



Fire Fighter I

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JPRs addressed in this chapter

This chapter provides information that addresses the following job performance requirements of NFPA 1001, *Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, 2019 Edition*.

- 4.2.1
- 4.2.2
- 4.2.3

Learning Objectives

1. Explain the procedures for receiving nonemergency calls. [4.2.2]
2. Describe the types of communications systems and equipment used to receive and process emergency calls. [4.2.1]
3. Explain the procedures for receiving and dispatching emergency calls. [4.2.1]
4. Describe radio equipment and procedures used for internal fire department communications. [4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3]
5. Skill Sheet 2-1: Handle emergency and nonemergency phone calls. [4.2.1, 4.2.2]
6. Skill Sheet 2-2: Use a portable radio for routine and emergency traffic. [4.2.1, 4.2.3]

Chapter 2

Communications



Fire department communications can be divided between emergency and nonemergency communications. Both types may come from the general public. Citizens may report emergencies directly to the fire department, or they may call for assistance with a number of other, nonemergency issues such as scheduling fire department tours or questions about local fire codes. These requests or emergency reports from the public may be received at a central point and then relayed to the appropriate fire department unit or individual.

Internally, most communications consist primarily of radio transmissions between units and individuals during emergency operations. Your effectiveness as a firefighter will depend on your knowledge of your local communications system and how it operates. Your personal safety will depend on your ability to operate the radio that is assigned to you during emergency incidents.

In the majority of the United States and Canada, the public can dial 9-1-1 for help in an emergency. In some communities and rural areas, individuals must dial a conventional seven- or ten-digit telephone number to report an emergency. In either case, the public connects to a telecommunications center that gathers the necessary information and dispatches the appropriate emergency response.

Nonemergency calls are handled on dedicated conventional or business telephone numbers outside of the 9-1-1 system. Nonemergency calls are generally routed to the division of the fire department that can best handle them, such as the fire prevention division. Emergency calls may be received on nonemergency telephone lines or directly from individuals walking into the fire station. You must know your local protocol for handling emergency calls received on nonemergency lines or from walk-in reports.

Receiving Nonemergency Calls

Nonemergency calls received at fire department facilities range from inquiries and requests for assistance to personal calls from family or friends. Each department will have its own procedures for answering nonemergency calls. It is important to know and follow your departmental procedures. Remember that you are representing your department. Always be professional and courteous when answering the telephone:

- Answer calls promptly.
- Be pleasant and identify the department, station or facility, unit, and yourself.
- Be prepared to record messages accurately by including date, time, name of caller, caller's telephone number, message, and your name.
- Never leave the telephone line open or a caller on hold for an extended period of time.
- Post the message or deliver it promptly to the person to whom it is directed.
- If you cannot answer the caller's question, refer them to someone who can, then follow up on the request.
- End calls courteously. Disconnect according to local protocol.

On occasion, you may receive a call from someone who is angry or upset. When handling these types of calls:

- Remain calm and courteous.
- Never become confrontational.
- Be pleasant and take the necessary information.
- Refer the caller to the appropriate officer or division that can assist the caller.

In many departments, the Public Information Officer (PIO) is the contact person for nonemergency or complaint calls. You should become familiar with the functions and personnel in each division of your department so you can refer callers efficiently. Handling emergency and nonemergency calls is discussed in **Skill Sheet 2-1**.



Watch Room or Booth

In some jurisdictions, fire stations have a watch room or booth that is staffed throughout the work shift. This area contains the radio communications equipment for receiving alarms from the telecommunications center, telephones, Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Teletype (TTY) devices, and station intercommunications (intercom) equipment. Local protocol usually requires one member of the crew to remain in the watch room at all times. A bed may be located in or near this space. Personnel assigned to monitor the watch room have the following responsibilities:

- Listening to all radio communications
- Answering the telephone
- Acknowledging the receipt of alarms
- Notifying crew members of telephone calls and messages
- Maintaining dispatch records

Receiving Emergency Calls

The system for receiving emergency calls varies among communities, states/provinces, and regions regardless of the telephone number that is used. There are two broad categories of telecommunications systems:

- **Emergency Service Specific Telecommunications Center** — Separate telecommunications or dispatch centers that the fire department, emergency medical service, or law enforcement agency operates.
- **Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)** — Central location that takes all emergency calls and routes the call to the fire, emergency medical, or law enforcement dispatcher (**Figure 2.1**).

Regardless of which category of communications center an area uses, certain equipment and procedures should exist to properly manage emergency calls. The sections that follow discuss these procedures and equipment.

Public Alerting Systems

Enhanced 9-1-1 (E-9-1-1) systems combine telephone and computer equipment including computer-aided dispatch (CAD) to provide the dispatcher with information such as the caller's location and phone number, directions to the location, and other information about the address. Modern 9-1-1 capabilities now include text messaging and application software (apps) for smartphones.



Alternative Alerting Systems

Public alerting systems are those systems that anyone can use to report an emergency. Besides telephones, these systems include:

- **Radio** — An emergency may be reported by other public or private workers who carry radios. The same kind of information that would be taken from a telephone caller must be gathered.

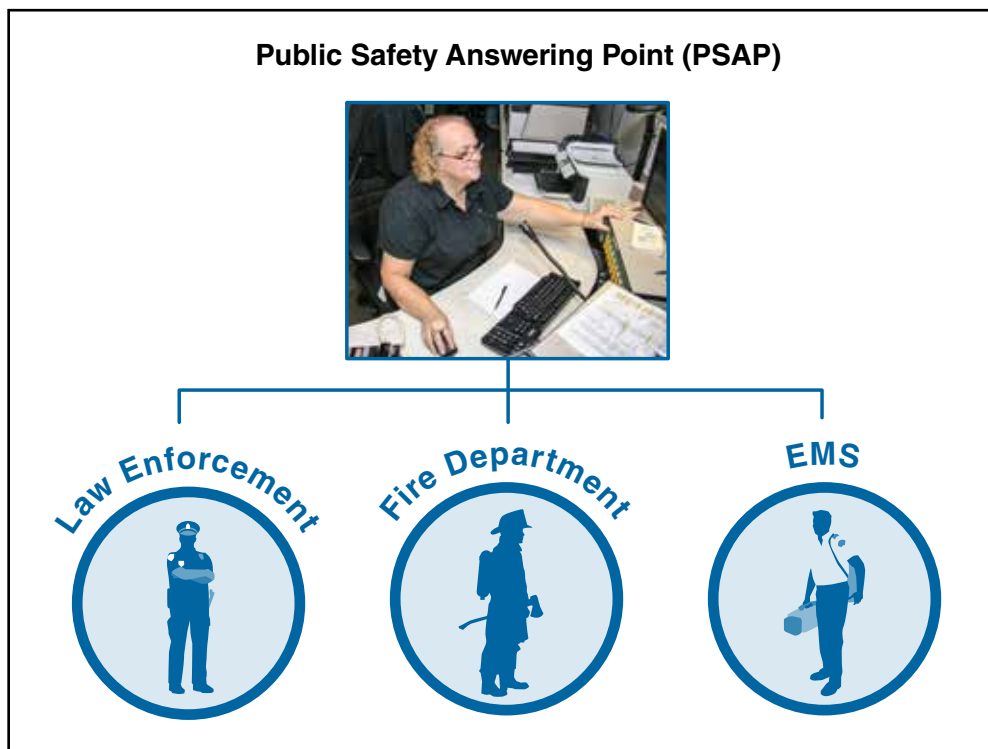


Figure 2.1 A public safety answering point (PSAP) can route information to multiple emergency response agencies.

- **Wired telegraph circuit box** — Historically, many cities installed street corner alarm boxes to allow citizens to report a fire. Pressing a lever on the box's door transmits a unique code that identifies the location of the activated box. While reliable, they only transmit their locations not the nature of the emergency and are notorious for false alarms. Public telephones and cellular phones have diminished the need for these systems.
- **Telephone fire alarm box** — Telephone fire alarm or call boxes are equipped with a telephone for direct voice contact with the telecommunications center.
- **Radio fire alarm box** — A radio fire alarm box contains an independent radio transmitter powered by a battery, small solar panel, or spring-wound alternator.

Communications Center Equipment

Depending on local requirements and capabilities, telecommunications centers contain a variety of equipment required for handling emergency calls. Some common pieces of communication equipment include the following (**Figure 2.2**):

- Two-way radio system for communicating with mobile and portable radios at the emergency scene as well as base station radios in fire stations or other department facilities
- Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), Teletype (TTY), and Text phone for receiving calls from individuals with hearing impairments.
- Tone-generating equipment for dispatching resources



Figure 2.2 An example of the variety of equipment used in a telecommunications center.

- Telephones for receiving both emergency and nonemergency calls
- Direct-line telephones for communications with fire department facilities, hospitals, utilities, and other response agencies
- Computers for dispatch information and communications
- Recording systems or devices to record telephone calls and radio transmissions
- Alarm-receiving equipment for municipal alarm box systems and private fire alarm reporting systems



Figure 2.3 A telecommunicator (dispatcher) receiving an emergency call.

Processing Emergency Calls

Emergency calls must be handled quickly to ensure the safety of the community. Minimum requirements for receiving, processing, and dispatching emergency responders are included in NFPA 1221, *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems*. Telecommunicators, also referred to as dispatchers, are trained to obtain the correct information quickly and accurately (**Figure 2.3**). When the public contacts the fire station directly regarding an emergency, there must be procedures and methods in place to relay the information from the caller to firefighters accurately.

Collecting Information

Based on local protocol, the information that should be gathered includes (**Figure 2.4**):

- The type of emergency
- The location of the emergency:
 - Cross street(s)
 - Building name
 - Neighborhood
 - Area of city/county
 - Nearby landmarks
- The number and location of people involved
- The name and location of the caller
- The caller's callback number

NOTE: Provide life safety directions if the caller is at immediate risk.

E-Dispatch Incident Information

Workstation

Event

Info

Unit

Inquiry

Database

Help

Type of Emergency: Fire in the kitchen

Location: 123 South Blair

Cross Streets: Blair and Virginia

Bldg Name: Bonham's Country Kitchen

Neighborhood: Highand Park Addition

City/County Area: Watertown Section

Nearby Landmarks: Near Roundabout Statue

Number People Involved: 3

Location of People Involved: Evacuated across the street

Caller's Name: Alan Kempler

Remarks:

Callback Number: (555) 098-7654

Fire started in a deep fat fryer. The fire suppression system discharged but failed to put out the fire.

Caller's Location: In front of 122 South Blair

Unit/Incident Status

Status	Unit	Time Out	Time In	Location
EnR	E113	21:39	--:--	
EnR	TR26	21:39	--:--	
A	M101	--:--	19:59	
EnR	R151	21:40	--:--	
EnR	BC02	21:39	--:--	
A	E135	--:--	20:13	

Figure 2.4 Examples of the types of incident information that telecommunicators gather.

Relaying Information to Responding Units or Personnel

Once an emergency has been reported, the information must be transmitted to the responding units or personnel. The more time that it takes for receiving, processing, and dispatching units, the greater the potential for severity of damage and injuries.

Dispatch begins with some form of alert to the stations, apparatus, or individuals. Alarm notification may be one or a combination of the following:

- Visual such as station lights
- Audible
 - Vocal alarm
 - Station bell or gong
 - Sirens
 - Whistles or air horns
- Electronic
 - Computer terminal screen with alarm or line printer
 - Direct telephone connection with telecommunications center
 - Radio with tone alert
 - Scrolling message boards

- Television override
- Radio
- Pagers
- Cellular telephones
- Smartphones
- Home electronic monitors
- Landline telephones
- **Mobile Data Terminal (MDT)**



Figure 2.5 One type of pager that volunteer fire departments use.



Figure 2.6 An emergency alert siren mounted on a water tower.

Fire departments may use pagers to alert members of an emergency (**Figure 2.5**). Each pager or group of pagers can be set to a specific frequency. Dispatch can send alert codes to these specific frequencies. When the pager receives its codes, it alerts the wearer by tone, light, and/or vibration. The pager will then either relay a voice message or display an alphanumeric message sent to it. When different departments or public safety agencies share the same dispatch frequency, it is desirable to set pagers to the alert setting to avoid hearing unwanted radio traffic.

Sirens, whistles, and air horns are most commonly employed in small communities and industrial facilities. The alerting device is mounted on a water tower, radio tower, or top of a tall building (**Figure 2.6**). These devices produce a signal that everyone in the community can hear. Civilians will be aware that emergency traffic may be on the streets; however, some may also be inclined to follow the apparatus and congest the emergency scene.

Information regarding the emergency must also be broadcast to department members using an established means of communication located in the station or apparatus. The broadcast should include information received from the caller and information from the preincident plan developed for the specific address or facility. Basic information to be broadcast generally includes:

- Units assigned
- Type of emergency
- Address or location

- Dispatch time
- Current conditions, such as wind direction/speed and road closures
- Units substituted into the normal assignment

NOTE: Firefighters may be able to review preincident information in the apparatus during response.

When the dispatch transmission is complete, assigned units confirm receipt of the information according to local protocol. The telecommunications center will then confirm that all units have been notified and are on the assignment.

Radio Communications

The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** regulates all radio communication in the United States. The FCC issues radio licenses to fire departments that operate radio equipment. Depending on the radio system in a particular locality, one license may cover several departments that operate a joint system. Local department rules should specify who is authorized to transmit on the radio. It is a federal offense to send personal or other unauthorized messages over a designated fire department radio channel. Information on use of a portable radio for routine and emergency traffic can be located in **Skill Sheet 2-2**.

NOTE: In Canada, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission regulates radio communications.

Radio communication is essential to safe and efficient emergency scene operations. Most fire departments use **clear text**, using plain English rather than agency specific codes such as 10-codes. Standardized emergency-specific words and phrases are included within clear text. Fire department radio systems are used to communicate the following:

- Alert units of an emergency
- Coordinate tactics at the emergency
- Request additional resources
- Monitor the activities of units and individuals

In many departments, all facilities, apparatus, official vehicles, and personnel are assigned radios during emergencies or on a daily basis. Personnel are trained in local radio procedures including periodic radio tests, and both emergency and nonemergency radio operations.

Internal communications require you to have general knowledge of:

- Radio systems and how they work
- Limitations of radio communications
- Fixed, mobile, and portable radios assigned to you

NOTE: Emergency transmissions that are used when a firefighter is in trouble are described in Chapter 10, Structural Search and Rescue.

Radio Systems

The radio systems used in the fire service can be classified according to their location and size. Radio systems also have various signal transmission options. All radio systems feature a number of transmission channels that can be assigned to emergency or nonemergency traffic.

Location and Size

Radios used in fixed locations such as fire stations, telecommunications centers, training centers, or administrative offices are referred to as **base station radios** (**Figure 2.7, p. 64**). Base stations have stable, powerful transmitters and interference-resistant receivers that provide better performance than mobile and portable radios. Base station equipment includes a receiver, transmitter, antenna, microphone, and speakers. The base station is powered by the



Figure 2.7 A base station radio in a fire department watch room.



Figure 2.8 Mobile radios mounted in a fire department apparatus.

building's electrical system and is usually connected to an emergency generator in case of power loss. The system may also be connected to the alarm notification system of the fire station.

Mobile radios are mounted in fire apparatus, ambulances, and staff vehicles and are powered by the vehicle's electrical system. The receiver and transmitter are usually located in the cab within reach of the officer and driver/operator (**Figure 2.8**). Headset connections are usually provided for all riding positions. Pumping apparatus have additional connections at the pump panel while aerial devices have connections on the turntable and in the elevating platform. An external antenna is mounted to the vehicle. Mobile radios have better performance than portable radios but are not as powerful as fixed location radios.

Portable radios are handheld devices that are less powerful than fixed or mobile radios. They are powered by rechargeable or replaceable battery packs. Rechargers are usually found in fire stations and apparatus (**Figure 2.9**). An external antenna is attached to the top of the radio. Controls on the radio include knobs for changing channels, adjusting the volume, and a push-to-talk switch for transmitting. These radios may also have an emergency response button that may be programmed to transmit a distress signal. Some radios are equipped with a keypad similar to those on telephones (**Figure 2.10**). Radios may fail under typical conditions found on the fire-ground. Portable radios used in hazardous atmospheres must be intrinsically safe for that environment.

Portable radio distribution depends on local protocols. Some departments only issue a radio to the officer in charge of the unit. Other departments assign one radio to each member of the company.

Figure 2.9 A handheld portable radio shown from the front (left) and the back with the battery pack removed (right).





Figure 2.10 Common parts of a portable radio.



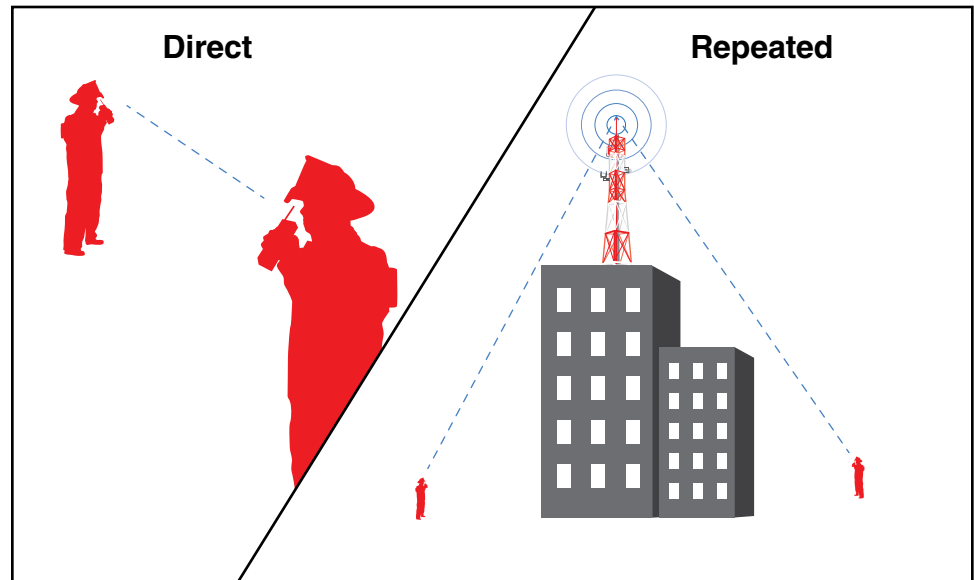
NIST Testing of Firefighter Portable Radios

According to National Institute of Standards and Technology testing, firefighter radios can fail to operate properly after 15 minutes of exposure during fire fighting activities. During the test, seven radios were exposed to Thermal Class I and II conditions. Class I conditions are temperatures of 212° F (100° C) similar to an incipient fire or fire fighting some distance from a fully involved fire. Class II conditions are temperatures of 320° F (160° C) similar to firefighting close to a fully involved fire.

When exposed to Class I conditions, all of the radios operated correctly for 25 minutes. When exposed to Class II conditions, all of the radios failed after 15 minutes. Firefighters should be aware of these failure times. Radios that have been used extensively may fail more quickly.

NIST has shared the results of their testing with the NFPA. The NFPA may adjust their standards in the future based upon the new findings.

Figure 2.11 Illustrating the concepts of direct and repeated communications.



Signal Transmission

Direct communication refers to the straight line travel of radio signals between the transmitting radio and the receiving radio. Direct communication allows the same radio channel to be used by other groups that are located at a greater distance from the first group. When the first speaker is finished, the second can press the talk button and respond.

Repeated communications are used to strengthen communication signals between radios, increase distance of transmission, or increase capacity on the system (**Figure 2.11**). Because of increased number of users, keying the radio may not immediately allow the firefighter to talk. The radio may emit a tone until the radio is ready for use.

Fireground Channels

Modern fire and emergency services organizations routinely operate on a variety of radio channels. Modern radio systems are designed to operate on multiple channels as needed.

Most fire departments have a channel assigned for dispatching only. When units arrive at the incident, a Command channel is assigned to the Incident Commander (IC) while a second tactical channel is assigned for fireground operations. The command channel and the tactical channels may be expanded as the incident grows in complexity as other agencies are added to it.

Nonemergency channels are also used in some departments for the training center, code enforcement, and administrative personnel. Use of these channels is regulated by the AHJ.

Radio Limitations

As the fire service has increased its dependency on portable radios, limitations to their use have become more apparent. The main limitations or barriers to all radio transmissions include (**Figure 2.12**):

- Distance
- Physical barriers
- Deadzones
- Interference
- Ambient noise

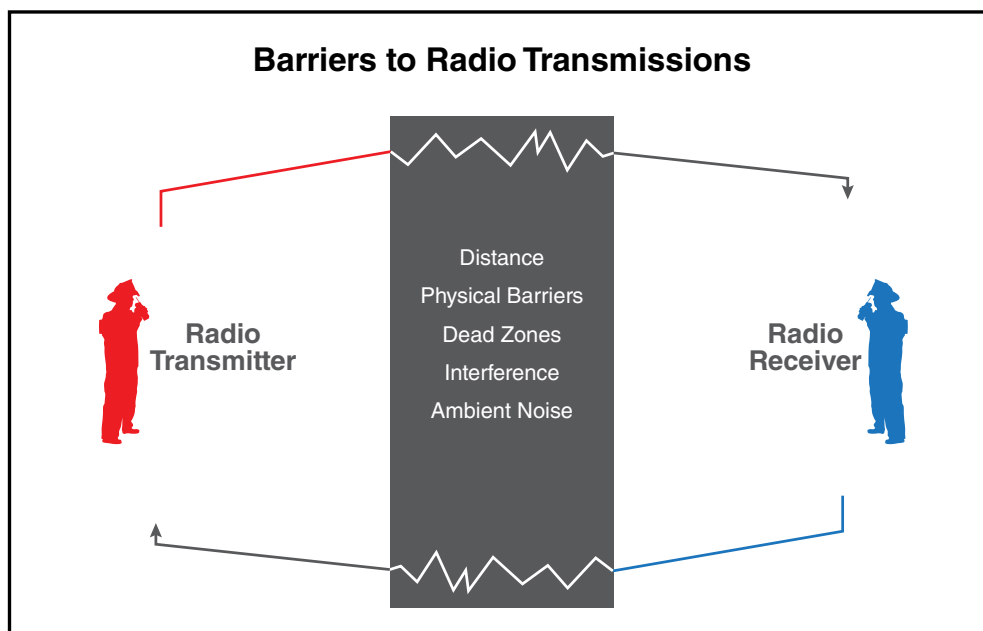


Figure 2.12 Examples of some of the common barriers to radio communications.

Distance

The distance the signal will travel depends on the power of the transmitter and receiver radio and the height of the broadcast and receiving antennas. Repeaters can be used to increase the area of coverage. Static and broken messages are an indication that the receiver is near the limit of the transmission range.

Physical Barriers

Any physical barrier between the transmitter and the receiver can block the signal. The signal may be totally blocked, partially blocked, or reflected. Units working within tunnels, basements, or structures may be able to communicate with each other using the talk-around function, but they may not be able to talk to the IC or the telecommunications center. Your body can act as a physical barrier and you may need to reposition yourself to see if your signal can be sent, especially while working within a structure. To overcome physical barriers, you may need to turn your body 90 degrees, lift the portable radio higher, or raise the antenna up straight.

Dead Zones

Dead zones are remote areas or locations inside structures that cause the loss of cellular telephone service or radio signals. Repeaters may have been installed in buildings to eliminate deadzones within the building. Moving to an outside wall, roof, window, or doorway in a structure can improve reception. Inspectors or other fire personnel should perform radio checks during preincident planning surveys to verify that radios can be used in all areas of the building. In large metal and concrete buildings, radios may not work and runners or other means of communication may be required. Direct communication may still be possible within dead zones.

Interference

Interference can originate from various sources. Sources of interference may include but are not limited to:

- Another powerful radio signal
- Electric motors
- Computers
- Cellular telephone towers or transmitters
- Vehicle ignitions
- High-voltage transmission lines
- Equipment that contain microprocessors
- High-power radio sites such as television and radio stations

Manufacturers design high-quality transmitters, receivers, and repeater systems to filter out interference. The fire department administration or AHJ should specify and purchase the best quality radio systems that are available within the resources they have.

Ambient Noise

Emergency scenes are filled with ambient noise that can make radio communications difficult. New technology has developed noise-canceling microphones that may help. Each mobile or portable radio operator is responsible for overcoming ambient noise at a scene. The following are some ways to overcome ambient noise:

- Turn off apparatus audible warning devices when they are no longer needed.
- Move away from noise-emitting equipment when transmitting.
- Follow radio procedures at all times.
- Move to a location that blocks wind noise.
- Use your body or PPE to create a wind barrier when transmitting.

Radio Procedures

Local SOP/SOGs will dictate a specific radio channel that is available to all units and personnel at the scene, the telecommunications center, and in some cases, other fire department facilities and the public. Therefore, it is important to follow local protocol for sending a message. Depending on the local radio system and protocols, frequencies may be monitored. All recorded transmissions become part of the official record on the incident and may be made public under open records laws or Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.



Communication Model

During radio communications, the communications model begins each time a person opens or *keys* a microphone and speaks. The generally accepted communication model consists of six basic elements (**Figure 2.13**):

- **Sender** — The person who initiates the message.
- **Message** — The content that the sender is trying to communicate.
- **Receiver** — Individual(s) to whom the sender is attempting to communicate.
- **Feedback to the sender** — Reaction of the receiver to the message and its tone. If this feedback is verbal, the receiver becomes the sender and relates a new message to the original sender, who becomes the receiver. Receiving feedback allows the original sender to confirm reception of the message and to assess the receiver's level of understanding.
- **Interference** — Anything that prevents the receiver from fully understanding the message.

Everyone at the emergency scene should follow two basic communications rules. First, units or individuals must identify themselves in every transmission as outlined in the local radio protocols. Second, the receiver should acknowledge the message. Requiring the receiver to acknowledge every message ensures that the message was received and understood. This feedback can also tell the sender if the message was not correctly understood and further clarification is necessary.

Another good practice is to key the microphone and wait a second or two for the signal to capture an antenna before starting your message. Keying the microphone and immediately speaking often results in a message being cut off at the start and the receiver asking for the message to be repeated.

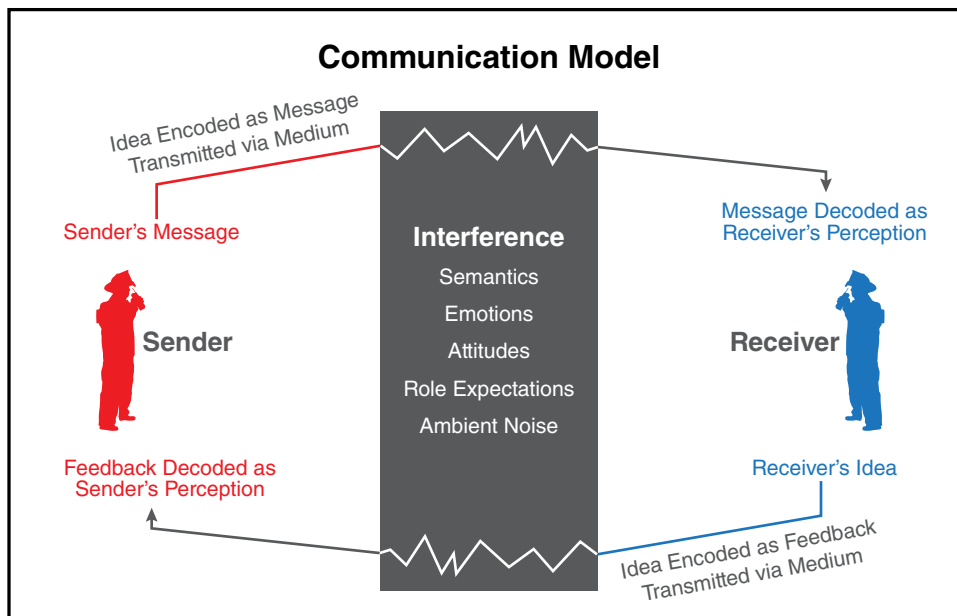


Figure 2.13 Illustrating the basic elements of the Communication Model.



ABCs of Good Communications

When transmitting information and orders, adhere to the ABCs of good communications: Be Accurate, Brief, and Concise. Consider the difference between the following two radio communications:

Radio Communication 1: *This is Lieutenant Thompson on Engine 57. I need another truck company at this location, 1400 South Memorial, for additional personnel.*

Radio Communication 2: *Engine 57 to Dispatch — assign one truck company to 1400 South Memorial.*

The second example is accurate, brief, and concise.

Experience at emergency incidents has shown that background noise and personal protective equipment can significantly affect the ability to hear and understand radio transmissions. To improve your ability to hear and be heard, you should follow these radio communications best practices:

- Know what you are going to say before you open the microphone.
- Use a moderate rate of speaking focused on clear understanding.
- Do not use pauses or verbal fillers such as “ah” or “um.”
- Use a moderate amount of expression in speech – not a monotone and not over-emphasized – with carefully placed emphasis.
- Avoid excitement or shouting over the radio and be careful to articulate properly.
- Attempt to pronounce words correctly.
- Use a vocal quality that is not too strong or weak.
- Finish every comment, and avoid trailing off near the end of the transmission.
- Keep the pitch in a midrange – not too high or too low.
- Avoid using slang or regional expressions.
- Do not chew gum or eat food while transmitting a message.



Figure 2.14 A firefighter demonstrating how to hold and speak into a portable radio.

- Be confident in what you say.
- Be concise and to the point.
- Do not transmit until the radio frequency is clear.
- Remember that emergency transmissions have priority over any routine transmission.
- Do not use profane or obscene language on the air.
- Hold the radio/microphone 1 to 2 inches (25 to 50 mm) from your mouth or self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) voice port when transmitting.
- Speak directly into the microphone, not across it.
- Position or hold the microphone according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Repeat the message back to the sender to ensure that they know you received and understood it.
- Speak with a loud, controlled, and clear voice.
- Do not shout. If the receiver did not understand your first transmission, raising your voice will not make it any clearer and will possibly make the message harder to understand.
- Shield the microphone from noise, water, and debris. You can cup your hand over the microphone or use your helmet brim to protect it (**Figure 2.14**).
- Locate your microphone or radio as far as possible from your personal alert safety system (PASS) device, low-pressure alarm, or other noise-generating equipment.
- Avoid laying the microphone on the seat of the vehicle because the transmission button may be pressed inadvertently.
- Avoid transmitting too close to another radio that is on the same frequency.
- Position the antenna vertically for best transmission results.

- Place the microphone against your throat if you cannot be understood through your SCBA facepiece. Do not remove your facepiece to talk into the microphone.
- Practice communicating with your portable radio while wearing your SCBA before you have to use it at an emergency.

WARNING: Do not remove your SCBA facepiece to talk into the microphone.

Chapter Review

1. What guidelines should be followed when receiving nonemergency calls?
2. What types of communications systems and equipment are used to receive and process emergency calls?
3. How should emergency calls be received and dispatched?
4. What types of radio systems are used for internal communications?
5. What are some limitations that may impact internal communications?
6. What guidelines should be followed when using fire department radios?

Discussion Questions

1. You receive a call from an upset citizen. The citizen is yelling and using foul language because the individual believes that the response time for a recent emergency was too slow. How should you respond to the call?
2. You answer an emergency call about a car accident. The caller is obviously distressed. What information should you focus on obtaining? Why?
3. As technology continues to evolve, how do you think the changes might affect the fire service?

Key Terms

Base Station Radio — Fixed, nonmobile radio at a central location.

Clear Text — Use of plain English in radio communications transmissions. No 10-codes or agency specific codes are used when using clear text.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) — U.S. government agency charged with the control of all radio and television communications; acts as the main regulator of radio frequencies in both the public and private sectors.

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) — Mobile computer that communicates with other computers on a radio system.

Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) — An entity responsible for receiving 9-1-1 calls and processing those calls according to a specific operational policy.

Emergency Phone Call



- Step 1:** Answer the telephone. Identify the department, station or facility, unit, and yourself.
- Step 2:** Record information about the emergency.
- Type of emergency
 - Location of the emergency
 - Number and location of people involved
 - Caller's name, location, and phone number
- Step 3:** Provide life safety directions if the caller is at immediate risk.
- Step 4:** Transfer information to the dispatch center, responding units, or personnel as required by local SOPs.
- Incident information
 - Information from the preincident plan developed for the specific address or facility
- Step 5:** Confirm that units are notified and on assignment.
- Step 6:** End the phone call per local SOPs.

Nonemergency Phone Call



- Step 1:** Answer the telephone. Identify the department, station or facility, unit, and yourself.
- Step 2:** Record the caller's information and message.
- Date and time
 - Caller's name and phone number
 - Message
 - Your name
- Step 3:** Provide the caller with information, if necessary.
- Step 4:** Post the message or transfer the call to the recipient or other department as necessary.
- Step 5:** End the phone call per local SOPs.

Routine Traffic



Step 1: Rotate the selector knob to the assigned frequency.



Step 2: Monitor radio traffic until the air is clear.



Step 3: Hold the microphone in transmit position, 1 to 2 inches (25 to 50 mm) from your mouth.

Step 4: Depress the transmit button, holding down until finished with the transmission.



Step 5: Transmit a routine traffic message using department codes and local SOPs.

Emergency Traffic



Step 1: Depress the transmit button, holding down until finished with the transmission.



Step 2: Announce "emergency traffic" (or department's standard emergency traffic break-in message), interrupting air traffic as necessary.



Step 3: Wait for Incident Commander (IC) or dispatch to acknowledge.

Step 4: Transmit emergency traffic message following local SOPs.

Step 5: Repeat message until Command verifies given information.

