



Devon & Cornwall Police

Force Policy & Procedure

Security – Communication Procedures and Status Codes

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Operations Department

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Assistant Chief Constable
Local Policing & Connectivity

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1. Policy Statement [FOIA Open]

- 1.1 This policy details communications via digital technology (Airwave) to operational officers. A standard national language is being implemented to minimise misunderstandings and promote brevity of exchanges. This policy also details the procedure should communication be lost with an individual.

2. Introduction [FOIA Open]

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to give guidance in circumstances where the Force Control Rooms communicate with staff and in circumstances where contact is lost.
- 2.2 This policy should be utilised in conjunction with the principles of 'Task not Ask.' This involves the Force Control Room(s) taking on command of incidents and locating / deploying resources accordingly.
- 2.3 In the application of this policy staff are reminded of the need to comply with the standards and principles of the [Code of Ethics for policing](#).

3. Procedure

3.1 General [FOIA Open]

- 3.1.1 Digital communication via Airwave is encrypted so transmissions via Airwave are secure.
- 3.1.2 Air traffic should be kept to a minimum subject to operational necessity. Under no circumstances will Airwave Terminals (Sepura Handsets) be left unattended or in a situation where transmissions can be overheard. Handsets are issued to individuals who are responsible for their security and ensuring that unauthorised access is not gained to the Airwave network. Handsets should be turned off at the conclusion of a duty period thereby being protected from unauthorised access by the PIN function.
- 3.1.3 Transmission time is at a premium and accuracy, brevity, clarity and discipline are required at all times. Staff will use status code updates (via Airwave) rather than provide verbal updates wherever possible. Lengthy updates for Command and Control Logs will not be given via Airwave; updates should be appended to Crime Complaints where applicable. 'AirwaveSpeak' is a nationally mandated procedure for speech via Airwave and will be used by all officers and staff. Key words and phrases are used (attached at [Appendix A](#)).
- 3.1.4 Using Airwave, the control room has priority when transmitting; the control room has the ability to transmit at any time overriding any other transmission.
- 3.1.5 Radio Supervisors are to ensure radio broadcasts are transmitted at regular booking off times e.g. 1600hrs, 1700hrs, 2200hrs, 0200hrs reminding officers due off duty to book off.

3.2 [FOIA Closed S31(1)(a)]

3.3 Transmissions [FOIA Open]

- 3.3.1 Transmissions will be made in accordance with AirwaveSpeak procedure. When calling the control room or operational police resource, the callsign will initially be spoken twice, for example “Delta Hotel Three One, Delta Hotel Three One from EV” by Control Rooms “EV, EV from XXXX” by Mobile Unit.
- 3.3.2 The words ‘affirmative’ and ‘Roger’ are no longer used. ‘Received’, ‘yes yes’ or ‘no no’ should be used.
- 3.3.3 ‘Authorisation’ for incidents such as pursuits, stinger and firearms is required. To minimise the risk of officers mishearing their authorisation in dual incidents, such as aggravated burglaries (with a weapon), where offenders are making off from the scene in a vehicle, the word ‘authorised’ **must not** be used in isolation but prefixed by the authority that is being given. The units callsign **must** also be included in the transmission, for example ‘Y30 pursuit authorised’ or ‘DH30 Code 83 authorised’.
- 3.3.4 Where resources wish to talk directly with another resource via Airwave, they may do this via a private radio call (PRC/ PTT) PRC should not be used when dealing with Major or Critical incidents or where the operational decision making or integrity of an investigation would be compromised as a result of the call not being recorded.

3.4 [FOIA Closed S31(1)(a)]

3.5 Loss of Communication with Operational Officers [FOIA Open]

- 3.5.1 The procedures detailed below will be instigated in any situation where there is concern for the safety of an on-duty officer or member of staff. This may occur in several ways: firstly, because a member of staff booked on has not made contact with others for an extended period, secondly, because supervisors, dispatchers or colleagues cannot raise them and have concerns for their safety, or thirdly, because they are deployed to high-risk incidents and cannot be readily contacted, in circumstances which give rise to specific concern for their safety.
- 3.5.2 The Automated Personal Location System (APLS) will be used to enhance staff safety.
- 3.5.3 If it is reasonably believed that contact has been lost with a member of staff not having been dispatched to, arrived or allocated to an incident and there is concern for their welfare, an incident log will be created.
- 3.5.4 Control Room staff, under the direction of the Control Room Sergeant, will continue to try and make contact with the member of staff by all available means, that is, Airwave talk group, mobile telephone or land line telephone.
- 3.5.5 Control Room staff will check the position of the staff members Airwave Terminal using APLS technology and XC Mapping system.

- 3.5.6 The relevant Sergeant, or first line supervisor as appropriate, will be informed by the RDO responsible for the area in which the member of staff was last deployed or is showing on APLS. They will be asked if they have any relevant background information or knowledge of relevant tasking. The Supervisor (or in the absence of one the CIM) will be responsible for a risk assessment and decision regarding resourcing. The Control Room Supervisor or Sergeant may direct Resource Deployment Officer to dispatch the first available unit to the last known location of the member of staff to initiate enquiries or commence a search.
- 3.5.7 The CIM for that area (Duty 10) will be informed of the incident by the Control Room Sergeant/ Supervisor and must assume command of the incident.
- 3.5.8 The Force Incident Manager (FIM) will monitor the Control Room action and, in consultation with the CIM (Duty 10), will consider advising the Duty Senior Officer for the relevant function. The Duty Senior Officer should be advised in any event if two hours has elapsed since loss of contact with the member of staff was established.
- 3.5.9 The Force Incident Manager (FIM) will consider advising the Duty NPCC Officer.
- 3.5.10 Once contact made with the member of staff, if contact was not established using Airwave, then checks should be performed within the Control Room to investigate any faults. If a fault is identified, it will be reported to Airwave.
- 3.5.11 The relevant incident log will be closed by the Control Room. It will be the responsibility of the CIM to debrief the member of staff with whom contact had originally been lost.

3.6 Emergency (Code 0) [FOIA Open]

- 3.6.1 To declare an emergency, the officer will press and hold the orange Emergency Button on the Airwave Handset. Emergency button should be used for:
- Fail to stop/runners
 - Immediate risk to public safety
 - Anytime an officer requires urgent assistance
- 3.6.2 The microphone is automatically opened for a period of 7 seconds during which all speech and nearby sounds are transmitted to all users in the talkgroup.
- 3.6.3 If able to do so, the activating user should state who they are, their precise location and the nature of the incident.
- 3.6.4 APLS - The Airwave Handset will send an automatic update via GPS to the control room mapping systems identifying to control room staff the staff member's location.

3.6.5 Control Room staff will deploy resources as required.

4. Assessment Compliance [FOIA Open]

4.1 This policy has been drafted and audited to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act. Equality and diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with Equality legislation and policies. In addition Data Protection, Freedom of Information, Management of Police Information and Health and Safety issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy will therefore ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and internal policies.

5. Review and Ownership [FOIA Open]

5.1 The review of the contents of this policy is the responsibility of Commander, Alliance Operations Department. Review of the policy will be undertaken annually.

Appendix A [FOIA Closed s.31(1)(a)]

Appendix B [FOIA Closed s.31(1)(a)]