

TEXARKANA POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL

SUBJECT	Radio Communications		
NUMBER	1109.03	EFFECTIVE DATE	February 01, 2011
Scheduled Review Date	July 01, 2016	ISSUE DATE	February 01, 2011
Date Reviewed	June 17, 2014	REVISION DATE	February 14, 2012
APPROVED BY		(Reserved for Expansion)	

I. Purpose and Scope

- A. The purpose of this policy defines and establishes the guidelines surrounding the Texarkana Police Department's Public Safety Radio System and institutes the standards and provisions that define its acceptable use.

II. Policy

- A. The Texarkana Police Department recognizes and acknowledges the need for various agencies and organizations to establish and maintain direct communication with different agencies during periods that surround critical incidents. The Texarkana Police Department operates from within the Bi-State Criminal Justice Building, and in order to maintain operational efficiency, the Department shares a public safety radio system with the following agencies:
1. Texarkana Texas Police Department;
 2. Bowie County Sheriff's Department;
 3. Texarkana Arkansas Fire Department; and
 4. Texarkana Texas Fire Department.
- B. To that end, the Texarkana Police Department shares control to the direct access of the public safety radio system. These above agencies—along with their collective governing bodies—provide for rules and procedures governing the use of the shared radio system by outside agencies who request access during interoperability incidents.
- C. The design of the public safety radio system allows all first responding agencies that operate within the greater Texarkana area to interoperate using the main radio console. These radio consoles are manned on a continual basis.
- D. Members of the Texarkana Police Department shall recognize and adhere to the following guidelines within this policy.

III. Definitions

- A. **Texarkana Police Department Public Safety Radio System:** The Department operates an 800 MHz Trunked Public Safety Radio System which is utilized by the Central Communications Section as the

Page 1 of 8 Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications	Revision Date: February 14, 2012

primary dispatch system. In addition to the Texarkana Arkansas Police Department, communications are managed and maintained on the radio network system with members from the Texarkana Texas Police Department, both municipal fire departments and the Bowie County Sheriff's Department.

- B. **Primary Dispatch Channel:** The primary communications system upon which an agency and its members rely on to provide radio communications or radio transmissions among radio units.
- C. **Shared Talkgroups:** This term refers to common frequencies, sets of frequencies and other talkgroups which have been established and are programmed into the radios to provide agencies on the system with interoperable communications in the field. The individual radios utilized by the Texarkana Police Department shall be part of the State of Arkansas Wireless Information Network System (AWINS).
- D. **Shared System:** This term refers to the single radio system infrastructure that provides radio communications to several public safety agencies within the greater Texarkana area. The Texarkana Police Department Public Safety Radio System is a shared system; however, the infrastructure utilized independently by the Texarkana Police Department is part of and maintained by the State of Arkansas AWINS System.
 - 1. The AWINS System allows first responders and those other member users access to a statewide communications network that allows the user—byway of a series of repeater towers—to communicate from any location in the State of Arkansas to any other location in the State of Arkansas through the Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWINS).
 - 2. Operation of the AWINS network is available to those participating agencies who have received prior approval from AWINS to operate within the system. AWINS talk groups are set aside for member agencies, and all AWINS capable radios contain standardized programming.

IV. Interoperable Rules of Use

- A. Radio communication provides for the immediate transmission of calls, requests for assistance and any other information that will enable the different agencies on the shared system to communicate with officers in the field. More than any other communication device, radio resources are finite and valuable. Communications should be held to brief, concise and meaningful message delivery, and the appropriate channel for the respective types of information should be selected.
- B. **General Radio Use, Radio Etiquette and General Guidelines**
 - 1. All personnel utilizing the radio system will maintain a professional demeanor at all times. At no time will personnel broadcast sensitive information pertaining to the victims of a crime. If necessary, such information should be sent via a mobile data computer connected to the system or by other means of communication.
 - 2. At no time will personnel engage in radio, data or telephone communication that would embarrass, humiliate or shame any person, nor should any of the communication's content bring discredit upon the individual or the Department.
 - 3. All members of the Department operating a police radio shall strictly observe regulations for communications as set forth in the General Orders Manual and established by the mandates set forth by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).
 - a. Unidentified communications, obscene and profane language, unprofessional and rude remarks, clicks of the microphone button and other violations of the FCC rules and regulations are strictly prohibited.

Page 2 of 8 Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications	Revision Date: February 14, 2012

- b. Violations of the policy such as these can result in disciplinary action up to an including termination of employment.
 - c. Officers of the Department are reminded the radio network system is capable of tracking each officer's radio transmission through the system's radio identification (RID) computer. Every time an officer depresses the microphone button, the radio's RID identification number is displayed to the dispatcher and electronically stored.
4. All members of the Department shall remain familiar with and properly utilize official radio signals in order to speed the transmission of calls more effectively on the radio network system. All communications over the radio network system will be direct, concise and will conform to established procedures and regulations.
- a. When practical—and when time is not of the essence—all lengthy descriptions and details shall be communicated to the Central Communications Center by telephone or by relying on the Information channel. Officers shall rely on the Information channel when requesting a response from a wrecker. The officer will provide a description of the vehicle when the making such a request.
 - b. Officers shall rely on the Information channel when requesting information related to license plate registration and the existence, location and confirmation of warrants of arrest.
6. Officers of the Department shall not request advice from dispatchers in the Central Communications Center regarding what type of action should be taken during the execution of police operations. Any officer requiring advice on a matter relating to a police function should make contact with his/her immediate supervisor.
- a. Officers of the Department shall not request court dates from dispatchers in the Central Communications Center.
 - b. Officers of the Department shall not request directions or the location of any street from dispatchers in the Central Communications Center; however, officers are permitted to request the identification of a street name that crosses the street in question. Should the officer discover the street in question is not located on their street map, the officer may request the location of new streets.

7. Special Assignments

- a. During periods in which officers are assigned to special duties, the officer will ensure the dispatcher in the Central Communications Center is made aware of the circumstances and location of their special assignment, the duration of the assignment and their radio and employee number. As a matter of routine, this should occur on the main radio channel. When making such notifications, officers shall ensure the on-duty supervisor is aware of their assignment.
- b. Should the officer already be on-duty, the officer shall ensure the dispatcher and his/her supervisor is aware of the special assignment circumstances. Such instances include working a school crossing, working traffic, handling escorts, attending court and all other instances in which an on-duty supervisor has tasked the officer with a special assignment.
- c. Officers who are not listed on the regular patrol riding schedule provided to Central Communications will notify the dispatcher of their call number, radio number, employee number as well as the radio code that signifies the beginning of an officers' duty shift (10-41).

Page 3 of 8	Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications		Revision Date: February 14, 2012

- d. Officers who are assigned to undercover positions are exempt from the provisions within this section; however, officers assigned to an undercover position should ensure a supervisor is aware of their activity and location in case of an emergency involving the officer.
8. In addition to announcing the beginning of their tour of duty (10-41), officers who are working an off-duty assignment will call Central Communications—as well as the on-duty supervisor—and provide them with their radio number, employee number, location of the assignment and expected hour the assignment will conclude. When ending a tour-of-duty, the officer will make a secondary announcement signifying the conclusion of the assignment (10-42). Officers shall make such notifications on the primary channel.
9. **Criminal History Information**
- a. When an officer of the Department arrests a suspect or has contact with a person who could have a prior criminal record, and that officer requests a criminal history through the Central Communications Center, the dispatcher will only transmit a coded warning originating from NCIC, ACIC or a local database that alerts the officer to the potential danger involved with the subject of the criminal history. One example of such a circumstance is a person having a known, prior history of assaulting officers.
 - b. Criminal histories will not ordinarily be communicated over the radio network system or placed within the CAD system that facilitates the transmission of such information to the officer's Mobile Data Computer (MDC); however, the dispatcher—upon clearance from a Central Communications Center supervisor—may relay this information to the officer if they believe the immediate delivery of the information is vital to the safety of the officer or others. Should the officer require additional information, the officer should rely on telephone contact with the Central Communications Center.
 - c. Under emergency conditions—and upon clearance from a Central Communications Center supervisor—transmissions containing criminal history information may be broadcast via the radio network system. A police supervisor may also authorize this type of transmission if the circumstances warrant the immediate access to the criminal history information.
10. Officers of the Texarkana Police Department are issued portable radios, and the officers of the Agency are required to carry the assigned portable radio when the officer is off-duty, away from their residence and located within the areas that are covered by the radio network system inside the greater Texarkana area.
- a. While on-duty—and when an officer leaves his/her police unit—the officer shall carry his/her portable radio. Unless the radio traffic interferes with an interview or an investigation, the radio will remain functional throughout this period so the officer can monitor radio traffic.
11. Officers of the Texarkana Police Department shall check in and out of service utilizing either the radio network system, or if so equipped, the MDC within their assigned unit. For more information regarding MDC's and their use, refer to [General Order 1109.02---Mobile Data Computers](#).
- a. Officers will not rely on telephone communications with the Central Communications Center for this function. Officers will not use telephone communication with the Central Communication Center for obtaining clearance for scheduled breaks and non-essential matters.
 - b. Telephone communications to the Central Communications Center should be utilized to communicate lengthy information not suitable for transmission over the radio network

Page 4 of 8 Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications	Revision Date: February 14, 2012

system. Unnecessary telephone calls to the Central Communications Center should not be made.

- c. Entry into the Central Records and Communications Center is limited to Agency supervisors and requires veri-card access. Members of the Department are prohibited from using the CRC—to include the telephones, NCIC and ACIC computers—for social or unofficial purposes. For more information regarding entry into CRC, refer to [General Order 1108.04--CRC Entry](#).

12. All officers assigned to a police unit equipped with a mobile radio and/or an MDC shall maintain contact with the Central Communications Center at all times when the unit is in service. Officers shall remain ready to accept, and shall accept, any radio and/or MDC call for police service assigned by the dispatcher.

13. Should an officer of the Department who is on-duty and logged into the CAD system fail to respond to a dispatcher when called upon, the Central Communications Center shall immediately notify the on-duty supervisor.

- a. Radios issued to the supervisors of the Department are configured with a special feature that enables the supervisor to send a special signal to the officer's radio that might assist in making contact with the officer.

14. Supervisor Responsibilities

- a. Supervisors shall remain accountable for the proper use of the communications system by the personnel operating within their charge.
- b. The commanding supervisor of a division, section or shift shall be responsible for notifying Central Communications of any special circumstances which may affect the standard operating procedures of dispatching calls for police service.

15. Prisoner Transport

- a. Officers of this Agency who are involved in prisoner transports occurring outside of the City's jurisdiction shall monitor the AWINS prisoner channel. The AWINS prisoner talkgroup is located in Zone B, Position 16 on the Department's fleet radio map. This talkgroup is continuously monitored by the Arkansas Department of Corrections and solely dedicated to prisoner transports throughout the state.
- b. Should an incident occur while in-transit with a prisoner outside of the City's jurisdiction, assistance can be obtained on this pre-designated talkgroup.

C. Emergency Procedures

1. All radios connected to the network radio system are equipped with a special button—commonly referred to as the emergency button—that automatically sends an emergency signal to the Central Communications Center. The dispatcher receiving such a notification shall immediately notify the on-duty supervisor of the emergency signal.

- a. Within the notification to the on-duty supervisor, the dispatcher will transmit the officer's beat unit number, officer's name and the officer's last known location. All available units should be dispatched to the officer's last known location to assist the officer.
- b. During periods of such an emergency response, all additional network radio traffic on the system's main channel shall be withheld until the emergency situation has been mitigated.

Page 5 of 8 Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications	Revision Date: February 14, 2012

2. A Communications Supervisor shall have the authority to manage the radio resources in a manner they deem appropriate for the situation. Although not inclusive, this can include directing units to a specific talk group and limiting radio traffic during periods of emergency.

D. Radio Failure

1. In the event an officer's radio—either portable or mobile—malfunctions and becomes inoperable, the Communications Center shall be notified of the occurrence. The Communications Center will be responsible to notify the on-duty police supervisor of the radio failure, and depending upon the circumstances, the supervisor will be responsible to take the appropriate action by assigning a secondary portable radio or a secondary police unit.
 - a. The officer whose portable radio has been deemed inoperable—or those portable radios that need repair—shall forward the radio to the Services Division who shall ensure the radio is returned to the appropriate source for repair. When forwarding the radio to the Services Division, officers are responsible to ensure an appropriate description of the problem accompanies the radio.
 - b. Officers who encounter a mobile radio within their police unit that has been deemed inoperable—or those mobile radios that require repair—shall complete a unit maintenance request that documents the problem. When deemed appropriate, the Services Division will ensure the radio is returned to the appropriate source for repair.
2. The Texarkana Police Department's public safety radio system is equipped to automatically place the main communications channel on a special radio frequency when the trunking capabilities of the radio system malfunctions. When this occurs, all radios within the shared system's network will be placed within a function entitled "*fail soft*". The radios will continue to communicate with the Communications Center, TAPD units and TTPD units. Regardless of the talkgroup selected on the officer's radio, all radio traffic for TAPD and TTPD radios will automatically be transmitted on a single channel. As a result, radio traffic should be limited to emergency traffic only.
 - a. When this occurs, officers should continue to operate in the "*fail soft*" mode unless directed by the communications supervisor to switch to the AWINS system. Often, the duration of "*fail soft*" episodes are brief, and the system will return to normal operation within a short period of time. Because of the interoperability needs and staffing within the Communications Center, it is preferred that operations continue on the "*fail soft*" channel unless it significantly effects the ability to provide essential police services.
 - b. In the event of complete radio failure, officers of the Texarkana Police Department will immediately switch all radios to **TAPD Net**—a digital AWINS channel—which will be utilized to facilitate patrol operations.
 - (1) **TAPD Net** is located in *Zone B*, Position 1 on all radios. *Zone B* can be found by toggling the switch positioned on top of all portable radios to position "**B**". When utilizing mobile radios, *Zone B* can be found by depressing the "**Zone Up**" button on the radio's face.
 - c. Central Communications maintains the ability to monitor and communicate on **TAPD Net**; however, during such periods, officers should remember there will be only one dispatcher monitoring the channel, so all non-essential radio traffic should be limited. While operating on **TAPD Net**, officers will not have interoperability with Texas side officers.

Page 6 of 8	Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications		Revision Date: February 14, 2012

E. Interoperability with Texas Officers and Talk-Around Channels

1. The Texarkana Police Department’s public safety radio system allows officers of the Texarkana, Arkansas Police Department and officers from the Texarkana, Texas Police Department to operate on many of the same radio talk groups. In order to avoid over domination of the primary channel by mobile-to-mobile communication, officers should transition to those channels designated within the radio network’s fleet map that are intended to facilitate mobile-to-mobile communications.
 - a. Those incidents that involve radio traffic and circumstances isolated to Texarkana, Texas, personnel of the TAPD shall not add to this radio traffic unless such traffic is deemed positive and constructive.
 - b. The interoperability shared between both Departments facilitates the instantaneous transmission of information to police units of both cities while assisting during those periods when the activity and circumstances have the possibility of extending across the state line.
 - c. This section is not intended to limit the level of cooperativeness shared by both Departments. Whenever possible, members of this Department will extend assistance to all other law enforcement agencies to the greatest extent.

IV. Radio Fleet Maps

Zone A Fleet Map

	Designation	Signal	Purpose	Interoperability With Texas
1	Central	Analog	Primary dispatch channel	Yes
2	Information	Analog	Services Channel (10-28, 29) warrant checks, etc	Yes
3	Arkansas Mobile 1	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Police (mobile-to-mobile)	Yes
4	Arkansas Mobile 2	Digital	Texarkana Arkansas Police (mobile-to-mobile)	Limited
5	Texas Mobile	Analog	Texarkana Texas Police (mobile-to-mobile)	Yes
6	TAC 1	Analog	Channel used to coordinate large scale police operations	Yes
7	TAC 2	Analog	Channel used to coordinate large scale police operations	Yes
8	TAC 3	Analog	Channel used to coordinate large scale police operations	Yes
9	Arkansas TAC 4	Digital	Channel used to coordinate large scale police operations	Limited
10	CID	Analog	Reserved for use by CID units	Yes
11	Narcotics	Analog	Reserved for use by narcotics officers / operations	Yes
12	BCSO A	Analog	Bowie County SO Primary Channel	Yes
13	BCSO B	Analog	Bowie County SO Talk Around Channel	Yes
14	MCSO	Digital	AWINS System—Miller County SO ^{Main Channel}	No
15	Arkansas Admin***	Digital	TAPD supervisor’s channel ^{All Supervisor Radios}	No
16	ASP G***	Digital	ASP Troop G ^{All Supervisor Radios}	No

***ASP G located in Zone C, Position 12 on non-supervisor radios.

***Zone A, Position 16 not programmed on non-supervisor radios.

Page 7 of 8 Number: 1109.03	Effective Date: February 01, 2011
Subject: Radio Communications	Revision Date: February 14, 2012

Zone B Fleet Map

	Designation	Signal	Purpose	Interoperability With Texas
1	TAPD Net	Digital	AWINS System—TAPD Police Operations	No
2	MCSO-TAPD	Digital	AWINS System—TAPD/MCSO Interface/Interoperability	No
3	Law Com G	Digital	AWINS System—Interoperability within Troop G	No
4	1TA8CALLD	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Police (talk around)	Yes
5	2TA8TAC1D	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Police (talk around)	Yes
6	3TA8TAC2D	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Police (talk around)	Yes
7	4TA8TAC3D	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Police (talk around)	Yes
8	5TA8TAC4D	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Police (talk around)	Yes
9	3RP West	Analog	Bowie County SO West	Yes
10	Animal	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas / Texas Police --- Animal Control	Yes
11	Jail	Analog	Bi-State Justice Center Jail	Yes
12	TAPW	Analog	Texarkana Arkansas Public Works	No
13	MAC Call	Digital	AWINS System – Department of Emergency Management	No
14	SO Net 1	Digital	AWINS System – Sheriff’s Departments in Arkansas	No
15	SO Net 2	Digital	AWINS System – Sheriff’s Departments in Arkansas	No
16	Prisoner***	Digital	AWINS System – Statewide prisoner transport	No

***Zone B, Position 16 is monitored by Arkansas Department of Corrections continuously.

Zone C Fleet Map

	Designation	Signal	Purpose	Interoperability With Texas
1	INC CEN	Analog	Incident Command, Main Channel <small>Default Command Post Channel</small>	Yes
2	INC 1 – EMS	Analog	Incident Command Channel – Reserved for EMS	Yes
3	INC 2	Analog	Incident Command Channel 2	Yes
4	INC 3	Analog	Incident Command Channel 3	Yes
5	INC 4	Analog	Incident Command Channel 4	Yes
6	INC 5	Analog	Incident Command Channel 5	Yes
7	INC 6	Analog	Incident Command Channel 6	Yes
8	INC 7	Analog	Incident Command Channel 7	Yes
9	INC 8	Analog	Incident Command Channel 8	Yes
10	Emergency	Analog	Emergency Only	Yes
11	G EMS	Digital	AWINS System – EMS Channel <small>All Radios in Troop G Network</small>	No
12	2RP East***	Analog	Communication East of Mosley Road <small>Supervisor Radios</small>	Yes
12	ASP G***	Digital	ASP Troop G <small>Non-Supervisor Radios</small>	No
13	2RP East***	Analog	Communication East of Mosley Road <small>Non-Supervisor Radios</small>	Yes
14	Not Programmed			
15	Not Programmed			
16	Not Programmed			

***2RP East located in Zone C position 12 on supervisor radios.

***2RP East located in Zone C Position 13 on non-supervisor radios.

*** ASP G located in Zone A, position 16 on supervisor radios.

***Zone C, Position 13 not programmed in supervisor radios.