

OPP128

TELEPHONE AND RADIO TRANSMISSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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The aim of this policy is to provide information which will ensure that all radio users are able to communicate in a structured and consistent manner. This in turn will support effective communication, impacting in a positive manner on patient care, staff welfare and the image of the National Ambulance company.

This document is intended to ensure that accurate, concise and appropriate messages are passed between Ambulance Communications Centre (ACC) and operational staff.

This policy is related to OPP113 Ambulance Communications Centre Procedures.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers all employees within National Ambulance who are required to communicate using radio technology.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ACC Team leaders are responsible for ensuring that all ACC staff adhere to the policy. Operational Supervisors and Managers are responsible for ensuring that Operations staff adhere to the policy.

4. POLICY

Radio transmissions should provide the primary method of voice communication with telephony used as a back up to this.

All personnel using the Tetra radio system are reminded that correct procedure must be adhered to at all times. Applying the procedure consistently ensures uniformity throughout the service and prevents misunderstandings and confusion.

4.1. Radio Usage

At the start of each shift operational staff must contact ACC to confirm ability to respond and complete a test of the radio. Batteries should be charged and exchanged as required. Any defect in radio communications should be reported immediately to ACC.

Staff should refer to the Clinical Manual for more information regarding how to use the radio.

All personnel need to be aware that it is the responsibility of all users to maintain their integrity, conduct, and behaviour towards others while using any radio equipment. All personnel need to be mindful that radio transmissions may be overheard and therefore all transmissions must be professional and not compromise the reputation and integrity of NA.

It is the responsibility of all staff to utilise only recognised radio terminology, code-words and phrases while speaking on the radio system and that radio communications should be concise. Prolonged conversations should not be carried out over the radio. Use the telephone if a long conversation is required with ACC

4.2. General Broadcast

A General Broadcast is broadcast to all radio users on a specific radio talkgroup for the specific purpose of sharing information. A General Broadcast is carried out by ACC only and no reply is expected unless specifically requested.

4.3. Telephone Usage

All ambulances will have a mobile phone issued to that specific vehicle. It is the responsibility of the crew to ensure that the phone is charged and functioning at the commencement of each shift.

Any conversation that is not suitable to be carried out via radio should be conducted by telephone. This includes lengthy conversations, for example where directions need to be given to a crew.

All staff should be aware that any telephone conversation carried out via ACC is recorded and can be produced at any time as required. All conversations carried out by telephone should be conducted in a professional manner and not compromise the reputation and integrity of NA.

Telephones within ACC should not be used for conducting personal business without the prior permission of the ACC TL.

Should there be any failure of the telephone systems, then this should be reported to Logistics team as outlined in Section 5.3.

4.4. Vehicle Status and Movements

All vehicle movements must be approved by ACC prior to the journey being commenced, unless being carried out as part of an already arranged sequence i.e. crew returning to station via refuelling.

4.5. End of Shift

When operational staff have reached the end of their shift they should add the suffix “X-ray” to their call sign when transmitting, for example “NA35 x-ray”. This will enable ACC to identify which resources are available to respond to calls.

4.6. Vehicle Status

The following terms should be used when referring to vehicle status:

Dispatched	A call has been sent to MDT
On route	Crew have acknowledged the call and are en-route
On scene	Crew have arrived at the location of the call and are with the patient
Arrived at Patient	Crew arrived at the patient – this could be different to the on scene time if the crew have to go on foot
Transporting	Crew are conveying a patient
Arrived Receiving Hospital	Crew are at hospital or other facility

Patient Handed Over	Signature received from hospital staff signifying patient has left care of ambulance crew
Finished	Crew have handed patient over to hospital staff and are now available to take another call
Off the road	Crew are unable to respond. This must be escalated to the ACC TL without delay

4.7. Common Phrases

Only recognised phrases should be used during radio communications.

Go ahead	Start your message
Say again	Repeat your message
Over	I've finished my message, it's your turn
Out	We've finished our conversation
Received	I understand
Roger	I understand
Negative	No
Standby	Please wait
Ten Ten	I am unable to speak freely. Please be cautious with your broadcast as I can be overheard.
On base	Please inform ACC when you are back on base
Green	When you are not on a call, your status is green
Clear	When you have become available after a call
No trace	Unable to locate incident
Urgent assistance	I require urgent assistance from the police, civil defence or another ambulance crew. It is essential that you specify who require the assistance from.
Windscreen Report	When arriving on scene a "windscreen report" should be given for all calls. The following information should be included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and priority of patients Other services required Exact location
Methane Report	M – Major incident declared (or not) E – Exact location T – Type of incident (MVA, fire, explosion) H – Hazards, present and potential A – Access to scene and egress routes N – Number and priority of patients E – Emergency services present and required

All radio communications should be concise. Telephony should be utilised if a long conversation is required.

4.8. Telephone and Radio Faults

If a crew or ACC experience a fault with their radio or telephone, this should be reported to the IT team immediately.



5. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

International, federal or local legislation and circulars relevant to this Policy. Full detail on this legislation can be found in QHP109 Legal Register.

Code, Name of Legislation	Jurisdiction
Code, Name of Legislation, Year here	Jurisdiction here

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. Radio Usage

When calling ACC operational staff should use the following format:

Employee: "Comms centre, receiving (callsign)"

ACC: "(callsign) pass message"

Employee: pass message

ACC: "all received (callsign). Comms centre out"

ACC: "Comms centre, (callsign) are you receiving?"

Employee: "(callsign) receiving"

ACC: pass message

Employee: "all received"

ACC: "Comms centre out"

If no response is received from ACC via radio, then please amend your position and try again. If there is still no response then please call ACC via telephone.

In the event of multiple callsigns attempting communication with ACC, the ACC has priority and will determine the order of communication.

6.2. General Broadcast

6.1.1. MANUAL PROCESS

If ACC revert to manual process for any reason, all resources will be advised via a "General Broadcast" to use voice only until further notice.

"General broadcast, general broadcast. All ambulances please be aware that ACC is working on manual process. All transmissions via radio only".

Once normal functions have been restored a further "General Broadcast" will be made to inform staff they are to return to normal working processes.

"General broadcast, general broadcast. All ambulances please be aware that ACC has now returned to normal process".

6.1.2. UNASSIGNED CALLS

If ACC have calls that are unassigned then it may be appropriate for a General Broadcast to be made:

*"General broadcast, general broadcast. All ambulances please be aware of call outstanding in **area**. Any ambulance available to respond please contact ACC".*

A note should be entered into the call record that a General Broadcast has been made and the time that it occurred.

6.3. Radio and Telephone Faults

This should be reported by the ACC TL via email to THelpDesk@nationalambulance.ae and followed up with a notification email to the Area Manager.

7. RELATED POLICIES AND FORMS

List related policies and procedures to the created/updated policy.

Policy & Procedure /Form

8. FEEDBACK

Any feedback or suggestions for improvement to this Policy, Processes or Procedures can be submitted to ghse@nationalambulance.ae

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL AND OWNERSHIP

A review and update of this document will take place as necessary, when changes occur that identify the need to revise this Policy such as changes in roles and responsibilities, release of new legislative or technical guidance, or identification of a new policy area.

This document ownership for editing is identified as:

- Operation

This controlled document is managed / overseen by [Procurement and Tendering Committee and/or Audit and Risk Management Committee and/or HR and Compensation Committee].

Change Brief

Version No.	Date	Changes
3	July 27, 2011	Addition of Dispatching & Response Codes
3.1	June 26, 2012	Update to generic procedures including embedding
3.2	16-July-12	Addition of log sheet codes and addition of scope and title procedures

3.3	15-Oct-14	Rewrite Policy, change code from SPO004 Radio and Telephone Usage Policy to OPP128 Telephone and Radio Transmission Policy and Procedure
4	August 2016	Changes to Vehicle Status Terminology 4.6
5	November 2017	Removal of reference OPF182
6	September 2021	6.3 Phone and radio issues to be escalated to IT, not logistics. Minor grammatical corrections

CEO Approval

Board Member Verification

