

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
CONSOLIDATED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS BUREAU
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Audio Equipment and Recordings		NUMBER: 31
RESCINDS: 515	EFFECTIVE DATE: September 12, 2011	
UP DATED: June 23, 2015		
DISTRIBUTION:	REVIEW DATE: Annually	
STANDARD:		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to provide communications personnel with guidelines covering the use and maintenance of the recording equipment, along with the custody and control of recordings.

The use of the recording equipment is for the purpose of providing instant playback of phone and radio conversations along with maintaining a record of these conversations.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the communications bureau to record all phone and radio traffic coming into, and going out of the communications centers.

III. DEFINITIONS

ECS: Emergency Communications Specialists

ECSS: Emergency Communications Specialist Supervisor

OIT: Office of Information Technology

RCC: Regional Communication Center.

Recording device: Equipment that has been installed in each regional communication center for the purpose of recording telephone and radio conversations.

IV. PROCEDURE

31.1 Installation and Maintenance

31.1.1 Installation

31.1.1.a The acquisition and installation of the recording device shall be at the direction of the Bureau Director in cooperation with the Office of

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Information Technology. Only those devices approved by the Director and OIT may be used by communications personnel.

31.1.2 Maintenance and Repair:

31.1.2.a The supervisor of each RCC or his/her designee will routinely inspect the recording device to assure its continuous operation.

31.1.2.b. The supervisor of each RCC will be responsible for the security of the recorders

31.1.2.c Any repair or periodic servicing that needs to be done to the recording device, will be done by an agent approved for the brand of the recording device, or by OIT technicians

31.2 General Operation

31.2.1 The recording device will only be used to record telephone and radio conversations from within the communications dispatch room. The recording device will be on at all times.

31.2.2 Each ECS reporting for work will be able to listen to the last fifteen (15) minutes of conversation prior to them taking control of a dispatch position. That ECS will be able to listen to any conversation that was recorded during any period of the shift they were dispatching.

31.2.3 If an officer requests a certain phone call be recorded, that call will have to originate from a phone assigned to a dispatch position, or patched through a dispatch position telephone.

31.2.4. Telephones that are distributed throughout the barracks/building will not be recorded. However, a phone call transferred from the dispatch area to another phone may be recorded.

31.2.5 It is a violation of this policy for an Operator to disconnect a recording device from telephones or radios, or to tamper with recording devices.

31.3 Control of recordings

31.3.1 Copies of recordings

31.3.1.a The Supervisor of the RCC will make any copies of recordings that are requested.

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31.3.1.b The Supervisor will ensure that their actions are documented appropriately, and stored on file for a period of six (6) years.

31.3.1.c All audio recordings shall be maintained for six (6) years.

31.4 Discovery

31.4.1 Any law enforcement officer or law enforcement agency requesting a copy of a recording for a criminal investigation will be given a copy. It will then be the officer's responsibility to see that the District Attorney's Office is provided with a copy of the recording. The copy will only contain recorded conversations pertaining to that particular investigation.

31.4.2 If a District Attorney requests a copy of a recording not pertaining to an Officer's investigation, he/she will have to make the request in writing and that written request shall be attached to the supervisor's documentation of the record provided. That copy then becomes the responsibility of the District Attorney's Office.

31.4.3 If any attorney other than the District Attorney's Office, requests a recorded copy as part of discovery for a criminal case, that request will have to be submitted in writing on the Bureau's request form, which will be processed through the Director's Office.

31.4.4 If any attorney requests a recorded copy for any civil case, he/she will have to make the request in writing on the Bureau's request form, which will be processed through the Director's Office.

31.4.5 All requests for E911 calls shall be routed through the Director's Office and the Office of the State Police Staff Attorney for review prior to their release.

31.5 Trial

31.5.1 If a portion of the original recording is needed for trial, and the District Attorney wishes to retain custody, or if the court will retain custody after the recording is entered into evidence, then an inquiry of the District Attorney will be made to determine if a copy of the recording would be sufficient. If so, the Supervisor of the RCC will make arraignments to provide a copy.

31.6 Attorney General's Office

31.6.1 If the Attorney General or a member of his/her office requests a copy of a recording, that copy will be made available. Either the officer investigating

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the case or a member of the Attorney General's office must submit the request on the Bureau's request form, for documentation purposes.

31.7 Internal Affairs:

31.7.1 The Commander of Internal Affairs may request that a copy of a recording. Either the Commander of Internal Affairs or his designee must also submit such request in writing for documentation purposes.

31.8 Training

31.8.1 The Supervisor of an RCC shall review recordings for the purpose of quality control and/or training. All copies of recordings used for this purpose must be authorized by the Director of the Communications Bureau prior to being made.

31.9 Media:

31.9.1 If media personnel requests a copy of a recording, they will have to submit their request in writing to the Director on the Bureau's request form. The Director will review the request to determine if the recording is confidential. If the Director determines that the recording is confidential, the request will be denied.

IV EFFECTIVE DATE

Standard Operating Procedure #31 is effective on this 3rd day of September, 2014.



Cliff Wells
Director
Consolidated Emergency Communications Bureau