vermont Medical Center located at 111 Colchester Avenue.

IV. Guidelines:

- A). All emergency calls will be dispatched over BFD Channel 1.
- B). Communications on incidents with 2 or less units assigned may elect to remain on Channel 1.
- C). Communications on incidents with more than 3 units assigned will move to a tactical channel.
 - 1. BFD Channel 3 will be the primary tactical channel in all areas of the City except:
 - University of Vermont Medical Center
 - New North End beyond Burlington High School
 - 2. BFD Channel 4 will be the primary tactical channel in the New North End (North of Burlington High School).
 - 3. UVM Medical Center Channel 15 will be the primary tactical channel for the University of Vermont Medical Center located at 111 Colchester Avenue. (This physical location has in building antenna capability designed to this frequency).
- D). Tactical Channel Use.
 - 1. Tactical Channels will be assigned by Dispatch at the time of an initial incident dispatch, on incidents where three (3) or more units are assigned.
 - 2. Upon arrival at the incident scene, the first due unit will sign on scene with Dispatch on Channel 1 and broadcast their Brief Initial Report and establish command.
 - 3. Upon arrival of the second due Fire unit (not an ambulance) they will sign on scene on Channel 1 then broadcast that the incident will be moved to the assigned tactical channel.
 - 4. All later arriving apparatus will sign on scene with dispatch on Channel 1, then move to the tactical channel. Units shall then sign on scene with the incident commander on the tactical channel.
 - 5. The incident commander shall monitor the primary dispatch channel and the tactical channel at all times.

E). Terminating an incident.

1. Upon completion of an incident, the Incident Commander shall advise Dispatch the status of all units on the primary dispatch channel. This allows any units not yet on scene to hear the update from Command and the disposition of the incident.
2. Updates from the Incident Commander including; terminating the incident, releasing units, or announcements of a transfer of command shall be done on Channel 1.
3. Units who remain on the incident scene will continue to utilize the tactical channel until a single resource is all that is remaining.

V. Responsibility:

It is the responsibility of all members to read, understand and follow this Standard Operating Guideline

Revision History			
Revision Date	Section	Summary	Principal Author
Sept. 15, 2017		Initial release of document	Capt. Webster
July 6, 2020	Definitions IV.C.3	Updated UVMMC frequency to Channel 15 after recent radio reprogramming.	DC Collette