

## **08-003: Internal Telephone/Field Audit**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this station order is to establish procedures for conducting internal station telephone audits and field audits. The internal audit is designed to ensure that station personnel who work answering the phone or responding in person, appropriately and professionally handle calls. This evaluation system will act as a tool to monitor station personnel and ensure members of the community and Department are assisted in a polite, courteous, and professional manner.

### **PROCEDURE**

Each shift Watch Commander, Watch Sergeant, or designated personnel shall evaluate how station personnel answer the telephone and complete a Phone Audit form. This will be accomplished twice a shift. Deficiencies will be addressed on a case by case manner through training or performance log entry, if necessary. The form will include any remedial actions taken. The forms will be placed in the operations mailbox found in the Watch Commander's office. These forms, after being reviewed, will be forwarded to the designated sergeant who shall record which lieutenant or sergeant completed the form.

Each shift Field Sergeant shall evaluate how station personnel conduct themselves at calls for service and complete a Field Audit form. This will be accomplished twice a shift. Deficiencies will be addressed on a case by case manner through training or performance log entry, if necessary. The form will include any remedial actions taken. The forms will be placed in the operations mail box found in the Watch Commander's office. These forms, after being reviewed, will be forwarded to the designated sergeant who shall record which lieutenant or sergeant completed the form.

Telephone and Field Audit forms shall be forwarded to Compton Station operation's staff for filing and record keeping purposes.

Attached is a copy of Department policy regarding the procedures for answering the station telephones.

### **MPP 3-07/090.00 INCOMING CALLS**

Procedures for handling emergency and routine incoming calls are outlined in the subsections which follow. All calls shall be answered promptly, efficiently, and courteously. Personnel shall properly identify themselves by unit and name when answering all incoming telephone calls.

### **3-07/090.25 ROUTINE INCOMING CALLS**

Establishing and maintaining good public relations shall be a primary concern of all Department members handling incoming telephone calls. The following procedures shall be observed:

- Give proper identification when answering the telephone, stating Unit of Assignment and name
- Handle the call yourself, when possible, unless the caller asks to speak to a specific person

- When necessary to refer the caller to another unit, explain the reason and provide caller with the correct number before transferring the call
- If caller has already been transferred, offer to obtain requested information and return the call or obtain an accurate source of information for the caller
- Return calls promptly, notifying caller of action being taken or results of your efforts to obtain correct information.
- Use message forms when taking messages: record the following information:
  - Called person's name,
  - Caller's name and affiliation,
  - Date and time of call,
  - Message,
  - Receiver's name.

#### Telephone Demeanor

The public's perception of our organization is directly impacted by our courtesy and thoroughness during daily telephone contacts. All personnel shall utilize the basics of effective telephone communications:

- Greet the caller with a professional tone,
- Listen closely,
- Be helpful,
- Empathize, and
- Avoid Department/police jargon.

By utilizing these five easy steps, the Department will present a professional image and promote better customer service.

#### Procedure

All personnel who answer incoming telephone calls shall greet the caller by identifying themselves and unit of assignment. Below are examples of standard greetings that may be adapted for every unit on the Department:

#### Data Systems:

"Records Management, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, how may I help you?"

"Good afternoon, Records Management, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, can I help you?"

#### Homicide Bureau:

"Detective Smith, Homicide Bureau, how may I help you?"

"Homicide Bureau, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, can I help you?"

#### Lakewood Station:

"Deputy Smith, Lakewood Station, how may I help you?"

"Good morning, Sheriff's Station, Mr./Ms./Mrs. Smith, can I help you?"

#### Telephone Demeanor Audits

To ensure compliance with Department policy, random audits will be conducted. The results of these audits will be reported to the Office of the Undersheriff on a monthly basis. A copy of these results will also be sent to each unit audited. Unit Commanders are responsible for commending employees who performed in accordance with this policy. Unit Commanders shall take appropriate administrative action regarding employees who demonstrated substandard performance in an area covered by the audit.

#### **MPP 3-07/090.10 EMERGENCY INCOMING CALLS - BUSINESS SYSTEM**

Emergency calls directed to a station complaint desk, received on the business system, shall take precedence over all other business system calls. Any routine call in progress shall be placed on "hold" until each new incoming call is answered to determine if it is an emergency call.

When calls for emergency service or assistance are received by a unit other than the unit having jurisdiction, all necessary information shall be obtained and the information relayed to the concerned unit or agency immediately. This procedure is in accord with the Department policy of not transferring calls of an emergency nature, received on the business system and giving all possible assistance to the caller.

If there is any question of jurisdiction or when available information indicates that our emergency service can arrive sooner than that of the agency having jurisdiction, a unit of this Department and necessary allied emergency equipment shall be dispatched.

The incident and action taken shall be entered in the dispatch system and a tag number assigned so that the incident will be recorded.

#### **MPP 3-07/090.15 THE 9-1-1 EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER SYSTEM**

Without exception, only emergency calls shall be taken on the 9-1-1 line. Do not transfer a non-emergent 9-1-1 call to a business line. This procedure does not remove the caller from the incoming 9-1-1 telephone trunkline, though appearances would tell you otherwise. Should a non-emergent call be received on this line, transfer the caller to the 9-1-1 nuisance line recording and the caller will be informed that 9-1-1 is to report emergencies only.

Station complaint desk personnel answering 9-1-1 lines shall:

1. Do so without delay - the line should not ring more than twice before being answered,
2. Answer: "9-1-1. What is the emergency?",
3. If "Foreign Exchange" appears on the Automatic Location Identification (ALI) display unit above the caller's address, the deputy shall look at the address carefully. "Foreign Exchange" should alert the deputy that the call is originating outside the station area. If an emergency, the deputy shall determine which police or Sheriff's station has jurisdiction and immediately transfer the call,
4. Immediately transfer calls reporting incidents of smoke/fire to Fire Dispatch. Do not interrogate the caller. All calls reporting the same smoke/fire incident shall be transferred, not terminated,

5. Immediately transfer calls reporting injury traffic accidents to Fire Dispatch, regardless of jurisdiction. Calls reporting injury traffic accidents within station jurisdiction, including contract cities, may be placed in conference with Fire Dispatch to obtain all necessary information,
6. Remain on the line until the transfer is complete,
7. Transfer or terminate all calls expeditiously to free the 9-1-1 lines.

A 9-1-1 call that has been transferred to the station complaint desk shall not be transferred a second time. All necessary information shall be obtained and relayed to the concerned unit or agency immediately.

When a 9-1-1 line is answered and the call is disconnected prior to determining its nature or completing a transfer, deputies shall utilize available resources to determine an appropriate response.

## **FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE 90-03**

### Standard Greeting for Station Operators

Station operators handle virtually all incoming calls during standard business hours, therefore, all calls received by the station operator shall be answered as follows:

Example: "Compton Sheriff's Station Operator, how may I direct your call?"

### Standard Greeting for all Station Personnel

When station operators are not available to answer incoming calls, calls are automatically forwarded to the station desk. Station desk personnel and all other station personnel shall answer all non-9-1-1 calls in the following manner:

1. State the name of the unit or station
2. State your rank or title,
3. Ask, "how may I help you?"

Example:

(Deputy) "Compton Sheriff's Station, Deputy Smith, how may I help you?"

(Professional Staff) "Compton Sheriff's Station, Mr./Ms/Miss Jones, how may I help you?"

### Optional Generic Greeting for all Station Personnel

Stations who serve contract cities may choose to have a more "generic" greeting. In these instances, personnel answering telephones should delete the station's name in their greeting and replace it with "Good morning," "Good afternoon" or "Good evening" (depending on the time of day).

