

Snohomish County Fire Chiefs Association

RECOMMENDED GUIDE LINE DOCUMENT 20-01-11

SNOHOMISH COUNTY'S DISPATCH TYPE CODES

1.0 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 This procedure addresses the need to standardize incident type codes used in the dispatching of calls for Snohomish County's fire agencies. This standardization will provide the frame work needed to allow a commonality in computer aided dispatch systems between dispatching agencies.
- 1.2 The standardization of incident type codes improves the ability for agencies to work together and pre plan the agency desired response to emergency incidents.

2.0 AGENCIES AND PERSONNEL AFFECTED

- 2.1 All fire departments
- 2.2 Communication Centers (Snopac, Snocom, Marysville)

3.0 REFERENCES

- 3.1 Northrop Grumman CAD operations manual – Incident Type Codes section.

4.0 POLICY

- 4.1 Whereas the Snohomish County Fire Chiefs Association has identified that a standardization of type codes will improve the ability of multiple communications centers and improve inter-department cooperation of fire agencies throughout the county the Association hereby adopts this standardization of type codes to be used by the county's communication and fire agencies.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Incident Type Code – The type code shall include the verbiage used to announce the type call during dispatch. In addition the type code shall indicate the character entry used in CAD to identify the specific type code.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Dispatch agencies are requested to adopt the type codes published here in and utilize the approved list of type codes only and specifically as indicated.

- 6.2** Fire agencies and personnel (especially command level personnel) are encouraged to learn the type code names and utilize the specific verbiage when requesting assignment, type code change or balance of incidents. In addition department personnel should have sufficient knowledge of:
- A. Alarm levels and there specific meanings.
 - B. Target Hazards as applied to the areas of their jurisdiction.
 - C. How these type codes interact with other response plans of the county.
- 6.3** Fire Agencies should assure fire response lists, with alarm levels are entered in CAD with the assistance of the dispatch centers and as outlined in their specific regulations for the altering of CAD files.

7.0 PROCEDURE

- 7.1** Dispatch centers shall adopt internal procedures utilizing the incident type codes defined in the approved list of incident type codes.
- 7.2** Dispatchers and fire department personnel shall use the verbiage as described herein when referring to the incident types where applicable. The use of plain English and common terminology will enhance the intention of this procedure.
- 7.3** In the case of emergency response mode the term “Code response” shall be the verbiage used. A non emergency response mode shall be referred to as “Non Code Response”. All dispatched events shall be considered a “code response” without the announcement of code response. Dispatched incidents that are recommended for a non emergency response mode shall be announced in the dispatch verbiage in the text message as a “Non Code Response”
- 7.4** In addition to the type codes agencies are strongly encouraged to enter varying alarm levels as indicated in the type coded list. Each agency should assure that the station order is completed for all BLK files in CAD to increase the likelihood of CAD recommendations in completing the alarm level assignment. This shall assure consistency and deter delays in requesting resources to large scale events.
- 7.5** The Incident type list attached shall be defined as Addendum “A” and be part to this procedure.

FIRE AGENCY TYPE CODE LIST

AID (Aid Call)

(Dispatcher must balance the response)

Used for processing all aid calls taken **by non-certified call takers and certified call takers without direct access to a CBD flipchart due to extraordinary circumstances when certified dispatch personnel are not available**. May also be utilized by police dispatchers requesting an aid response for law enforcement units in the field.

NOTE: It will be the fire dispatcher's responsibility to balance or change the response according to text entry.

AIR (Aircraft Crash Light plane)

A crash or reported crash of a single engine aircraft (i.e. Cessna, Beechcraft, Piper) or a rotary wing aircraft (i.e. Huey, Bell) – if the aircraft has crashed into a structure or onto a roadway involving an unknown quantity of vehicles upgrade to a FC response. *NOTE – If in doubt as to the size of the aircraft send an AIRC response.*

AIRC (Aircraft Crash Commercial plane)

A crash or reported crash of a multi-engine aircraft (i.e. Boeing, Airbus, Lockheed, or any Military type aircraft whether carrying ordinance or not). Note – if the aircraft has crashed into a structure or onto a roadway involving an unknown quantity of vehicles upgrade to a FC response. *It is recommended that all agencies establish 4 alarm levels for this incident type code.*

NOTE – If in doubt as to the size of the aircraft send an AIRC response.

AIRS (Aircraft Standby)

A request to standby for an aircraft that may be experiencing a potential in-flight emergency.

BLS (BLS Response)

A code response for Basic Life Support using CBD dispatching guidelines.

BLSN (BLS Non-code Response)

A non-code response for Basic Life Support using CBD dispatching guidelines.

COA (Carbon Monoxide Alarm)

A report of an alarm detecting Carbon Monoxide (CO).

COAM (Carbon Monoxide Medic Response)

Used for response to a CO alarm where signs of exposure to the occupants have been reported.

FAC (Fire Alarm Commercial)

A report from an alarm company, homeowner, business owner, or third person of an automatic fire alarm activation in a commercial type structure. A commercial structure is defined as any multi-family dwellings (apartment building, condos, buildings housing over three or more families), industrial buildings, hospitals, strip malls, schools or educational facilities, warehouse or storage facilities, public gathering locations (such as night clubs, restaurants, theaters, etc.).

FAR (Fire Alarm Residential)

A report from an alarm company, homeowner, business owner, or third person of an automatic fire alarm activation in a single family residence.

FAS (Fire Alarm – Sprinkler Waterflow)

A report from an alarm company, homeowner, business owner, or third person of a sprinkler water flow alarm activation in a commercial type structure.

FB (Fire – Brush Response)

A report of a fire involving any natural ground cover including timber, blackberry vine areas, shrubs, grass or other ground cover materials without immediate threat to any structure. *It is recommended that all agencies establish 4 alarm levels for this incident type code.*

FC (Fire Commercial Response)

Report of a known or potential fire involving a commercial type structure, including:

- Multi-family dwellings (apartment buildings, condos, buildings housing over three or more families)
- Industrial buildings
- Hospitals
- Strip malls and shopping malls
- Schools or educational facilities
- Warehouse or storage facilities
- Public gathering locations (such as night clubs, restaurants, theaters, etc.)
- Multiple buildings involved
- Commercial boat/ship or multiple private watercraft (dock involvement or potential), single private watercraft fire with no dock involvement or potential for exposure to other watercraft or docks, piers or pilings. NOTE – A boat out of the water on a trailer should be dispatched as a FS.
- Train involving multiple railroad cars or a single car with cargo
- Any large building not identified as a single family dwelling or duplex.

It is recommended that all agencies establish 4 alarm levels for this incident type code.

FIRE (Fire Call)**(Dispatcher must balance the response)**

Used for processing any type of fire call taken **by non-certified call takers due to extraordinary circumstances when certified dispatch personnel are not available.** May also be utilized by police dispatchers requesting a fire response for law enforcement units in the field.

FFB (Fire – Ferry Boat)

A confirmed or reported fire aboard a Washington State Ferry.

FI (Fire Investigation)

Used when an investigation into a cause of a fire is needed.

FR (Fire- Residential)

Reports of a known or a potential fire involving a single family residence, duplex type dwelling, detached structure (garage) or any type of fire with exposure to the dwelling. Dwellings that are reported as housing three families or more shall be considered as a commercial type response. Multiple involved residential structures shall be dispatched as an FC response. *It is recommended that all agencies establish 4 alarm levels for this incident type code.*

FS (Fire-Single)

A response that requires only a single engine that is reported as small in nature and does not have an immediate potential for rapid spread or significant exposure hazard. If in doubt of the severity, or if subsequent information is received, the incident should be upgraded. Examples of single engine response:

- A small single shed or out building with no life hazard or exposure hazard.

- Any structure that was on fire reported as out and/or any item inside the structure as reported out such as a chair or mattress. 1st party caller only.
- Appliances-burned food in oven, overheated frying pan, clothes smoking or burning in clothes dryer with no flames extending outside appliance.
- Electrical problems-no flames or excessive smoke and/or heat.
- Vehicle fires-in open area with no exposure hazard.
- Single railroad car-empty, minor in nature with no exposure.
- Grass or shrub fires-small in size without immediate potential of rapid spread or exposure hazard.
- Collection boxes, dumpsters, mailboxes with no exposure hazard.
- Chimney Fires – Walls are not hot and no extension inside the residence.
- Small spills (5 gal or less) of hydrocarbons outside a residence or business.

FSN (Fire-Single Non code)

A response that requires only a single engine that should not be diverted to another call. This differs from a serviced call in which the unit may be diverted to a more serious call. This call type8 does not have the time critical factor such as a fire in progress or an injury.

- A person or persons stuck in an elevator no known injury, illness or immediate danger.
- Fires reported as out and not inside a structure such as vehicle fire reported as out, or a mattress outside the structure reported as out.
- Smoldering beauty bark with no flames visible and no immediate exposure

FTU (Fire – Type Unknown)

Any report of a fire where the reporting party can not determine what is on fire or 2nd or 3rd party reports without identifying information.

GLI (Gas leak inside a structure)

Used when a report of a smell of natural gas or propane is reported inside of a structure. No fire is visible or known to be occurring. Note: If the gas cannot be identified as natural gas or propane dispatch a HZ response.

GLO (Gas leak outside)

Used for response to a reported natural gas or propane leak outside or a structure. Use appropriate fire response for gas that has ignited i.e. residential fire response or commercial fire response depending on distance from a structure. Note: If the gas cannot be identified as natural gas or propane dispatch a HZ response.

HZ (HAZMAT Response) – 1st Alarm

Used for response to small quantity spills of known or possible hazardous substances. No reaction or immediate threat to persons, property or the environment. Also used for the smell of an unidentified gas or known gas (not natural or propane i.e. ammonia, chlorine) inside a residence or business.

(2nd Alarm)

Used for responses that have potential or known threat to persons, property or the environment. Usually shall dispatch HAZMAT unit(s) from within zone only.

(3rd Alarm)

A hazardous materials response that includes all county available hazardous materials units from each zone. Usually incident commander initiated. The dispatcher may initiate this response only in circumstance that are known high risk to persons, property or the environment.

(4th Alarm)

This alarm level shall call all off duty Sno. Co. Hazmat Technicians by pager. An incident commander request for all county on and off duty HAZMAT personnel to respond to an incident.

MAA (Mutual Aid ALS)

A request from an agency for a paramedic or ALS response. Usually outside the dispatch agency or across dispatch control units. (Advance Life Support)

MAB (Mutual Aid BLS)

A request from an agency for a BLS response. (Basic Life Support)

MAF (Mutual Aid Fire)

A request from an agency for a fire type apparatus. Usually used outside the dispatch agency or across dispatch control units.

MAH (Mutual Aid HAZMAT)

A request from an agency for a HAZMAT response. Usually used outside the dispatch agency or across dispatch control units.

MAR (Mutual Aid Rescue)

A request from an agency for a rescue response. Usually used outside the dispatch agency or across dispatch control units.

MCI (Mass Casualty Incident – 1st Alarm)

Incident where the number of victims is determined to be beyond the capabilities of the first alarm assigned to that type of incident or for dispatching purposes any reported incident where 5-10 patients are involved.

(2nd Alarm) Used where 11 to 19 patients are involved. Field units will request a 2nd alarm dispatch when applicable; however dispatchers should automatically balance calls to a 2nd alarm level when caller(s) indicate this many patients are likely.

(3rd Alarm) Used where 20 to 29 patients are involved. Field units will balance calls to a 3rd alarm level when applicable; however dispatchers should automatically balance calls to a 3rd alarm level when caller(s) indicate this many patients are likely.

(4th Alarm) Used where more than 30 patients are involved. Field units will balance calls to a 4th alarm level when applicable; however dispatchers should automatically balance calls to a 4th alarm level when caller(s) indicate this many patients are likely.

MED (Medic Response/ALS)

Advanced Life Support. All medical incidents using the CBD dispatching guide may or will require paramedic type skills i.e. drug therapy, intravenous fluid therapy, defibrillation, and airway management.

MEDX (Medic Upgraded Response)

Advanced life support paramedic response requiring specific or additional designated resources. Criteria for the upgraded response include: CPR and major trauma.

MISC (Miscellaneous call)

Used to inform fire department personnel of pertinent information, including notifications from public works or utilities regarding street closures or hydrants out of service, or reports from alarm companies advising of fire alarms off line or out of service.

MU (Move – Up)

Notification of a units change of staffing/response coverage location outside its first in response area. (Example – Engine 21 moves – up to Station 15 for a class and is now in service at Station 15's area for calls and not Station 21 area.

MVC (Motor Vehicle Collision – Code Response)

Traffic Collisions meeting CBD Criteria for unknown injuries or meeting CBD Red response guidelines.

MVCE (Motor Vehicle Collision – Entrapment)

Traffic Collisions with severe injuries requiring specialized extrication equipment. Agencies may consider using alarm levels with this incident type code. A balance to an MCI incident should be considered when patient numbers exceed resources. Field personnel will need to be clear in their request of additional alarms within this type code or changing type code and balancing alarm levels. Other examples of incidents that would use this type code are entrapment due to a automobile or trailer, RV, farm equipment, machinery, etc... that has caused entrapment. I.e. a person working under a car and his has fallen on him, a person working with farm equipment and has become entrapped in a excavator etc... These type of entrapments will often require the same personnel and equipment and should be coded to this type.

MVCF (Motor Vehicle Collision – Fire)

Traffic Collisions where the reporting party advises fire exists. This response also includes a medic level response in addition to other resources sent to a serious traffic collision. Agencies should consider using alarm levels with this incident type code. A balance to an MCI incident should be considered when patient numbers exceed resources. Field personnel will need to be clear in their request of additional alarms within this type code or changing type code and balancing alarm levels.

MVCM (Motor Vehicle Collision - Medic)

Severe traffic collision requiring medic skills using the CBD dispatching criteria. Agencies should consider using alarm levels with this incident type code. A balance to an MCI incident should be considered when patient numbers exceed resources. Field personnel will need to be clear in their request of additional alarms within this type code or changing type code and balancing alarm levels.

MVCN (Motor Vehicle Collision – Non-Code)

Traffic Collisions meeting CBD Criteria meeting CBD Yellow response guidelines.

MVCP (Motor Vehicle Collision – Pedestrian/Bicycle)

Traffic Collisions with severe injury involving pedestrian or bicycle with no entrapment requiring specific or additional designated resources.

NOTICP (A Priority notice to the department)

Notifications to fire department of a situation that is potentially serious in nature. Such notices may be set by the agency to go out over alpha pagers and/or sent to apparatus MDC terminals. Sensitive information shall not be broadcasted over the radio; a broadcast will be made to have the specific unit (supervisory person) call dispatch to receive the information. These should include:

- Predicted or sudden occurrence of weather events such as red flag warnings or sudden high wind warnings or flood warnings.
- Predicted dam failures.
- Bomb threats where fire has not yet been requested to respond.
- Civil unrest or terrorism potential that is occurring or expected to occur.
- Police activity that has a high potential for immediate fire or EMS response

NOTICE (Non priority Notice to the department)

Notifications to fire department of a situation that may require a response in the future or advisement of information that does not require an immediate fire department response. Sensitive information shall not be broadcasted over the radio; a broadcast will be made to have the specific unit (supervisory person) call dispatch to receive the information. Examples

- Hydrant out of service

- Fire alarm system change in status
- Road or travel information
- Hospital EMS transport status

SC (Service-Call)

Non emergency requests for service that require fire department assistance that do not have any potential for medical, rescue, fire or hazmat. **If in any doubt the call should be upgraded to a higher level of response.** Examples include:

- Illegal burning complaints without immediate potential of spreading or exposure.
- Water problems causing damage inside a structure.
- Odor investigations wherein the caller is sure that no emergency exists.
- Law Enforcement requests for non-emergency assistance, such as laddering a building.

All service responses shall be comprised of jurisdictional units only, If a jurisdictional unit is not available the "Service" call shall be held until a unit becomes available. Advise the Jurisdictional Battalion Chief or Duty Officer of a holding call.

**NOTE: This following Technical Rescue codes may involve the Snohomish County Technical Rescue resources. Each jurisdiction shall determine the first level of response by using the Alarm levels. The 1st Alarm level shall indicate the initial response if the jurisdiction chooses to have a response level pre activation of county team resources. If a jurisdiction chooses they may bypass the first alarm and request a Tech Response which will dispatch the available technical resources within the zone. The 3rd alarm level shall request a County Technical Rescue team response which shall send all Technical Resources from all three county zones. The 4th alarm level shall send all on duty and off duty technical rescue personnel from all three zones of the county.*

TRA (Technical Rescue High/Low Angle)

Rescues requiring life lines and rescue hardware for persons trapped in high angle (40 to 90 degrees) situations which do not offer safe and reasonable foot-hold and low angle (0 to 40) situations which offer good foothold but require the same rescue equipment. See * Note.

TRC (Technical Rescue Confined Space)

A rescue involving a person(s) who have entered a space that is large enough to get into but has limited or restricted means of escape. I.e. storage tanks, silos, ventilation and exhaust ducts, storm drains, sewers, furnaces, boilers, storage compartments and crawl spaces. See * Note.

TRS (Technical Rescue Structure)

All reports of structural collapse. Examples of structural collapse would include person(s) trapped after a collapse of a residential or commercial buildings, fallen construction of a building, bridge collapse and scaffolding failure of a stadium. See * Note.

TRT (Technical Rescue Trench)

A rescue that involves a person(s) who is trapped in a narrow excavation below the ground surface. In general, the depth is greater than the width, but the width is not greater than 15 ft. i.e. trenches dug by utility companies for electrical, water and gas services. See * Note.

Note: The Water Rescue codes do not send county resources as the previous codes. Each jurisdiction shall determine its response which may or may not include multiple jurisdictions.

TRWR (Technical Rescue Water – River/Swift)

Emergencies involving victims who are unable to get to safety while **in** swift water. I.e. river, stream, rain swollen drainage ditches, any fast moving water. May also require response from Search and Rescue and/or the Dive Team.

TRWS (Technical Rescue Water - Surface)

Emergencies involving victims who are unable to get to safety while **in** the water or **on** a frozen body of water. I.e. boating, rafting, swimming, skating accidents. Not used for accidents in swimming pools or small backyard ponds. May also require response from Search and Rescue and/or the Dive Team.

BLST (zone) (BLS Strike Team)

A request from an agency for five of a single BLS Units that has common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident

ENST (zone) (Engine Strike Team)

A request from an agency for five of a single Engine Units that has common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

LAST (zone) (Ladder Strike Team)

A request from an agency for five of a single Ladder Units that has common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

PST (zone) (Personnel Strike Team)

A request from an agency for 10-12 personnel a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

TST (zone) (Tender Strike Team)

A request from an agency for five of a single Tender Units that has common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

WST (zone) (Wildland Strike Team)

A request from an agency for five of a single Wildland Engine Units that has common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

EMTF (zone) (EMS Task Force) [(1)Team Leader,(1)ALS Unit, (3)BLS units and (1) Auto Rescue

A group or combination of single (unlike) resources that have common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

ITF (zone) (Interface Task Force)[(1)Team Leader, (2)Type 1 Engines, (2) Type 6 Engines, (1) Tender]

A group or combination of single (unlike) resources that have common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

LTF (zone) (Ladder Task Force) [(1)Team Leader,(3) Type 1 Engines, (2) Aerial Ladders.

A group or combination of single (unlike) resources that have common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

RTF (zone) (Rural Task Force) [(1)Team leader, (3) Engines, (2) Tenders]

A group or combination of single (unlike) resources that have common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

UTF (zone) (Urban Task Force) [(1)Team Leader, (3) Engines, (1) Ladder, (1) BLS unit]

A group or combination of single (unlike) resources that have common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

WTF (*zone*) (Wildland Task Force) [(1) Team Leader, (3) Type 6 Engines, 2 Tenders]

A group or combination of single (unlike) resources that have common communications, a Team Leader and that can be formed on or off an incident.

WHC (Wildland Hand Crew) [10 Personnel wildland firefighters with minimum NWCG training equivalent to Type 2 FF]

A request for personnel with the tools and training to combat wildland fires.