


FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL POLICY MANUAL

	SUBJECT COMMUNICATIONS	POLICY NUMBER 14.01
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14.01.01 PURPOSE

To promulgate regulations and procedures governing radio communications within the Division of Florida Highway Patrol, with other law enforcement outside the agency, and the general motoring public. Effective and efficient law enforcement communications enhance officer safety, present meaningful communications within the Patrol, with other agencies, and the motoring public.

14.01.02 AUTHORITY

Section 401.465, Florida Statutes, 911 public safety telecommunicator certification.

14.01.03 POLICY

It is the policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to provide effective oral and written communications at all times to all necessary agency personnel and other law enforcement agencies in a clear and concise manner. The Division has 24-hour two-way radio capability providing continuous communications between the Regional Communications Centers, patrol officers on duty and other law enforcement agencies.

14.01.04 DEFINITIONS

- A. **ASSISTANT COMMUNICATIONS COMMANDER (ACC)** – Sworn law enforcement Captain assigned the responsibility of assisting the Communications Commander for all Regional Communication Centers.
- B. **CALL TAKER (CT)** – Non-sworn communications personnel assigned to primarily receive and enter calls for service information into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.
- C. **COMMUNICATIONS COMMANDER (CC)** – Sworn law enforcement Major assigned the responsibility of providing overall leadership and command oversight for all Regional Communication Centers.
- D. **COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING OFFICER (CTO)** – Non-sworn communications personnel assigned to a Regional Communications Center responsible for training new and current communications personnel.
- E. **DUTY OFFICER SUPERVISOR (DOS)** – Non-sworn communications supervisor

assigned to a Regional Communications Center.

- F. **REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTER (RCC)** – There are seven (7) Regional Communications Centers statewide. RCCs are responsible for dispatching all state law enforcement officers whose agency is participating in the joint dispatch.
- G. **REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTER MANAGER (RCCM)**– Non-sworn communications management personnel responsible for the operations of their respectively assigned Regional Communications Center.
- H. **REGIONAL DUTY OFFICER (RDO)** – Non-sworn communications personnel assigned to a Regional Communications Center.
- I. **TROOP WATCH SUPERVISOR (TWS)** – A supervisor assigned the role and responsibilities of providing command oversight for the troop.

14.01.05 OBJECTIVES

- A. To formulate and disseminate written policy and procedures relating to accurate and effective radio communications.
- B. To specify procedures concerning documentation, as required, of all communications.

14.01.06 RESPONSIBILITIES

A. COMMUNICATIONS COMMANDER

1. The Communications Commander or designee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Overseeing the RCC performance measurement process, including data collection, processing, data cleaning, and reporting.
 - b. Training of designated RCC performance measurement personnel and other staff to promote understanding of general RCC performance measurement concepts and implementation of specific performance measurement techniques.
 - c. Identification of activities and outcomes to be measured.
 - d. Creating a RCC performance measurement methodology which addresses specific techniques for data collection, processing, data cleaning, and reporting; and,
 - e. Providing opportunities for feedback about RCC performance measurement data and service delivery from internal staff and outside entities.
2. The CC will establish RCC performance measurements of processing times for all incoming telephone lines at each RCC to ensure the timely and accurate appropriate response for all calls for service.
 - a. The CC or designee shall conduct a quarterly review of the RCC performance measurements of processing times for all incoming

telephone lines.

- b. The review will address and document policy, training, and remedial actions, if necessary.
 - c. The CC will forward the written performance measurements results to the Director or designee.
3. If the RCC Manager position is vacant for an extended period of time beyond 30 days (i.e., long-term injury/illness, termination, etc.), the Communications Commander shall ensure the duties and responsibilities are formally delegated to another employee.

B. REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTER (RCC) MANAGERS

The RCC Manager is responsible for the following:

1. The effective operation of the RCC.
2. Establishing a schedule to ensure 24-hour coverage by a Duty Officer Supervisor (DOS) or Acting DOS in the RCC.
3. Ensuring all DOSs are properly trained.
4. The timely advertisement, interview, and hiring of all personnel assigned to the RCC.
6. Notifying TAC to ensure password access to the facility, computers, records or information systems, either internal or external, is terminated when employment status or position changes.
7. All operations at the RCC, including technical communications.
8. Completing an after action report after a critical or unusual incident occurs that covers all elements outlined in the RCC COOP Plan to include details of recording communication personnel time and expenses.
9. Completing a documented monthly inspection on the RCC Monthly Exercise and Reporting Form (HSMV 62230), available on the FHP SafetyNet Forms page, for operational readiness of all equipment designated for use in support of the Emergency Operations Plan.
10. Performing a management reporting and review process of all completed monthly Communications Quality Assurance (CQA) Forms, and forward the results to the CC or designee.
11. Designating a DOS as a Training Coordinator to oversee the RCC training program.

C. REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTER DUTY OFFICER SUPERVISORS

RCC Duty Officer Supervisors (DOSs) are responsible for:

1. The direct supervision of CTOs, RDOs and Call Takers.

2. Establishing communications personnel schedules to ensure coverage on a 24-hour basis in the RCC.
3. The effective operation of the RCC under his/her command.
4. Ensuring that RCC operations are conducted in compliance with all Department and Division policies and procedures, FCIC/NCIC rules and FCC rules.
5. Ensuring on-going communications with the TWS during any critical incident, to include the closing and re-opening of major roadways. All pertinent interactions shall be documented in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) notes section.
6. The out-going DOS or Acting DOS shall brief the in-coming DOS/Acting DOS prior to ending their shift. The briefing shall provide an opportunity to discuss all **relevant** issues and information that may affect the in-coming DOS/Acting DOS and subsequent shift communications personnel.
7. The RCC Shift Log shall highlight critical issues pertaining to the operations of the RCC (i.e., CAD failures, radio outages, significant road closures, active fires, weather or other alerts received during the shift, etc.). Prior to ending their shift, the DOS or Acting DOS shall enter the briefing report in the FHP Notification and Reporting System (FHPNRS) online through the SafetyNet.
8. Conducting playbacks of telephone and radio conversations at least once each month for each call taker and duty officer under their supervision to ensure compliance with RCC requirements and;
 - a. Provide a written analysis on the CQA Form (HSMV 62231),
 - b. Share feedback with the call taker, RDO and CTO, and;
 - c. Forward the CQA Form to the RCC Manager.
9. Ensuring that the geographic location (GEO), personnel, and other files on each RCC's CAD system contain current information and are updated in a timely manner.

14.01.07 PROCEDURES

A. FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION RULES AND REGULATIONS-USE OF RADIO

1. All radio operations shall be conducted in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rules and Regulations. The Patrol is authorized to transmit communications relative to public safety, the protection of life and property and communications essential to law enforcement activities. False calls, false or fraudulent distress signals; superfluous, unidentified communications, obscene, indecent and profane language are prohibited.
2. Mutual Aid frequencies shall be used in accordance with the rules and

regulations established by the FCC and the Region 9 Plan. Mutual Aid frequencies are primarily for extraordinary communications between disparate agencies. Transmissions on these frequencies shall be:

- a. Brief, using plain English.
- b. No dispatch signals or ten-codes shall be used.
- c. Mutual Aid frequencies are not law enforcement specific and not secure channels.
- d. Mutual Aid frequencies are available to many public safety agencies including fire departments and other first responder personnel.

B. STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT JOINT DISPATCH

1. All supervisors assigned to the RCC, shall be familiar with the various Memoranda of Understanding and/or Joint Dispatch Protocols for each state law enforcement agency served by the RCC. All related documents shall be kept readily available and where all RCC supervisors may reference the material immediately.
2. Communications personnel shall promptly answer all calls on the State Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS), Mutual Aid and Florida Interoperability Network (FIN) in a professional law enforcement and businesslike manner using proper communications procedures established by the current training program.
3. Each RCC shall be identified by the name of the city where they are located. There are seven Regional Communications Centers located in:
 - a. Tallahassee (TRCC),
 - b. Jacksonville (JRCC),
 - c. Orlando (ORCC),
 - d. Tampa (TBRCC),
 - e. Ft. Myers (FMRCC),
 - f. Miami (MRCC), and;
 - g. Lake Worth (LWRCC).

C. RADIO PROCEDURES

1. Members and Communications Personnel will be identified by their assigned identification number during radio communications.
2. All telephone and radio conversations are recorded 24-hours per day and retained for 120 days. Only Communications Personnel with access clearance are allowed the capability of immediate playback of recorded telephone and radio conversations.

3. Main talkgroup channels shall not be used for the purpose of any planned tactical or special operations. Secondary channels will be assigned as needed for tactical or special operations by the DOS or acting DOS on duty.
4. Each Duty Officer when working a dispatch console between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 6:00am, shall perform location and status checks (10-20, 10-13 checks) for each field unit in-service, to verify their status. This will be performed every 30 minutes during this time period. If there is no contact with the field unit within the 30-minute period, the duty officer shall initiate contact with the field unit. All contacts shall be properly documented in the Computer Aided Dispatch System. Attempts to contact any in-service field unit, which has negative results shall also be documented, and the appropriate supervisor notified.
5. 10-33 traffic (emergency traffic) designates emergency radio traffic and receives the communications officer's maximum attention. The following procedures shall be used when lives of division personnel are in immediate danger.
 - a. The RCC will announce 10-33 traffic (emergency traffic) and all communications; administrative, convenience, tactical transmissions and other transmissions of a lesser priority – not related to the situation, will cease. The RCC communications personnel shall have the authority to initiate 10-33 traffic (emergency traffic) and will immediately notify their supervisor. The 10-33 traffic (emergency traffic) will be cleared or reduced in urgency as soon as the immediate danger to lives of Division personnel has passed, or at the discretion or the direction of a field supervisor.
 - b. Communications personnel shall verify the exact location, situation and status of the member and check the status of the member as frequently as possible without disrupting the situation or placing the member in further danger.
 - c. Whenever a unit calls with 10-33 traffic (emergency traffic), the immediate response from the communications personnel will be to instruct the reporting officer to go ahead with the 10-33 traffic.
 - d. Communications personnel responsible for the specific radio channel involved will make other communications personnel and supervisors in the vicinity, aware of the situation to better facilitate their assistance.
 - e. 10-33 traffic (emergency traffic), takes priority over all other radio traffic. Units not directly involved will maintain radio silence unless they have related or other emergency traffic.
 - f. Communications personnel shall notify bordering Division jurisdictions and other agencies of the situation and status to keep them updated and informed.
 - g. There will be occasions where citizens will happen upon a sworn

officer experiencing problems and the officer is unable to utilize the radio for assistance. Citizens may utilize the radio to request assistance. Excitement sometimes prevails on the part of the citizen reporting the incident. He/she may be difficult to understand; therefore, care should be taken to obtain as much information as possible. In these situations, the communications personnel shall:

- (1) Refrain from utilizing ten codes and dispatch signals and will communicate entirely in plain language.
 - (2) Direct the citizen to respond to requested information as professionally as possible.
 - (3) Explain the proper mechanical use of the radio to the citizen, over the airways, when necessary.
 - (4) Identify the communications center as an FHP dispatch center, if needed to identify yourself to the citizen.
 - (5) Obtain location information first, if you are only able to obtain limited information.
6. 10-24 traffic designates an emergency exists and that immediate help is required. When a unit reports 10-24 traffic, the communications personnel shall:
- a. Immediately verify location;
 - b. Notify the following:
 - (1) Closest unit(s),
 - (2) Other agencies as needed,
 - (3) Supervisor, and
 - (4) Emergency response agencies (i.e., fire, rescue, etc.) as needed;
 - c. Initiate 10-33 or 10-46 traffic as needed or requested;
 - d. Document all transmissions and notifications;
 - e. Check condition from the unit as frequently as possible without placing the member in further jeopardy; and
 - f. Provide additional assistance as needed, requested or directed.
7. Radio procedures for members:
- a. Whenever a patrol vehicle is being operated by a member and is equipped with a patrol radio, the member shall ensure that the radio is operational and shall monitor the designated talk groups.
 - b. Unless specifically exempted by the Director, members shall notify

the RCC (via voice or CAD) when they begin and end their tour of duty, and anytime the member is out of service, including location, other than routine traffic operations. All information shall be logged into the CAD. Members engaged in field assignments must ensure they maintain availability for communications with the RCC through mobile radios, portable radios, cellular telephones or other methods that ensure immediate voice contact. Members engaged in planned patrol duties should not exit their vehicle without carrying a portable radio on their person.

- c. Employees shall listen to ensure the talkgroup is clear before transmitting, and should wait approximately 15 to 30 seconds between each attempt to contact a mobile unit or the RCC unless circumstances dictate otherwise.
- d. At the start of a transmission or a series of transmissions, members using SLERS shall properly identify themselves, then the RCC, person or agency being called, i.e.: trooper identification number 309 calling Tallahassee would say, "309 Tallahassee". All members shall respond with their location when called by a RCC except when stating the location would jeopardize the safety of the member or the success of the assignment being conducted. Other agencies will use their Joint Task Force (JTF) approved agency designator before their radio identification number for proper identification of unit.
- e. Radio communications shall be brief and to the point. Unnecessary, superfluous comments added as an expression of courtesy, such as please, thank you or you're welcome, etc., should not be used. Personal communications are prohibited.
- f. Units shall advise the RCC (via voice or CAD) of changes in their in-service status as soon as practical. Dispatch consoles and mobile units shall be alert to radio traffic within their area of responsibility. All employees shall monitor radio traffic on all assigned talk groups and when necessary or directed to do so, will hold radio traffic to a minimum. All changes in status of members when out of service and assigned to an incident or crash shall be recorded in the CAD.
- g. Members who believe they are stopping a suspicious person or suspicious vehicle shall notify the RCC of the following:
 - (1) Location and direction of travel (if appropriate)
 - (2) Complete description of vehicle and/or person
 - (3) License number, including the state, on vehicle, if available
 - (4) Reason for the stop
 - (5) The member shall immediately notify the RCC when completed with the stop.

- (6) If no contact has been made with the member within three (3) minutes from the initial contact reporting the stop, the communications personnel shall attempt to contact the member originating the stop. The member's welfare shall be checked every five (5) minutes utilizing the unit timer until the traffic stop is cleared except at the request of the member to extend the contact to every fifteen (15) minutes, depending upon the circumstances of the stop. Due to the length of time it takes for commercial motor vehicle safety inspections, CVE members may request to extend the contact to every twenty (20) minutes. Safety of the member shall always be the primary factor when the decision to perform the welfare check is deemed necessary.
 - (7) If in the event two attempts to contact the member have failed, the communications personnel shall dispatch the nearest patrol unit to the location of the stop and notify the on-duty/on-call sworn supervisor.
 - (8) If no patrol unit is available, the communications personnel shall contact the nearest local law enforcement agency and notify the on-duty/on-call sworn supervisor or TWS.
 - (9) All information concerning traffic stops and all welfare checks shall be appropriately documented in the CAD system.
- h. Should a member accidentally activate the radio emergency tone he/she must notify the RCC immediately that:
- (1) It was accidental,
 - (2) Provide their current location,
 - (3) Provide their Permanent Identification Number (PIN), as an added assurance that the member is not being held against his/her will.
 - (4) The Duty Officer or call taker shall check the PIN for accuracy and, if correct, can resume normal radio traffic.
 - (5) Should the PIN prove to be incorrect, the call shall continue to be handled as an actual emergency until the member's condition has been verified as okay.

8. **Be On the Look Out** (BOLO)

- a. BOLOs shall be used to inform units, other agencies or RCCs of items, events or hazards that require prompt notification. Items that should be **kept confidential** should be dispatched by telephone, computer or other more secure method of communication.
- b. Communications personnel shall consider the timeliness and

importance of the items before reading a BOLO. Items of importance shall be repeated to mobile units who were out of service, unavailable or who started their tour of duty after the original BOLO was read. "Attempt to contact" BOLOs will be broadcast if there is an indication that the party is in or about to enter the affected district. Items where timeliness and importance are not a factor shall be read during low volume transmission periods.

BOLOs should also be sent to MDC units for future reference by field units.

- c. Communications personnel, when transmitting BOLOs, shall consider the availability of other agencies that could be affected.
 - d. Only pertinent information shall be broadcast, and all BOLOs shall be read using the proper format and stated as briefly as possible.
 - e. Questions concerning the need for dispatching certain messages shall be referred to the DOS or Sworn on-duty/on-call shift supervisors, including the TWS.
9. Communications personnel when broadcasting messages containing information regarding criminal activity, or information of an emergent nature, shall follow all agency requirements. In addition, ensure that all messages are edited appropriately and contain all pertinent information:
- a. Type of crime or incident.
 - b. Time the crime or incident occurred or length of time since occurrence.
 - c. Location of crime or incident.
 - d. Direction and route of travel from scene and when last seen.
 - e. Description of person.
 - f. If armed, type and number of weapons.
 - g. All other pertinent information.
10. Sworn on-duty/on-call district supervisors, including the TWS, shall be notified of all calls holding.

D. TELEPHONE

While answering calls for service, all communications personnel will conduct themselves in a way that is befitting of their post/position. Communications personnel will always be polite, professional, and business like, speaking in a calm, competent and decisive voice tone. Communications personnel will avoid the use of jargon or slang, use only proper English and will not use abbreviations known only within law enforcement circles.

1. Communications personnel of the Florida Highway Patrol shall always identify themselves when answering the telephone. The telephone shall be answered promptly, professionally, and courteously at all times. The prescribed manner to answer incoming telephone calls shall be:

“Florida Highway Patrol, (Title) (Last Name), may I help you?”
2. Communications personnel should use their best judgement to determine whether a call for service will require an emergency or non-emergency response and should ask either open-ended or closed-ended questions to effectively control telephone conversations. The following specific questions apply to most calls:
 - a. What - What is the nature of the call? What happened? Are there any injured persons?
 - b. Where – At what location did the incident occur? Is the caller there or somewhere else? Get specific and exact locations. Direction of travel is also critical as well as distance between intersection, ramps, etc.
 - c. When – When did the incident occur? In progress, just occurred, or in some time past (obtain date and time if necessary).
 - d. Weapons – Are any weapons involved? What type? How many? Are they being used or displayed?
 - e. Are there any intoxicants involved?
 - f. Name and call back number of the caller (if necessary obtain the callers address).
 - g. Who – Who is reporting the incident and/or who is involved? If the callers wish to remain anonymous, do not badger the caller for their name.
 - h. Description of suspect or vehicles involved.
 - i. Any additional information pertinent to the type of call.
3. The Florida Highway Patrol RCCs are not public-safety answering points (PSAP) and not subject to regulation or funding as provided in F.S. 365.171 known as the Florida Emergency Communications Number E911 State Plan Act. However, personnel assigned to the RCC's are certified as 911 Public Safety Telecommunicators and subject to the rules and regulations as provided in F.S. 401.465.
4. All calls of an emergency nature shall always be accepted, even when they do not originate within the jurisdiction of the Division. All pertinent information shall be obtained documented in CAD and then relayed to the proper agency. Communications personnel shall never assume the caller is in a position to redial another number. Any misdirected calls received relating to a life or death situation shall be immediately dispatched to all

appropriate emergency personnel and agencies.

5. Calls for service are often transferred to a Florida Highway Patrol RCC from a local 9-1-1 center. Communications personnel shall not blind transfer any caller to another agency, but shall obtain all available information, including the caller's name and contact number. Calls may be placed in a conference call with a local agency.
6. If the caller hangs up abruptly, without leaving any information, attempts should be made to return the call using caller ID to ensure the callers wellbeing.
7. The Florida Highway Patrol is provided with a toll-free access to the nearest communications center for motorists to dial on cellular telephones. This service is provided and supported by individual cellular telephone and local telephone companies for motorists who need to report crashes, incidents involving reckless drivers, possible intoxicated drivers, disabled motorists or for the reporting of any roadway hazard while traveling throughout the state. This is accessed by utilizing the "*FHP (*347)" access from a cellular phone. Communications personnel should be aware that these calls should normally transfer automatically to the closest Florida Highway Patrol communications center, however, in the situations where the calls are misdirected, the information should be obtained by the communications center receiving the call and then relayed to the appropriate communications center.
8. To avoid a busy signal when callers attempt to contact the Florida Highway Patrol's communication centers utilizing phone numbers other than "*FHP", all calls are directed to an automated attendant. The caller is immediately prompted to hang up and call 911 if the call is an emergency. If the caller remains on the line, he or she is provided with options for FHP administrative phone lines.
9. All calls involving crimes in progress or life-threatening situations will be handled in the following manner:
 - a. Keep the caller on the line as long as the safety of the caller is not placed in jeopardy by doing so, or where existing laws and/or statues may be violated. Do not transfer or place the caller on hold for another duty officer or agency to pick up and handle. The caller may be placed in a conference call with a local agency. FHP communications personnel will remain on the line until the call is completed.
 - b. Obtain sufficient information to determine;
 - (1) That the call is valid.
 - (2) The crime or incident is in progress or just occurred.
 - (3) A potential for death or injury.
 - (4) Are weapons involved? If so, what kind of weapons?

- c. When sufficient information is obtained:
 - (1) Immediately dispatch appropriate units or other law enforcement agency as appropriate for the call.
 - (2) Immediately notify emergency services and request they dispatch appropriate units.
 - (3) The caller should be kept on the line until public safety personnel arrive at the scene. If the caller's life is threatened by remaining on the line, or existing laws and/or statutes may be violated, DO NOT ask them to stay on the telephone.
 - d. FHP employees are **not** authorized to provide emergency first-aid instruction over the telephone or radio.
10. Managing the Aggressive, Irate, Hysterical and/or Emotional Caller:
- a. Attempt to calm the caller by being professional, polite, and courteous. Get the callers attention with specific questions, not general questions.
 - b. Do not return the aggressive, irate, emotional or hysterical behavior to the caller. If necessary, have another communications personnel or a supervisor handle the call.
 - c. Some callers may use obscene and abusive language and while communications personnel disconnecting the call may be appropriate in many cases, it is imperative that the Call Taker or RDO first establish enough information to ensure that there is in fact not an emergency or priority service call involved in the situation. It may be necessary to handle the call to obtain necessary information. If this occurs, a supervisor shall be notified at the earliest opportunity and the call documented in CAD.
11. Handling Calls from Children and Elderly:
- a. Children may be calling for an adult who is unable to speak or make the call. They may be upset or confused about the situation they are calling about. It is important for communications personnel to use extreme patience and adapt questioning to the child's age. Communications personnel should avoid jargon or large words which could confuse the child depending on his/her age. If the child is unable to give their location, ask for landmarks or signs to describe their surroundings.
 - b. Elderly callers may not be able to communicate clearly. Some elderly callers may have physical or mental limitations including hearing impairment, memory loss, or are easily confused/frightened. Communications personnel should use a calming respectful tone of voice as additional patience may be required.

- c. To ensure the accuracy of information obtained from callers who are children or elderly, communications personnel should take the time to confirm the information provided by the caller in order to avoid any delays of service and document the call in CAD.
- 12. Non-Emergency/ Administrative Calls:
 - a. Non-emergency calls will be handled based on priority and availability of members.
 - b. During times of high call volume, callers will be advised that emergency calls will take precedence and troopers may have extended response times. At no time will a caller be told that no trooper is available.
 - c. Prior to the termination of a call, communications personnel may provide safety related information if applicable.
 - d. Administrative calls should be referred to the appropriate agency depending on the nature of the request.
- 13. Calls from Another Agency:
 - a. When receiving a call from another agency, determine from the other agency the following:
 - (1) The type of service/assistance being requested.
 - (2) Are they on the scene?
 - (3) Are there any injuries?
 - (4) Is there roadblock? If so, is it possible to clear the roadway while the member is responding to the scene?
 - (5) Will their personnel remain on scene until a Division member arrives?
 - (6) Name or operator number of the agency reporting, in addition to the original caller's name, phone number, and role in the incident (i.e., passing motorist, witness etc.)
 - b. Always notify the responding unit if the call was received from another law enforcement agency or from the public.
- 14. Hearing Impaired, Equal Access per F.S. 427 (Telecommunications Access System Act – TASA):
 - a. The RCC Manager shall:
 - (1) Prominently post and ensure communications personnel have access to procedures for processing calls using the hearing-impaired service provider system for instances when a communication link between standard telephone

- (voice) users and persons who are deaf, deaf/blind, hard-of-hearing, and/or speech-disabled is required.
- (2) Ensure that every RDO receives initial training in the use of the hearing-impaired service provider system.
 - (3) Ensure that every RDO receives re-training in the use of the hearing-impaired service provider system every six months.
 - (4) Document the monthly testing of the hearing-impaired service provider system on the RCC Monthly Exercise and Reporting Form (HSMV 62230), available on the FHP SafetyNet Forms page.
- b. Communications personnel who utilize the hearing-impaired service provider system during the regular course of their duties shall notate this in the CAD system.
15. To overcome language barriers and ensure effective communications with the public, the Florida Highway Patrol utilizes a subscription service to assist the communications personnel with non-English language translation.
- a. This service is to be used for Division activities only and investigations of an urgent nature.
 - b. This service will not be made available to any local agencies at Division expense.
 - c. Communications Personnel and members who need to contact the interpreter service shall do so only via the direct recorded lines in the RCCs.
 - d. The use of the interpreter service shall be documented in the CAD system.
16. General message recording procedures:
- a. Take down all available information.
 - b. Obtain name and call back number from the person calling.
 - c. Confidential informants may need to be directed to a specific person instead of leaving a message.
 - d. Never give out a telephone number to a confidential informant to call an officer at, unless specifically requested by that officer to do so.
 - e. Record all documented messages in the proper mail and/or message format or added remarks as appropriate in the CAD.
17. Procedures for relaying messages:

- a. Critical, important messages shall be delivered as soon as possible to the specific member or employee.
 - b. Non-Critical messages can be delivered utilizing a FHP email account or transferring to a member's voicemail.
 - c. Messages, which are obviously personal in nature, shall be delivered by telephone instead of radio.
18. Response to private security alarms:
- a. When calls are received from any private security alarm monitoring company, regarding the activation of an alarm system in a home, business or other State facility, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - (1) A sworn member shall be dispatched immediately with appropriate additional units as necessary; or the appropriate county or local city police department will be notified.
 - (2) Attempt to ascertain the type of alarm being received and if any other agencies, departments or companies have or will also be dispatched.
 - (3) If the call is received via pre-recorded message, the information available will be supplied to the responding unit(s). If the call is received in person, as much information will be obtained as possible, including contact or call back telephone numbers from the reporting party.
19. Roadway Hazards:
- a. Communications personnel shall notify the appropriate agency of developing road hazard(s) or potential traffic control problem(s) when advised by citizens, the motoring public or field personnel.
 - b. Communications personnel shall notify the appropriate agency immediately upon receiving notification of a damaged, downed, malfunctioning or missing traffic control device.
 - (1) Traffic control devices requiring immediate attention include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Traffic Control Signs:
 - (i) Stop Signs.
 - (ii) Dangerous Curve Signs.
 - (iii) Dangerous Intersection Signs.
 - (iv) Yield Signs.
 - (v) Other Traffic control signs.

- (b) Traffic Control Signals:
 - (i) Traffic lights.
 - (ii) Flashing red/amber lights.
 - (iii) Railroad crossing arms/lights.
 - (iv) Other lighted type signals.
- c. Communications personnel shall notify the appropriate agency during normal business hours of a damaged, malfunctioning, missing or downed traffic control device. If available, after hours contact numbers shall be utilized.
- d. Communications personnel shall gather the following information when receiving a report of a potential roadway hazard:
 - (1) Location.
 - (2) Nature of the problem or solution.
 - (3) Any special directional response information.
 - (4) Name and callback number of person reporting the roadway hazard.
 - (5) Any other relevant information provided by the caller.
- e. Communications personnel shall notify the appropriate agency that would normally handle the repair or clean-up of the roadway hazard.
- f. Communication personnel will notify the TWS or his/her designee of the potential hazard.
- g. Communications personnel shall immediately notify the Florida Department of Transportation or County Department of Transportation when bridges, overpasses, guardrails or any other structures connected to or related to a bridge or overhead structure, has been struck and/or damaged by a crash, fire, act of God or any other force.
- h. To reduce the possibility of a motor vehicle striking an animal, the communications personnel shall immediately notify the appropriate agency when a fence or barrier bordering a limited access highway is damaged, discovered to be damaged, to have a hole, or no longer secure.

E. COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH (CAD)

- 1. The CAD captures all calls for service and provides data for the collection and submission of necessary data that may be required by client public safety agencies.

2. Only authorized personnel will have access to the CAD system equipment, to include computer terminals and printers. Each user of the CAD system will be required to have an identification number and a password to access the system.
3. All communication personnel will be trained using the CAD system to enhance efficiency in the agency's operation by providing officer safety, and safety of the general public. Communication personnel will efficiently dispatch and account for all:
 - a. appropriate personnel,
 - b. related times,
 - c. associated assistance,
 - d. as well as request for all calls received.
4. Communications personnel shall promptly document all calls for service received into the CAD system. If appropriate, dispatch the closest available unit without delay.
5. All unit activity and related times will be properly documented in a timely manner using appropriate CAD commands. All information shall be documented in the fields designated for the information that is received.
6. The CAD system will automatically document the following information when the incident is properly verified and entered;
 - a. Date the incident was entered.
 - b. Time the incident was entered.
 - c. Sequential incident number.
 - d. FHP Case Number – if the incident type entered is set to automatically generate a case number.
7. As a unit is dispatched, placed on scene, or is returned to service following the completion of an incident; the CAD will be used to accurately record these times, as well as primary units assigned, reporting units, backup units, and call dispositions.
8. Communications personnel shall document all information provided and or reported, to include appropriate web notes, by callers and or by members. If any information is unknown, it shall be indicated in the proper manner on each call as it is entered into CAD.
9. Communication personnel will be required to become proficient using the CAD system.
10. Tactical Dispatch Selection Criteria
 - a. Communications personnel shall utilize the CAD system to

document when SRT/QRF/MFF members are notified of an activation or stand-by status, and if applicable, of the cancellation of SRT/QRF/MFF assignments.

- b. All information concerning SRT/QRF/MFF member activities, status, assignments, deployment or cancellation of assignment shall be properly documented in the CAD system.
- c. If the RCC participates in tactical dispatch communication operations, the RCC Manager or designee will assign a RDO to assist in those operations either at the scene or remotely and ensure the RDO has received annual training requirements.

11. Emergency Services/Special Requests:

- a. Duty Officer Supervisors are responsible to maintain a complete file within CAD of agencies and personnel outside the Division. These files shall be accessible to all communications personnel. These files shall contain, but will not be limited to:
 - (1) Police and sheriff departments.
 - (2) Fire departments and rescue units.
 - (3) Emergency medical services.
 - (4) Towing services.
 - (5) Division vehicle repair facilities.
 - (6) Social service agencies and facilities.
 - (7) Mental health facilities.
 - (8) Medical/Hospital facilities.
 - (9) Search and Rescue agencies.
 - (10) Environmental control agencies.
 - (11) Federal, State, county and local state law enforcement agencies.
 - (12) Utility and public service agencies.
 - (13) Other departments or agencies providing specialized services which would be needed during an emergency situation (i.e., Red Cross).
 - (14) Military installations.
 - (15) Federal Aviation Authority locations.
 - (16) Florida Disaster Preparedness office.

- (17) Department of Transportation.
 - (18) Hazmat Response agencies.
 - (19) Tactical response to crimes in progress shall be available through the on-duty sworn supervisor for response profiles from on-duty members.
- b. Generally, the notifications of a serious nature shall not be made by telephone. All telephone notifications must be approved by the TWS.
 - c. Any question regarding a message to be delivered shall be forwarded to the duty officer supervisor.

F. MULTIPLE MEMBER/SUPERVISORY RESPONSE - There are certain incidents when it shall be necessary to assign multiple members, including supervisory personnel.

- 1. When available, two (2) or more members should be assigned to:
 - a. Arrests of felons, violent misdemeanants, or contacts involving combative subjects
 - b. Serious injury or fatal crashes
 - c. Crimes in progress and scenes of major criminal offenses
 - d. Natural and manmade disasters
 - e. Hazardous material incidents
 - f. Manhunts and roadblocks
- 2. If two or more members are not available, necessary assistance should be requested from other law enforcement agencies having concurrent jurisdiction in the area, if feasible.
- 3. Sworn on-duty/on-call shift supervisors, including the TWS, shall be notified of all critical incidents as outlined in FHP Policy 17.29 Troop Watch Supervisors, and in addition to, but not limited to the following:
 - a. Crashes involving:
 - (1) Fatality / Preliminary fatality
 - (2) A school bus occupied with children
 - (3) A Division owned or operated vehicle
 - b. Aircraft down
 - c. Significant road closure, as defined in FHP Policy 17.29
 - d. Incident involving an employee that results in injury or death of the

- employee or another person
- e. Motor vehicle and foot pursuit
- f. Felony drug arrest; cash or property seizure
- g. Manhunt
- h. Shooting that involves a member or discharge of a firearm not during training or qualification
- i. Arrest of an employee on any charge
- j. Other unusual situations that require the presence of a sworn supervisor

G. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. Only equipment authorized and issued, if necessary, by the Florida Highway Patrol will be used by communications personnel.
2. Radio Repairs and Modifications:
 - a. All modifications and repairs to radio and other communications equipment shall only be performed by authorized personnel.
 - b. Communications personnel shall be knowledgeable of the operating functions and locations of all communications equipment including radio consoles and the auxiliary power sources.
 - c. Communications personnel, shall at all times, ensure that Division property and equipment is operational ready and used only for its intended purpose in accordance with established procedures. The DOS shall be responsible for ensuring that each communication personnel receives the required equipment and property necessary for the performance of their duties. Any issues related to damaged or inoperative equipment should be reported to the DOS and replaced or repaired accordingly.
3. RCC Auxiliary Radio Equipment:
 - a. Each RCC shall have auxiliary radio equipment capable of transmitting and receiving to be utilized in the event of primary radio equipment failure.
 - b. All portable radio units assigned to the RCC shall be maintained in working order. Dispatch portables assigned to the RCC shall not be removed from the communication centers for any reason other than maintenance or service. Dispatch portables are specifically programmed for dispatch use and shall not be used by field personnel.
4. Emergency Power Sources:

- a. Each RCC shall be equipped with an emergency generator set to start immediately in the event of commercial power failure. These generators shall produce sufficient power to keep the RCC equipment operating so there will be no interruption of service.
 - b. Generators shall be checked for proper operation during each hour of use. Generators shall be manually or automatically self-tested at least monthly to ensure proper operation. Additionally, each generator should be tested quarterly under full load capacity and preventive maintenance inspections completed annually.
 - c. Automatically generated self-testing diagnostic reports suffice as evidence of monthly testing and may be retained in electronic format. Manual tests shall be documented on a log sheet or inspection checklist (e.g., conducted by a service company). This log sheet may be developed by each RCC and maintained for reference purposes at each location. At a minimum, the following information shall be recorded on this log:
 - (1) Date
 - (2) Time
 - (3) Oil Level
 - (4) Fuel Level
 - (5) Results (i.e., running okay, would not start, leaking oil, etc.)
 - d. Emergency back-up generators that are not owned by DHSMV and are maintained by other agencies will require the RCC to obtain the agencies documentation of maintenance, quarterly full load testing and monthly inspections.
 - e. The ultimate responsibility for the proper documentation of the operation inspections of the auxiliary power generator shall be that of the RCC Manager.
5. Regional Communications Center Security:
- a. The security of each RCC, communications personnel and its assigned equipment shall be the responsibility of the RCC Manager. Adequate security must be provided at all facilities for property and personnel.
 - (1) Entrance doors to the RCC shall be kept closed at all times when not in use. All non-public entrances shall be locked. All outside lights, if manually controlled, shall be turned on during hours of darkness. All drapes, curtains and shades shall be closed during these periods.
 - (2) When equipped, an RCC facility with a closed circuit TV camera and/or intercom at the public entrance, shall be

utilized. This will enable the communications personnel to have contact with visitors without permitting access to the facility.

- (3) Communications and computer equipment, as well as files and messages, shall be located in a secure area not accessible to unauthorized personnel.
 - (4) Any security problem at any facility shall be brought to the attention of the respective RCC Manager through the appropriate chain of command.
 - (5) Areas containing computers, servers, telecommunications equipment, radio equipment, uninterrupted power supplies and emergency generators shall be restricted to authorized personnel. When necessary, non-Division personnel may be permitted access to restricted areas containing communications equipment, provided they have approved Joint Task Force (JTF) Security Clearance or they are accompanied by a Division employee and they have a need to be in that area.
 - (6) Communications equipment (i.e.: radio transmitter sheds, antennas, etc.) outside communication centers will be appropriately secured from public access when no Division personnel are on the premises. Securing will normally be done by the use of adequate fencing, locks and/or alarm systems. Additional security measures shall be taken, if needed.
- b. Division employees shall be attentive to communications equipment and sites. All apparent unauthorized entry, access or tampering shall be investigated and appropriate action taken to safeguard Division equipment.
 - c. ACCESS CONTROL - Only communications personnel and members with official business, which requires access to the RCC, or a person(s) authorized by the Communications Commander, RCC Manager, or DOS are permitted in the RCC. Those who have regular access will be maintained on a current list or issued access credentials. General public walk-in traffic is not permitted to the secure areas. Signs bearing the words "Restricted Area - Authorized Personnel Only" (or substantially similar language) shall be conspicuously posted at all entrances to the secure area of the RCC.
6. Each RCC has an independent "Take Over Plan" / "COOP Plan" that describes the Centers' backup communication plan and documents monthly testing.
 7. As FHP adopts new technology for the provision of public safety services the agency will:

- a. Develop a process and procedure for use of specified new technology;
- b. Provide initial training for telecommunicators in use of newly adopted technology; and
- c. Provide public education for the community when access to public safety services applies.

H. SELECTION and TRAINING

1. A background investigation and verification of qualifying credentials of candidates for Regional Duty Officer positions will be performed in a similar fashion addressing the components and following the guidelines established in FHP Policy 25.02.05(F).
2. Prior to the appointment to probationary or trainee status of a candidate for Regional Duty Officer;
 - a. A medical hearing and vision examination will be conducted by a Division authorized medical provider,
 - b. An emotional stability and psychological fitness examination will be conducted and assessed by a Division authorized qualified professional provider.
3. The Florida Highway Patrol 911 PST Training Curriculum was submitted and approved by the Department of Health. Only FHP personnel that are 911 PST certified by the Department of Health may provide this training.
4. Communications personnel in training must:
 - a. Work under the direct supervision of a certified 911 PST;
 - b. Complete an approved training program and receive 911 PST certification;
 - c. The 911 PST certification must be achieved within 12 months of assignment; and
 - d. Complete remedial training if required, within the timeframe to include appropriate documentation as established by the Florida Highway Patrol Regional Communications Center Training Guidelines.
5. New communications personnel should start their 911 PST training within the first week of hire.
6. Lateral-entry communications personnel already certified in 911 PST training, will complete the training program outlined by the CC.
7. All communications personnel will complete the mandatory annual training plan as set forth by the Learning and Development Office. Any remedial training will be documented and completed within 60 days unless an

extension is granted by the CC.

8. All communication personnel shall be conversant and knowledgeable with the LO/JACK system in a stolen vehicle.
9. COOP Plan review and Evacuation exercises shall be conducted during the first quarter and third quarter of the year to include:
 - a. An exercise report outlining when the evacuation exercise was conducted and by whom.
 - b. A completed training roster signed by all those who participated.

I. WRECKER LOGS

1. Each RCC shall maintain all required vehicle information on every vehicle towed, regardless if the vehicle was towed by a rotation request or at owner's request. The information required for the authorized Wrecker Log shall be maintained in the CAD in the proper formats. The CAD System is available to produce a printed report of all vehicles that have been towed. This information is available from on line history and archival retrieval of information from properly stored backup tapes. This information shall be maintained until a written destruction order of such records is received, in accordance with the DHSMV Management Manual.
2. Communications personnel shall record the following information, at a minimum, as required to properly maintain wrecker logs:
 - a. Year of vehicle.
 - b. Make of vehicle.
 - c. License plate attached to vehicle (if appropriate).
 - d. Year of attached license expiration.
 - e. Complete Vehicle Identification Number.
 - f. Documentation of any other information related to the vehicle tow such as:
 - (1) Reason for non-response by the wrecker company.
 - (2) Non-compliance with rules and or regulations by the responding wrecker company.
 - (3) Name of person spoken to at wrecker company.
3. Communications personnel are responsible for ensuring the proper rotation of wrecker companies and will be held responsible for the completeness of all vehicle records, regardless if they are entered into the CAD system or when the CAD is down.
4. All calls requiring the use of a wrecker service shall be assigned a case

number.

5. It shall be the responsibility of the Communications Manager or designee in each RCC to develop and maintain a current list of all Division inspected and approved rotation wrecker companies by wrecker zone and wrecker class. This information may be obtained from the sworn member in charge of the rotation wrecker companies in their respective Troops.
6. Each rotation wrecker company information file shall contain, at a minimum;
 - a. Name of the wrecker company.
 - b. 24-hour telephone number (toll free) for the RCC to directly contact the wrecker company.
 - c. Any specialized equipment maintained by the wrecker company.
7. The established rotation list, with all current wrecker company information shall be maintained separately from the CAD system, for use during times when the CAD system is down.
8. The Communications Manager or designee shall monitor the rotation wrecker assignments weekly, to ensure completeness and accuracy of all entries. The Communications Manager or designee shall ensure that any missing information is promptly provided and shall handle all inaccurate entries on an individual basis, using the appropriate supervisory and disciplinary methods.
9. Any rotation wrecker discrepancy, regarding failures on the rotation wrecker company, shall be forwarded to the sworn member in charge of the rotation wrecker companies in a timely manner.
10. Removal of Vehicles:
 - a. Upon notification that a member is towing an abandoned vehicle, the RDO shall document the incident in the CAD and utilize the FCIC/NCIC system to verify registration and wanted checks on the attached license plate (if applicable) and the VIN of the vehicle. The RDO shall contact the next available rotation wrecker company for the appropriate wrecker zone and requested wrecker class. If the tow is only for an abandoned vehicle, the tow company will not be rotated to the bottom of the list and moved to the top of the list.
 - b. The RDO shall complete the Abandoned Vehicle Worksheet and properly enter the vehicle into the FCIC as an abandoned vehicle.
 - (1) Second Party Verification shall be completed, as required by FCIC/NCIC rules, policies and regulations, and shall be adhered to, in order to verify the accuracy of the entry.
 - (2) Communications personnel shall complete the letter of notification of towing an abandoned vehicle. The letter shall

be sent to the registered owner, the assigned lien holder (if listed) and the assigned insurance company (if identified).

- (3) All paperwork, vehicle information and vehicle tow information shall be properly documented in the CAD system utilizing appropriate incident codes and disposition codes. All printed paperwork regarding these entries shall be properly stored and maintained.
 - (4) FCIC/NCIC entries must be cancelled if no supporting documentation can be located, and unable to verify report with reporting party.
- c. The DOS shall ensure that proper checks are made utilizing the FCIC system to verify the vehicle entries and accuracy of data.
 - d. Abandoned vehicle entries will be purged from the FCIC system ninety days after entry. The DOS or designee shall ensure through the FCIC Verification process that the entries are cancelled and, if necessary, re-enter the vehicle into FCIC, if appropriate circumstances warrant the re-entry of the vehicle.

J. DISSEMINATION AND SECURITY OF INFORMATION

Communication personnel with access to any type of confidential information during the course of employment shall comply with all applicable Florida Statutes, Federal Regulations; the FDLE CJIS Certification Manual; FBI CJIS Security Policy; and FDLE CJIS Agency User Agreement as well as DHSMV policy and procedures pertaining to the dissemination of information. Communication personnel will exercise discretion when releasing information about investigations and operations as outlined below:

1. Communications personnel will only disclose confidential or sensitive information to authorized FHP members or other Joint Task Force Agencies to whom the RCC provides services.
2. Physical and electronic media containing CJI must be kept in restricted access areas in locked offices, away from publicly accessible areas. Additional measures must be taken within these locations to store physical copies of CJI and CHRI securely, such as locked filing cabinets or secure file rooms with restricted access. Physical media includes paper documents, thumb or flash drives, removable hard drives and compact DVD/Blue-ray disks. Electronic media includes electronic files that may be transmitted across a network or stored in an electronic.
3. Electronic media that is transmitted is encrypted in transit. Any electronic media transferred from a computer that accesses CJI must be encrypted prior to writing to the physical drive or disk. Any physical media (hard drives, thumb drives, paper files) that has not been encrypted must be physically escorted by authorized personnel who have completed CJIS security awareness training and background checks (this will include most FHP personnel).

4. All hard drives and other electronic storage media that are no longer in use must be returned to the Law Enforcement Information Technology Support (LEITS) office. LEITS will coordinate with ISA staff to ensure electronic storage devices are wiped and run through a shredder using a NAID AAA-Certified cross-cut process on site while escorted and monitored via video.
5. Documents containing CJI or CHRI in field offices or RCC's should be placed in locked secure bins and shredded onsite via cross-cut by escorted shredding service or, if not possible, incinerated.
6. Confidential or sensitive information may be disseminated in the following manner:
 - a. Radio (in cases of officer safety),
 - b. Fax (providing the receiving agency has a valid ORI.),
 - c. The T drive after being encrypted, (All files containing CHRI or FCIC information and distributed via the RCC messages folder must be encrypted and password protected. The requesting member must retrieve the document from the folder as soon as possible upon notification that it is available. Once the requester has retrieved the document, they will inform the duty officer, who will delete the record from the folder immediately.); or
 - d. An approved method by the Chief Technology Officer.

Communications personnel should NEVER use email to disseminate confidential or sensitive information as it is impossible to ensure the recipients email system is encrypted to FBI CJIS Security Policy Standards.

7. Communications personnel shall defer to FHP Policy 13.04 for all public record requests.
8. Member location, personal or identifiable information including work schedules should NEVER be disclosed to unauthorized individuals or posted on any form of social media.
9. Any document containing sensitive information or scratch paper used while dispatching/ call taking that is not immediately needed or stored in a case file, shall be shredded in a micro-cross shredder by the end of the communications personnel shift.
10. Criminal history record data will only be obtained for, and released to, members of the Division in the performance of their official duties. Use of and dissemination of criminal history records will be handled in the following manner but not be limited to:
 - a. Communications personnel who have requested criminal history information in the course of their duties are restricted in the manner that the information may be used.
 - b. Logging is required by established rules and regulations of

FCIC/NCIC. A dissemination record shall be maintained in the communications center where all criminal history record information is released by the Department to external agencies. Criminal history record information, which is not disseminated outside of the Department, is not required to be logged. The dissemination log shall contain at a minimum:

- (1) Whom the information is related to.
 - (2) Whom the information was released to.
 - (3) Who released the information.
 - (4) Date the request was run.
 - (5) Purpose for which the information was released.
 - (6) Other numeric identifiers.
- c. When criminal history arrest records are released outside the Department, the printout from the FCIC/NCIC computer system must be:
- (1) Properly logged in the dissemination log.
 - (2) Stamped with the official CONFIDENTIAL stamp using red ink only.
 - (3) The requesting agency representative shall sign the dissemination log when the member receives the criminal history information. If the agency representative's location precludes their signing the log, and the information is relayed to the agency representative, the communications personnel shall sign the release log instead of the member, and indicate the disposition of the criminal history information.
 - (4) FCIC rules and regulations allow for the release of criminal history record information and other criminal justice information over the radio and cellular telephones when the member determines the data is required immediately.
- d. Direct, computer connected access to criminal history database files is permitted only for criminal justice purposes and limited to criminal justice/law enforcement agencies only in the discharge of their official duties. Communications personnel shall not disclose criminal history data to any unauthorized person or agency.
- (1) Agencies permitted direct access to criminal history data include:
 - (a) Law enforcement departments and agencies.
 - (b) State Attorney agencies.

- (c) Courts at all government levels with criminal or equivalent jurisdiction.
- (e) Corrections departments.
- (f) Parole commissions.
- (2) Agencies NOT allowed direct access include:
 - (a) Public defenders.
 - (b) Private attorneys.
 - (c) City/county government officials (outside law enforcement divisions).
 - (d) Private security firms.
 - (e) News/media personnel.
 - (f) Military recruiters.
 - (g) Any other non-critical justice agency.

K. REGULATIONS

1. Communications personnel are prohibited from using personal cell phones at their workstation, unless authorized by the RCC Manager, Assistant Communications Commander or the Communications Commander.
2. Any earring, jewelry, piercings or similar that may interfere with the safe use of department issued communications equipment are prohibited.
3. Employees shall not loiter in the RCC or engage in conversation or activities that disrupt the communications function.