



Eric Hawkins  
Chief of Police

**ALBANY, NEW YORK**  
**POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
165 HENRY JOHNSON BOULEVARD  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12210



1789

**COMMUNICATIONS: SECURITY AND EQUIPMENT**  
**GENERAL ORDER: 6.1.05**

<b>Issue Date:</b> August 5, 2019	<b>Effective Date:</b> March 1998
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<b>Volume 6:</b> Communications	<b>Chapter 1:</b> Operations
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<b>Issuing Authority:</b> Chief Eric Hawkins	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 10

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to specify the security measures implemented to protect Communications Center personnel, facilities, and equipment; and to establish guidelines to ensure operability of communications equipment.

**POLICY:** It is the policy of the Albany Police Department to safeguard and secure Communications Center personnel, facilities, and equipment; and to properly maintain communications equipment to ensure uninterrupted communications services.

**I. EQUIPMENT CHECKS**

- A. At the beginning of each tour of duty, Communications personnel shall check equipment that they will be utilizing for the upcoming shift.
  - 1. Personnel who discover broken, missing, or defective equipment shall report said incident immediately to a Communications supervisor and complete an Intra-Departmental Correspondence (IDC) detailing the problem(s).
  - 2. The supervisor shall attempt to identify the problem(s) and submit a work order to the Communications lieutenant.
    - a. If immediate repair is needed, and the Communications lieutenant is off-duty, the Communications supervisor shall contact the Operations lieutenant.

**II. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES**

- A. When making relief, Communications personnel shall complete the following:
  - 1. All Positions:
    - a. Obtain proper briefing;
    - b. Log into the CAD Terminal;
    - c. Log the previous user off the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Terminal, if not already logged off; and

- d. Check telephones to assure proper working condition.
2. Police and Fire Radio Operators:
  - a. Check the radio console for any damage or malfunction;
  - b. Set the main frequencies and secondary frequencies on the radio console;
  - c. Adjust the volume control on the console to an adequate hearing level; and
  - d. Make sure the playback machine is recording.
3. Switchboard/Private Branch Exchange (PBX) Operators:
  - a. Check the PBX board for any damage or malfunction; and
  - b. Make sure the playback machine is recording.
4. Teletype Operators:
  - a. Log into the eJustice IJ Portal and check for on-line status;
  - b. Check eReporting for any teletypes pending; and
  - c. Check the fax-machine for operability.
5. Supervisor Personnel:
  - a. Make sure employees are aware of any new policies and/or orders; and
  - b. Ensure that proper supplies are available to accomplish the daily duties of each shift.
6. Radio Repairs:
  - a. Upon approval of a supervisor, personnel may notify the Motorola Repair Shop of any needed repairs.
    - i. The Motorola Repair Shop is available Monday through Friday from 0800 hours to 1600 hours.
  - b. Whenever there is a need for either a Motorola radio repair or a telephone repair after regular working hours, the Operations lieutenant shall be notified.

### **III. RECORDING PROCEDURES**

- A. All incoming and outgoing lines assigned to the Communications Center, including 911 emergency calls and non-emergency calls, are recorded.
- B. Radio transmissions on all frequencies, except channel seven (7), are recorded.
  1. Additionally, all radio consoles are equipped with immediate playback capabilities.

- C. Recordings of radio and telephone communications are retained in a secure manner for a minimum of ninety (90) days.
- D. Persons requesting to review or obtain copies of audio recordings, printouts, and/or readouts shall be supplied such information as permitted by law and departmental policy.
  - 1. Inter and Intra-agency requests shall be completed via an Albany Police Department Communication Reproduction Request for Radio/Telephone Transmission Form, APD Form [REDACTED] shown on page 10 of this order, which shall be forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards for processing.
  - 2. Civilian requests shall be processed via the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) through City Hall.

#### IV. NORMAL CARE OF THE RADIO CONSOLE

##### A. Procedures:

- 1. Any malfunction of the radio console components shall be immediately reported to the supervisor/senior dispatcher for repair.
- 2. Consoles and work areas shall be kept clean and free from foreign matter.
- 3. No sprays shall be used on or near the console, unless it is a cleaning spray approved for such usage.
- 4. Paperwork at consoles shall be left intact. Paperwork that is outdated or has changed shall be brought to the attention of the supervisor/senior dispatcher and disposed of or changed accordingly.
- 5. When placing objects on shelves of consoles, care shall be used to ensure that there is no damage to the console.
- 6. Loose wiring shall not be touched, but instead shall be brought to the attention of the supervisor/senior dispatcher so that repair or replacement may be made in a timely manner.
- 7. Personnel shall not place their feet up on the consoles.

##### B. Safety:

- 1. Never attempt to repair any equipment in the Communications Center unless you are qualified and authorized to do so.
- 2. Keep the floor clear of anything that may cause a fall or injury.
- 3. Immediately report to the supervisor/senior dispatcher anything that may cause a fall or injury.
- 4. Keep drawers closed, wastebaskets in place, and moveable objects away from areas where one could trip over them.
- 5. Do not stand on chairs or on the consoles.
- 6. Know where the fire extinguishers are located.
- 7. Know where the first aid kit and AED LIFEPAK are located.
- 8. Know what actions to take if a person near you becomes ill or injured.
- 9. Never spray any chemicals, deodorants, hair sprays, or similar substances in the Communications Center.
- 10. Unplug equipment, as necessary, during maintenance/repairs.
- 11. Do not move any equipment in the Communications Center from one

place to another, unless authorized by the Communications lieutenant or supervisor.

**C. Headsets:**

1. It is recommended that Communications personnel use issued headsets during the performance of their duties, and that they keep other personnel (e.g., supervisors, etc.) advised of any calls of a serious nature.
  - a. Headsets shall not be used on fire or police radio, as headsets are not compatible with these positions.
2. If a supervisor/senior dispatcher is not in the radio room at the time of a serious call, they must be notified of the call. These call shall include, but not be limited to the following:
  - a. Holdups/Armed Robberies;
  - b. Shots Fired;
  - c. Serious Fires; and
  - d. Traffic Pursuits.

**D. Use of Headsets During Electrical Storms:**

1. Any time information is received, either by radio or other means, and any time there are visible signs of a storm with lightning in the area, the following shall be adhered to for safety purposes:
  - a. Communications personnel shall immediately remove their headsets as a measure of protection from a possible lightning strike.
  - b. Personnel shall continue communicating without a headset until there is no longer the threat of a lightning strike.

**V. UNAUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT**

**A. Communications personnel shall abide by the following:**

1. Only equipment issued or supplied by the City of Albany shall be used in the Communications Center, unless approved by the Communications lieutenant.
2. No other televisions, radios, tapes, CDs, music, computers, games, headphones, earphones/buds, or the like, shall be used in any work area, unless approved by the Communications lieutenant.
3. Every effort shall be made to keep all extraneous noise to a minimum and to maintain a quiet professional work atmosphere.

**VI. SECURITY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER**

**A. Communications personnel shall abide by the following:**

1. All exterior doors to the Communications Center shall be kept closed and

locked at all times.

a. [REDACTED]

2. There are [REDACTED] in place to protect equipment and cover areas surrounding the Communications Center, including the front and rear entrances, the parking lot, and streets directly surrounding the Communications Center.
3. Communications personnel are responsible for restricting unauthorized personnel from entering/remaining in the Communications Center.
4. Communications personnel shall use their issued swipe key cards to enter the Communications Center.
5. Communications personnel may allow a person who has proper business within the Communications Center to enter and accomplish his/her job, providing such person has been properly identified.
6. All other requests shall be conducted on the telephone that is located within the Communications Center.

**B. Unauthorized Entry Into the Communications Center:**

1. Access to the Communications Center is limited to personnel of this department who are on official police business.
2. All other access shall be approved by a Communications supervisor.

**C. Alternate Power Source for Communications Center:**

1. The Communications Center has a generator that provides an alternate source of electrical power that is sufficient to ensure the continued operation of emergency communication equipment in the event of the failure of the primary power source.

a. The generator [REDACTED]

i. The generator [REDACTED]

ii. Security cameras monitor the location of the generator at all times.

b. A remote test of the alternate power source is completed monthly, at a minimum. The test is completed as follows:

- i. The generator shall start up and run for thirty (30) minutes to ensure operability.
- ii. If there is a problem indicated during the test, an audible alarm will sound at the facility where the generator is located.
- iii. The Building Maintenance supervisor shall notify the vendor

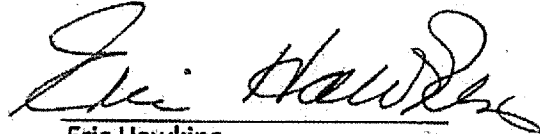
- of the alarm and request them to respond.
- iv. The vendor shall make a record of any problems indicated during the tests and remedies taken to resolve them. Such records shall be maintained by the vendor and shall be provided to the department.
    - a) Any records received by the department shall be maintained by the Building Maintenance supervisor, in accordance with department policy.
  - v. The remote test shall be observed once each month by Communications Personnel and documented on an Albany Police Department Generator Self Test Log, APD Form # [REDACTED] shown on page 9 of this order. Personnel observing the test shall be designated by the Communications supervisor or senior dispatcher.
- c. A documented full load test and inspection shall be completed annually, at a minimum.
    - i. This is an on-site test completed by the vendor and includes the following:
      - a) Mechanical inspection;
      - b) Filter change;
      - c) Oil change; and
      - d) Full load test to ensure readiness, which includes attaching a separate load bank to the generator and running it for four (4) hours to confirm the generator can put out the maximum power output that it is rated for.
    - ii. Records of such tests shall be maintained by the vendor and shall be provided to the Building Maintenance supervisor after completion.
      - a) Any records received by the Building Maintenance supervisor shall be maintained, in accordance with department policy.
  - d. A desk mounted radio shall be maintained in the police and fire radio sections to facilitate communications in the event of a power failure and the emergency generator has failed.
  - e. In the event the CAD system fails or has to be shut down for an extended period of time, dispatch cards are available for use to dispatch and keep track of calls for service.
2. Equipment, such as transmission lines, antennas, and electrical power distribution points, shall be secured by fences or other appropriate means with entry restricted to authorized personnel.

## VII. EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

- A. In the case of a fire/smoke condition the supervisor/senior dispatcher shall coordinate evacuation of the Communication Center.
1. The dispatcher assigned to the fire console shall page the fire alarm dispatching the Albany Fire Department to the Communications Center.
    - a. If conditions do not permit this to be done from the fire console position, the dispatcher shall take the portable fire radio while evacuating the building and sound the alarm when time and safety permit.
- B. All Communications personnel shall proceed to one of the entrance/exits of the Communications Center and then [REDACTED] so that the supervisor or senior dispatcher can account for all personnel.
1. Under no conditions, shall communications personnel move vehicles in the parking lot, unless directed by Albany Fire Department personnel.
  2. All rescue, fire suppression, and medical duties shall be carried out by the Albany Fire Department or other appropriate agencies.
  3. The Communications supervisor or senior dispatcher shall ensure that the Communication lieutenant, or the Operations lieutenant if the Communication lieutenant is off-duty, is apprised of the situation.
- C. The Communications supervisor or senior dispatcher shall be responsible for notifying the telephone service provider to begin rolling over incoming phone calls according to the following:
1. Emergency 911 calls shall be routed to the Albany County Sheriff's Office (ACSO):
    - a. The ACSO shall be notified immediately;
    - b. The ACSO shall enter calls into the CAD system; and
    - c. Once entered into CAD, calls shall be dispatched by Albany Police Department personnel.
  2. Non-emergency calls shall be forwarded to phone lines within the department, to be determined by the Commander of Administrative Services Bureau (ASB), or his/her designee.
- D. A back-up Communications Center shall be set-up at Headquarters or other appropriate location determined by the Commander of ASB or his/her designee.
1. If regular telecommunications equipment is unavailable, Communications Center personnel shall use the phones and computers available at the back-up location to access necessary systems and databases and to take calls; and portable radios to dispatch calls.
  2. The Computer and Technology Unit (CTU) shall be notified and shall coordinate with the Commander of ASB or his/her designee, to make any

necessary notifications or obtain necessary equipment to maintain the communications function of the department.

- E. Personnel shall not re-enter the building until instructed to do so by the Albany Fire Department.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Hawkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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Chief of Police







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**COMMUNICATION REPRODUCTION  
 REQUEST FOR RADIO/TELEPHONE TRANSMISSIONS**

**Requested By:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please Print Name) (Signature)

**Unit:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Request Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Authorizing Supervisor, if applicable)

**SUBJECT MATTER:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Incident Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Office of Professional Standards Use Only**  
**Request Complied with: Yes \_\_\_/No \_\_\_ # of Copies Supplied:**

**RETURNED REPRODUCTION**

**Date Returned:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time Returned:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Copies Returned:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Person Receiving Copies:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_