

SOG 06: DRT- Tactical Call Sign Use

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Emergency communications use tactical call signs exclusively to call other stations.

You don't contact another station on an emergency net by using their amateur call sign, because if you have a reason to call them on the net, they have either a DESIGNATOR (if a mobile station) or a LOCATION (if a fixed station) and a FUNCTION!

Maintaining Logs and Status Boards: Field Team Leaders use either STATUS.doc or ICS Form 214 to track personnel assignments, locations and tactical call signs. Individual operators use either OPLOG.doc or ICS Form 214a to identify themselves on the station log. Each duty rotation, such as the operator and logger swapping duties within an operational period, as well as take over by a relief team at the end of an operational period, must also be recorded.

Fixed station tactical calls are indicative of a GEOGRAPHIC NAME and FUNCTION. The Incident Command Post for a search operation in the Fort Valley is "Fort Valley Base."

Mobile station tactical calls are easily distinguished from fixed stations by their FUNCTION, followed by use of a unique DESIGNATOR (alpha or numeric) such as. "SUPPLY ONE. "

The tactical call sign "COMMAND" is reserved for the senior public safety official in charge of the incident, i.e. the incident commander. The only time a RACES operator uses "Command" in their tactical call is when speaking for, by the authority of, and under the direct, real-time supervision of the IC, in immediate hearing range and physical proximity.

If operating a served agency radio which is on a non-amateur frequency, you'll also end transmissions with a tactical call sign.

Whenever using an amateur frequency, append your full FCC call sign to the end of your last transmission (or every ten minutes if NCS) and let the other station end with his/hers.

To contact another station always state the called station first, followed by the prowords "this is", then your station name. Here are some examples:

Calling a station:

"Team 2, this is SAR Base"
"Fair Oaks Command, this is Brush 21"

The correct response is to identify with YOUR call sign, followed by the prowords "go ahead":

"Team 2, go ahead"
"Brush 21, go ahead"

To end a contact, use the term "out" - never "clear".

Here's how it sounds:

"SAR Base out"
"Fair Oaks Command out"
"Operations out, WC4VAC" (if operating on amateur frequencies.)

What if you need to call a specific person at a location? Easy:

"Fairfax EOC, this is Fair Oaks Command with contact for Deputy Chief Jones."

But what if you have a written message to deliver?

Even easier:

“Fairfax EOC, this is Fair Oaks Command with traffic”

(Contrary to what some teach, you don’t identify the recipient of a written message in the call - it will be in the message itself, and there’s no reason to duplicate the information!)

Remember: the only time an amateur call sign is used is when using the amateur frequencies, and then **only** at the termination of a conversation (emergency conversations rarely - if ever - proceed past the FCC’s 10-minute limit for station identification. If for some reason one does, one must of course ID as required.)

VA RACES Specific Call signs:

When activated and on-station the DRT team designator is used as the tactical call of the Field Team Leader. Designators are alpha-numeric using the Operational Area, RACES District, and Team Designator. For instance, the field team leader for the first (or only) team in District Two, (which is in Operational Area “C”) would be designated “Charlie Two Alpha” The field team leader position will usually change with each operational period throughout a lengthy incident, so “Charlie Two Alpha” gives everyone a way to get in touch with the person in charge of a specific team, without having to remember just who that is at any particular time.