



**SOUTH COAST BRITISH COLUMBIA
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
POLICE SERVICE**

AMBER ALERT

Effective Date: September 12, 2005

Revised: February 6, 2006, December 13, 2010

POLICY

1. RCMP "E" Division Major Crime Section – BC Police Missing Persons Center is responsible for the AMBER (America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response) Alert Program for both the Division RCMP and BC police agencies. All requests for an AMBER Alert must be made through the AMBER Alert line (1-888-542-6237) and meet the criteria and be recommended by the police service commander/designate.
 1. The Amber Alert Program is administered by the RCMP "E" Division AMBER Alert Coordinator who also provides training and consultation.
 2. Approval of AMBER Alerts throughout BC will be undertaken by the RCMP Lower Mainland District Regional Duty Officer (RDO)/designate.
2. The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service (SCBCTAPS) will refer to the Jurisdictional Police Department (JPD) the request for recommendation of an AMBER Alert in child abduction cases, unless exigent circumstances exist.
3. SCBCTAPS will recommend an AMBER Alert in child abduction cases that meet established criteria.
4. An AMBER Alert may only be recommended by the Watch Commander (who is the authorized officer for the purpose of an AMBER Alert) responsible at the relevant time.
5. Unless otherwise determined by a Deputy Chief Officer, the SCBCTAPS Manager – Operations Communication Center (OCC) will be responsible for the AMBER Alert liaison function and coordination with the RCMP AMBER Alert activation team. The OCC Manager may delegate day-to-day liaison functions to an OCC Team Leader.

[See also: OB180 - Missing Persons]

REASONS FOR POLICY

6. The AMBER Alert is a tool used by police in certain child abduction cases to assist in the search for the child and the suspect.
7. When an AMBER Alert is activated, a message is immediately broadcast on local radio and television stations soliciting the public's assistance.

8. AMBER Alert does not replace existing investigative procedures for the recovery of an abducted child.

PROCEDURES

Definitions

9. “**Abduction**” means an incident where a child is removed from his or her environment without the permission of the child’s legal guardian or representative.

Activation Criteria and Authorization

10. The five minimum requirements to activate an AMBER Alert are as follows:
 1. the victim is under the age of 18,
 2. police have reasonable grounds to believe that the victim has been abducted,
 3. police have reasonable grounds to believe that the victim is in imminent danger,
 4. police have enough descriptive information about the victim, and the abductor and/or an involved vehicle to believe that dissemination to the public could help to locate the victim, and
 5. police believe that the AMBER Alert can be issued in a time frame that would provide reasonable expectation that the child could be returned or the abductor could be apprehended.
11. An AMBER Alert may be requested **only when all activation criteria have been met.**
12. The Watch Commander will request the activation and cancellation of the AMBER Alert, and will oversee the protocol for so long as it is in place, including fulfilling all of the Watch Commander assigned tasks.
 1. The Watch Commander will update the activation and cancellation upon receipt of new information.

Investigator

13. The investigator attending the initial call of a missing child/abduction will:
 1. immediately upon becoming aware that the activation criteria for an AMBER Alert may exist, notify the Watch Commander, and
 2. obtain as much of the following information as possible, relaying it to the OCC Communications Operator (Communications Operator) and Watch Commander as received:
 - a. Child/Victim Information

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

b. Abductor Information

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

c. Vehicle Info

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

3. request the Watch Commander to ensure that electronic recordings from the relevant control centers of TransLink subsidiaries be retrieved and reviewed as soon as possible.

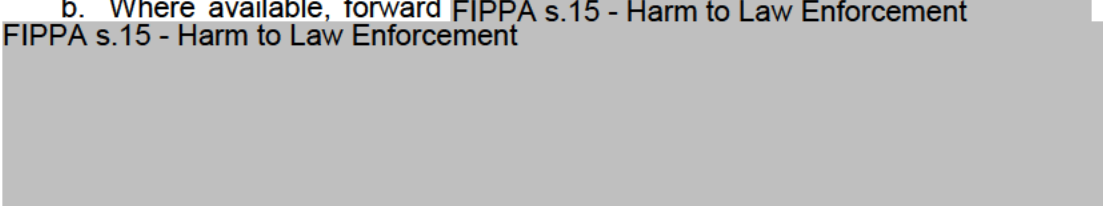
Activation Procedures

14. Immediately upon becoming aware that the activation criteria for an AMBER Alert may exist, the investigator will notify the Watch Commander. In consultation with the investigator, the Watch Commander will consider the circumstances and determine whether the activation criteria have been met.
15. Prior to recommending an AMBER Alert, the Watch Commander will consult with the affected JPD and may contact the RCMP AMBER Alert line FIPPA s.15 - [redacted] to seek input.
16. If satisfied that the activation criteria have been met and the JPD has advised that SCBCTAPS should take the lead on the AMBER Alert, the Watch Commander will recommend the activation of the AMBER Alert and cause the following protocol to be followed:
 1. The Watch Commander will:
 - a. Call FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law [redacted] -- Police Use Only, managed by the RCMP "E" Division Operations Communication Center, and indicate the desire for AMBER Alert activation and provide contact information. The RDO will call back immediately to obtain enough details to ensure the criteria have been met and provide final approval. The RCMP OCC staff will

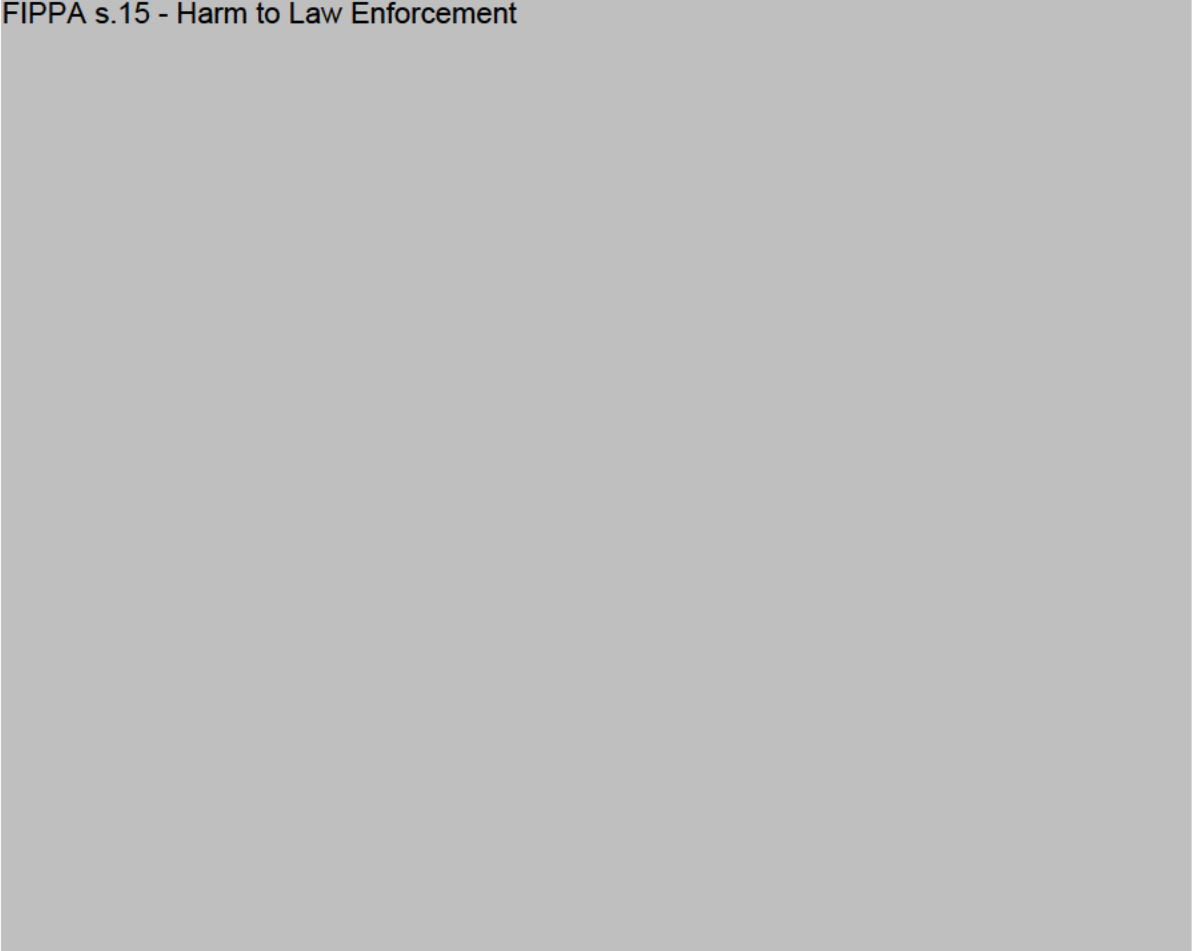
then obtain the details necessary to enter the data to the primary activation system.

NOTE: The Watch Commander will need to provide the name and contact information for the SCBCTAPS Media Relations Officer before an AMBER Alert can be activated. It is a mandatory field in the primary activation document.

b. Where available, forward FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement
FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement



2. The Communications Operator(s) will:
FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement



- g. telephone and then fax the AMBER Alert Activation Document (once received) to the following transit related parties:
- i. T-COMM/Coast Mountain Bus Company (CMBC),
 - ii. OMC/BC Rapid Transit Corporation (BCRTC),
 - iii. OMC/ProTransBC
 - iv. Operations/SeaBus,

- v. Operations/West Coast Express,
- vi. Operations/West Vancouver Blue Bus, and
- vii. TransLink corporate communications/media liaison,

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

3. If the Communications Operator receives any tip information as a result of the AMBER Alert, they must immediately advise the shift supervisor or delegate and send a CPIC to the RCMP Federal Operational Communication Center FIPPA detailing the tip information received and request that they disseminate the information to all agencies.
4. The Watch Commander will notify the E-COMM Team Manager by telephone at FIPPA s.15 - that an AMBER Alert is being activated. The Watch Commander and E-COMM will confirm with each other that:
 - a. E-COMM will relay callers with “on view/in-progress” information directly to the relevant police jurisdiction or as otherwise determined by the Watch Commander and E-COMM Team Manager, and
 - b. E-COMM will provide call answer service for non-emergency AMBER Alert-related calls as an interim measure until such time as the SCBCTAPS advises E-COMM that it is in a position to receive such calls directly.
5. The Watch Commander will maintain contact with the Duty Officer of the JPD where the child abduction occurred in order to facilitate coordination of roles/responsibilities regarding the AMBER Alert and case investigation.
6. The SCBCTAPS Media Relations Officer (MRO) will be notified and may be called-out to perform media relation duties in connection with the AMBER Alert.
 - a. The Watch Commander will perform these duties in absence of the MRO.
 - b. If for some reasons both the MRO and Watch Commander are not available to perform these duties, SCBCTAPS will request assistance from the RDO via the AMBER Alert activation team.
7. The Watch Commander will call out such additional Members and civilian personnel as deemed appropriate.
8. The Watch Commander will maintain liaison with the RDO by utilizing the AMBER Alert line FIPPA s.15 - Harm to provide information on updates and cancellations.
9. The Watch Commander will notify the Inspector Operations/designate that an AMBER Alert has been activated and provide updates.

10. When additional personnel are in place and the SCBCTAPS OCC is in a position to receive non-emergency AMBER Alert related calls, E-COMM will be notified by the Watch Commander or their designate.

SCBCTAPS Media Relations Officer

17. The MRO or designate will field all inquiries from the media, and may refer specific inquiries about the AMBER Alert Program to official RCMP AMBER Alert spokespersons.

18. The MRO or designate will prepare, in coordination with the Watch Commander, a communications strategy, complete with follow-up new releases, and provide AMBER Alert Updates where necessary.

NOTE: An AMBER Alert may generate media interest for many days following activation. SCBCTAPS will need to be prepared to accommodate a high volume of information and public/media enquiries.

[See also: OM010 – Media Relations]

Cancellation Criteria

19. One or more of the following criteria must exist before cancelling an AMBER Alert:

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

20. An AMBER Alert may be cancelled only by the Watch Commander and only when the cancellation criteria exist.

FIPPA s.15 - Harm to Law Enforcement

Cancellation Procedures

21. When the decision has been made to cancel the AMBER Alert, the Watch Commander will cause the following protocol to be followed:

1. The Watch Commander will notify the AMBER Alert line FIPPA s.15 - Harm, who will send out a cancellation through the primary activation system to all partners.
2. A CPIC message will be sent by a Communications Operator to the RCMP Federal Operational Communication Centre FIPPA s.15 - cancelling the AMBER Alert and requesting that they disseminate the message to the FIPPA distribution list. When the criteria exist for the cancellation, the Watch Commander will contact the AMBER Alert line and request the cancellation.

3. The Communications Operator(s) will notify the transit related agencies that the AMBER Alert has been cancelled and make an office announcement over the public address system.

AMBER Alert Review

22. Following any activation by the SCBCTAPS of an AMBER Alert, the Watch Commander will:
 1. convene a debriefing to review the handling of the case and the effectiveness of the AMBER Alert protocol and to determine whether any adjustments are warranted, and
 2. attend any meeting convened by the RCMP AMBER Alert designate (Coordinator can be contacted at **FIPPA s.15 -**) to review the effectiveness of the AMBER Alert protocol.

Receiving External AMBER Alert Notification

23. When the OCC receives a CPIC message from another agency activating an AMBER Alert, the OCC will acknowledge receipt of the message by replying via CPIC to the activating agency ORI and immediately notify the Watch Commander.
24. The OCC will be in place to receive calls relating to the alert and will take all relevant information including caller identification and what they are reporting before telling the caller that they are going to be transferred through to the originating JPD (as the JPD may have more questions). The Communications Operator will send the activating agency a CPIC with all information that has been received. The activating agency's authorized officer will ensure any updates are forwarded for distribution according to the region's protocol.
25. The Communications Operator(s) will telephone and fax the AMBER Alert information to the parties identified in section 16(2)(f), and then notify these agencies upon cancellation of the AMBER Alert.