

**MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**  
**General Order**

**CHAPTER - Administration**  
GO-01-11  
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**DATE**  
6/4/01

**MOBILE DATA COMPUTER SYSTEM**

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Marin County Sheriff's Office that during an interim "familiarization" period, the mobile data system method of communication will be used in accordance with the below described procedure.

**PROCEDURE**

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this temporary operating procedure is to establish interim guidelines to be used by Communications and Patrol personnel while both are becoming accustomed to the new mobile data computer method of communication.

**Use of the System**

Under the guidelines of this procedure and during this interim time period, personnel from either division may, at any time and for any reason, abandon the use of the mobile data computer method of communication and revert to voice radio communications.

While this is acceptable during this interim period, it should be understood that after a sufficient "familiarization" period, an increased emphasis will be placed on the proper and consistent use of the mobile data computer in accordance with permanent procedures.

**Officer Safety**

During the time period immediately following implementation, personnel from Communications and Patrol should take extra care to insure accurate communications and status keeping in order to maintain a high level of officer safety and service to the public during this transition.

**System Coverage**

All personnel should also understand that as with any communication system in Marin County, we do not have 100% coverage with the new mobile data system. While most of the populated areas do enjoy excellent coverage, some areas have limited or non-existent coverage. These areas include parts of West Marin and West Novato. We are working with our cellular data provider (AT&T Wireless) to improve coverage in these areas.

**Guidelines**

The guidelines described in this temporary operating procedure are not meant to address every situation. These guidelines do address most of the common interactions between Patrol and Communications as they relate to CAD and CLETS/NCIC transactions. This includes responding to calls for service, keeping accurate, updated status, monitoring activity, and querying CAD and CLETS/NCIC databases. This system does not include local CJIS access at this time.

### **Calls for Service**

All calls for service, of any priority, will be CAD dispatched and voice dispatched simultaneously to the assigned units.

On low priority calls for service (CAD priority 2-3.), the dispatcher may abbreviate the call, indicating the unit assigned and the type of call. IE: "1Q11, 10-50 459 Residential". The Patrol unit can then retrieve the call using the mobile data computer for the address and details. While this practice will be possible most of the time, the dispatcher should be cognizant of the fact that the Patrol unit may not be in an area that has mobile data coverage.

After receiving a call for service, the Patrol unit may use the mobile data computer or the voice radio to maintain status for the call. The exception to this practice is a CODE 4 status change. A CODE 4 status change will be provided by the Patrol unit on the radio and subsequently echoed on the radio by the dispatcher.

### **Supplemental Information**

Information that is added to a call for service in CAD, after the initial dispatch, is not automatically displayed, or "pushed" to the Patrol unit on the mobile data computer. A Patrol unit must "recall active" in order to refresh the mobile data computer and display any additional information.

The dispatcher will enter any additional information into the CAD system. If the additional information is significant and/or would affect the response in any way, the dispatcher will simultaneously relay the information to the assigned units on the radio. A Patrol unit may then "recall" the call for service on the mobile data computer to display the additional information.

### **Premise History Information**

CAD maintains a premise history file containing a range of information, from occupant data to police and fire histories and warnings that were entered into the system, as well as recent dispatch incidents.

When the Premise History flag is presented on an incident, the dispatcher will announce the Premise History information on the radio to the assigned Patrol units in accordance with existing procedures. For Information such as alarm codes or gate combinations, the dispatcher may advise the Patrol unit to check the Premise History information on the mobile data computer without broadcasting that information on the radio. A Patrol unit may review the premise history information for the incident at any time using the mobile data computer.

### **Vehicle Stops**

Traffic stops and all types of in-field vehicle contacts will be handled in accordance with existing procedures. Patrol units will not use the mobile data computer to call in, put themselves out on, or indicate CODE 4 on traffic stops, 11-96's, or disabled vehicles. A Patrol unit may use the mobile data computer to change status to 10-8 or 10-98.

## Pedestrian Stops

Pedestrian stops and all types of in-field pedestrian contacts will be handled in accordance with existing procedures. Patrol units will not use the mobile data computer to call in, put themselves out on, or indicate CODE 4 on pedestrian stops, pedestrian contacts, or suspicious subjects. A Patrol unit may use the mobile data computer to change status to 10-8 or 10-98.

## Self-Initiated Activity

Self-initiated activity will be handled in accordance with existing procedures. Patrol units will not use the mobile data computer to call in, or put themselves out on, any law enforcement activity that has the potential of requiring assistance. The exception to this rule would include any of the OUT (10-7) commands listed on the menu bar under "10-7 Sta." or "10-7 Oth."

A Patrol unit may use these mobile data computer commands to indicate that he/she is out at the pumps, court, range, one of the stations, etc. It will be assumed that when one of these commands is used, the Patrol unit will not require assistance of any kind unless otherwise indicated using the voice radio.

## Status Keeping

A Patrol unit may make routine changes in his/her status in CAD to the extent that is capable using the mobile data computer. The dispatcher should take extra care in monitoring CAD in order to maintain a high level of awareness of unit status. Echoing of these routine status changes by the dispatcher is not necessary. Patrol supervisors and other Patrol units may monitor unit status using the mobile data computer.

## Messaging / Mail

Both CAD and the mobile data system have QPAGE, text messaging, and mail capabilities. This includes car-to-car, car-to-dispatch, dispatch-to-car, and car/dispatch-to-QPAGER.

This feature is not intended to replace organization-wide email. Messaging, mail, and QPAGE shall be used for official law enforcement business only and all messages will be kept brief and to the point.

**The transmittal, intentional retrieval, or storage of messages, mail, or QPAGES containing any remarks or comments that are racist, sexist, threatening, pornographic, harassing, obscene, or discriminatory of any kind are strictly prohibited. Any employee who receives any information of this nature must immediately notify his/her supervisor in writing. Failure to do so will result in a presumption that the employee intentionally received and/or retained the material in question.**

Text messages, mail messages, and QPAGE messages will be logged, recorded, and stored for an indefinite period of time. There shall be no expectation of privacy in these messages, any of which are subject to periodic and unannounced audits to insure compliance with this procedure. Any of these messages may, with due process, be recalled for court, disciplinary action, or other legal proceedings.

Employees must remember that messages, mail, and QPAGES are not completely secure and they must consider that fact when transmitting information of a highly sensitive or confidential nature.

## Emergency Buttons

Each mobile data computer has two emergency buttons, one on the keyboard and one on the touch screen. Activation of either of these buttons sends an emergency message to the dispatcher indicating the unit ID and the last known location of that unit according to the CAD system.

**These buttons are not intended to replace the voice radio when a Patrol unit is in an emergency situation.**

These buttons are available for use if the Patrol unit's voice radio is malfunctioning or if there is other traffic on the radio and the Patrol unit is unable to contact dispatch.

There are two important points to remember about the emergency buttons. First, if the Patrol unit is located in an area without mobile data coverage, the emergency button will not transmit. Secondly, the emergency button transmits the Patrol unit's last known location from a dispatched call or CAD status change. ***This may not be the unit's current location.***

When a dispatcher receives an emergency notification via CAD, he/she will immediately clear the air on the appropriate frequency and attempt to contact the unit indicating an emergency situation.

The dispatcher will confirm whether or not an emergency exists and, if so, proceed according to existing procedures. If no emergency exists, such as with an accidental activation, the dispatcher will confirm this information and announce it on the radio so that all units are aware.

If the dispatcher is unable to contact the unit, Patrol and dispatch personnel shall proceed according to existing practices.

#### **All Points Bulletins and Code 777's**

Information for All Points Bulletins and Code 777's will be provided to the Communications Center, and broadcast by the Communications Center, in accordance with existing procedures and using the normal methods of communications.

Once the information is broadcast, Patrol units may use the mobile data computer to recall the bulletin to the screen in order to reduce the need to use the voice radio for clarification of details such as license plates and vehicle descriptions.

#### **CLETS/NCIC Inquiries & Want/Warrant Hits**

Patrol units may use the mobile data computer for any number of State & Federal criminal database inquiries including license plates, driver's licenses, property, guns, wanted persons, supervisory release files, restraining order files, criminal histories, and much more.

It is important to remember that State and Federal laws, and department procedures govern the use of all of these criminal database systems. As is currently the policy, records of all these transactions are maintained and the Department of Justice conducts periodic audits to insure compliance with all laws.

This is especially important for criminal history inquiries. You are personally accountable for both the inquiry and the subsequent dissemination of the information. **The inquiry screen must be properly completed and the system may only be used for legitimate law enforcement purposes.**

A Patrol unit may request that the dispatcher perform any of these inquiries, as is currently the practice, or the Patrol unit may elect to perform the inquiry using the mobile data computer. When performing enforcement activities, Patrol units should consider officer safety issues when deciding which method to use. If the Patrol unit receives a positive match (hit) on a want, warrant, stolen, or officer safety related notification, he/she must immediately advise the dispatcher on the radio of the information.

**The dispatcher is not automatically notified of any hit.** This notification to the dispatcher is not necessary if the inquiry is for informational purposes only and the subject, vehicle, or item of property is not

in the immediate presence of the Patrol unit.

Once the notification to the dispatcher is made, he/she can retrieve the information on the subject, vehicle, or item of property from the Patrol unit's history information. The dispatcher will use the information to check the match, and if requested by the Patrol unit, confirm the want, warrant, or stolen information with the agency holding the original record.

**As always, an arrest should not be made based on computer information alone.** The dispatcher will notify the Patrol unit on the radio whether or not confirmation is received. The Patrol unit may also request that the dispatcher assist in interpreting a potential match in the same manner.

### **Conclusion**

While the mobile data system enhances our ability to communicate in a variety of ways, it is important to remember that the voice radio is still the primary means of communicating with other units and the Communications Center. The voice radio can, and should, be used in any type of urgent or emergency situation, or when personnel are unsure of how to accomplish a certain task using the mobile data system. The voice radio should also be used if any personnel have any concerns regarding potential officer safety issues that might arise in a given situation.

#### RELATED STANDARDS:

None

#### AFFECTED DIVISIONS:

All

#### DATE OF REVISIONS:

6/4/01

By Order of:

*Signature on File*

Robert T. Doyle, Sheriff