

Santa Barbara City Fire Department - Standard Operating Procedures Apparatus and Equipment Operations		Code: A-XIV-15
MDC Policies and Protocols		
Chpt: XIV	Miscellaneous Equipment	Revised: 1/17/12 Pages: 5

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

A. The purpose of this SOP is to establish usage protocols and policies for the MDC. It does not describe actual MDC usage or operation. Refer to MDC field guide for operational information of the MDC.

B. The Mobile Data Computer (MDC) has the potential to access confidential records from the State of California, Department of Justice and Department of Motor Vehicles databases. Employees using the MDC shall comply with all appropriate federal and state rules and regulations.

II. TERMINOLOGY

A. MDC – Mobile Data Computer is the touch screen in the cab and the actual computer that is used to send and receive information from dispatch. For clarification and ease, the term “MDC” will refer to the entire in cab system (touch screen and computer) unless otherwise noted.

B. CAD – Computer Aided Dispatch

III. REFERENCES

A. Refer to the Santa Barbara City Fire Mobile Data Terminal Field Guide for more detailed operations. The guide should be in each station library or can be accessed electronically here.

IV. POLICY

A. MDC use is covered under the existing city policies and procedures as they apply to computer use.

B. The MDC shall be used for official fire communications only. Messages that are of a sexual nature, racist, offensive, or otherwise critical of any member of the Department, or the city are strictly forbidden.

C. Messages may be reviewed by supervisors at anytime without prior notification. The Battalion Chiefs will periodically review MDC messages.

D. Employees generating or transmitting messages not in compliance with this policy are subject to discipline.

E. MDC’s will remain on at all times.

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1. Since the MDC does create an electrical drain, it is imperative that the apparatus be plugged in to shore power when in the station.
2. The only exception to this rule will be for out of town assignments when shore power will not be available. In these instances, it will be prudent to turn off the MDC when not using it.

F. Communications with dispatch will be redundant. Both voice and MDC will be used to communicate with dispatch. Communication via radio will continue as before with no significant changes in radio protocol.

G. Apparatus are equipped with GPS devices to allow tracking of apparatus on maps and in dispatch. DO NOT tamper with, remove, or alter the GPS devices in any way.

H. DO NOT add any programs or software to the MDC.

V. RESPONSIBILITY

A. All members are required to know how to properly use and operate the MDC.

B. Battalion Chiefs, Captains, and Acting Captains are responsible for signing on and ensuring that the MDC is operated in accordance with this policy.

VI. PROCEDURE

A. Sign on

1. MDC will be signed on by apparatus, not individual. Sign on codes are as follows (note, there are no spaces between letters/numbers):

- a) Engines – E1, E2, E3, etc.
- b) Truck – TK1, TK2
- c) Squad/Heavy – SQ1
- d) Rescue – R1
- e) Battalion chiefs – BC712, BC713, BC714.
- f) ARFF – FM81, FM82, R8

2. Once an apparatus is signed on, there should be no need to sign on to the MDC each shift. (See Mobile Data Terminal field guide for more information regarding sign on)

B. Responding to calls

MDC Policies and Protocols

1. Once a call is received, Capt. or AC will press the “Enroute” button. After pressing the “Enroute” button, then get on the radio and notify dispatch that you are responding just as before.
 - a) *Note: In the event you are away from the rig and there would be a delay in accessing the MDC, (i.e. prevention or PT), notify dispatch via radio you are responding and tell them to “Show Eng. __ enroute” this lets dispatch know that you are not going to be pressing the enroute button and they will enter the enroute time. You will NOT need to press the enroute button once you reach the apparatus.
2. Check MDC screen for call information (address, cross street, etc.) and notify engineer if necessary.
3. Once on scene, press the “On scene” button and then notify dispatch via radio that you are on scene.
4. Once you are on the fireground and away from the rig, all communication will be done via the radio.
5. Upon completion of call, press the “In service” button and then notify dispatch via radio that you are in service. Do not wait until you are back to the station to press the “In service” button. Pressing the “In service” button will clear all information from the call.
6. Upon return to quarters, there is no MDC button that needs to be pressed. Notify dispatch via radio that you are in quarters. Dispatch will create a busy code putting you in quarters.
7. If you come across another call while enroute to your dispatched call, notify the dispatcher via radio that you are on a different call and they will put you on the new call and dispatch the next engine.
8. Remember, if the address is unverified by CAD, dispatch will send the call as a “Block” address in order to get the call to the MDC, this will not be the actual address. The actual address will show up in the “Remarks” field.
9. There will be NO map pages given as long as the MDC is operational. In the event that the MDC goes down, dispatch will then return to radio only communication and give map pages for calls.
10. Although apparatus are equipped with GPS, dispatch is not set up to automatically dispatch the closest available resource. It is incumbent on the company office to monitor radio traffic and notify dispatch if you are closer to the call than the dispatched apparatus.

C. Strike teams and Apparatus out of service

MDC Policies and Protocols

1. If sent on a strike team, log off of your current apparatus and log on as ST1 (Strike Team 1) or ST2, ST3 or ST4, a different one for each engine responding on the strike team. The replacement engine will then log in as that engine for that district.
2. If the apparatus goes out of service for any reason, log off of the MDC and log on in the reserve apparatus as the engine for that district.
3. As mentioned above, MDC will drain battery if left on and not plugged into shore power. If MDC is not in use while on the strike team, turn the unit off.

D. Non emergency operations

1. If you are in service at another station (for training or equipment) notify dispatch via radio and they will put you on a busy code and keep you available for calls in your district.

E. Move ups

1. Dispatch will still manually use the move up schedule and move the engine company to the designated station. The move up Engine Company will still use their apparatus designation even if they are covering another district. Dispatch will still recommend that engine company for calls in the newly designated area.

VII. CAD/MDC ISSUES

A. In the event that the MDC goes down or is not functioning properly:

1. Discontinue use of MDC and respond using radio transmission only. Report to dispatch that your MDC is down.
2. Go to the Portal site and access the repair log. Fill in the appropriate boxes and BE SPECIFIC about what is wrong with the MDC. Police IT personnel will check the repair log daily and will contact the reporting party and schedule a repair time.
3. If there is a system wide problem, (i.e. several MDC's drop offline at the same time) Notify dispatch and they will contact Police IT personnel immediately.
4. Note* Portal site can also be used to report problems with FireHouse and Desktop PC's in the station.

B. Questions about MDC's

1. Check the Field guide first.
2. If the field guide does not answer your question, contact the Training Captain for questions about the MDC.

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3. DO NOT call dispatch with questions about FireHouse or MDC's.

C. CAD will auto populate FireHouse with dispatch information. This could take up to 10 minutes to auto fill after the call has been closed.

D. Getting new or updated information into CAD

1. Pre-plan information, Knox box, and gate codes can be forwarded to FD receptionist for input into the system.

2. Building hazards, new streets, and response order issues should be forwarded to the training captain.