Augusta County Emergency Services Officers Association
Augusta County Government Center
P.O. Box 590 – 18 Government Center Lane
Verona, Virginia 24482

Fire-EMS	
Standard Operating Guideline	
Section:	**Emergency Communications**
Title:	**Emergency Radio Traffic and Activation of Emergency Button**
Date:	**Approved 3/26/13**

Pertains to: Career and Volunteer Personnel

Purpose

To provide Personnel of the Fire & Rescue department a procedure and guidance for emergency communications to include; Emergency Call, mayday, and responses to such.

Standard Operating Guideline

1. Emergency radio traffic and activation of emergency buttons will be handled using one of the following four guidelines:
    a. Emergency radio traffic
    b. Emergency button activation at incidents with a single unit
    c. Emergency button activation at incidents with multiple units and an incident command structure
    d. Emergency button activation from personal/station assigned radios.

2. Emergency Radio Traffic
   At incidents, emergency communications can mean the difference between life and death. Augusta ECC at any time or per request may close a channel to all other radio traffic or incidents. To ensure clear, concise communications, the following emergency terminology and procedures are hereby enacted for emergency voice transmissions:
    a. The term "Priority Traffic" signifies that the radio user has the need to transmit important orders to Communications, Command, or other units operating at the scene. This should be used for immediate needs, such as medic units, additional alarms, or to evacuate personnel away from dangerous situations, etc.
       Example: "Command from Safety Group, Priority Traffic!"

b. The term "MAYDAY! MAYDAY!" is reserved for priority messages involving the safety of firefighters, EMS, or other personnel (trapped, endangered, etc.). This term is universally recognized as a distress signal.

Example: "Command from Roof Division, MAYDAY! MAYDAY! We have a firefighter through the roof at …"

c. The following is the sequence when units/personnel have an emergency and notification to Augusta ECC/Command is needed. Once activated all shall follow # 4, 5, 6, or 7 of this SOG depending on what is appropriate.

    a. Non Fire/Non MayDay Situation

        i. Personnel will transmit the following on the assigned frequency "Augusta/Command from (unit/personnel ID) priority traffic"

        ii. Once acknowledge they will advise Augusta/Command of the situation, resources needed, and other pertinent information.

        iii. Augusta ECC/Command will acknowledge and proceed in what is requested or needed to mitigate the situation

        iv. Open communications will be maintained at all times by those involved.

        v. If due to situation or injury personnel are unable to speak they will immediately activate the Emergency Button.

    b. Firefighter/Personnel Down

        i. Person will stop immediately, size up the situation, try and gain their location, and if they are injured or trapped.

        ii. If able to speak transmit "MayDay, MayDay, MayDay!" provide LUNAR report, then activate PASS device.

        iii. LUNAR Report

            1. L- Location, provide as much and as specific information as possible

                Example: "Division 1, end of hallway"

            2. U- Unit, apparatus personnel were on

                Example: "Engine 102 Firefighter"

            3. N- Name, rank followed by last name.

                Example: "Firefighter Jones"

            4. A- Assignment/Air, what was the task they were assigned.

                Example: "Division 1 fire attack, Air is 500psi"

            5. R- Resources, what is needed rescue.

                Example: "Trapped under debris need manpower and vent saws"

            6. Follow Lunar with "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday"

            7. Example: "Mayday Mayday Mayday, Division 1 end of hallway, Engine 102 firefighter, Firefighter Jones, Division 1 fire attack air is 500psi, I'm trapped under debris and need manpower and vent saws, Mayday Mayday Mayday"

            8. Open communications will be maintained.

        iv. If unable to speak; activate PASS then press Emergency Button. If unable to reach PASS press Emergency Button.

3. Emergency Button Activation

    a. All portable and mobile ACFR/County owned radios are equipped with Emergency Activation Alert Buttons.

    b. These buttons are Orange in color and are located on the top of the portable radio and on the front of the mobile radio. These buttons are activated by depressing the orange button.

    c. Radios will transmit Emergency Alert identifiers on County 1 regardless of the radio operator's selected channel and switch the radio to County 1. Alerts may be reset by powering the radio off and on.

d. Radios that could be operating in neighboring jurisdictions will have Emergency Button Activation live for those jurisdictions operating channels. This is provided that the County of Augusta, Augusta ECC, ACFR, and the other jurisdiction(s) agree on this. If so then the program will be set up to show the Augusta County ID on the other jurisdictions system and on the appropriate normal operating channel(s) as well as any designated Emergency channels.

4. <u>Activation At Incidents With A Single Unit or Incidents with no Command Structure</u>
   a. If an emergency activation signal is received from a unit on an emergency incident, the Emergency Communications Center shall:
      i. Attempt to make contact with the unit twice using County 1. The following announcement shall be used, "Augusta to (the unit identified on the console with the activation), receiving Signal 1".
         Example: "Augusta to Engine 102, receiving Signal 1." The term "Signal 1" has been established by the Virginia Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator for statewide use – signifying Immediate Danger.
      ii. If the activation was accidental, personnel must state the patterned response of "Augusta from (The unit identified on the console with the activation), accidental activation of Signal 1".
         Example: "Augusta from Engine 102, accidental activation of Signal 1".
      iii. Any response other than this established pattern will signify a hostile situation where personnel are not able to communicate the details of the emergency.
      iv. Once the "Accidental Activation of Signal 1" transmission has been made, the radio user should power the radio off/on to clear the signal. Augusta ECC will acknowledge and clear the CAD.
      v. If no response is received by Augusta ECC, or if any message other than the patterned response is stated, law enforcement assistance will be dispatched immediately to the last known location of the unit!
      vi. The Emergency Communications Center will have other radio users limit non-priority radio traffic until the emergency is cleared or the situation is stabilized.
      vii. Personnel must provide an update of the situation as soon as possible.
      viii. If the unit/person is operating in a jurisdiction outside of Augusta County Augusta ECC will follow above. If it is not accidental or they receive no response they will contact the appropriate jurisdiction's dispatch center the unit/person is operating in and advise them of the Emergency Activation and the possible need for law enforcement. Augusta ECC will remain in contact with the unit person until the situation is mitigated.

5. <u>Activation at Incidents with Multiple Units and an Incident Command Structure</u>
   a. If an emergency activation signal is received from a unit on an emergency incident with multiple units and an incident command structure, the Emergency Communications Center shall:
      i. Acknowledge the Emergency Activation has been received.
      ii. Immediately notify Incident Command for the incident, activation has been received and the unit.
      iii. Incident Command will then contact the unit and establish if it was an accidental activation or an emergency.
      iv. If it is an accidental activation IC will notify Augusta ECC immediately on the incident frequency and advise them it was accidental and Signal 1 is okay. Augusta ECC will then clear the ECall.
      v. If it is an emergency, the IC shall be responsible for the following.
         1. Activation of RIT/RIC and any other resources needed.
         2. Command or designee (Safety or Operations) will maintain communications with the person/unit on County 1 while the incident operations remain on the assigned frequency.

3. If County 1 is the incident frequency then incident operations shall be moved to another frequency.
    vi. If the unit/person is operating in a jurisdiction outside of Augusta County, Augusta County ECC will follow above. If it is not accidental or they receive no response they will contact the appropriate jurisdiction the unit/person is operating in and advise them of the Emergency Activation and to notify command. Augusta ECC will remain in contact with the unit person until the situation is mitigated.

6. Activation of Personal/Station-Assigned Radios
    a. In the event that an emergency button activation is received from a radio that has been assigned to a person or station, the Emergency Communications Center shall:
        i. Attempt to make contact with the unit twice using County 1. The following announcement shall be used, "Augusta to (the unit identified on the console with the activation), receiving Signal 1."
        ii. If the emergency activation is accidental, the unit will respond with the following message, "Augusta from (The unit identified on the console with the activation), accidental activation of Signal 1". Once the transmission has been made, the unit should power the radio off then on to clear the signal. Augusta ECC will acknowledge then clear the CAD.
        iii. If no response is received, the Communications Center will attempt to make contact with the radio user (telephoning home/cell, station, digital alpha pages, etc.). The radio user's senior officer (Chief / Captain/Lieutenant) shall be notified. The radio user's senior officer shall be responsible for resolving the Emergency Button Activation and notifying the Communications Center of the outcome.
        iv. If no response is received a page/dispatch will also be sent to the ACFR Duty Officer with a request to contact the Emergency Communications Center reference "Signal 1" activation from (radio user).The ACFR Duty Officer will determine what further action, if any, is warranted based on the information available.

7. Monitoring of False Activations
    a. False activations will be monitored and followed up with accordingly. Abuse of emergency activation buttons will not be tolerated. ACFR reserves the right to disable emergency alerting from radios should abuse occur or take further appropriate action.