

**BASIC RADIO TECHNIQUES
UNIT 4 - TERMINOLOGY/FORMATting**

LAW ENFORCEMENT TERMINOLOGY

Law enforcement personnel use their own vernacular. In addition to the acronyms used in everyday speech (DUI, FTA, ATL, etc), there are commonly accepted words or phrases used on the radio that vary from everyday speech. These terms may be used for several reasons.

- A one syllable word may be replaced with a longer word so it is not "cut off" or "clipped" if the transmit button is not depressed long enough.
 - An example of this is "Affirmative" for yes and "Negative" for no.
 - "Please", "thank you", and "you're welcome" are not normally used on the radio. They are considered superfluous. Politeness can be inferred in the voice tone by a professional demeanor.
 - Some other common phrases used in radio communications:

<u>COMMON PHRASE</u>	<u>PROFESSIONAL PHRASE</u>
Drunk	Intoxicated
Get	Obtain
Going	En-route
Can't	Unable
Yes	Affirmative
No	Negative
Chase	Pursuit
Go	Proceed
Help	Assistance (unless officer needs <i>help</i>)
Tell	Advise
Broken down	Disabled
Dead body	Fatality/DOA
Dope	Narcotics
Don't know	Unknown
Understood	Received/Copy
Refuses	Declines
Obnoxious	Uncooperative, irate

Sometimes, a word, phrase, or abbreviation is used, even if it is not grammatically correct in the sentence. For example, "The subject is HBD" may be used, although you would not say "The subject **is has** been drinking".

FORMATting RADIO TRAFFIC

Although calls may have different details, communication centers usually use a standardized method to format calls for dispatching. By using these standardized formats, the chance of information being misunderstood or omitted is decreased. The basic format is called the **Mobile call-up procedure** also may be called the "**initial dispatch**"). There are three commonly used call-up procedures:

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- Dispatch identifies themselves then the unit they are dispatching to: "Dispatch [to] 3S8" or "Radio [to] Oakville 34"
- Dispatch identifies the unit they are calling and then themselves: "3S8, Dispatch" or "Oakville 34, Radio"
- Dispatch identifies the unit number only: "3S8" or "Oakville 34"

In each procedure, the dispatcher gives the **type of call** next. This will allow the officer to prepare to copy the information they are about to receive. They should be able to determine the incident priority and level **of response** by the information provided in the initial dispatch. Some agencies also give the location and/or business name of the call in the call up procedures for high priority incidents:

Dispatch: "[Unit(s)], armed robbery just occurred at Washington Mutual, 1st and Main".

- After calling the field unit and identifying the call type, the dispatcher waits for an **acknowledgement** before beginning the details of the call. This acknowledgement indicates the officer is prepared to receive the information. Agency policy may dictate that when dispatching units to major crimes, such as a robbery in-progress, that the dispatcher directed the broadcast to all units, therefore, requiring no unit acknowledgement before continuing with the dispatch. Agency policies and practices will prevail; however, *consistency* in use of the practice is needed.
- After acknowledging the field unit, the dispatcher proceeds with the "body" or **details** of the call also called the **SHORT REPORT**. The broadcast provides the details of the call in a uniform manner. The dispatcher quickly organizes those details before dispatching the call. For example, if the suspect has left in a vehicle, it is more logical to broadcast the vehicle description before the person description.

"Respond to 17243 NE 23 Pl., Mrs. Smith, regarding a suspicious male last seen 5 ago walking northbound from her residence on the west side of the street. Described as a WMA early 20's, medium height and weight, blond hair, LSW white t-shirt, jeans. Subject was in the caller's yard. She thought she saw him hide something in a shrub on the north property line in front of the house. She has not gone outside and is requesting contact. Contact Mrs. Smith."

- After the details of the call are given, the officer once again **acknowledges** the dispatcher. This could be done by the field unit saying

Responder: "[Unit(s)] enroute to [location]" or
Responder: "[unit ID] copy".

For in-progress or just-occurred calls, the dispatcher may say there is more information forthcoming and call the unit when that information is available.

- When the call has been given and no more details are immediately forthcoming, the **transmission should be signed off or ended**. This is often accomplished by having the dispatcher repeat the unit number and then give the time:

Adapted from the **WSCJTC Telecommunicator-2 Course Manual**

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Dispatcher: "3S8, 10:53"

Additionally, stating the responding unit number may end the transmission. Some agencies also close out a call by announcing the FCC identifier for the frequency.

Officer initiated activity follows the same general format:

- Identify self, who is being addressed, and what the subject matter will be: "A-1, dispatch, I'm out with a disabled vehicle"
- Wait for acknowledgement ("A-1, go ahead")
- Give pertinent information ("A-1, at 1st and Baker, a red late model BMW, 4-door, no plates")

Example:

"A-2, dispatch, foot pursuit"

"A-2, go ahead"

"A-2, eastbound from 1st and Down, chasing a white male, teenager, 5'06", 150, brown shoulder length hair, black wool stocking cap, WSU jacket, jeans, tennis shoes"

EXAMPLES OF DISPATCHES –

Burglary report:

Dispatch: "3A6, Burglary report"

Field Unit: "3A6, go ahead"

Dispatch: "Burglary report at 1419 Midland Ave. Contact Mr. Harris, reference a burglary to residence that occurred sometime over the weekend."

Field Unit: "3A6, received, contact Mr. Harris, be enroute".

Dispatch: "3A6, 10:23"

Burglary in-progress:

Dispatch: "Dispatch Robert 48 and a unit to back, burglary in-progress, 1010 W. Washington, Wood's Lumber Yard"

Field Unit: "Robert 48"

Field Unit: "Robert 65"

Dispatch: "Copy Robert 65 to back"

Dispatch: "Robert 48, Robert 65, burglary in-progress, 1010 W. Washington, Wood's Lumber Yard. A neighbor reports two male subjects entered the side office window 3-5 minutes ago and sees a vehicle parked outside of the fenced compound. Descriptions: (pause for acknowledgement)"

Field Units: "Robert 48, Robert 65"

Dispatch: "Suspect #1, a W/M 20's wearing dark clothing and carrying a dark duffel bag. #2, a B/M, wearing a light colored jacket and dark pants. Vehicle, break"

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Dispatch: "Vehicle, a dark colored, older two door parked on west side just outside fence. R/P unsure if vehicle is associated with suspects, but does not recognize it from area."

Field Unit: "Robert 48, in the area"

Field Unit: "Robert 65, 2 minutes away, coming in from the west".