BASIC DISPATCH PROCESSING

705.1 RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

All radio traffic/transmissions shall be directly related to the safety of life, protection of property, or the performance of official Police Department and City business. All activities and situations must be accurately analyzed and appropriate action taken to help assure officer safety. Radio dispatches must always exercise initiative and independent judgment in determining priorities and coordinating simultaneous activities of a critical nature.

705.2 RADIO SYSTEM

The police radio system is for official use only, to be used by dispatchers to communicate with department members in the field. All transmissions shall be professional and made in a calm, business like manner, using proper language and correct procedures. Such transmissions shall include, but are not limited to:

(a) Members acknowledging the dispatcher with their radio identification call signs and current location.

(b) Dispatchers acknowledging and responding promptly to all radio transmissions.

(c) Members keeping the dispatcher advised of their status and location.

The Dispatch Supervisor shall be notified of radio procedure violations or other causes for complaint.

705.3 RADIO IDENTIFICATION

Radio call signs are assigned to department members based on factors such as duty assignment, uniformed patrol assignment and/or member identification number. Dispatchers shall identify the department member by his/her full call sign.

Members should use their call signs when initiating communication with the dispatcher. The use of the call sign allows for a brief pause so that the dispatcher can acknowledge the appropriate department member. Members initiating communication with other law enforcement or support agencies shall use their entire radio call sign, which includes the department name and call sign.

705.4 INTERFERENCE

If the dispatcher or field units relaying traffic experience interference that hinders normal communications operations, the dispatcher should contact a Dispatch Supervisor immediately. If interference is such that normal operations can not continue on the affected channel, the Dispatcher shall instruct units to switch to an unaffected channel. If the interference is being caused by an illegal source of transmission, the dispatcher shall read the appropriate FCC warning.

705.5 RADIO DISPATCHER

The primary responsibility of a radio dispatcher assigned to work a police radio channel is the radio operation. A dispatcher is to promptly and effectively dispatch both routine and emergency

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calls to officers, effectively coordinate officer responses and status changes for calls of service and requests. Other responsibilities include utilizing tools such as RIMS CAD, phone systems and desktop radio consoles. Dispatchers process miscellaneous requests from officers in the field, monitor phone calls and all radio channels, efficiently make legal inquiries through law enforcement databases and applications, and accurately interpret and disseminate information.

To avoid interference with radio communications in progress, dispatchers shall actively monitor the radio channel on which they wish to transmit, allowing sufficient time to ascertain if their transmission will cause interference. Dispatchers shall not transmit if interference is likely to result.

705.6 DISPATCHING CALLS FOR SERVICE

Radio dispatchers shall adhere to the following basic ABCC principles of public safety communications:

1. **Accuracy**: Accuracy is necessary to obtain factual and reliable information.
2. **Brevity:** Brevity is necessary to conserve radio "air" time. Lengthy or unnecessary radio traffic can jeopardize officer safety and delay communications business. Conserve "air" time by using property radio codes, concise phrases, and established broadcast formats.
3. **Courtesy**: Courtesy is necessary for efficient and rapid service.
4. **Clarity:** To prevent misinterpretation of radio transmissions, dispatchers shall use proper radio codes, phonetic alphabet, proper phraseology and standardized broadcast formats. Avoid familiarity, humor or slang. Use proper titles or unit/officer identifiers.

Calls for service are to be voiced over the radio to ensure situational awareness and safety of officers response. Dispatchers shall speak in normal tone of voice and pronounce words slowly and distinctly. Speaking shall be done in a voice that is as emotionless as possible, regardless of the situation. Emotion will distort the voice and render it unintelligible.

705.6.1 DISPATCHING TIMES

The radio dispatcher's primary focus is to diligently manage all open calls for service and dispatch available resources as soon as possible. If the adequate number of patrol units are not available within the allotted following timeframes, a notification shall be made to the Sergeant or Patrol Supervisor advising of the pending incident.

Priority 1: The maximum time a priority one may pend before a supervisor is notified shall be three minutes.

Priority 2: The maximum time a priority two may pend before a supervisor is notified shall be five minutes.

Priority 3 & 4: Within a reasonable amount of time, depending upon the availability of the supervisor and units.

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705.6.2 NUMBER OF UNITS

The number of units that are assigned to an event/incident depends on the type of incident, time element, and priority. Generally, dispatchers shall use the following guidelines and good judgment when deciding the number of units to dispatch on a call:

One Unit: All report calls that are prior, suspect has been gone for some time and there is no potential danger to life or property such as cold thefts, stolen vehicles, missing persons not at risk, meet the citizen, burglary reports where the RP has cleared the location and sure the suspect is gone. This is normally referenced by a priority 3 call, but not always.

Two Units: Crimes in progress or just occurred where the potential for danger officer/public safety exists. Examples such as injury accidents, disturbances, civil standbys, welfare checks, robbery, assaults, suicide, missing persons at risk, and any incident involving a weapon.

More than Two Units: Dispatchers shall dispatch more than two units for crimes in progress involving immediate threat to life such as an active shooter, assault with a deadly weapon (stabbing/shooting), kidnapping, armed bank robbery, officer in peril, foot pursuit, vehicle pursuit, bomb threat, hit and run major injuries, major disaster, barricade/hostage situation, riot or officer/ sergeant request.

705.6.3 CANCELLING CALLS

Incidents, that are not informational only/broadcast only, shall not be canceled by the dispatcher unless authorized by a Sergeant or other Watch Commander. When canceling an incident, the dispatcher should document the reason for the cancelation and the authority (i.e. Sergeant call sign or name). The call taker may cancel an incident when a caller requests them to do so and he or she deems there is no longer a safety risk requiring dispatch.

705.6.4 PENDING CALL- NO UNITS AVAILABLE

The Patrol Supervisor shall be notified of all priority 1 and 2 pending calls. Once the Supervisor has been notified Dispatch shall document the notification into the pending incident.

705.6.5 BE ON THE LOOK OUT/BEAT INFORMATION ONLY

Not all incidents require dispatch and can be completed with an informational broadcast to the units. Certain incidents, by their very nature, are broadcast only and can be broadcasted and closed by the radio dispatcher (Refer to Section 704 for these specific incident types). Other incident types may be cleared with a broadcast only if authorized by a sergeant, watch commander, or dispatch supervisor.

705.6.6 WATCH COMMANDER NOTIFICATIONS

The radio dispatcher has the responsibility for notifying the Sergeant, Lieutenant, and/or Dispatch Supervisor under the following conditions:

- Major Disasters
- Code 20/Code 30

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- Shootings
- Stabbings
- Mass Casualty Incidents
- Bomb Threats
- Barricades or Hostage Situations
- Deceased Persons
- Incidents at Schools
- Sexual Assaults
- Incidents Involving Juveniles
- Administration of Narcan
- Any Incident requiring an SR-10

705.7 ASSIGNING UNITS

The radio dispatcher's primary focus is to diligently manage all open calls for service and dispatch available resources as soon as possible. In dispatching, the radio dispatcher should take a variety of factors into account when assigning units. If a unit is within 2 hours of end of watch, the dispatcher should attempt to use a different beat unit as the primary officer to allow that officer time for report writing. This factor should not be prioritized over immediate dispatch for priority 1 or 2 calls for service or for use as a cover for officer initiated activity.

In most cases, the goal is to support beat integrity by dispatching calls for service to officers based on beat assignments. However, for Priority 1 and Priority 2 calls for service, there are additional considerations to guarantee public safety and service to the community.

Priority 1 and 2: Attempt to first assign to an available (10-8) beat unit. If no beat unit is available, do not delay in assigning call for service to any unit in the city over the air for response. Use the verbiage "off beat" in your radio transmission.

If asked or directed by a beat unit to hold a Priority 1 or Priority 2, immediately contact a watch commander over the air to confirm authority to do so. Document in the CAD incident the directive and who approved it.

Priority 3 calls can pend for an available beat unit or Community Service Officer, unless there is reason or direction to do otherwise.

705.8 OFFICER INITIATED INCIDENTS

Officer initiated incidents are often have the highest risk of officer safety. Dispatchers should use their best discretion when assigning a cover for these incidents. Routine passing checks or traffic stops do not require an automatic assigned cover from dispatch. If the officer initiated incident presents an officer safety risk (i.e. a wanted vehicle, a pedestrian stop, etc.) the dispatcher should automatically assign a cover without prompting. If the field unit determines that a cover is not necessary the dispatcher can cancel the cover when instructed. The dispatcher should broadcast

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back the location of the officer during an officer initiated incident for confirmation and awareness. Any officer safety related to the officer initiated activity should be broadcasted as quickly as possible.

705.9 RADIO PARROTING

In order to promote clarity and prevent miscommunication, dispatchers shall repeat back pertinent radio traffic. Location updates, suspect descriptions, radio status, officer safety information, and any information of relevance to the field units shall be repeated back. When acknowledging an officer (i.e., 10-4 or copy) the dispatcher should parrot back the officer's unit ID; this will confirm to whom the acknowledgement was meant. Dispatchers should use their best judgment when parroting during critical incidents with heavy radio volume in order to allow airtime for the officers' updates.

Examples:

Unit arrives at a location:

Officer: "A123 10-97"

Dispatch: "Copy 10-97 at (state address or street)" or "10-4, A123 10-97 on (name of street)"

Update to incident:

Officer: "A123, subject took off 5 mins ago in a red car North on ECR"
Dispatch: "A123, subject took off 5 mins ago in a red car North on ECR" or "copy, subject took off 5 mins ago in a red car North on ECR"

Update by Officer:

Officer: "A123 C3"

Dispatch:" A123, copy C3"

Update on incident:

Officer: "A123, suspect 1015"
Dispatch: "Copy, suspect 1015"

Update by Officer:

Officer "A123, code 4"

Dispatch: "Copy, A123 Code 4 on (Incident # or name of street)" or " 10-4, Code 4 on (Incident # or name of street)"

Unit out of service:

Officer: "A123, show me 10-7 at PD"

Dispatch: "A123,10-7 at PD"

Restricting Channel:

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Officer:" A123, give us Code 33

Dispatch: "Copy, Code 33 on the primary", or "A123 10-4, Code 33 on the primary"

705.10 CAD DOCUMENTATION

It shall be the responsibility of the Dispatcher to document all relevant information on calls for service or self-initiated activity. Dispatchers shall attempt to elicit, document and relay as much information as possible to enhance the safety of the officer and assist in anticipating conditions that may be encountered at the scene. Desirable information would include, at a minimum:

(a) Date and time of request.

(b) Name and address of the reporting person, if possible.

(c) Type of incident reported.

(d) Synopsis of incident including description of people and property involved.

(e) Involvement of weapons, drugs and/or alcohol.

(f) Time lapse and direction of travel, if applicable.

(g) Whether the reporting party requests contact or not.

(h) Location of incident reported.

(i) Identification and location changes of members assigned as primary and backup.

(j) Time of dispatch.

(k) Time of the responding officer's arrival

(l) Time of officer's return to service. (l) Disposition or status of reported incident

705.11 CODE 33

"Code 33" is defined as limited radio traffic pertaining to the incident prompting the use of Code 33. All other traffic shall be diverted to another channel. Radio transmissions not associated to the incident prompting the Code 33 should be redirected to the appropriate alternate channel. Dispatchers may assign a Code 33 when they feel there is an officer safety element that would best be handled with restricted radio traffic. Incidents such as a code 3 cover, shots fired, felony in progress, first unit's arrival on scene of a hold up alarm, pursuits, or any major critical incident require an immediate Code 33. Dispatchers should also assign a Code 33 anytime they are prompted by a field unit regardless of rank. When assigning a Code 33, the dispatcher shall announce "Code 33" and assign the channel marker (if field units request restriction without the tone the dispatcher will remove the channel marker).

705.12 USE OF CHANNEL 2

Channel 2 should be monitored by the dispatcher to the best of their ability. The dispatcher may also direct units to switch to Channel 2 if they have radio traffic that is not relevant to the working incident on the primary channel. Channel 2 can also be reserved for special events.

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When reserving the Channel the Sergeant or Lieutenant with the reservation must advise if they need an assigned dispatcher. Officers may also use Channel 2 if they have lengthy unit-to-unit transmissions that are best kept off the primary.

705.13 TAC ALERTS

Refer to Section 706.2

705.14 MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN

The City of San Mateo is participating in the County's Mental Health Clinician Pilot Program. This program facilitates the response of mental health professionals in the field, supporting police officers during crisis calls involving citizens. The goal of the immediate response will be to de-escalate the crisis support the safety of the individual in crisis, those around the individual, and all responding to the incident.

The dispatch of Mental Health Clinicians can be initiated by the Dispatcher, responding Officer, Sergeant request, or by the Clinician themselves. The Dispatcher may proactively send the Clinician to a call for service as a co-response with Officers, if the incident involves a subject having a mental crisis or the reporting party advises of a diagnosed mental health condition.

The Dispatcher should assign the relevant special circumstance on Page 2 of the incident for all calls for service involving a behavior or mental health indicator in the call details (i.e. a Mental Health Clinician was dispatch or could have been dispatched if available).

The special circumstance options are as follows:

MHC-Off Duty

MHC-Responded

MHC-Unavailable

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