
Section: 4.7 Radio Emergency Button Activation

Effective Date: 07/13/2017

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Approved by: M. Erickson 07/13/17

SCOPE

This guideline applies to all South Metro Fire Department personnel responsible for emergency response.

PURPOSE

DCC fire agencies have elected to activate the emergency button on their portable radios. In the event of an emergency situation, verbal communication will be the preferred method of communication with dispatch. In the event verbal communication is not possible or appropriate, the emergency button may be activated as a safety feature for responders in the event their safety is threatened. DCC will be the 24-hour emergency button monitoring point for all fire departments in Dakota County.

PROCEDURE***Radio User Responsibilities:***

The emergency button shall only be used for emergencies where the responder is unable to safely communicate verbally or in a situation where a delay in accessing the appropriate talk group could endanger lives.

1. Unit in duress and able to safely communicate over the air.

- a. Unit will identify jurisdiction and call sign and indicate they have emergency traffic (jurisdiction, unit –emergency traffic).
- b. Unit will provide the following information to dispatch
 - i. Type of help that is needed (law or rescue)
 - ii. Indicate if response request is routine or emergent
 - iii. Identify/confirm current location
 - iv. Indicate the reason for the request

2. Unit in duress and unable to communicate safely over the air.

- a. Unit in distress will activate their emergency button by firmly depressing the orange emergency button on their portable radio for **at least 3 seconds**. Upon successful activation, the radio will automatically change the talk-group to the departments home talk group (fire main).
- b. The priority of the radio that has activated their emergency button has increased their priority level above all other radios on that talk group.
- c. Upon receipt of the emergency activation, Dispatch will make **one** attempt to Par Check an identified radio. If the radio in distress mode is not able to be identified, dispatch will conduct a roll call of all units on active incidents.
- d. **No response, or any verbiage other than Code 4 or PAR will indicate to dispatch that you are in distress and assistance will be sent to your last known location.** (active incident location, station, avl location etc.).

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3. Accidental Activation of the emergency button

- a. Do not turn off your radio in the event of an accidental activation.
- b. Wait for dispatch to ask for a PAR Check
- c. Answer dispatch with Code 4 or PAR. Do not include any other verbiage to this response.
- d. Reset your emergency button by depressing the orange button for at least 3 seconds.

Dispatch Responsibilities

1. Upon activation of the emergency button, an alarm will sound on the dispatch radio consoles. The alarm can be silenced by clicking the alarm icon on the top row of the radio from any console. Once one dispatcher has acknowledged the alarm, it will silence on all consoles. In addition a red box will appear and indicate the radio alias that has activated their emergency button
2. DCC Fire dispatchers will determine which radio ID activated the emergency button.
 - a. **Identified Radio** - Fire Dispatcher will attempt to hail the unit/radio ID in emergency mode one time and ask for "PAR Check"
 - b. **Unidentified Radio** - the fire dispatcher(s) will conduct a roll call of each unit on active incidents to identify, and/or confirm crew safety.
3. Activation was in error,
 - a. The unit in emergency mode will respond with (Jurisdiction), (Unit) – **Code 4 or PAR**
No response or a response such as "I am ok" or "working an arrest" etc. are insufficient and dispatch must start a law response in accordance with the procedure listed under #4 below.
 - b. The unit should exit the emergency mode by pushing and holding the orange button on their radio for 3 seconds and return to their appropriate talk group.
4. Activation cannot be confirmed as an error:
 - a. If the unit in emergency mode does not answer the PAR Check with **Code 4 or PAR**, they are confirmed to be in emergency mode.
 - c. The fire dispatcher will initiate a CAD event for the appropriate law enforcement agency to dispatch units to the last known location of the unit in emergency mode indicating that a responder has activated their emergency button (active incident location, station, avl location etc.).
 - d. If the unit in confirmed emergency mode is on an active incident with an identified incident commander, the fire dispatcher will direct incident command to an available fire ground and advise of the activation and direction being taken.
 - e. The Fire dispatcher will assign the SOS (Resource SOS-Emergency Unit) unit of the jurisdiction that is in emergency mode. This will activate an Active 911 or lamResponding notification to appropriate personnel within that fire department.