



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

COMMUNICATIONS: OPERATIONS

Effective Date: May 9, 2005
Revised: September 11, 2006

POLICY

1. The South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service (SCBCTAPS) will provide a communications function that will:
 1. adequately provide 24-hour coverage:
 - a. radio transceiver communications,
 - b. telephone communications, and
 - c. automated data communications,
 2. provide the prompt handling and routing of emergency calls, and misdirected emergency calls, using a system that will ensure constant access to these calls,
 3. have the capability through external resources for communicating with persons whose primary language is not that spoken by the majority,
 4. have the capability for communicating with persons with special needs,
 5. specify the information to be recorded when a police officer responds to a request for service, including:
 - a. date and time of request,
 - b. name, address and phone number of complainant, if possible,
 - c. type of incident reported,
 - d. location of incident reported,
 - e. time of dispatch,
 - f. time of officer arrival,
 - g. time of officer return to service,
 - h. disposition or status of reported incident, and
 - i. a record of secondary police officers assigned to assist the primary officer,
 6. assign a Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) call number to each case in which the SCBCTAPS responds to a request for service,
 7. provide for the dispatch of field units,
 8. record the operational status of all Members,
 9. ensure that Operations Communication Centre (OCC) personnel have immediate access to the resources required to appropriately and adequately respond to a request for service, including:
 - a. Jurisdictional Police Departments (JPDs),
 - b. necessary external services, including:
 - i. fire equipment,
 - ii. environmental,
 - iii. social,
 - iv. ambulance,
 - v. helicopter or other aircraft,

- vi. towing,
 - vii. transport,
 - c. other services that are not components of the SCBCTAPS,
 - d. certified language interpreters,
 - e. current contact information, including:
 - i. the officer in charge,
 - ii. a duty roster of all personnel,
 - iii. telephone numbers of all SCBCTAPS personnel, and
 - iv. telephone numbers of all emergency service agencies, and
 - f. tactical dispatching plans for special operations and circumstances,
10. provide maps, which are visibly available, detailing the SCBCTAPS service area,
 11. establish and maintain standardized radio communications procedures,
 12. provide a telephone system designed to separate emergency from non-emergency calls,
 13. record SCBCTAPS radio transmissions and emergency telephone conversations made within the OCC, Public Service Counter (PSC) telephone lines, and other such lines determined by the Chief Officer, and provide capability for immediate playback of this information,
 14. provide for the review of recorded conversations,
 15. ensure the security and confidentiality of information,
 16. provide a radio system that is engineered to produce a 12-decibel or greater SINAD ratio to mobile receivers in 95 per cent of the SCBCTAPS service area, and to portable radio receivers in 80 per cent of the SCBCTAPS service area,
 17. limit access to the OCC to authorized personnel,
 18. provide accessible and understandable directions for performing telephone and automated data communications functions,
 19. provide for the security of SCBCTAPS communications including:
 - a. protection of the equipment,
 - b. provision for back-up resources, and
 - c. provision of alternate source of electrical power sufficient to ensure continued operation of emergency communication equipment,
 20. provide for routine line load studies,
 21. be administered under the authority of the Chief Officer and the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Officer, and
 22. use appropriately selected and trained personnel and the appropriate equipment and techniques.

Operational Status of Members

2. Members will report and update their operational status to the OCC.

Time System

3. The SCBCTAPS utilizes the 24-hour clock system. The 24-hour clock commences at 0000 and ends at 2359.

REASON FOR POLICY

To provide and maintain the communications and communications infrastructure required to satisfactorily provide the policing services to the SCBCTAPS service area.

4. To better provide for the safety and security of the public and the Members involved in ensuring the public's safety.
5. To ensure the confidentiality, security and appropriateness of information received through the communications function.

PROCEDURES

[See also: OO030 – Requests for Service, OO040 – Communications Codes, O050 – Radio Response Codes, OL010 – Liaison With Other Agencies, AF090 – Canadian Police Information Centre]

OPERATIONS COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE (OCC)

OCC Personnel

6. OCC personnel will be responsible to the Operational Support Manager (OSM), or in their absence, to the Watch Commander.
7. All Dispatchers and Call Takers, and other assigned personnel to the OCC will ensure that they are familiar with the procedures, policies, equipment and any other duties connected with that position.
8. All Dispatchers and Call Takers will wear their issue head set while performing their assigned duties related to use of the E-COMM radio system in the OCC.
9. OCC personnel will record all information, as prescribed by general and temporary orders. Dispatchers will dispatch Members, police vehicles, contract towing companies, Emergency Health Services (EHS) and Fire Rescue Services (FRS) and/or other vehicles, persons, services or equipment as required or directed.

Equipment Function

10. OCC personnel will report immediately to the OSM (if on duty) and Watch Commander any irregularity or damage to the radio system or OCC.
11. OCC personnel completing their shift will advise the relieving OCC personnel of any irregularities or damage to the radio system or OCC.

MEMBERS

12. At commencement of a shift, the Patrol Supervisor will issue zone assignments to Members and provide a copy to the OCC Dispatcher.
13. Units will obtain radios from the Radio Room and the OCC Dispatcher will record the portable radio identification upon the Unit's initial shift communication.
14. Members will monitor their radios at all times and keep the Dispatcher informed of their status and location at all times.
15. Members will acknowledge all dispatches, and break lengthy broadcasts and attempt to keep their radio broadcasts short and concise.
16. Member will receive permission from their Supervisor before leaving the assigned zone. The Member will advise the Dispatcher of their destination and estimated time of return to the zone.

911

17. Member who are off duty and require police assistance will call 911, not the SCBCTAPS Dispatch.

[See also: OO050 – Radio Response Codes]

RECORDED COMMUNICATIONS

18. Due to the nature of the policing environment, SCBCTAPS personnel cannot have the expectation of privacy when making telephone calls. The length, time, origin and terminus of all telephone calls are monitored. Further, telephone conversations may be recorded at some or all telephones.
19. The SCBCTAPS will utilize a recording computer software program to record all phone lines into the OCC and PSC, as well as other telephone lines identified by the Chief Officer.
20. Archive CD-ROMs of the recordings will be produced bi-monthly (or more frequently as required by recording volume) and filed in date order in a fireproof facility (e.g., safe or secure cabinet) under the custody and control of the Property Custodian or as otherwise designated by the Deputy Chief Officer.
21. Members who require copies of recorded audio communications for investigative purposes will submit a request in writing through the Member's Supervisor to the OSM. This request will include the following information:
 1. Number of the General Occurrence report,
 2. the reason for the request (e.g., type of investigation),
 3. the requested communication medium (e.g., radio channel, telephone local),
 4. the time for the communication requested.

22. The OSM or designate will retrieve from the required communication; make a CD-ROM copy of the communication requested and forward to the Member.
23. Access to the original recordings is restricted to the Deputy Chief Officer, OSM, or their designate.
24. Any recording seized for an investigation will be processed as an exhibit.
25. With the exception of a seized tape, the archive CD-ROMs will be stored for a minimum of one (1) year. On expiration of the retention period, the discs will be destroyed.
26. SCBCTAPS will not provide audio recordings for SCBCTAPS staff personal use, and SCBCTAPS personnel will not make such requests.
27. SCBCTAPS personnel will not make unauthorized copies of any audio recording (in any form) and are prohibited from unauthorized retrieval and play back of an audio communication.
28. Deletion of an audio recording from the master recording system requires authorization of the Chief Officer or Deputy Chief Officer, or their designate, and verification will be done to ensure that the deletion was correctly performed.

[See also: OF020 – Exhibits / Property Control]

TELEPHONE/PAGING

Incoming Calls

29. All incoming telephone calls to SCBCTAPS will be answered promptly, efficiently, and in a professional manner. SCBCTAPS personnel will not express personal opinions in dealing with the public.
 1. Call taking phone lines should not ring more than three times without being answered.
30. Courtesy and diplomacy will be exercised by SCBCTAPS personnel at all time during telephone conversations and when using the telephone paging system or intercom.
 1. Sworn personnel will be identified by rank and surname when being paged on the intercom.

Pages

31. The telephone system in the SCBCTAPS police facility can be utilized to page personnel and to broadcast announcements or emergencies.
32. SCBCTAPS personnel will only use the telephone pager system for business purposes.

Priority calls

33. The responsibility of handling emergency calls will take precedent over non-emergency calls.
34. When SCBCTAPS receives a misdirected emergency call relating to an incident in another police jurisdiction, the receiver will promptly transfer the call to 911 or to the police department having jurisdiction.

Cellular Phones

35. Cellular telephones and other electronic devices with telecommunication functions (e.g., Blackberries) may be used to enhance administrative and operational efficiency.
36. SCBCTAPS personnel will exercise caution when using cellular telephone and other related devices as the conversations may not be secure.
37. Members will avoid using cellular telephones to discuss matters of a sensitive or confidential nature. Particular caution will be exercised during communication with informants. During prolonged operations requiring communication outside regular police frequencies, consideration will given to the use of voice privacy radios, encrypted telecommunication devices, or Mobile Data Terminal messaging systems.
38. Cellular telephones and telecommunications devices are provided to enhance work related communications. The use of SCBCTAPS issue phones/devices will be restricted to urgent situations where operational demands make it impossible or impractical to utilize a hard line telephone. With the above exception, all personal use is the responsibility of the staff person using the phone to reimburse SCBCTAPS. Supervisors will monitor Cellular/telecommunication use.

Intercom

39. There is an intercom system at front door public entrance, which connects to the OCC, so that when the PSC is not staffed the public can talk to the OCC.

Security of Telephone Numbers

40. Only authorized SCBCTAPS and TransLink personnel will have access to the portion of the SCBCTAPS Telephone Directory that contains private contact information for personnel. Private residence or cellular telephone numbers of SCBCTAPS personnel will not be provided to non-SCBCTAPS personnel without permission of that staff person, or without permission of authorized personnel.
41. If a person deems a message important and it is during the staff person's off duty time, the PSC personnel (or OCC when the PSC is not staffed) will try and contact the SCBCTAPS personnel concerned by telephone to relay the message.
42. If there is doubt as to the purpose in contacting a particular SCBCTAPS staff person and the staff person is not available, the matter will be referred to the Watch Commander for decision.

43. A Member's direct office or work cellular telephone number may be released by SCBCTAPS personnel to non-SCBCTAPS personnel as is deemed operationally necessary (e.g., other law enforcement agencies or transit personnel), unless release of information related to a specific Member has been ordered restricted.

Telephone Communication - Hearing Impaired

44. SCBCTAPS personnel will utilize Telus operator services (provides specialized service) when required to communicate by telephone with a person who is hearing impaired.

E-COMM

Call Taking and Dispatch

45. E-COMM is the radio emergency communications provider for the SCBCTAPS. The SCBCTAPS OCC will provide police radio dispatch and process calls for service received directly or forwarded from other JPDs.

PRIME

46. All calls for service will be recorded by OCC personnel as a CAD call through either CAD or the Telephone Report Centre (TRC).
47. OCC personnel will comply with documented procedures for entering and retrieving information from the PRIME system.
48. When OCC personnel encounter problems with any component of the PRIME system, they will notify the OSM or, if not on duty or available, the Watch Commander, who will take appropriate action (e.g., whether to call out the PRIME Coordinator).

SKYTRAIN RADIO AND OPERATING MAINTENANCE CENTRE (OMC)

49. SkyTrain operates a radio system through the OMC. SCBCTAPS OCC monitors and has access to the SkyTrain radio system, and the OCC provides indirect radio contact between the OMC and field staff, and SCBCTAPS Members
50. SCBCTAPS personnel will follow established communication protocol with SkyTrain OMC, as outlined below:

SkyTrain Obtaining Non – Emergency Police Service

1. SkyTrain Attendants (STAs) or other field staff requiring assistance of SCBCTAPS Members, for non-emergency situations, will request that service by either:
 - a. contacting the SCBCTAPS OCC directly via the SkyTrain Radio, or,
 - b. contacting the OMC via radio or phone and the OMC will then contact the SCBCTAPS OCC by telephone to pass on the STA's request.

2. The OCC will dispatch the appropriate Members via the E-COMM radio system.

SkyTrain Obtaining Emergency Police Service

3. STAs or other field staff requiring police attendance, for emergency situations, will request that attendance by contacting the OMC, via the SkyTrain radio system. The OMC will then call 911 to request police attendance. The jurisdictional police for the location of the problem will respond, as well as contacting SCBCTAPS.

SCBCTAPS Members Communications with OMC

4. At times, Members will need to request train holds for policing and/or public safety matters, often on short notice. To hold a train and then release, the Member will use one of three communication options:
 - a. make request to hold and then release train through the SCBCTAPS OCC, or,
 - b. make request to hold and then release train through a nearby STA, or,
 - c. make request to hold and then release train by contacting the OMC via cell phone.
51. When OCC personnel encounter problems with the protocol with SkyTrain, they will notify the OSM, who will take appropriate action. In exigent circumstances, OCC personnel may contact the Watch Commander.