

# POLICY : STANDING ORDERS FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION CENTRE

Item PS 77-2002  
MC 5.12.2002

STANDING ORDERS FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND  
COMMUNICATION CENTRES' PERSONNEL WORKING IN THE CALL-  
TAKING AND DISPATCHING CENTRES

## RESOLVED:

1. **That** the contents of the report regarding the standing orders for disaster management and communication centres' personnel working in the call-taking and dispatching centres, **BE NOTED**.
2. **That** the standing orders for disaster management and communication centres' personnel working in the call-taking and dispatching centres attached as **Annexure "A"** to the report, **BE APPROVED**.
3. **That** the report **BE REFERRED** to the Local Labour Forum for deliberation.
4. **That** it **BE NOTED** that the standing orders **WILL BE AMENDED** from time to time.

# STANDING ORDERS FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION CENTRES PERSONNEL WORKING IN THE CALL-TAKING AND DISPATCHING CENTRES

## 1. PURPOSE

Policies, Procedures and Standing Orders are aimed at standardization and are intended to inform members of the above-mentioned department what is expected of them and how they should carry out their various functions in order that departmental goals and objectives may be realised.

## 2. POLICY

The departmental employees shall at all times conduct themselves in an exemplary manner in furtherance of the department's mission of providing a professional service in all communications centres.

## 3. THE ORDER

3.1 Standing Orders of the Emergency Services and Metropolitan Police Department shall apply, in the event of employees from these Divisions, performing any light-duty in the Communications Centre: with the provision that where there is a conflict in the above-mentioned standing orders, these standing orders will apply.

3.2 Members shall comply with those procedures contained in operating manuals issued by the department and any deviation may be construed as a transgression and render the transgressor liable to disciplinary action.

3.3 The standing order manual is aimed at complimenting the Conditions of Employment.

3.4 Use of masculine gender (he or his) shall also include the female gender (she or her).

### 3.5 MANDATORY AND PERMISSIVE VERBS

3.5.1 "shall" "will" and "must" are mandatory conditions and where used means that the conditions referred to have to be complied with.

3.5.2 "should" is a recommended action, except to the extent that if any deviation of conduct there from occurs. Such deviation must be based on facts clearly justifying the deviation.

3.5.3 "may" is a permissive condition, which is optional.

### 3.6 DEFINITIONS

3.6.1 "emergency telephone lines"

3.6.2 "duty manager"

## 4. DUTIES OF CONTROL ROOM OPERATORS

### 4.1 OPERATORS / PART-TIME OPERATORS

- 4.1.1 An operator is an employee who works in the communications centre and who receives, via various communication media, municipal service related calls, then dispatches only non-emergency services as well as handles any municipal related enquiries.
- 4.1.2 The operator is responsible for handling any radio, telephone or other communication media for which he / she has been trained.
- 4.1.3 The operator shall report directly to the Supervisor in charge of the shift.
- 4.1.4 The operator shall deal with any service complaint (for which training has been received) and shall capture the call details as per the standards, which are in operation at the time on the relevant communications system.

### 4.2 107/112 OPERATORS

- 4.2.1 The 107 operator is responsible for the taking of emergency calls.
- 4.2.2 The 107 operator shall take emergency calls in accordance with training received and the approved standard operating procedures (SOP's).
- 4.2.3 The 107 operator shall quickly assess the situation at hand and notify the Supervisor of any matter/incident, which the operator requires additional assistance with.
- 4.2.4 All the details of calls shall be entered on the computer provided in the prescribed manner.
- 4.2.5 Services required for call action should be notified in the prescribed manner.

### 4.3 SUPERVISOR

- 4.3.1 The supervisor is the responsible employee for the Communications Centre during the shift he / she works
- 4.3.2 The supervisor is responsible for the supervision, organization and coordination of the employees on his / her shift..
- 4.3.3 The co-ordination of any situation shall be the responsibility of the supervisor and shall include the effective and efficient utilization of resources to control, prevent and manage any situation, which is reported to the Communications Centre.
- 4.3.4 In the event that the supervisor is unable to handle any situation, he / she shall contact the Manager of the Communications Centre for guidance.
- 4.3.5 The supervisor, on duty, shall ensure that all significant situations are reported to the Manager of the Communications Centre immediately.
- 4.3.6 The supervisor shall perform a public relations function as he / she must liaise with the public, emergency services and other organisations due to their enquiries and problems experienced.
- 4.3.7 The supervisor shall complete the shift report at the end of each shift in the prescribed manner and any other reports required by the Manager of the Communications Centre.

- 4.3.8 The supervisor shall ensure that training of employees under his direct supervision shall take place and that such training does not interfere with the normal functioning of the Communications Centre.
- 4.3.9 The supervisor shall ensure that disaster and emergency plans and procedures are implemented should a disaster situation, which has been reported to the Communications Centre, arise.
- 4.3.10 The supervisor shall activate, in the prescribed manner all senior personnel in the event of a disaster or when disaster is imminent or in the event of major incidents as prescribed in legislation from time to time.
- 4.3.11 The supervisor shall supervise all components and systems of the Communications Centre.
- 4.3.12 He / she shall ensure that all systems are functional and liaise with technical and maintenance support agencies in the event of system failures and malfunctions, within the prescribed parameters.
- 4.3.13 The supervisor shall update and record particulars of all resources in the Directorate, Council departments and external agencies which may be required during any emergency, disaster situation handled / to be handled by the Communications Centre.
- 4.3.14 The supervisor shall investigate and prepare transcripts regarding complaints affecting the Communications Centre; its systems and operators
- 4.3.15 The supervisor shall report directly to his / her immediate supervisor on all matters related to the Communications Centre.

## **5. CONDUCT**

- 5.1 All employees shall at all times conduct themselves in a professional, friendly, helpful manner to the public, colleagues, clients and any other person(s) or organizations to whom they may provide a service.
- 5.2 Employees shall ensure that the work environment is conducive to working under stressful situations by bringing to the attention of their immediate supervisor, in writing, any proposals in this regard.

## **6. WORK AREA**

- 6.1 The Communications Centre / 107 Centre shall at all times be kept free of any unauthorized / illegal substances, e.g. foodstuffs, papers, pens, cellular telephones, alcohol, etc.
- 6.2 No eating, drinking or smoking shall be allowed in the Communications Centre.
- 6.3 Operators shall report any damage or defaults of any equipment in the control room to their supervisor immediately.
- 6.4 No operator is allowed to adjust the air conditioner without supervisor approval; if the majority of the operators in the control room are in agreement that the current temperature is unfavourable, a request to alter the temperature should be made to the supervisor.
- 6.5 No operators are allowed behind the consoles.

- 6.6 No- adjusting of lights in control room is allowed without supervisor approval. If the majority of the operators in control room are in agreement that the current illumination is unfavourable, a request to alter the lights setting should be made to the supervisor.
- 6.7 No breaking, damaging or misuse of any equipment will be tolerated. (e.g. scratching with pen on tops, chairs and keyboards or misuse of headsets)
- 6.8 No operator is allowed to sit on, or put their feet on consoles.
- 6.9 Sharp or heavy objects shall not be placed on a console.
- 6.10 No operator will tamper with chair mechanisms except in adjusting for own use.
- 6.11 No recreational reading by operators at their workstations shall be allowed.
- 6.12 No cellular phones are allowed in the control room except those of duty authorised personnel.
- 6.13 The emergency telephone lines are to be used solely for the receiving of emergency calls.
- 6.14 No private calls are to be made or received on the emergency telephone lines, visitors or Communication Centre operators.
- 6.15 No private phone calls may be made from, or received, in the control room. The supervisor may in extreme emergency cases grant permission to make I receive necessary calls
- 6.16 Communication in the control room shall be done in an orderly fashion (no shouting).
- 6.17 No operator will enter into an argument or open confrontation with colleagues during a shift, if there are any problems consultation with the supervisor is required. Proper procedures for dealing with arguments and grievances between employees are set within the conditions of service.
- 6.18 No operator is allowed to tamper with the Fire Protection System control panel or fire extinguisher equipment; any alarms or defaults must be reported to the supervisor without delay.
- 6.19 No operator will remove any keys from the Cabinet in the Equipment Room.
- 6.20 Operators will be issued with 1 Manual, 1 Headset, set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), 1 set of House rules which they will be required to sign for.
- 6.21 If operators are in doubt of the operation of any equipment, they shall consult their supervisor.
- 6.22 No sleeping is allowed in the control room.

## **7. RECREATION AREA**

- 7.1 All personnel to report any malfunctions, breakages and misuse of any equipment in recreation area to the supervisor immediately.
- 7.2 All personnel are to adhere to house rules for the relevant Centre, regarding the kitchen and recreation area.

## **8. LOCKERS:**

- 8.1 Lockers must be kept clean and tidy.
- 8.2 No perishables may be left in the locker when off duty.

- 8.3 No pot plants or wet clothes must be left in the lockers.
- 8.4 All lockers will be identified With the operator's name and numbered.
- &5 Operators will keep one key and the other will be locked away under the control of the Centre Manager / Supervisor or delegate.
- 8 6 Lockers should be locked at all times
- 8.7 No sharing of lockers will be allowed.
- 8.8 No person will open or remove anything from the cupboards allocated to cleaners except when instructed by the Centre Manager / Supervisor
- 8.9 No person will use anything that doesn't belong to him or her, or that they don't have permission to use.

## **9. OFFICES**

- 9.1 The offices shall always be kept neat and tidy.
- 9.2 The store room, Administrative Office, Reception Area, Systems Administrator and Manager's Office are out of bounds for all operators, except with permission.
- 9.3 No operator will be allowed outside the Communications Centre, unless he/she is called there for a meeting or any other purpose.
- 9.4 The receptionist's workstation is off limits to all unauthorised personnel and no items may be moved or removed from this workstation.
- 9.5 The telephone and facsimile facilities may only be used with prior permission of the Centre Manager or Supervisor.

## **10. CLOTHING**

- 10.1 Communications Centre staff shall not wear clothing which causes static.
- 10.2 All Communications Centre staff shall wear the type of clothing as agreed upon, in an acceptable manner.

## **11. EQUIPMENT ROOM**

- 11.1 The Equipment Room shall be out of bounds to all unauthorised persons.
- 11.2 Management / contractors shall be the only persons to enter the Equipment Room to complete such tasks as they have been instructed to.
- 11.3 The Supervisors shall ensure that the equipment room is at all times locked and shall only allow approved persons into the equipment room to affect repairs or maintenance.
- 11.4 The Supervisors shall ensue that the temperature in the Equipment room shall be maintained between 16 and 20 degrees Celsius.

## **12 BATHROOMS**

- 12.1 Occupational Health and Safety regulations regarding the use and hygiene of bathrooms are to apply at all times

12.2 Operators are only allowed to shower during their lunch hour, or before and after shifts, if a facility exists.

12.3 The disabled bathroom may only be used if the other bathroom is occupied.

### **13. WORKING HOURS**

13.1 The working hours shall be those negotiated by the Council

13.2 No employee shall without management's approval end a shift earlier than is required.

### **14. VISITORS**

14.1 All visitors shall be treated with respect.

14.2 No unauthorized visits from anyone shall be allowed without the express authority of the Centre Manager.

In the event that the above person is not available, the Supervisor in charge shall be authorized to permit visitors.

14.4 Visitors shall be accommodated only in the Reception or Recreation areas.

14.5 All visitors' names to be entered in the Visitors Register.

### **15. COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES (TELEPHONE AND RADIO)**

15.1 All complaints /enquiries shall be dealt with in a professional manner.

15.2 All complaints I enquiries shall be dealt with within the prescribed time limits and in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures.

15.3 All procedures shall comply with those agreed upon with the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Police Department, Emergency Services, South African Police Services and the South African Defence Force as contained in their standing orders.

15.4 Call out times must be correctly logged on the call-taking software.

15.5 Any emergency not falling within the Council boundaries will be immediately reported to the Centre Manager / Supervisor and relevant discipline head and logged on the call-taking software.

### **16. DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

In the event of a natural or human-made disaster, the Supervisor shall immediately take charge of the Communications 1107 Centre and execute such procedures, SOP's, which have been provided by the Head of the Division until the arrival of a Disaster Management official

### **17. GENERAL**

17.1 No information shall be furnished to any member of the public or a public institution without the permission of the Executive Director: Public Safety.

17.2 Private telephone numbers or any other details, of 'persons listed on any database shall not be supplied to any person or institution that is not approved.

- 17.3 All Communications /107 Centre staff shall obey any reasonable instruction within the scope of the authority, pertaining to operations in the Centre, given by a superior.
- 17.4 In the event of a Communications / 107 Centre staff member being unfit or late for duty, he/she shall notify his/her immediate supervisor at least one hour prior to commencement of his/her shift where physically possible.
- 17.5 Each Communications Centre staff member shall in writing bring to the attention of the Executive Director: Public Safety and the Manager of the Communication Centre any changes in home address, home telephone number or qualifications obtained.
- 17.6 No staff member shall be negligent or indolent in the execution of his/her duties.
- 17.7 No employee shall commit corruption or accept a bribe for any reason whatsoever. and all gifts must be declared.
- 17.8 No staff member shall misuse, wilfully or negligently endanger or damage Council's property or use it or cause it to be used in an improper or unauthorized manner.
- 17.9 Statements to the media shall not be made under any circumstances. Only the Executive Director Public Safety or his designate will make an opinion statement to the press or media. The Head: Disaster Management Centre or his designate shall make statements in connection with any event when authorized to do so by the Executive Director or when performing duties as the Deputy Head: Disaster Management in terms of the relevant legislation.
- 17.10 No employee(s) shall gossip maliciously about other employee(s), and/or discredit, and/or treat any employee in a disrespectful manner.
- 17.11 Any meritorious or conscientious conduct during difficult situations, that prevent the loss of human life, accidents, etc. or any other exceptional service rendered, shall be brought to the attention of the Head: Disaster Management Centre by the concerned supervisor in a written report.
- 17.12 No private work or tasks shall be allowed during shifts, unless prior permission has been obtained from the Head : Disaster Management Centre.
- 17.13 Each employee shall ensure that he/she complies with the proviso of all departmental circulars as distributed by the Executive Director: Public Safety or his authorised delegate.
- 17.14 No staff member shall wilfully contravene or fail to comply with any provision of these standing orders
- 17.15 All operators shall sign a confidentiality certificate i.r.o. any information to which they have access.
- 17.16 Failure to comply with the confidentiality certificate shall be regarded as an extremely serious offence.
- 17.17 Each operator shall attend any course or training session which may be required from time to time, which enhances the skills or capacity of the operator to fulfil his/her task, as and when necessary.
- 17.18 No employee may provide unauthorized or preferential information to any private institution such as vehicle recovery services and ambulances.
- 17.19 No drugs or pornography is allowed on the premises.
- 17.20 No off-duty personnel are allowed in the control room, or will interfere with on-duty personnel.
- 17.21 All personnel are expected to adhere to personal hygiene at all times.

- 17.22 No firearms or traditional weapon or any other weapon whatsoever will be allowed within the control centre.
- 17.23 Firearms will be locked in the safe by the supervisor for the period that personnel are on duty.
- 17.24 All personnel will display their ID cards at all times.
- 17.25 Only approved Radio Procedures will be used at all times.
- 17.26 All communication devices will be answered in a professional manner and with the necessary identification.
- 17.27 In case of any doubt concerning any call, the duty manager on duty will be contacted, irrespective of the time of day.
- 17.28 All occurrences/incidents will be logged on the call-taking program.
- 17.29 All enquiries will be logged on the call-taking program
- 17.30 All cancellations of services to be performed by a department are to be confirmed and recorded on the appropriate software.
- 17.31 Upon receipt of an emergency call, the despatch system will be activated immediately. Thereafter the emergency call will be handed over to the relevant department
- 17.32 Control room duties will only be altered with the necessary permission obtained from the supervisor.
- 17.33 All unfinished duties are to be handed over and such duties are the responsibility of the new control room operator. All transfers will be written in the Transfer Book and the Occurrence Book if it is for the next day.
- 17.34 Only control room operators on duty or operators preparing to commence duty are allowed in the control room, unless additional personnel have been detailed to assist by the senior controller on duty.
- 17.35 No person/persons are allowed to enter the premises without prior identification and permission by the supervisor.
- 17.36 Personnel shall at all times ensure that the TV and FM radio will not interfere with any telephone calls or radio communications.
- 17.37 The control room doors are to remain closed at all times.
- 17.38 All private telephone calls must be noted in the telephone logbook.
- 17.39 The calling of private service providers must be authorised by the supervisor and logged on the system database as per the service provider duty roster or as per operational procedures.
- 17.40 All cellular phone calls to be authorised by the supervisor.
- 17.41 Under no circumstances will an operator be allowed to "log on" on a different user name other than allocated.
- 17.42 The Smoking Policy of Council shall be adhered to
- 17.43 Policies, rules and regulations on Alcoholic beverages, Firearms, Dangerous Weapons, Pets, and Occupational Health and Safety shall be adhered to at all times.

**Standing Orders are subject to change without any reserve of prejudice.**