



WASHINGTON COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE ASSOCIATION STANDARDS MANUAL

Title: Standardized Dispatch Assignments

Effective Date: 06/01/2004

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PURPOSE

The purpose of standardizing dispatch assignments is to provide a consistent, measured and apolitical response when a citizen reports an emergency. Depending on the location of the incident, a predetermined dispatch will alert stations in the best position to render immediate assistance.

OVERVIEW

The key elements of the guideline include:

1. Define minimum response levels, identify standard types of emergency calls and construct a geographic classification system composed of protected and unprotected response areas.
2. Assign the classification of protected and unprotected to all communities within the county based on its water supply and perceived resource needs.
3. Identify the fire and rescue resources needed on emergency calls within each geographical classification and construct response levels accordingly.
4. Referencing the WCVFRA mileage standard, assignments will be designed with the closest fire and rescue companies to the scene being dispatched.
5. In addition to multiple alarm responses, construct specialized assignments (Groups) to simplify the dispatch of additional resources to an emergency scene.

DEFINITIONS

ALS Unit	Advanced Life Support Ambulance
Apartment Building	Four or more family dwelling
BLS Unit	Basic Life Support Ambulance
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
County Safety Officer	Included in the Working Fire Dispatch, the Washington County Department of Emergency Services plans to develop a program in the future to ensure a trained safety officer is present on serious emergency scenes in the county.
DFES	Division of Fire and Emergency Services
Duplex	Two family dwelling
ECS	Emergency Communications Specialist



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EFD	Emergency Fire Dispatch
EMD	Emergency Medical Dispatch
FDD	Fire Department District
FRC	Fire & Rescue Communications
HFD	Hagerstown Fire Department
High Risk Occupancy	Buildings, which pose a unique challenge for fire and rescue companies because of its occupancy. Therefore, the following is a list of high-risk occupancies: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Any building over six stories;2. Schools (i.e. public, private, higher education, etc.);3. Medical facilities (excluding a doctor's office);4. Extended living facilities (i.e. nursing home, group home, etc.);5. Daycare centers;6. Shopping centers (including outlets and malls);7. Movie theaters;8. Hotels and motels;9. Large industrial and manufacturing facilities.
IC	Incident Commander
MVC	Motor Vehicle Collision
Pre-alert	When an emergency call is received for either smoke or fire within a structure, the FDHJ is alerted using their pager activation tone while the full assignment is being prepared. The pre-alert gives the FDHJ time to begin assembling their response while FRC gathers information, sets up the dispatch in CAD and dispatches the call.
RIT	Rapid Intervention Team
SCBA	Self Contained Breathing Apparatus
Special Service Apparatus	A request that can be fulfilled with a ladder truck or squad.
Tanker	A request for a tanker can be filled by a tanker or engine-tanker meeting the WCVFRA apparatus standard.
WCVFRA	Washington County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association



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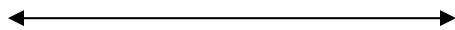
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POLICY

Emergency Fire Dispatch

In April 2005, DFES began utilizing EFD. This program gives the dispatchers a course of action while processing an emergency request for fire or rescue services. Using the phonetic alphabet, the software identifies the call priority and level of response.

Single/Cold



Multiple/Hot

ALPHA	CHARLIE	
BRAVO	DELTA	
		ECHO



Multiple/Hot

- Alpha Local alarm / non-emergency response
- Bravo Local, rescue local or extended local alarm / emergency response
- Charlie Task force or rescue task force / emergency response
- Delta Box or high risk box alarm / emergency response
- Echo An immediate emergency response is needed with limited questioning of the caller.

Geographic Classification System

The classification system is one component in the development of dispatch assignments, which automatically send the minimum amount of emergency apparatus, needed to mitigate the situation. In basing the size of the initial assignment on geography, we hope to accurately meet the resource needs of the call without exaggerating or underestimating the dispatch.



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The following classifications outline Washington County, excluding the City of Hagerstown. The FDD will define each of its box areas using the following classifications.

Protected: An area with an established water supply system offering constant protection and utilizing hydrants for delivery.

Unprotected: All other areas in the county not already addressed.

General Response Levels

Alarm Type	Engine	Tanker	Truck	Squad	Ambulance	Brush	Special Operations
Local (L)	1						
Medical Local (ML)	1				(1) ALS or BLS		
Rescue Local (RL)	1			1	(1) ALS		
Extended Local (EL)	1		Truck	OR Squad			
Task Force (TF)	2		Truck	OR Squad			
Rescue Task Force (RTF)	2			1	(2) ALS		Yes
Box (B)	3		1	1			
High Risk Box (HRB)	4		2	1	(2) BLS		

- Notes:**
- 1) The FDD is not limited in the number of units which can respond from their station on a call. For example, if the dispatch requires an engine company for the FDD and the IC wants both of their engines to respond, this is acceptable.
 - 2) For the local and medical local responses, the FDD may respond with a special services piece of apparatus in place of the engine company except for Medical Assist / Roadway (see Standard Emergency Calls – Note #4).
 - 3) In some areas, an additional engine company is added to local alarms because of the station’s proximity to the respective area. This is intended to deliver an immediate response to a request for assistance. For example, HFD Engine 3 responds automatically on all calls to certain areas within Longmeadow and Funkstown.

Standard Emergency Calls

1 st ALARM: PROTECTED					
Call Description	Pre-Alert	Alarm Type	Additional Units	Note	Priority



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Medic Assist		L			Bravo
Medic Assist / Roadway		ML		4	Bravo
Farm / Machinery Accident		RL			Bravo
Industrial Accident		RL			Bravo
Trench Collapse		RTF			Charlie
Structural Collapse		RTF	(1) Ladder Truck		Charlie
Confined Space Rescue		RTF			Charlie
Technical Rescue		RTF	(1) Ladder Truck		Charlie
Water Rescue		RL	Water Rescue Group		Bravo
Wires Down and/or On Fire		L			Alpha
Investigation - Outside		L			Alpha
Investigation - Inside		L			Alpha
Flooding Condition		L			Alpha
Emergency Flooding Condition		L			Bravo
Brush, Field or Grass		L			Bravo
Mountain or Woods		L	(1) Brush Unit		Bravo
Fluid Spill - <15 Gallons		L			Alpha
Fluid Spill - >15 Gallons		L	Special Ops		Bravo
Hazardous Materials Incident		L	(2) ALS / Special Ops / Air Unit		Bravo
Natural Gas Leak - Outside		L			Bravo
Natural Gas Leak - Inside Residential		TF			Charlie
Natural Gas Leak - Inside Commercial		TF		3	Charlie
MVC - Major		RL			Bravo
MVC - Minor		ML			Bravo
MVC - Property Damage		L			Alpha
MVC – Structural Collapse		RL	(1) Ladder Truck, Special Ops		Bravo
MVC – Unknown		ML			Bravo
Aircraft Crash (outside airport property)		RTF		1	Charlie
Train Crash		RTF			Charlie
Vehicle Fire - Car		L			Bravo
Vehicle Fire - Large / Commercial		L			Bravo
Smoke Detector Sounding		L			Alpha
CO Detector Sounding		L			Alpha
Automatic Fire Alarm - Residential		L		2	Bravo
Automatic Fire Alarm - Commercial		L		2,3	Bravo
Chimney Fire		EL	(1) BLS Unit		Bravo
Building Fire - Shed / Out-Building		TF		2	Charlie
Building Fire Residential / Commercial	Yes	B		2,3	Delta
Building Fire - High Risk Occupancy	Yes	HRB		2	Delta
Building Fire - Barn / Agricultural	Yes	B	(1) Tanker	2	Delta
Building Fire - Silo		RTF	(1) Ladder Truck		Charlie
1st ALARM: UNPROTECTED					
Call Description	Pre-Alert	Alarm Type	Additional Units	Note	Priority
Medic Assist		L			Bravo
Medic Assist / Roadway		ML		4	Bravo
Farm / Machinery Accident		RL			Bravo



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Industrial Accident		RL			Bravo
Trench Collapse		RTF			Charlie
Structural Collapse		RTF	(1) Ladder Truck		Charlie
Confined Space Rescue		RTF			Charlie
Technical Rescue		RTF	(1) Ladder Truck		Charlie
Water Rescue		RL	Water Rescue Group		Bravo
Wires Down and/or On Fire		L			Alpha
Investigation – Outside		L			Alpha
Investigation – Inside		L			Alpha
Flooding Condition		L			Alpha
Emergency Flooding Condition		L			Bravo
Brush, Field or Grass		L			Bravo
Woods or Mountain		L	(1) Brush Unit / (1) Tanker		Bravo
Fluid Spill - <15 Gallons		L			Alpha
Fluid Spill - >15 Gallons		L	Special Ops		Bravo
Hazardous Materials Incident		L	(2) ALS / Special Ops / Air Unit		Bravo
Natural Gas Leak - Outside		L			Bravo
Natural Gas Leak - Inside Residential		TF			Charlie
Natural Gas Leak - Inside Commercial		TF		3	Charlie
MVC – Major		RL			Bravo
MVC - Minor		ML			Bravo
MVC - Property Damage		L			Alpha
MVC – Structural Collapse		RL	(1) Ladder Truck / Special Ops		Bravo
MVC – Unknown		ML			Bravo
Aircraft Crash (outside airport property)		RTF		1	Bravo
Train Crash		RTF			Charlie
Vehicle Fire – Car		L			Bravo
Vehicle Fire - Large / Commercial		L	(1) Tanker		Bravo
Smoke Detector Sounding		L			Alpha
CO Detector Sounding		L			Alpha
Automatic Fire Alarm - Residential		L		2	Bravo
Automatic Fire Alarm - Commercial		L		2,3	Bravo
Chimney Fire		EL	(1) BLS Unit, (1) Tanker		Bravo
Building Fire - Shed / Out-Building		TF	(1) Tanker	2	Charlie
Building Fire - Residential / Commercial	Yes	B	(1) BLS Unit, (3) Tankers	2,3	Delta
Building Fire - High Risk Occupancy	Yes	HRB	(3) Tankers	2	Delta
Building Fire - Barn / Agricultural	Yes	B	(1) BLS Unit, (3) Tankers	2	Delta
Building Fire – Silo		RTF	(1) Ladder Truck, (3) Tankers		Charlie

Notes: 1) If a Hagerstown Regional Airport unit (e.g. Special Unit 35 or Engine 352) is in service, FRC will communicate with the airport duty officer to check on apparatus availability. If the apparatus is available for off airport property



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response, FRC will communicate that to the duty officer or first unit responding from the FDHJ.

2) A call for *smoke in the building* or *electrical hazard* where no fire or smoke is visible will be dispatched based upon the EFD determinants of unknown type situation (structure) using the “extended local” assignment.

3) If an emergency call for a fire station is dispatched by FRC, excluding an EMS response, the respective station will not be alerted to respond. The station’s pager tone will activate to advise its members of the emergency and the assignment will be supplemented.

4) For all EMS incident types on a roadway, the medical local response requires a “Class A” engine or special services apparatus of equivalent size.

Multiple Alarm Dispatches

	Engine	Tanker	Truck	Squad	Ambulance	Air Unit	Special Operations
SECOND ALARM							
Protected	3		1	1	(1) BLS	Yes	Yes
Unprotected	3	2	1	1	(1) BLS	Yes	Yes
THIRD ALARM							
Protected	2		1				
Unprotected	3	2	1				
FOURTH ALARM							
Protected	2		1				
Unprotected	2	2	1				

Predetermined Specialized Responses

Working Fire Dispatch:

If the first arriving officer or unit from the FDD checks on scene with a “working” fire situation on a structure, the FRC dispatcher will immediately dispatch the following assignment and notify the IC accordingly when the dispatch is complete.

Upon hearing other terminology that may indicate a working fire by any other unit, the ECS will attempt to verify the “Working Fire” dispatch through FDD officer.



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The “Working Fire” dispatch will consist of:

- Air Unit
- ALS Unit
- Engine Company
- Rehab Unit
- Washington County Safety Officer. *

* The definition and a standard operating guideline addressing a county safety officer are under development.

“Group” Assignments:

If the IC needs additional resources and they fall in one of the following categories, the respective group assignment is dispatched.

<i>Tanker Group</i>	Three tankers (or engine-tankers) One engine
<i>Brush Fire Group</i>	Three brush units One tanker (or engine-tanker)
<i>Mountain Fire Group</i>	Three brush units Three Tankers (or engine-tankers) One Engine
<i>ALS Group</i>	Three ALS units One Rescue Squad
<i>BLS Group</i>	Three BLS Units One Rescue Squad
<i>Water Rescue Group</i>	Two Boats Washington County Special Operations

Interstate and Airport Responses



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All interstate highways in Washington County and the Hagerstown Regional Airport are assigned box areas by the FDD. Because the current response system meets the unique needs of companies responding to the interstate and airport emergencies, this policy will not modify the current assignments.

Mileage

It is indisputable that time is of the essence when a request for assistance is made. Therefore, no matter where a citizen lives in the county, only units from stations located closest to the scene should be dispatched. In order to construct a consistent and apolitical system, we will use the WCVFRA mileage standard already in place as a guide.

It is also necessary to address overextending a station's resources. When an assignment is dispatched, mutual aid apparatus requests will be limited to one engine company and one special service (i.e. ladder trucks, tankers and rescue squads) per station. When FRC prioritizes the order that mutual aid special services are dispatched, ladder trucks will take priority due to positioning considerations.

FRC Discretionary Power

During times of high volume radio traffic, FRC can implement *Condition B*, which limits unnecessary transmissions. If this occurs, the FRC supervisor has the authority to limit the use of the guideline or temporarily discontinue its use until normal radio traffic can be restored.