

Telecommunications General Orders

A. Purpose:

To establish guidelines for telecommunications in dispatching calls for service, while not every incident or situation is listed, these general orders will provide a framework to assist the telecommunications in handling everyday responsibilities.

B. Policy:

Most often the initial contact the public has with the department is throughout telecommunications center. It is vital that telecommunications are provided with guidelines to perform their responsibilities efficiently, courteously, and with consistency. It is recognized that the telecommunicator often does not have time to review departmental policy while taking a call. However, they should be aware that knowledge of departmental policy is an essential element of their occupation, and where conflict between these general order and departmental policy occurs, departmental policy should be followed.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
TELEPHONE AND FACSIMILE SYSTEMS

TELEPHONES

- ❖ The administrative telephone used in dispatch operates with multiple incoming lines.
 - Lines are routed through dispatch.
 - Answer as follows: "Ruidoso Police Department, this is [name]. How may I help you?"
 - In order to dial out on one of these lines, you must first press 9, and then dial the number. If the number is long-distance, after dialing the number, you will hear a long tone. Enter your long distance code at that time.
- ❖ *Crime stoppers*
 - This is the only line that is not recorded, and is to be used for Crime stoppers tips ONLY.
 - Answer as follows: "Lincoln Co. Crime stoppers" or "Ruidoso Crime stoppers."
 - If the caller on the Crime stoppers line wishes to give a tip:
 - Open the Crime stoppers binder and obtain a CS number. Give this number to the caller and have them reference it when calling to check on status of the tip.
 - Fill out the tip sheet accordingly, and place it in CID's box and/or refer to the appropriate agency if necessary.
 - Dialing out on this line requires you to first press 9.

FACSIMILES:

- ❖ There are two faxes hooked up for departmental use. One is located in the communications center, and the other is located at the front desk.
 - Front Desk fax number is: 575-258-1145
 - Dispatch fax number is : 575-258-1863
- ❖ Dialing out on the fax does not require pressing any key or code for an outside line first. Simply dial the number and press SEND. If the number you are dialing is long distance, enter the phone number, including 1 and the area code, then press the PAUSE button and enter your long distance code. Complete the long distance fax by pressing SEND.

CALL-TAKING:

- ❖ The average citizen only has contact with law enforcement three times in their life.
- ❖ On average, two out of every five calls will be a call for service.
- ❖ Never assume that just because a call is coming in on an administrative line, that it will not be an emergency.
- ❖ Always be alert and prepared with your note-taking implements and your equipment ready.
- ❖ You must control the call. Do not be rude, but do maintain your authority as the controller of the call.
- ❖ Avoid long pauses or interruptions in the call flow if possible. Doing so may cause you to lose your control of the situation.
- ❖ Each type of call presents a different set of questions and answers that need to be asked and obtained. As questioning proceeds, you should be able to determine the priority response for the call, and how to proceed. Utilize your reference sheets and familiarize yourself with each type of call you might receive and how respond and prioritize the call.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
E911 OPERATIONS

OPERATION OF THE E911 SYSTEM

- ❖ **PSAP** is an acronym for **Public Safety Answering Point**. A PSAP is the call center that is designated to handle 911 calls for a specific geographical area. Within Lincoln County, there are two PSAPs: RPD, AND Lincoln Co. S.O.
 - RUIDOSO PD: generally handles incoming 911 calls for Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs and the parts of Lincoln Co. that surround Ruidoso proper.
 - LINCOLN CO. S.O.: generally handles incoming 911 calls for outlying areas of Lincoln Co. not covered by the Ruidoso PSAP, including but not limited to Carrizozo, Capitan, Bonita, Corona and Alto.
 - Although a PSAP may handle a primary area, the dispatcher should be prepared to handle incoming 911 calls from all over the state, not just the area that their assigned PSAP normally covers.

ANSWERING 911

- ❖ When receiving an incoming 911 call, dispatch will be notified by a distinctive ring, and the flashing red/green indicator on the Positron E911 screen. (*NOTE: To utilize the 911/GIS keyboard, press CTRL, release, and the press 1. To revert to the CAD keyboard, press CTRL and then 2.*)
- ❖ In order to answer in incoming call, the dispatcher must do the following:
 - Click on the button showing an active incoming call using the mouse.
- ❖ When answering the incoming 911 call, the State of New Mexico mandates that the 911 operator will identify which PSAP has received the call. This is done by answering EVERY 911 call in the following manner: “**Ruidoso Area** 911, what (or where) is your emergency?” (Remember that all 911 lines are recorded.)
- ❖ Occasionally, there are multiple incoming 911 calls. When this occurs, it is necessary to determine which trunk the active call is coming in on in order to answer it. In order to determine the incoming trunk, you must right click on the incoming call button that is showing active. This will pull up a separate box on the upper right hand side of the positron E911 screen. That screen will show an active button for the incoming trunk. Each truck is labeled: 911-1, 911-2, 911-3. Answering by truck line once the trunk has been determined is the same as answering when a single call is inbound.
- ❖ Once you have picked up the incoming 911 call, you should receive ANI (Automatic Number Indicator) and ALI (Automatic Location Indicator) information. The ANI/ALI screen is displayed directly above the incoming call indicator buttons. Cell phone callers will not display ANI/ALI information all of the time, but landline callers generally will. Regardless of whether or not the call displays ANI/ALI information, always make sure to verify the caller’s location, location of the emergency, and the number the caller is calling you from.
- ❖ Upon receiving a 911 call from a wireless phone, wait approximately 15-20 seconds into the call and hit the RTX button on the ALI section of the 911 screen (upper right hand side). This will triangulate the location of the 911 caller, based on 911 cell towers that the call is bouncing off of. It makes it easier to narrow down the approximate location of the caller. You may have to do this more than once.
- ❖ If you find that the caller has hung up prior to your pick-up of the call, or if the caller hangs up immediately after you pickup (or during the course of the call), you are **REQUIRED** to attempt a call-back if possible. Call back should be immediate, and you should attempt to call back as many times as required in order to establish voice contact. If you are only able to reach voicemail or an answering machine, leave a message identifying yourself, and requesting that they attempt to re-contact you in order for you to determine that they are in no need of assistance. Continue to attempt to periodically re-contact the caller for at least 30 minutes after the initial hang up, or until you establish voice contact.
- ❖ Should you desire to listen in on another call-taker’s ongoing 911 call, you may do so by right-clicking on the active 911 call button (lower left-hand side of Positron screen) and then double-clicking on the appropriate trunk line in the resulting pop-up window. *Note:* once you have joined in on the 911 call, your handset is *LIVE*. You should always opt to mute your handset when you are not the primary call-taker. (Click the mute button below the 911 incoming line indicator buttons, or hold down the mute button on the handset.)

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL

E911 OPERATIONS (CONT.'D)

ANSWERING 911 (CONT'D.)

- ❖ Once you have handled a call, or have finished listening to a call that another operator is handling, you must select the orange "R" button on your Positron screen to disconnect. You may also hit release on your 10-key pad. If you do not disconnect the call, you will continue to have an open, live, 911 line.

TTY/TDD CALLS

- ❖ There are times when an incoming 911 call will have dead air on the other end. This may be a misdial, or it may be a TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf) call. TDD is a tool utilized by people with speech or hearing disabilities that enables them to communicate via telephone.
- ❖ To recognize an incoming 911 call as TDD, you must listen for a tone. There are some TDD systems that have a recording announcing that the call is a TDD/TTY call. If you do not hear a tone or a recording, but are unable to reach anyone by repeating yourself, you should send out a TDD test tone. This will enable the E911 system to connect of the caller on the other end is using TDD.
- ❖ To send a TDD tone, follow these steps:
 - Left-click on the TTY button located in the upper right-hand corner of the ANI/ALI indicator section.
 - When the TTY box pops up, look for the Baudot button on the bottom left-hand side. Left-click. Once you've done this, the text box above should automatically show incoming text if the call is a TDD call. If clicking on the Baudot button is unsuccessful, repeat the steps, using instead the ASCII button. (Be prepared for a very loud tone in your ear when using the ASCII button. You may want to hold the phone receiver away from your ear until the tone is complete.)
 - If you are successful at connecting with a TDD caller, you may communicate via the messaging box in your TDD screen. (See reference sheets for proper TDD protocol.)

TRANSFERRING CALLS

- ❖ Because **Ruidoso PD** is a PSAP for several jurisdictions, you will find that there are times when a transfer to another agency is required. There are two ways to transfer a call to another agency.
- ❖ For agencies that are routinely transferred 911 calls (LCSO, BIA, RDPD), you may left-click on the button labeled with the appropriate agency name. These buttons are located at the bottom right-hand corner of the Positron screen.
- ❖ For agencies that are not listed on the quick-button transfer, right-click on the agency transfer button on the top row of the transfer buttons. (The button will have "right click to view" listed on it.) This will bring up a separate menu that you may select from in order to transfer to the appropriate agency by left-clicking.

I.T.R.R. AND ROLODEX FEATURES

- ❖ Positron has enabled the dispatcher to access recording for recent radio and 911 traffic by utilizing the I.T.R.R. (Internal Telephone and Radio Recorder). You access this feature by selecting the ITRR button on the top left hand side of your Positron screen. Once the ITRR has popped up, you may select either telephone or radio recordings to listen to, or if you so desire, you may listen to telephone and radio recordings simultaneously. You also have the option to save the recordings on your terminal for quick access later.
- ❖ Positron is also equipped with a rolodex feature, enabling the dispatcher to access numbers, addresses and additional information for multiple resources. You may select the rolodex by left-clicking the rolodex icon on the upper left-hand side of your Positron screen. You may search for information in a number of ways, including card name, type of contact, etc.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
E911 OPERATIONS (CONT.'D)

OPERATION OF THE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) MAP

The GIS map is integrated with E911. Whenever a 911 call comes in on a land line and is associated with a **verified** address, the GIS will plot the location the call came from on the map. In the case of some 911 cell callers, the address plotted on the map will refer to the cellular tower that the cell call was placed from. The plotted location will remain on the map for a minimum of one minute after the disconnection of the call. **DO NOT RELY SOLELY ON THE LOCATION PLOTTED ON THE MAP TO OBTAIN YOUR DISPATCH ADDRESS. IT IS NOT ALWAYS CORRECT OR RELIABLE.** *The GIS map is to be used only as a tool in addition to, not in place of, verifying the address with your caller.*

- ❖ It is also possible to enter addresses to be plotted on the map. In order to find an address on the map, you must select the "SEARCH" tab on the left-hand side of the screen, next to the map.
 - Under the SEARCH tab, click on the LOCATION field. Type in your address with minimal information. (For example, use "332 Sudderth" not "332 Sudderth Drive, Ruidoso.") The address should turn bold if it is verified, and then automatically plot on the map after you press the ENTER key.
 - To plot intersections, use the following format: Sudderth/Mechem
 - There is a COORDINATES tab under the LOCATION tab. If you left-click on the COORDINATES tab, the address that you plotted on the map will show GPS latitude and longitude coordinates, which is particularly helpful for people lost that have only GPS coordinates to provide.
 - Under the COORDINATES tab, you also have the option to enter latitude and longitude in order to plot a location.
 - This feature will be used more by the Sheriff's Office and State Police; however, you should make an effort to familiarize yourself with the function should they request your assistance, or should you receive the 911 call for help that has only latitude and longitude for a location.
 - Under the SEARCH tab, there is also a field to enter "NEW PIN DESCRIPTION." This is used to title or mark specific pinpoints on the map. For example, if you have an officer stationed on a perimeter, or hydrant location that you need to mark, you may select the NEW PIN DESCRIPTION field and enter the officer's badge number, or a name for the hydrant, then enter the address or intersection in the LOCATION field, and then hit the ENTER key. GIS will then plot the location on the map, titling it with the name you have chosen.
 - You may plot as many pins as necessary
 - Once you've finished with the pins you've set, you can clear them by selecting the "CLEAR PINS" icon in the top center of the GIS screen, right under the blue title bar.
- ❖ It can also be helpful to plot the address on the ArGIS map provided by the Village GIS Coordinator. This map clearly defines the boundaries for the Village of Ruidoso. You can access the map by going to the following web address: <https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/planning-zoning-1> and selecting the "VIEW LARGE ONLINE ZONING MAP" option.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH (EMD)

A NOTE REGARDING EMD: As PSAP 911 operators, we are the FIRST first-responder on the scene of a medical emergency. When callers contact 911 in the event of any emergency, we are the first line of help and defense they have for resolving the situation. Often times, it is our ability to adequately perform our duties that means the life or death of the person needing emergency assistance.

As a result, we are required to be certified to give medical instruction and direction to callers. Doing so begins medical treatment for the patient in need, and often, may save the person's life. Doing it properly also protects us from liability if a patient's condition worsens and they suffer severe injury, disfigurement or death.

With the responsibility of providing Emergency Medical Dispatch, you, as the 911 operator, are also charged with the burden of liability. Therefore, once you begin giving emergency assistance, you are required to follow through with the patient, giving instruction and direction, as well as maintaining communication via 911 line until a scene responder arrives (paramedic or EMT). Failure to do so could mean that not only is the PSAP liable if the person dies or is incapacitated, but you are also personally held responsible.

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR USE OF EMD IS RESPONSIBLE, THOROUGH, AND TO THE LETTER OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE.

Until you are sent to the proper EMD course and receive your certification, you are not to provide emergency medical dispatch unless it is at the direction and under the direct supervision of a certified EMD provider.

- ❖ At each dispatch console, there is a black hard-back binder that, when opened, contains a MEGACall EMD flipchart. This flipchart contains pre-arrival medical instructions that can be provided to the caller in the case of a medical emergency.
- ❖ When a 911 call is received and it is determined that it is a medical emergency, the 911 operator should immediately pull out the EMD flipchart and begin giving pre-arrival instructions to the caller.
- ❖ Using the MEGACall flipchart:
 - Begin on the right-hand, top side with the Dispatch Flow Chart. Ask each question, in order, and as verbatim as possible.
 - Once the answers have been obtained to the initiation card, provide that information to emergency medical responders and then select the appropriate card in the flip chart for the patient's chief complaint/symptomology.
 - Each card should be read verbatim, beginning with the KEY QUESTIONS section, making sure to update the responders with the answers given to the questions asked of the caller.
 - Once all of the medical questions have been asked and answered, begin giving the PRE-AMBULANCE INSTRUCTIONS listed below the key questions.
 - Below the PRE-AMBULANCE INSTRUCTIONS there is a section with additional information that might be of help to the dispatcher.
- ❖ With every medical call, it is important to remain on the line with the caller, even after pre-arrival instructions have been given, until the scene responders arrive at the location. This prevents too long a delay in relaying updated patient information in the event that the patient's condition changes or worsens, or in the case of the patient's death.
- ❖ It is also helpful to make sure to determine if there are any pets that are at the residence, or inside the residence. If so, ask that the caller secure them if at all possible before scene responders arrive. Waiting until the paramedics arrive to determine that there is a yard full of vicious dogs doesn't help the patient, and it puts the responders in danger.

It is recommended that you also familiarize yourself with call-taking techniques regarding hysterical callers, as medical calls very often are initiated by callers that are hysterical or in a state of panic and shock.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
THINGS TO REMEMBER

VOICE: Keep in mind that this is the caller's first impression of you. First impressions are very important and can make someone feel comfortable or very uncomfortable. Keep this in mind while you are talking to them.

PITCH: High or low – Speech experts say a low-pitched voice is more desirable because it projects and carries better. It is also more pleasing to the ear and generally has a calming effect.

INFLECTION: Don't talk in monotone. Use feeling to express an idea or mood. Rising inflection toward the end of a sentence is very helpful.

COURTESY: Common, everyday courtesy should be used in the same way you would face to face. It may be more important because you cannot see the person to whom you are speaking, and thusly, they are unable to read your body language. It's better to be overly courteous than not courteous enough.

tone: Many times, it isn't what you say, but how you say it. Your voice should reflect sincerity, pleasantness, confidence and interest.

UNDERSTANDIBILITY: Avoid talking with anything in your mouth. Also make sure to speak directly into the phone or radio.

RATE: The basic rate of speech is 120 WPM. If you speak too rapidly, people start listening to your rate of speech instead of to what you are saying. If you speak too slowly, it can be irritating to a listener because he is kept hanging on every word and tends to anticipate what you are going to say. Speaking too slowly may also give the impression that you are not concerned with their problem.

ENUNCIATION: The English language is full of similarities – T & D, P & B, E & V. Clear enunciation will help avoid misunderstanding and reduce the need to repeat yourself.

TELEPHONE GREETING: Because all calls are potential emergencies, you must promptly answer all incoming calls. If you are not able to immediately handle the call because of incoming 911 calls, radio traffic, etc., ask the caller, "Do you have an emergency?" If their response is negative, then you may tell them to "hold, please." If the caller's response is affirmative, then handle the call and prioritize accordingly.

VOICE QUALITY: You should speak slowly and clearly on the telephone and with adequate volume. If callers cannot hear or understand you, you will have to repeat questions and instructions, which wastes time. Your voice should project authority and knowledge, backed up by a certainty of what you are telling the caller. If you are hesitant or seem unsure, the caller will probably question your answers or ability to help. If the caller has a question you don't know the answer to, tell them that you don't readily know the answer, but that you will find out for them if they don't mind waiting for a few moments.

ETIQUETTE: When dealing with all callers, you are required to maintain a polite and friendly tone. If the caller has a legitimate request of the Police Department, dispatch an officer and do not become involved in an argument. If the caller clearly does not have a problem, but persists in talking, refer them to the proper agency and then tell them that you have other calls to answer. If you determine that you cannot provide a service to a caller, explain to them why you can't and refer them to someone who can, if possible.

CONTROL OF THE CONVERSATION: It is important that you maintain control of all telephone conversations so that you can obtain all the necessary information in the least amount of time. Talkative or insistent callers are difficult to question and may take a longer time, and more patience, on the part of the call-taker.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
TYPES OF CALLERS

ANGRY/HOSTILE CALLER

Treat all callers with respect and courtesy. Understand that certain people react with anger and hostility when frustrated, frightened or upset. You have a responsibility to help all callers, not just the polite ones. You are responsible for controlling the call. You can do this by speaking quietly. If you speak quietly and don't react negatively to their anger and hostility, your manner and the tone of your voice will usually calm the caller. Don't take a hostile caller personally. Try to understand their point of view and be empathetic.

HYSTERICAL CALLER

Explain that you need them to calm down so you can get the information you need to help them. Suggest that they try taking deep, regular breaths. Use repetitive persistence. Repeat your questions with the exact same wording and tone until you get an answer. If the caller lapses into hysteria, use the same techniques to calm them down again.

INTOXICATED CALLER

Be patient and courteous. Get as much information as you can. Intoxicated callers are often unreasonable. Be patient and calm.

MENTALLY UNSTABLE CALLER

Be patient and courteous. Determine the exact nature of the problem. Chronic callers should be treated the same as others. Realize that chronic callers can have legitimate emergencies too. Never "play" with a person with mental health problems.

VERY YOUNG CALLER

Try to use words appropriate for their age level. If they don't know their address, ask for their name and for landmarks. Ask if they know the ABCs and 123s. Can they look at mail and read the address? Can they look at numbers on the front of the house? Ask for parents', grandparents' or teachers' names. Ask if there is a neighbor nearby that can talk with you. Ask where their parents work, where they go to school, or what their babysitter's name is. Children usually have much of the needed information. You need to be very persistent and imaginative in finding different ways to get the information you need.

VERY OLD CALLER

Be patient, courteous and respectful. If caller seems to have difficulty hearing you, speak more slowly and enunciate very carefully.

SPEECH IMPAIRED CALLER

Be patient and calm. Try to calm the caller. Stress and excitement can sometimes worsen impaired speech. If you are short or seem to be rushing the caller, you could be causing them more stress.

INDECISIVE CALLER

This type of caller is apprehensive and slow to speak. They are sometimes hesitant to give information and will pause a lot. Reassure the caller that they have done the right thing by calling and that they will receive help. Clarify information that they have given so that they know you have understood. After clarifying the information given, explain what you are going to do.

CALLER IN SHOCK

These callers may be very calm and will not have much emotion at all. Be sure to pay very close attention to everything that is said. This may allow you some insight and make you aware that the person is in shock. This is important, as a person who is going into (or has gone into) shock may become a separate medical emergency.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
QUESTIONING AND LISTENING TECHNIQUES

CONVERSATIONAL STYLE

Watch your tone and volume. Watch your pace in regard to the type of caller you have on the line. Be very considerate of the emotional state of the victim. Remember that the first two words of the conversation are usually lost. Watch for the numbers game, i.e. hysterical callers transposing numbers. Remember that the complainant gives the location and the operator verifies. Take notes as you are handling the call.

PUTTING THE CALLER ON HOLD

Let the caller know you are putting them on hold. Return promptly and always thank them for calling. Let them know that responders will be sent if applicable.

BONDING

Get the caller's name and use it. Treat them like a person, not just the next call in line.

RELUCTANT CALLERS

Reassure them that you will help them if you can. If you can't help them, refer them to someone that is able to do so. Request information, don't demand it. Don't lie to the caller.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLAINANT

Be careful not to minimize the information given to you. Don't try to explain it away. Listen to the caller and be aware of his/her emotions, hopes, fears, perceptions, values, age level, etc. It is not necessary to agree or accept the caller's perception or point of view; however, an effort should be made to understand it. It is helpful to articulate to the speaker exactly what you understand to be the problem.

ASSUMPTIONS

Don't assume every situation is the same. Treat every complainant fairly and individually. Don't try and deceive the caller.

ANGRY CALLER

Remember that all anger originates with the caller. Anger is a choice and secondary reaction. Try not to make things worse by participating in their anger.

HOW TO HANDLE OVERLY ABUSIVE PEOPLE

Cue yourself to sit or stand still. Assume an open posture if dealing with a complainant in person. Try to depersonalize the situation by remembering that their anger is at the situation, not you, and you cannot control the thoughts and emotions of the caller. Listen to the complete explosion. Ignore name calling and profanity and don't interrupt. Remember that there may be more attacks. Tell them you will help if you can. Use the echo method – repeat things back to the caller to verify that you got them correct. Don't rush them. Transfer/refer caller to a supervisor if it cannot be controlled.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- The average citizen only has contact with law enforcement 3 times in their life.
- It's important to always be ready and alert with your equipment and note taking implements at hand. An average of 2 out of 5 phone calls received by dispatch are calls for service.
- Be aware of your voice inflection and tone, and remain calm. This will help the caller remain calm as well.
- Be aware of your own bias, prejudices and past experiences that may interfere with your judgment. Keep an open mind and be willing to change your opinions and options.
- Avoid assuming anything about another person's problem. Listen to what they have to say.
- Stay positive and focused.
- Remember to repeat what the caller has said so that they know that you are listening.
- Always maintain a business-like attitude, even if the situation seems humorous or funny. You should sound empathetic and never make light of a caller's situation. Don't make jokes or relate stories to illustrate a point. The caller may not get the punch line. Don't try and be funny.
- Never try to educate a caller in terminology or the law. You may just make the caller feel dumb or start an argument. For example, if a caller says that they've been "robbed," don't explain that it's really a burglary.
- The most effective tactic is to ask short, specific questions; such as name, address telephone number, location etc. The questions should obtain relevant information and should maintain a good flow, free of interruptions. If you pause too long in questioning, or become sidetracked or distracted, your control of the conversation will end and you'll have to re-establish it.
- Remain calm under pressure. Prioritize and make immediate decisions. Use clear speech and good listening skills. Hesitation on your part may make the caller feel as if you are incompetent. Refrain from the use of stall tactics in speech such as "um" or "hmm."
- Listen to what the caller is saying, but also listen for background noise that may help clue you in as to location or situation. For example, listen for anyone yelling in the background, dogs barking, person choking or gasping, or location specific noises such as slot machines or construction noise.
- Never walk away in the middle of a call, regardless of situation. Just because your shift's end has arrived and does not give you the right to walk away from the console without following through on your responsibilities. Doing so means you've just abandoned your post and it makes you, as well as the Department, liable for anything that may happen as a result. You could be personally sued and/or lose your job as a result.
- Think before acting or speaking. Foresee possible problems and plan solutions.
- Ask for details. Remember that if a caller says the suspect left "in a red car," asking them for details may mean obtaining more information that helps to catch the suspect. Ask them if it was a dark red car, or bright red. Ask them if it was small or large. Ask if it had two doors or four, and if the vehicle was a hatchback or had any other distinguishing features. People generally remember if prompted.
- Make an accurate assessment of possible risks to field units. Be complete in your questioning and, in the case of medical calls or in-progress calls, keep the caller on line if safe to do so. Relay information obtained to your responders in a timely manner. After the officer arrives and advises "shots fired" is NOT the time to remember that there might be weapons present. Check persons involved for history and warrants if you can. OFFICER SAFETY COMES FIRST!!!
- ***Treat every caller's problem if it was your own, and there will be NO PROBLEM.***

MEDIA SYSTEM

Use the MEDIA SYSTEM: Who, What, When, Where, Why, Weapons, How

WHO

- ❖ Who is the calling party?
- ❖ Who is involved in the situation?
- ❖ Physical descriptions:
 - Name (if known)
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Height/Weight
 - Hair (Color, style, length, etc.)
 - Eyes (Color, glasses worn, other distinguishing features)
 - Facial description (acne, facial hair, scars, shape of face, etc.)
 - Clothing (Think top to bottom: hat, shirt, jacket, pants/skirt/shorts, socks/shoes)
 - Accessories (belts, jewelry, watch, etc.)
 - Scars/Marks/Tattoos
 - Special descriptors (Any special method of speaking? Accent? Distinctive walk? Appear intoxicated? Etc.)

WHAT

- ❖ What is going on?
- ❖ What do you need? (Police, Fire, EMS)
- ❖ What happened?
- ❖ What is the problem?
- ❖ What is the caller's name?
- ❖ What kind of vehicles are involved?

WHEN

- ❖ When did this happen? Is it happening now?
- ❖ When did suspect leave?
- ❖ When did you first notice the problem/situation?

WHERE

- ❖ Where did this happen (address/phone)? (Location address)
- ❖ Where are you (address/phone)? (Caller address)
- ❖ Where do responders need to report to (Address/phone)? (Report address)
- ❖ Where is the suspect/offender?
- ❖ Where is the victim?

WHY

- ❖ Why is the problem occurring?
- ❖ Why are you upset, what is wrong?

WEAPONS

- ❖ Where are the weapons?
- ❖ What kind of weapon (gun, knife, bat, mace, etc.)?
- ❖ (If applicable) Is the weapon loaded/armed?

HOW

- ❖ How did you find out about this? (If caller involved, find out how.)
- ❖ How many people are involved?
- ❖ How long has it been since situation occurred?
- ❖ How long, if applicable, has subject/item/vehicle been missing?

Write down everything significant that the caller is saying – do not rely on your memory. If necessary, tell the caller to slow down. A caller reporting a crime in progress should be kept on line as long as safely possible, or until responders arrive. During this time, additional information can be obtained and passed on to the responders.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL PRIORITIZATION

Calls for service should be prioritized for response based on the likelihood of loss of life, limb, or property. Call prioritization falls under four (4) categories: Emergency, Priority 1, Priority 2, and Priority 3.

EMERGENCY CALLS: Require immediate dispatch

- ☐ There is an immediate threat of violence or loss of life.
- ☐ Crime or incident is in progress.
- ☐ Examples of Emergency Calls can include: Active shooter, CSP in progress, Kidnapping, Homicide, Violent Domestic, Shooting/Stabbing, Aggravated Battery, Robbery, Structure Fire, Man Down (no breathing/CPR in progress), etc.

PRIORITY 1 CALLS: Require dispatch within 2 minutes

- ☐ There is an immediate threat to property, or high chance of apprehension of suspect or prevention of violence.
- ☐ Crime or incident is in progress, or just occurred
- ☐ Examples of Priority 1 Calls can include: Verbal Domestic, Burglary in Progress (unless resident is inside the home during commission of burglary, then it would be an emergency call), DWI, Hold-up/Panic/Medical alarms, Trouble to Ensur, Fights, Traffic Crash with injury, etc.

PRIORITY 2 CALLS: Require dispatch within 10 minutes

- ☐ There is no immediate threat to life or property, but response needs to be faster than a report call.
- ☐ Crime or incident is not in progress, or has not just occurred, but there is a chance delay in response might result in an escalation or commission of a crime.
- ☐ Examples of Priority 2 Calls can include: General burglary alarm calls, Welfare checks, loose dog and most animal calls, non-injury traffic crash, Traffic obstruction or direction, Suspicious persons/vehicles/activity, Civil standby, etc.

PRIORITY 3 CALLS: Should be dispatched as soon as all other priority calls have been handled.

- ☐ There is no immediate threat to life or property, and holding to call for an available unit will not negatively impact the outcome.
- ☐ Crime or incident is not in progress, or has not just occurred, and there is little to no likelihood that it could escalate or result in commission of a crime.
- ☐ Examples of Priority 3 Calls can include: All delayed report calls, Close Patrols, Parking Violations (unless there's an altercation over the parking violation, or it is obstructing traffic), meet complainant calls, etc.

Note: If you are unable to dispatch a unit within the allotted time, then you should broadcast that you have a call pending, indicating the type/nature of call, within that time frame.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CRIME STOPPERS TIP LINE

Communications is responsible for handling the Crime Stoppers Tip Line and for taking donations to Crime Stoppers as assigned by the Courts and Probation/Parole Office.

HANDLING CRIME STOPPERS TIPS:

- ❖ All Crime Stoppers tips will be logged by the dispatcher. There is a Crime Stoppers Binder on the back shelves in dispatch that should be pulled whenever a tipster calls in.
- ❖ The Crime Stoppers binder contains the following:
 - Lincoln County Crime Stoppers Donation Form (found in the front pocket)
 - Ruidoso Crime Stoppers Reference Numbers list (found in a plastic sleeve)
 - Completed Crime Stoppers Questionnaire (found behind the Reference number sheet)
 - Blank Crime Stoppers Questionnaire (found in the back pocket)
- ❖ Crime Stoppers Tips should be documented on a blank Crime Stoppers Questionnaire. Each questionnaire should be assigned a "Caller ID Number" at the top of the sheet. This number is found on the Reference Numbers List at the front of the binder. This number ***must*** be provided to the caller before the end of the call. In order for the caller to collect any reward money, or to find out updates on the tip, they must reference this number.
 - REFERENCE NUMBER SHEET: Dispatch should log a brief description of the nature of the tip next to the Reference Number, and should document the date/time the tip was received, then initial under "call taker initials"
 - CRIME STOPPERS QUESTIONNAIRE: Assign the Caller ID number obtained from the Reference Number sheet to the top of the Questionnaire and then question the tipster according to the sections listed on the sheet.
 - Once the questionnaire is complete, Dispatch should notate what was done with the tip in the "Investigator Notified" space.
 - If the tip is pertinent to an ongoing case in another jurisdiction, or is a report of a crime in which another agency or an RPD unit should respond to, then the dispatcher will indicate who was contacted. A copy of the completed tip sheet will then be included in the binder behind the other completed sheets, and the original will be placed in the Evidence Custodian's box.

HANDLING CRIME STOPPERS DONATIONS

- ❖ Regularly, citizens are directed by the Courts, or by Probation/Parole to come make a donation to Crime Stoppers as part of their restitution or sentence for minor infractions. Dispatch is responsible for taking the donation and securing it to be turned over to Crime Stoppers.
 - Donations will be taken in the form of cash or money order only, and it must be exact. We do not provide change.
 - The date and time of donation, the donator name and address, the court that referred the donator, as well as the amount of the donation should all be recorded on the Donation Form. If the donator is making the donation on someone else's behalf, notate that information next to the "Donator Name" on the form.

Once the donation has been taken, and the Donation Form has been completed, have the donator sign the form, as well as the dispatcher who took the donation. Once signatures have been made, provide a Xerox copy of the form to the donator as a receipt, and place the original in a sealed envelope along with the funds donated. The sealed envelope will then be marked "Crime Stoppers" and placed in the Evidence Custodian's box.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

ACCIDENTS

Response:

10-44: 1 PD unit unless vehicles are in the roadway, then send 2

10-45: 2 PD units, EMS/Fire

Hit and Run: 1 PD unit, unless in progress, then 2. EMS/Fire if needed.

- ✓ Is anyone hurt? If yes, get number and condition of victims.
- ✓ Types of vehicles and how many involved?
- ✓ Any vehicles still in roadway? If on a divided roadway, which lanes?
- ✓ All involved parties still on scene?
- ✓ Any fuel spilled or hazardous materials present? If yes, proceed to HAZMAT.

If hit and run:

- ✓ What is the suspect vehicle description and direction of travel?
- ✓ If delayed report, how long ago did complainant notice the damage? When is it believed that the damage occurred?
- ✓ Is there a medical or emergency reason that the other party might not have stopped?
- ✓ Do you know where suspect might be going?

If 10-45:

- ✓ Tone out a combined page and administer EMD instructions (if you are certified) until responders reach the scene.
- ✓ If it is a HAZMAT situation, notify responders of that fact and then notify the State Police (575-382-2500 ext. 1) to handle.

ATTEMPT TO LOCATE

Response:

Broadcast via radio. No unit response required unless subject of the ATL is believed to be at a specific location in jurisdiction.

- ✓ Why are we looking for this person?
- ✓ What is the person's name and descriptors?
- ✓ Any weapons? What kind?
- ✓ Is subject suicidal or dangerous in any way?
- ✓ What type of vehicle might they be in? Destination?
- ✓ What was the last point of contact? When?

ATLs are generally used when trying to locate a person for whatever reason. Make sure to give out complete description with all pertinent information about the subject, in a prompt manner. Indicate which agency is requesting the ATL.

AIRCRAFT DOWN

Response:

2 PD unit minimum. Notify the Shift Commander and Dispatch Supervisor.

EMS/Fire if injuries are suspected.

Notify FAA (800-255-1111)

- ✓ When did this happen?
- ✓ Do you know how many people were/are on board? Any fatalities?
- ✓ Who else has been notified?

These calls can be very hectic. If you think you might need more help, notify the Shift Commander and/Dispatch Supervisor and call in another dispatcher. Do whatever the Shift Commander requests of you, no matter how strange it may seem at the time. SBRA has their own rescue response. Confirm that they have been notified and are responding before notifying the Ruidoso Fire Department to respond as well.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

ACTIVE SHOOTING RESPONSE

Response:

In progress: ALL AVAILABLE patrol units, Patrol Supv., Lt. and Chief.

Notify Dispatch Supervisor (Supervisor will notify extra comm. personnel)

EMS/Fire to stage (they will need to stage at IC location, away from scene)

NOTIFY SURROUNDING AGENCIES FOR POSSIBLE MUTUAL AID/STANDBY

- ✓ How long has this been in progress?
- ✓ How many suspects?
- ✓ Is/Are suspect(s) still on scene? Where is/are suspect(s) right now (where in building, etc.)?
- ✓ What kind of weapons and how many?
- ✓ Suspect description? Suspect vehicle description?
- ✓ Has the shooter taken any hostages? If yes, how many and where?
- ✓ Is anyone injured? If yes, how many and nature of injury?
- ✓ Where are the injured parties?
- ✓ If caller is on scene, is the caller in a safe area, or exposed to shooter?
- ✓ Can caller get to a secure area safely? If not, are you able to shelter in place? Where are you sheltering in place?

*Shooting calls can be very dangerous for all responders, and active shooters present a special set of challenges. It is imperative that you keep abreast of what the agency response plan includes, as well as what the scene responders expect of dispatch. (Active Shooter Response classes are frequently held as part of CE requirements.) **Active shooter situations are not a specialized response. Active shooters are a patrol dilemma. It will be regular duty patrol that will be responding and handling the situation.***

Early warning signs that a call may be an active shooter include;

- ☐ An onslaught of calls in a compact period of time
- ☐ Open line calls with muffled sounds
- ☐ Sounds of shots being fired without a caller speaking
- ☐ Seemingly unrelated explosion of fire calls that begin to form a pattern on a mapping system
- ☐ Fire alarms (latest strategy is to pull an alarm inside to drive victims outside to a waiting sniper)

Special considerations Communications Personnel need to take regarding response:

- ☐ Number of shooters and location updates
- ☐ Where to send/position responders for containment and safety
- ☐ Secondary issues such as snipers, bombs, hostage taking
- ☐ Escaping suspects
- ☐ Large groups of people moving in and out of the area and the anticipated effect thereof.
- ☐ Safety for responders at triage areas b/c of amount of emotional response within those areas
- ☐ Evacuations or sheltering in place plans and the special needs of each
- ☐ Traffic control
- ☐ Alarms
- ☐ Explosions and fires in conjunction with shooter activity
- ☐ THE MEDIA. The media will ALWAYS be an interference during call processing and response. You will likely receive as many calls from the media as you do from the public and victims on scene. Quick establishment of a PIO or media notification system is integral and should be a priority of your incident command. Current trend is for PIO/IC to use social media to make quick and effective regular updates.

Questioning / Dispatching techniques and considerations:

- ☐ Active shooter incidents will be chaotic and panicked. It is imperative that you exercise repetitive persistence and take command of the call. Establish control so that you can quickly obtain and relay information.
- ☐ Once a call is determined to be an active shooter situation, call for 10-3 traffic. Securing the channel for emergency traffic related to the call only is imperative.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

ACTIVE SHOOTING RESPONSE (cont.'d)

Questioning / Dispatching techniques and considerations:

- ☐ An active shooter incident should be dispatched like a lawn mower theft that should've been called in 2 weeks ago: **CALM, COLLECTED & with as LITTLE EMOTION as possible.** (One key to remaining calm is to understand on scene operations.)
- ☐ Remember the formula: 5W + H + W + H + I (Where, What, Who, When, Why, How, Weapons, Hazards, Injuries)
- ☐ *Repeat radio transmissions.* Repeat yours, and repeat theirs back to them. Active shooter events often have multiple distractions (alarms, injured victims, etc.) and repeating transmissions helps both communications and responder personnel focus, as well as repeats anything that they may have missed due to those distractions.
- ☐ Keep abreast of any off-duty responders that may be responding after hearing the call out. Obtain descriptions and information on those off-duty officers and relay it expeditiously to the on-duty responders enroute to the scene to avoid off-duty responders being mistaken as suspects or additional victims.
- ☐ While responders are enroute, DO update shooter information, location and description as it changes. Often, active shooter incidents move incredibly fast, so accurate and timely updates on suspect and threat information is vital. You do far more good by focusing attention on gathering and giving information because harm has already been done to the victim.
- ☐ *Medical information and updates take a back seat until the shooter is neutralized.* Dispatch should obtain number of injured, casualties and injury type, but that information should be held until the shooter is down or in custody.
- ☐ Once officers have made entry to the scene, having the control to remain silent on the radio is critical to officer safety. Radio transmissions could give away the responder location to the shooter.
- ☐ Status checks are made only according to operations protocol. If there is no specific preferred policy established by IC, then every 10-15 minutes is a good general standard **unless a team is clearing a building or area.** In that case, radio silence is priority.
- ☐ Unless the caller tells you they are hiding and "sheltering in place," try and obtain caller information. If they are hiding and sheltering, and it is not safe to talk, then try to obtain clues about shooter information from background noise. Dispatch should try to give callers the reason to stay away from arriving responders to avoid the risk of the lifeguard effect (when citizens either grab onto or use as shields the police responders trying to locate the shooter). Additionally, remind them to avoid clinging to the responder if the responder arrives to evacuate them. Simply follow the direct orders of the responder and do not cling unless specifically instructed to by the responder to remain close. If the caller makes the choice to run, or evacuate the premise to a safe place, update the responders and again remind the caller to avoid grabbing responders or using them as shields, but instead to follow any instructions given by police without hesitation.
- ☐ *Once the shooter is down or neutralized,* dispatch can focus information giving to the casualties or the wounded.
- ☐ *Once the shooter is down or neutralized,* holding the perimeter is critical and control at the staging and triage area is vital to responder safety.
- ☐ Work with your team in the communications center to sort out and coordinate information before giving it out on the radio, both during the initial calls and response and during the aftermath/shooter neutralized phase.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

ALARMS

Response:

*2 PD unit minimum (if not fire or medical)
EMS/Fire (if fire or medical alarm)*

- ✓ What type of alarm is sounding?
- ✓ Is this a bank? If yes, move to BANK ALARM procedure.
- ✓ Have you made contact at the location of the alarm? If yes, what response did you get?
- ✓ Has key-holder been notified? If yes, who and what type of vehicle are they in?
- ✓ What is the name of the alarm company calling in the signal? What is the callback number for them?
- ✓ Was anyone seen in the area prior to the activation of the alarm?
- ✓ If fire, do you know if parties are inside? Is there any flame or smoke?
- ✓ If audio-monitored alarm, ask operator to indicate any sounds they hear, and find out if video access may be available.

Our policy states we only respond to the following types of alarms:

- *Panic or Hold up alarms*
- *Bank Alarms*
- *Alarms at schools and medical facilities (including veterinary offices)*
- *Medical (Lifeline) alarms*
- *Fire alarms*

We do not respond to general burglary alarms unless an alarm company representative (or key-holder) has arrived on scene and specifically requests response. It is mandatory for the alarm company to notify a key-holder. Every alarm company licensed to operate within the village has been notified of this policy via certified, return receipt letter.

ANIMAL IN DISTRESS

Response:

*Animal Control Unit, (Send PD if traffic control is needed)
1 PD unit if ACO is off-duty*

- ✓ What type of animal is in distress?
- ✓ What is the nature of the distress?
- ✓ Where is the animal located (in the roadway, near a building, on private property, etc.)?
- ✓ Is the animal showing signs of rabies or other disease?

If the animal is in distress after being struck by a vehicle, handled like a motor vehicle crash.

ARMED SUBJECT

Response:

*2 PD unit minimum, notify Shift Commander (Dispatch Supervisor if it is determined an extra dispatcher may be needed to handle extended call)
EMS/Fire to stage (if necessary)*

- ✓ What type of weapon is present?
- ✓ What is the suspect description and vehicle description, including direction of travel?
- ✓ What exactly was seen/done?
- ✓ Is anyone injured? If yes, what type of injury and what is the injured party's condition?
- ✓ Where is the caller in relation to the situation?
- ✓ Does the caller know who the suspect is?
- ✓ How is caller involved? (witness, victim, etc.)

Advise caller that once the officer reaches the area, he may check for suspect first, rather than immediately contact the caller. If EMS/FD were requested, have them stage for their safety. Also provide them with suspect information in case they make contact with the suspect while staged.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

BANK ALARM

Response:

2 PD unit minimum and Shift Commander (Dispatch Supervisor will be notified if it is determined a robbery has occurred or is in progress.)

The following is the procedure that will be used to dispatch and handle ALL bank alarms. Personnel at all banking/financial institutions in Ruidoso have been trained in these procedures.

1. Broadcast "921" and indicate location **by address only**. (DO NOT broadcast the name of the bank on the radio. If an officer requests the name of the business, advise them to 10-21 for that information.) Call units for response, assuring that at least one of the backup units is the shift commander.
2. Upon field units' arrival at the location, they will indicate their position around the bank and then request dispatch to "start procedures." The channel will be called 10-3 and closed for 10-33 traffic only at that time.

PROCEDURES:

- The dispatcher will call the bank and ask for **extension 900**. Asking for ext. 900 will alert the answering party that a silent alarm has been activated and that a designated bank official should be placed on the line. (Dispatch should always remain on alert for an impersonation of a bank representative.) The bank official should then survey the bank interior, without causing any unnecessary suspicion or alarm. (The line should be left open during this process, NEVER disconnected.) After doing so, the bank official will then indicate the situation in the following manner:
 - **Under duress** (robbery occurring): Bank official will reply, "I'm sorry. He is not in. Could you call back?"
 - **Not under duress** (no robbery): Bank official will need only to re-identify themselves and indicate the probable reason for the alarm.
- Dispatch will update field units immediately as to the type of response, either positive (robbery) or negative (no robbery). Extreme care must be taken to ensure that radio communications are not heard over the open phone line.
- If a reported or suspected robbery is NOT in progress, the dispatcher will obtain a full physical description of the bank official and then instruct him/her to exit a designated bank door to meet with field units for de-briefing. The field units should be immediately notified of the description and which door at which to meet the bank official.
- Responders will remain concealed until the designated bank official appears outside the facility for debriefing. Officer WILL NOT follow officials back into the building. Rifles and/or shotguns will be carried into the bank at the discretion of the responders.
- **IF A ROBBERY HAS OCCURRED:** Field units will be immediately updated as to the situation and dispatch will follow instructions of the field units accordingly. Chief and incident command staff should also be notified at this time, as well as Dispatch Supervisor.

IN CASE YOU ARE NOTIFIED OF A ROBBERY PRIOR TO RESPONDERS ARRIVING:

If the bank telephones before responders arrive and advise that a robbery has taken place, and the suspects have fled, the dispatcher should obtain a description of the suspects, their vehicle and the direction of travel. They should also obtain information regarding type and number of weapons, and whether or not the weapons were actually displayed or if the robbery suspects simply indicated that they were armed.

The bank employee should be kept on the line and as much additional information as possible should be obtained and forwarded to responders promptly.

If a hostage situation is in existence, suspects should be allowed to exit and move away from the building. Officers are to remain concealed and protect bystanders. **SUSPECTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE LOCATION WITH HOSTAGES.**

***** NOTE:**

The dissemination of information contained in this procedure is restricted to designated personnel of the Ruidoso Police Department. Any unauthorized dissemination or disclosure may result in appropriate disciplinary and/or criminal court action.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

BARKING DOGS

Response:

In Progress: Animal Control Unit (or PD unit if ACO is off-duty)

Delayed: Take the pertinent information and forward to ACO for follow-up next date.

- ✓ What is the location of the barking dog?
- ✓ Can you tell how many dogs are barking?
- ✓ How long have they been barking?
- ✓ Is this a habitual problem?

BATTERY (including BHHM)

Response:

In Progress: 2 PD unit minimum, notify Shift Commander, EMS/Fire to stage (if necessary)

Delayed: 1 PD unit for report

- ✓ When did this occur?
- ✓ Is victim/caller injured? Condition and type of injury?
- ✓ Is suspect still on scene, in area, or likely to return?
- ✓ Was suspect armed? If yes, what weapons?
- ✓ Does caller/victim know suspect?
- ✓ What is suspect description, vehicle description (including direction of travel)?
- ✓ Are there any restraining orders or protection orders on file regarding the suspect?

If an arrest is affected, and the battery is of a Domestic Violence nature, then a Domestic Violence Notification Sheet should be completed by the arresting officer and returned to dispatch. The sheet will be maintained so that upon the offender's release from detention, Communications can make notification to the victim of the offender release. **Notification is required by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984.**

It is the dispatcher's responsibility to ensure that the DV notification sheet is completed by the arresting officer and returned to dispatch.

BE ON THE LOOK OUT

Response:

Broadcast via radio. No unit response required unless subject of the BOLO is believed to be at a specific location in jurisdiction.

- ✓ What is the nature of the call? (DWI, reckless driver, etc.)
- ✓ Any special instructions? (If located hold for requesting agency? 10-48? 10-80? Check welfare only?)
- ✓ Description of suspect?
- ✓ Vehicle description, direction of travel?
- ✓ Number of vehicle occupants?
- ✓ Suspects armed? With what?
- ✓ Possible destination?
- ✓ Are subjects dangerous to themselves or anyone else?
- ✓ Last point/time of contact?

BOLO is usually initiated when trying to locate a vehicle involved in some suspicious or illegal activity. When putting out a BOLO, make sure to give all important details in a prompt manner. Include the name of the agency requesting the BOLO. NEVER hold a BOLO or fail to put it out because you don't believe it is pertinent.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

BOMB THREAT

SEE ATTACHED BOMB RESPONSE POLICY

Response:

*2 PD unit minimum, Shift Commander, Chief and Lieutenant (notified by Shift command), Dispatch Supervisor
EMS/FD to stage*

NMSP bomb team (or Holloman AFB EOD team) to be put on alert. (This should be handled by IC.)

- ✓ Is there a time element?
- ✓ Location of the bomb?
- ✓ Are there people in the building/vicinity of the device? If necessary, notify surrounding businesses/residences.
- ✓ Can the people safely evacuate?
- ✓ Type of bomb?
- ✓ Can it be set off remotely?
- ✓ Is it likely that the bomb threat could turn into a hostage call?
- ✓ Is the caller the subject who planted the bomb? If yes, try to determine motive.

The Shift Commander will be notified immediately upon receipt of the threat, as well as the dispatch supervisor. ALL OTHER NOTIFICATIONS will be made at the discretion and order of the Shift Commander.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

BOMB RESPONSE POLICY

It is the policy of the Ruidoso Police Department to respond to reports of actual or threatened use of bombs, explosive devices, or abandoned or found explosives, in an attempt to reduce the risk to persons and property to the greatest extent possible.

PROCEDURE:

- A. In any incident where an explosive or suspected explosive device is located, responding officers will not handle, or closely approach the device.
- B. The officer should refrain from using communications equipment (including mobile telephone) within **100 YARDS** of the device or location where a bomb threat has been received. (Electromagnetic energy emitted by the radios and cellular telephones may activate the device.)
- C. Officers will assist with the evacuation of persons who are in the vicinity of the device. It is not possible to know prior to the explosion how large an area must be evacuated. Thus, officers must rely on common sense judgment in advising evacuated persons where to relocate.
- D. Upon discovery of a device or suspected device:
 - 1. The **shift supervisor** will respond to the incident location, if not already present.
 - 2. The **shift supervisor** will make notification to the **operations lieutenant**.
- E. Upon discovery of explosives, improvised explosive device, suspected device or evidence which might indicate the presence of an explosive device; or after the explosion of the device, the **New Mexico State Police EOD (Bomb Unit) (575-382-2511)** will be requested to assist or respond. In the event the NMSP EOD unit is unavailable, one of the following will be requested to assist:
 - 1. Holloman AFB EOD (Holloman AFB, NM) PS: (575) 572-5406
 - 2. US Army EOD (Ft. Bliss, TX) PS: (915) 568-8905
- F. Upon discovery and after response and investigation by the Ruidoso Police Department and/or alternate disposal units, it shall be the decision of one or more of those personnel as to the disposition of the device or explosives.
- G. If bomb personnel determine the threat of detonation of the device/explosives to be minimal, disarming and/or removal of the device/explosives may be made to a safe area for destruction or dismantling.
- H. If bomb personnel determine the threat of detonation of a device/explosives too great to disarm or remove, bomb personnel, at their discretion, may allow the device to detonate on its own, or detonate it themselves after appropriate evacuation of the area is completed.
- I. At the conclusion of all incidents where bombs/explosive devices or hoax devices are discovered, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will be notified in writing by the Chief of Police on their appropriate forms.

TELEPHONIC BOMB THREATS:

- A. Department personnel, usually telecommunications, should attempt to obtain all information available to complete the "bomb threat checklist." **Call-takers and/or responding officers should obtain the following information:**
 - 1. The exact words of the person making the threat that will assist in identifying the person if they have made previous calls. Many times, callers repeat words or phrases.
 - a. Call-takers, or reportees should also try and describe the voice of the caller, including speech rate, impediments, style, slang or profanity used, accents, etc.
 - b. Did the caller sound familiar to the person receiving the call of the threat?
 - 2. Where the device is reported to be located. This information may help in the location of the device or in the planning of an evacuation.
 - 3. When the device is reported to detonate.
 - 4. What type of bomb (i.e. dynamite, pipe bomb, incendiary, etc.)
 - 5. What the possible motive for the bomb/bomb threat may be
 - 6. What type of background noise was heard, if any, during the course of the telephonic threat
 - 7. Date and time of the call, as well as duration (length) of call.
 - 8. If there's a recording of the call available (if threat came in to someone other than dispatch directly)
- B. The communications center will immediately notify the Ruidoso Fire Department to respond to stage during each bomb/incendiary device call. (EMS may also be requested.)

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

CATS (LOOSE OR FERAL)

Response:

Animal Control Unit (or Police Unit if ACO is off-duty)

- ✓ What is the nature of the cat complaint? Has the cat been dumped, abandoned or is it in distress or showing signs of disease?
 - If yes, ACO or PD will need to respond
 - If no, transfer caller to the ACO office to be placed on a cat-trap list.
- ✓ Are the cats feral or stray? If not, do you know to whom and where they belong?
- ✓ How many cats? Are they adults or kittens?
- ✓ Can you describe them? (Color, size, long-hair/short-hair, etc.)

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Response:

In progress, just occurred: 2 PD unit minimum, EMS/FD to stage, Victim Advocate.

Delayed report: 1 PD unit. EMS/FD if necessary.

- ✓ Is this in progress? How long has it been ongoing?
- ✓ What EXACTLY is the nature of the abuse?
- ✓ What is the relationship of the caller to the victim/suspect?
- ✓ How did the caller find out about the abuse?
- ✓ Where is the caller in relation to the incident (if in progress)?

If the abuse is CSP/CSC in nature, use discretion with information disseminated on the radio in order to protect the privacy of the minor victim. Provide call details and information to the officer via telephone if necessary.

CIVIL STANDBY

Response:

2 PD unit minimum

- ✓ Location of standby?
- ✓ Location of caller?
- ✓ Is there a restraining order in effect? Do you have a copy of the restraining order?
- ✓ Who is at the residence/business that we are going to?
- ✓ Is the person home and/or do they know that we're coming?
- ✓ What is the history concerning reason for standby?
- ✓ Have a neutral place for officer and complainant to meet before conducting the standby in order to obtain details.

Civil matters in which police become involved have a high potential to become explosive situations, in which the potential for violence is high. Violence may have already occurred in the past. Some examples of explosive situations are domestic violence incidents, strikes, landlord-tenant disputes, civil rights violations, boundary disputes, repossessions, and mechanic's liens. In most cases the only action that can be taken by police in civil situations is to ensure that no trouble or fight ensues.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Response:

1 Code Enforcement Officer

- ✓ What is the location of the code enforcement violation?
- ✓ What is the nature of the violation?

Most Code Enforcement calls are self-generated. Regardless of they are called in by a citizen or officer-generated, a call card will be required.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

CRIMINAL DAMAGE

Response:

In-progress: 2 PD unit minimum

Delayed report (no suspect on scene): 1 PD unit.

- ✓ When did this occur? (If in progress, or just occurred, obtain suspect/vehicle descriptions)
- ✓ Do you know who perpetrated the damage?
- ✓ What type of damage occurred?

DOMESTIC/FAMILY DISTURBANCE

Response:

In-progress: 2 PD unit minimum, EMS/Fire to stage if there are reported injuries.

Delayed report (no suspect on scene): 1 PD unit. (If there is potential of the suspect returning, send a second unit.)

- ✓ Is this a verbal or physical altercation?
- ✓ Any weapons involved? What kind?
- ✓ Who is involved (husband/wife, parent/child, etc.)?
- ✓ Has anyone been drinking or taking drugs?
- ✓ Is anyone injured? Is there a need for an ambulance?
- ✓ Are the parties involved inside or outside? Have they been separated?
- ✓ How many people are in the house? If there are other members in the house, ask them to leave if they can do so safely.
- ✓ Are there children involved? If yes, how many and what are their ages?
- ✓ Do the parties know that police are being called?

Domestic violence is one of the most potentially dangerous calls to which any unit can respond. Make sure that you are thorough in obtaining all possible information that may be pertinent and get the information to responders as soon as possible. If the altercation is physical, have the caller stay on line if safe to do so. If the caller advises that they cannot safely stay on the line to dispatch, ask if they can leave the line open and lay the phone down so that dispatch can hear what is going on. If the caller is reluctant to answer in detail because the perpetrator is in the same room with them, ask them simple questions that can be answered with a yes/no response.

***** If the call results in an arrest for domestic violence charges, make sure that the arresting officer completes a **Domestic Violence Notification Form** and returns it to dispatch. We are required by law to make notification to the D/V victim upon the offender's release. This is per the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984 . *****

DRUNKEN/IMPAIRED SUBJECT

Response:

2 PD unit minimum, EMS/Fire to stage if there are reported injuries, or if subject is passed out.

- ✓ Description of the subject?
- ✓ Location?
- ✓ How much have they had to drink (snort, inject, etc.) and of what?
- ✓ Have they consumed any other substances?
- ✓ (If passed out) Can the caller verify that the subject is breathing?
- ✓ Is an ambulance needed?
- ✓ Is the person in any danger?

Remember that some medical conditions cause people to appear to be intoxicated. This should be kept in mind, especially if the caller is unable to smell the odor of an alcoholic beverage on the subject

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

EMBEZZLEMENT

Response:

1 PD unit minimum.

- ✓ What was taken?
- ✓ How much?
- ✓ When was it taken?
- ✓ Is there a suspect?
- ✓ Is the suspect present at this time? (If yes, dispatch 2 officers. If no, get description of suspect.)

FIGHT

Response:

2 PD unit minimum, EMS/Fire to stage if there are reported injuries.

- ✓ Is the fight currently in progress? (If not, find out where involved parties are.)
- ✓ How many people involved?
- ✓ Any weapons? Type and location?
- ✓ What is the fight about?
- ✓ Any injuries? Ambulance needed?
- ✓ Are the involved parties intoxicated?

Find out the extent of the fight. If it's ongoing and volatile, or if there are weapons or a large number of involved parties, send as many officers as feasible until officers can gain control of the situation.

FIRE (BRUSH)

Response:

Notify 300 of extent of fire by initiating on-duty page. 300 will advise which fire units are responding.

- ✓ Any lives in danger?
- ✓ Any structures in danger?
- ✓ How large an area is involved?
- ✓ Can you see smoke, flames or both? How large are the flames?
- ✓ How did the fire start?

FIRE (FOREST)

Response:

Notify 300 of extent of fire by initiating on-duty page. 300 will advise which fire units are responding.

Contact the Forest Service in order for them to begin notification of their fire crews.

Notify the PD shift commander, as well as the Sheriff's Office/State Police in case mutual aid is needed.

Notify the Dispatch Supervisor if the fire is large, or has the potential to result in requirement of extra comm. personnel.

- ✓ Any lives in danger?
- ✓ Any structures in danger?
- ✓ How large an area is involved?
- ✓ Can you see smoke, flames or both? How large are the flames?
- ✓ How did the fire start?
- ✓ Who else has been notified?
- ✓ Find out if it may be necessary to evacuate citizens.
- ✓ If smoke is close to caller, have them block passages of entry as best as possible.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

FIRE (STRUCTURE)

NOTE: Fire calls will be dispatched according to specific protocol listed on the laminated page Posted at each dispatch console. A copy of this sheet has been included on next page.

Response:

Notify 300 of extent of fire by initiating on-duty page. 300 will advise which fire units are responding.

2 PD unit minimum

EMS to stage

- ✓ Is the caller or anyone else inside the structure? (If yes, stop interview and have them exit the building immediately)
- ✓ Are flames visible from outside the structure?
- ✓ What kind of structure is burning? (If commercial structure, try to determine type of structure and what may be stored inside. Especially important if warehouse or storage facility is on fire.)
- ✓ If you can see smoke, what color is it?
- ✓ Where in the building did the fire start?
- ✓ Is anyone injured? (If yes, and certified, give pre-arrivals)

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE PROTOCOL
(Copy posted at each dispatch console)

1. The Fire Department will respond to structure fires on a 1st, 2nd and 3rd alarm basis. Dispatch would have a list of these alarms and what they mean so that the fire OIC won't have to contact dispatch and request each resource individually. The breakdown is as follows:

- a. **First Alarm Response**

- I. A station page by RPD dispatch informing RFD of the location of the reported fire and all related information.
- II. One Class A Engine from the station responsible for the structure fire.
- III. One Rescue from the station responsible for the structure fire.
- IV. **Dispatch responsibility would be to page the station responsible for the fire or alarm only.**

- b. **Second Alarm Response**

- I. An "all stations" page by RPD dispatch informing all On-Duty personnel of the reported structure fire and its location.
- II. One Class A Engine from each station
- III. One Chief Officer
- IV. One ambulance from LCEMS
- V. All available RPD law enforcement personnel for traffic/scene control
- VI. Zia Natural Gas (Ph: 378-4277)
- VII. PNM Electric (Ph: 505-241-2475)
- VIII. Water Department (Ph: 257-2386 or 937-8048 if after hours)
- IX. **Dispatch responsibility would be to page a "Second Alarm" page with the location and relevant information. Dispatch would then page ambulance and contact Zia, PNM, Water Department and all available RPD officers.**
 1. **Proper dispatch for Second Alarm: "Stand by for 2nd Alarm Page: (Initiate ON DUTY page) All ON DUTY fire personnel, respond to (address) for second alarm."**

- c. **Third Alarm Response (as requested by fire OIC)**

- I. An "All Call" page by RPD Dispatch informing all off-duty personnel of the reported structure fire and its location.
- II. One Class A Engine from each station
- III. One Chief Officer
- IV. One ambulance from LCEMS
- V. All available RPD law enforcement personnel for traffic/scene control
- VI. Zia Natural Gas (Ph: 378-4277)
- VII. PNM Electric (Ph: 505-241-2475)
- VIII. Water Department (Ph: 257-2386 or 937-8048 if after hours)
- IX. Fire Investigator from the State Fire Marshal's Office (Ph: 505-827-9377)
- X. **Dispatch responsibility would be to page an "All Call" page with the location and relevant information, an ambulance, Zia, PNM, Water Department, all available RPD Officers and a Fire Investigator from the Fire Marshal's Office.**
 1. **Proper Dispatch for Third Alarm: "Standby for 3rd Alarm Page: (Initiate ALL CALL page) All fire personnel respond to (address) for third alarm."**

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

FLOOD

Response:

Combined agency response. Number of responders will depend on size of the flood and number of injuries or entrapped people. Notify the Emergency Manager and Dispatch Supervisor

- ✓ Is anyone in danger?
- ✓ Location of flooding?
- ✓ Size of flood?
- ✓ Is anyone trapped?
- ✓ Are sandbags or barricades needed? (If yes, notify street department)

FUEL SPILL/GAS LEAK

Response:

*On-duty fire units. PD units if traffic control is needed, or if spill is result of accident.
Notify State Police if fuel spill is large.*

- ✓ What kind of fuel is leaking (gasoline, diesel, natural gas)?
- ✓ What is the source of the leak?
- ✓ Amount of fuel on the ground?
- ✓ What type of fuel?
- ✓ Source of the spill?
- ✓ Is the fuel/gas still spilling or has it been stopped?
- ✓ If from a vehicle, have the vehicle remain on scene.
- ✓ If natural gas, have the caller vacate the building.

Small fuel spills or gas leaks can be handled by the fire department and police. State police handles the spill as a HAZMAT if it is 55 gallons or greater. Local responders are NOT hazmat certified responders, ONLY STATE POLICE. Therefore, if the spill meets the standard for SP response, SP MUST be dispatched. Natural Gas leaks will require contacting the natural gas company (usually Zia Gas 378-4277). Additionally, if the gas leak is the result of a pipeline being struck, additional steps must be taken to insure public and responder safety. There is a separate manual in dispatch that is for natural gas pipeline emergencies. It is located next to the NCIC manuals.

GAS SKIP

Response:

1 PD unit minimum if the amount of theft is over \$50.00, or, if under \$50.00 and the caller has driver or license plate.

- ✓ Suspect and/or vehicle description (including direction of travel and license plate)
- ✓ Amount value of skipped sale

We do not take reports on gas skips under \$50.00. Generating a call card and providing the incident number to the calling party will suffice. If the gas skip is over \$50.00 then an officer can be sent for report. The caller will need to provide a complete description, including license plate number on the suspect vehicle.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

GUN SHOT/STABBING VICTIM (SEE ALSO INDIVIDUAL PAGES FOR SHOOTING & STABBING RESPONSE)

Response:

2 PD unit minimum and a Patrol Supervisor. EMS/FD should be paged, with instruction for them to stage for scene to be secured.

- ✓ When did the offense occur?
- ✓ Is the suspect still on scene and armed? If not, is it possible the suspect is still in the area?
- ✓ If the suspect is gone, what is the mode and direction of travel, and how long have they been gone?
- ✓ Is the victim conscious and breathing?
- ✓ Where is the victim's injury?
- ✓ Does the caller know where the suspect may be or where he may have gone?

If you are EMD certified, administer EMD directions according to the flow charts. **If the victim appears to be deceased, per the caller, notify responding units in order for them to handle the crime scene appropriately as a possible homicide.**

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (HAZMAT)

Response:

2 PD unit minimum. 1 EMS and fire unit minimum, State Police HAZMAT officer. (Notify the Dispatch Supervisor if it is a large enough spill, or complex enough scene that extra comm. personnel may be required.)

- ✓ Can the caller see any placards? What color is the placard? Can they make out any words or numbers on the placard?
- ✓ What type of hazardous material (exactly) involved?
- ✓ If the spill is the result of a traffic accident, how many vehicles are involved and are they exposed to the hazardous material?
- ✓ Is the caller involved?
- ✓ What is the caller seeing, hearing, smelling?
- ✓ What is the source of material (tanker truck, barrel, etc.)?
- ✓ What form is the material in (liquid, powder, solid, gas)?
- ✓ Is anyone hurt? Is an ambulance needed?

State police are certified HAZMAT officers and will be notified to respond to ANY HAZMAT SITUATION. Based on placard numbers and/or colors, determine what type of hazardous material is involved and evacuate the area or handle as indicated in the yellow Emergency Response Guidebook for hazardous materials. Always advise responders from the initial dispatch that this is a hazardous materials situation. If the Emergency Response Guidebook indicates that it is a volatile or dangerous substance, advise responders, and have them stage or keep an appropriate distance. Instruct caller to remain out of the scene if possible and have them try and keep others from entering the scene. A bystander entering a hazmat scene to help the injured only creates more exposures and more injuries.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

KIDNAPPING/CHILD ENTICEMENT

Response:

In progress/just occurred: 2 PD unit minimum and a Patrol Supervisor

Delayed report: 1 PD unit and notify a Patrol Supervisor

- ✓ When did the offense occur?
- ✓ Was a weapon displayed or indicated? If so, what type of weapon?
- ✓ What is the suspect and/or vehicle description?
- ✓ Direction of travel for the suspect?
- ✓ Does the caller know the suspect?
- ✓ If it is a successful abduction, meaning the child has been taken, obtain a full description of the child, including clothing, as well as the suspect and vehicle, and broadcast it to responders and all surrounding agencies immediately.

It is imperative that you dispatch officers and initiate a BOLO immediately. Notify neighboring agencies in the quickest manner possible, to include an NCIC Statewide Administrative Message if possible. In the case of a kidnapping, an AMBER ALERT will have to be initiated by the State Police once the scene supervisor states it is necessary.

LINES DOWN

Response:

1 PD unit minimum. Fire unit if lines are arcing.

Notify the appropriate service (power company, phone company, etc.)

- ✓ What type of line is down?
- ✓ Is it arcing? If so, are any trees or structures exposed to the arc?
- ✓ Is the line actually on the ground, or partially down?
- ✓ How many lines are down?
- ✓ What is the caller seeing, hearing, smelling?

LOOSE DOGS

Response:

Animal Control Unit

1 PD unit if ACO is not available

- ✓ At what location is the dog loose and when was it last seen?
- ✓ Do you know where the dog belongs, or to whom?
- ✓ What is the description of the dog (color, size, breed, collar or not, etc.)?
- ✓ Is the dog vicious? (If yes, handle as a vicious animal)
- ✓ Do you know if this is a dog that runs loose habitually?

NOTE: Patrol units will not be able to transport dogs to the shelter if they are located. They are only able to attempt to find an owner and have the owner retrieve the dog. Animal transport is only to be done in an Animal Control unit.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

MEDICAL CALLS

Response:

Out of town emergencies or transfers: Page Medic 1 (or next call if M1 is busy. EMS initiated transfers will be paged

by medic unit. EX: 509 & 516, and will be determined by ALS personnel requesting the transfer page.)

In town emergencies: Medic unit and on-duty Fire/rescue unit

- ✓ Where is the emergency? What is the nature of the emergency?
- ✓ How did patient receive the injury? (If injury is result of criminal act, dispatch PD and have medical responders stage.)
- ✓ What is the exact location of the patient?
- ✓ Obtain a description of the residence, building or vehicle that the patient is in, or near.

After obtaining location and chief complaint, dispatch appropriate units and then immediately initiate EMD instructions (if you are EMD certified). If it is possible suicide, overdose, or the injury came as the result of violence or criminal offense, send PD to secure the scene, advising medical units to stage. **If the call is a request for mutual aid to the Reservation, or Otero County, then notify the ALS units as to who made the mutual aid request.**

NOTE: Patient lift assist calls are NOT police calls. EMS and Fire should be dispatched to handle patient lift assists.

MISSING PERSON/RUNAWAY

Response:

1 PD unit unless the subject just left, then dispatch a second unit to ATL while the first unit takes the report.

Initiate a BOLO to surrounding jurisdictions.

- ✓ Obtain the name, age and date of birth of the missing person. Obtain physical/clothing/vehicle description.
- ✓ When and where were they last seen?
- ✓ What condition were they in when they left? (Depressed, intoxicated, suicidal, etc.?)
- ✓ Does the caller have a possible location or destination for the person?

We do not take missing person or runaway reports for other jurisdictions. If the subject of the report is believed to be in our jurisdictional area, we may take the information and disseminate it as a BOLO, but the initial report and NCIC entry must be handled by the jurisdiction that the subject is missing from.

NARCOTICS VIOLATION/DRUGS CALL

Response:

2 PD unit minimum

- ✓ What exactly is going on?
- ✓ How does the caller know this information?
- ✓ Suspect information? (names, vehicles/descriptions, physical descriptors of suspects, etc.)
- ✓ Where is the caller in relation to the incident?
- ✓ Is it in progress?
- ✓ Provide information and copy of call card to NEU, regardless if the call is in progress or past tense.

If the call is in progress, dispatch accordingly. If it has already taken place, refer the information to the Narcotics Enforcement Unit (NEU) and give the caller their phone number (575-648-2402) in order for them to provide the information to NEU first hand.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

OPEN DOOR/WINDOW (UNSECURED BUILDING)

Response:

2 PD unit minimum

- ✓ What is the location of the unsecured building?
- ✓ Which doors/windows are open?
- ✓ Did the calling party see anyone enter, or inside the building? (If so, dispatch the call as a breaking and entering)
- ✓ Is the caller inside the unsecured premises? (If so, have them exit the building.)
- ✓ If the caller is already outside, have them remain there, if safe to do so, for officer contact.
- ✓ Keep the caller on line until officers make the scene in order to update responders with any new information.

RAPE (CSC/CSP)

Response:

2 PD unit minimum, notify a Patrol Supervisor and Victim Advocate

If in progress or injuries present, page EMS/FD to stage

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ Is an ambulance needed?
- ✓ Is the caller also the victim?
- ✓ What is the condition of the patient? If EMD is needed handle accordingly if you are EMD certified.
- ✓ Is the suspect(s) still on scene? If not, how long ago did he/she leave?
- ✓ Were any weapons used? Type?
- ✓ Number of suspects?
- ✓ Vehicle description (if applicable) and direction of travel?
- ✓ Keep caller on line if safe to do so. If not safe to do so, ask them to lay phone down and leave an open line. If an open line still puts the caller/victim in danger, allow them to hang up.

Advise the caller/victim not to disturb any evidence and to refrain from washing or changing clothing. If they have already done so, and the clothing has not been washed, ask them to gather the clothing for collection as evidence. It is imperative that, in the case that EMS is needed, that they stage for PD. This assures the safety of the responders as well as the preservation of the scene and evidence for investigation.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

ROBBERY

Response:

*In progress: 2 PD unit minimum and Patrol Supervisor. If injuries present, page EMS/FD to stage.
Delayed report: 1 PD unit and BOLO suspect information to surrounding agencies.*

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ Is an ambulance needed? (if so, have them respond and stage until scene secure.)
- ✓ Is suspect still on scene? If no, how long ago did they leave?
- ✓ Suspect information? (names, vehicles/descriptions, physical descriptors of suspects, etc.)
- ✓ Were any weapons used?
- ✓ Number of suspects?
- ✓ Direction of travel of suspects
- ✓ Advise the caller not to disturb any evidence.
- ✓ If suspects are gone, have the caller secure/lock the doors windows to the location.

IN PROGRESS: Keep the caller on line if safe to do so. If keeping them on line puts them in danger, allow them to hang up. If they are able to safely do so, ask them to refrain from hanging up and instead lay the phone down to maintain an open line. If they are under duress, ask simple questions that can be answered with a yes or no. Make sure to ascertain if anyone is injured and handle accordingly. If there are injuries and medics are required, advise them to stage. (This guarantees responder safety as well as scene and evidence preservation.) If possible, ascertain condition of any victims and provide EMD instruction if you are certified to do so.

DELAYED REPORT (AFTER THE FACT): If the robbery has already occurred, get the time of occurrence and detailed suspect description and direction/mode of travel. Find out what was taken. If they are concerned the robbery suspects may return, make sure they have secured the doors/windows where they are and keep them on line until responders arrive.

Notify surrounding agencies as soon as possible with regard to the incident and suspects.

SHOOTING (FOR ACTIVE SHOOTER, SEE ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE)

Response:

In progress: 2 PD unit minimum, and a Patrol Supervisor. If in progress and extra comm. personnel will be needed, contact Dispatch Supervisor.

EMS/Fire to stage

Delayed report: 1 PD unit and BOLO suspect information to surrounding agencies.

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ How many suspects?
- ✓ Is/Are suspect(s) still on scene? Where is/are suspect(s) right now (where in building, etc.)?
- ✓ What kind of weapons and how many?
- ✓ Suspect description? Suspect vehicle description?
- ✓ Is anyone injured? If yes, how many and nature of injury?
- ✓ Where are the injured parties?
- ✓ If caller is on scene, is the caller in a safe area, or exposed to shooter?
- ✓ Can caller get to a secure area safely?

Shooting calls can be very dangerous for all responders. Obtaining accurate information and disseminating it quickly and effectively to responding units is critical in minimizing responder exposure and reducing injuries or deaths on scene. Additionally, obtaining information about the number and types of weapons will make it easier for responders to approach and/or stage safely out of range.

Shooting calls, especially in progress, will usually have multiple callers, many of whom will be panicked or in shock. Effective use of calming tactics and caller control will be vital. Additionally, do not discount any information given by any caller. Sometimes, what may seem to you like an insignificant piece of information, or one that is incorrect, will prove to be vital and/or life-saving.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

SHOPLIFTING/THEFT

Response:

In progress: 2 PD unit minimum

Delayed report: 1 PD unit and BOLO suspect information to surrounding agencies.

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ Are suspects still on scene?
- ✓ Suspect description?
- ✓ If shoplifting, is the suspect in the store's custody?
- ✓ If not in custody, obtain the direction and mode of travel and what was taken.
- ✓ What is the value of the item(s) taken?

STABBING/CUTTING

Response:

In progress: 2 PD unit minimum, and a Patrol Supervisor

EMS/Fire to stage

Delayed report: 1 PD unit and BOLO suspect information to surrounding agencies.

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ How many suspects?
- ✓ Is/Are suspect(s) still on scene? Where is/are suspect(s) right now (where in building, etc.)?
- ✓ What kind of weapons and how many?
- ✓ Suspect description? Suspect vehicle description?
- ✓ Is anyone injured? If yes, how many and nature of injury? Is caller injured?
- ✓ Where are the injured parties?
- ✓ If caller is on scene, is the caller in a safe area, or exposed to shooter?
- ✓ Can caller get to a secure area safely?

(continued next page)

Stabbing calls can be very dangerous for all responders. Obtaining accurate information and disseminating it quickly and effectively to responding units is critical in minimizing responder exposure and reducing injuries or deaths on scene. Additionally, obtaining information about the number and types of weapons will make it easier for responders to approach and/or stage safely out of range. Remember, **ballistic vests do not stop knives or cutting instruments. Officers have no "knife-proof vests" in a situation such as a stabbing.**

Additionally, stabbing calls, especially in progress, will usually have multiple callers, many of who will be panicked or in shock. Many people see blood and trauma and will go into hysterics repeatedly. Effective use of calming tactics and caller control will be vital. Additionally, do not discount any information given by any caller. Sometimes, what may seem to you like an insignificant piece of information, or one that is incorrect, will prove to be vital and/or life-saving.

STOLEN VEHICLE (10-75)

Response:

In progress: 2 PD unit minimum

Delayed report: 1 PD unit and BOLO stolen vehicle information to surrounding agencies.

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ When did the theft occur?
- ✓ Is the suspect known? Description of suspect?
- ✓ Obtain a description of the vehicle, to include license plate and direction of travel if known.
- ✓ Were the keys in the vehicle?
- ✓ Was the vehicle loaned to anyone?
- ✓ Might the vehicle have been repossessed?
- ✓ Is the caller the registered owner? (If no, then ask to speak with the R/O, or advise caller that the R/O must make the report.)
- ✓ If you are unable to speak directly to the registered owner, BOLO the vehicle as stolen until the report can be taken.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

SUICIDE/ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

Response:

In progress: 2 PD unit minimum and Patrol Supervisor. If injuries present, page EMS/FD to stage.

- ✓ Is the caller the one attempting to commit suicide? If not, then who is the suicidal subject?
- ✓ Can the caller see what's happening?
- ✓ Is the suicidal subject intoxicated?
- ✓ How does the person intend to harm themselves?
- ✓ Is the suicidal subject already injured? (If yes, and you are certified to do so, initiate EMD protocol.)
- ✓ Keep the caller calm and reassure them that you are there to help.

Find out if they have taken any action toward suicide, or if they are just contemplating suicide. Do they have the implements they are considering using on hand? Ask if there is a history of suicide attempt, and if so, why. Do not be afraid to ask specific questions and try to gain the subject's trust. Don't make any false promises or tell them any lies. Try to make sure that the subject puts any weapons away before responding units make entry. It's usually a good idea to have an ambulance staged and on standby in case the subject attempts suicide or tries to harm the responders. (There are subjects who want to commit suicide "by cop." In these situations, inform the responders of the subject's intentions. Often the subjects become rash, brandishing weapons, etc., in order to force the police to inflict lethal force.)

SUICIDE HOTLINE NUMBERS

1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)

1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)

1-800-799-4TTY (1-800-799-4889) for deaf callers

SUSPICIOUS (ACTIVITY/PERSON/VEHICLE)

Response:

2 PD unit minimum

- ✓ What activity is taking place?
- ✓ Obtain a description of the suspects/vehicles
- ✓ Are any weapons involved/seen?
- ✓ Are any subjects intoxicated/impaired?

TRESPASSING

Response:

In progress: 2 PD unit minimum

Delayed report: 1 PD unit

- ✓ Is this in progress?
- ✓ Who is trespassing? (Obtain suspect/vehicle descriptions.)
- ✓ Is there a threat of violence?
- ✓ Are "No Trespassing" signs posted?
- ✓ Has a trespass warning been issued against this person previously?

If the suspect is known, you may want to check the criminal trespass log for prior criminal trespass warnings that may have been issued.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

UNATTENDED DEATH

Response:

2 PD unit minimum, EMS/FIRE to stage, notify Shift Commander

If there is an obvious state of decomposition/decay (i.e. it is not a recently dead body), EMS/FD may not be required. Confirm their response with Shift Commander. EMS/FD response not required if the reporting party is a medical or law enforcement professional that is certified/trained to call it as a death (i.e. hospice nurse, doctor, medic, firefighter, on-duty police officer).

- ✓ Are you positive the subject is deceased? Why? (Answers such as they are cold, blue, stiff, may indicate time they have been deceased)
- ✓ Can you tell what caused their death? (If there is any evidence of struggle, trauma, violence, incoming PD units will need to be made aware, and on call detective will need to be notified.)
- ✓ How is the caller related to the decedent?
- ✓ Is the caller a medical professional (doctor, registered nurse, paramedic)?

If there is an obvious state of decomposition/decay (i.e. it is not a recently dead body), EMS/FD may not be required. Confirm their response with Shift Commander. EMS/FD response not required if the reporting party is a medical or law enforcement professional that is certified/trained to call it as a death (i.e. hospice nurse, doctor, medic, firefighter, on-duty police officer). If subject is still warm, or the caller is unsure of the state of death, proceed with CPR/life-saving instructions. If it is obvious the subject is dead (decay, lividity, rigor), and that life-saving procedures are not necessary, ask the caller to exit the scene and remain outside until PD arrive (to preserve the crime scene).

UNWANTED SUBJECT

Response:

2 PD unit minimum

- ✓ What is the person doing?
- ✓ Who is the suspect?
- ✓ What is their location? Are they inside or outside?
- ✓ Do they have any weapons?
- ✓ Are they intoxicated or armed? If armed, what type of weapon?

VICIOUS ANIMAL

Response:

Animal Control Unit minimum

May require PD unit depending on viciousness and type of animal.

EMS/FD if the animal caused injury

Game & Fish if the vicious animal is wild game

- ✓ What type of animal is being reported as vicious?
 - If a wild animal, see WILD ANIMAL call
- ✓ At what location and when was the animal last seen?
- ✓ What is the description of the animal?
- ✓ Do you know to whom the animal belongs, or where it belongs?
- ✓ Is anyone injured?
 - If yes, then dispatch EMS/FD but inform them that the vicious animal may still be at large so that they can be on alert.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER MANUAL
CALL SPECIFIC QUESTIONING

WELFARE CHECK

Response:

*2 PD unit minimum
EMS/fire (to stage) if subject is to be violent or injured.*

- ✓ What is the reason for the check?
- ✓ Who is being checked on?
- ✓ What is the caller's relationship to the subject of the check?
- ✓ What was the last time of contact?
- ✓ What was the subject's condition or demeanor at that time?
- ✓ Is there reason to believe that the subject may become violent?
- ✓ Is there reason to believe that the subject may be injured?
- ✓ Obtain a callback number for the caller.

Once a disposition has been obtained from the responding officer, dispatch should attempt to contact the person requesting the welfare check to inform them of the result. This callback should be made by the responding officer, or the PIO, if the welfare check resulted in discovery of death, a crime, or a trauma.

WILD ANIMALS

Response:

*1 Animal Control Unit minimum
PD Units (if ACO is off-duty, or there's a need for an assist)
EMS/FD to stage (if there's injury to bystanders)
Game & Fish (unless animal falls under the "pest" category)*

- ✓ What type of animal?
 - If the animal is a raccoon, skunk, squirrel, bat or other similar animal, refer the caller to vermin control.
 - If the animal is a wild animal such as a deer, elk, cougar or bear, you will also need to notify Game & Fish
- ✓ What is the complaint? (Is the animal being aggressive? Is it a dangerous animal? Is it a nuisance or traffic hazard?)
 - If the animal is a cougar, notify Game & Fish. Dispatch units to get eyes on the animal and verify the public is not in immediate danger.
 - If the animal is a bear, notify Game & Fish. Dispatch units to ensure public safety. Our units will occasionally scare bears away from populated areas or help remove them to a safer area pending Game & Fish response.

We generally do not handle wild animal calls unless there's a danger to the public. Complaints about nuisance bears or other wild animals (that do not fall under the "pest" category) that are not an immediate public threat will need to be directed to Game & Fish.

WILDLIFE FEEDING BAN (Applies to Village of Ruidoso only)

Response:

1 Animal Control Unit minimum

- ✓ What type of animal?
 - If the animal is any wild animal, excluding birds, animal control shall be dispatched.
 - Waterfowl are the only exception to bird feeding.
 - Birdfeeders must be hung so that they are accessible only to birds. If they are accessible to any other wildlife, they are in violation.
- ✓ What is the attractant being used?
 - Ornamental plants, vegetable gardens and properly hung bird feeders shall not be considered "attractants."
- ✓ Does the caller know if there a history of feeding wildlife at this location? (Dispatch can also check for prior calls at the location to verify.)

Animal Control will be dispatched to all reports of prohibited feeding of wildlife. First offenses will result in written warnings. Citations will be issued for subsequent offenses.