

Number: Title:

Page 1 of 2

D-8 COMMUNICATIONS WITH PRIVATE AMBULANCE PROVIDERS**PURPOSE**

To provide a procedure for communications between Central Zone Fire Agencies and Private Ambulance units.

BACKGROUND

Many Central Zone Fire Stations provide living quarters and facilities to private ambulance companies under various contracts. Some of these private ambulances are dispatched by HCFA, and some are dispatched by other communications centers. While many private ambulances have RCS radios, challenges can arise when providers that do not routinely operate on RCS radios or do not have RCS radio capabilities are requested to respond to incidents within the Central Zone.

PROCEDURE

Private Ambulances that are dispatched by HCFA to incidents within the Central Zone will be assigned the appropriate command and tactical channels (or talkgroups) upon dispatch. When these ambulances are sent out of zone on mutual aid responses, HCFA will provide the proper command and tac channel as specified by the requesting agencies communications center.

Private Ambulances that are dispatched by other communications centers will be provided with the proper command and tactical channels upon dispatch. This information will be transferred between HCFA and other dispatch centers via RCIP or telephone. These units shall advise HCFA on the assigned command channel when going enroute, arriving at scene, transporting, going available, etc. All communications between units already at scene and responding private ambulances shall be on the assigned command and/or tactical channel as appropriate. This procedure applies in and out of zone and the communications plan will be determined by the agency with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident.

Some BLS Ambulances that cover Zone 2 areas during resource drawdown do not have RCS capabilities. When these ambulances are used for normal cover during drawdown, a supervisor from the Zone 2 contract holder will augment staffing on the ambulance, and maintain communications with Central Zone units and HCFA via portable radio with RCS capabilities.

When requests are made for BLS ambulances not dispatched by HCFA, every effort should be made to utilize the rotational list of providers with RCS capabilities.

Occasionally during periods of drawdown or Mass Casualty type incidents, ambulances without RCS capabilities will be assigned. The following communication methods should be used in these instances:

APPROVED: 08/14/14

REVISED: 09/06/16

Number: Title:

Page 2 of 2

D-8 **COMMUNICATIONS WITH PRIVATE AMBULANCE PROVIDERS**

MCI: IC shall establish Ambulance Staging. HCFA will communicate with private ambulance dispatch and route all incoming ambulances to staging. Upon arrival, the staging officer will track the unit number, and facilitate communications with HCFA and the IC of the incident to track status and assign the ambulances.

Drawdown: HCFA will communicate with the Private Ambulance Dispatch and the Central Zone units, relaying info such as reporting location, eta's, unit status, etc.

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