7.0   FIRE/RESCUE DISPATCH PROCEDURES

7.0.1   The Emergency Communications Center is the designated center for the dispatching of fire/rescue equipment within Lackawanna County as approved by the Lackawanna County Commissioners.

7.0.2   For all calls requiring fire or rescue response, the PST will determine what type of response is needed. The PST will dispatch according to the Run Cards as outlined in section 7.13.

7.1   Dispatching the Appropriate Fire Company

7.1.2   The ECC will dispatch the Fire Company having jurisdiction over the location of the call. If a question arises as to the proper Fire Company to dispatch, the company closest to the incident (based on the information supplied by the caller) will be dispatched.

7.1.3   All fire companies dispatched through the ECC will be alerted by tone activated pager and/or tone activated house siren.

7.1.4   Having determined the appropriate fire response from the CAD system, the PST will depress the appropriate pre-programmed page button(s) for the identified unit(s). Fire unit designations are delineated in Appendix D.

7.1.5   The proper fire dispatch format is as follows:

Lackawanna County dispatching {Fire unit/station designation} respond. . .
Type of incident (structure, vehicle, etc.).
Location of incident with cross streets when available
Municipality of the incident
Pertinent details of the incident
Time

After releasing the transmit button on the radio console and after a brief pause the PST will repeat the dispatch, but preface it with LACKAWANNA COUNTY REPEATING

7.1.6   In addition, as units respond, the ECC will repeat the location of the incident to each unit. I.e. OK Engine 35 responding 200 Adams Ave time 0000. The PST will then record the status of the unit in the CAD System incident.

7.1.7 **Referred Calls**

7.1.7.1 In the event the ECC receives a fire call handled by another dispatch center, the PST will determine the location and nature and the call will be immediately switched over the tie line, and the PST will remain on the line until the other dispatch center accepts the call.

7.1.7.2 Should the tie line fail or one not exist, the PST will secure the necessary information from the caller and refer the call by the most expedient means available. In this case, the PST will enter into the CAD note pad that the incident was referred to (proper agency) under the Note Pad Type REFR (referred to other agency)

7.1.8 For the purpose of brevity in fire communications, a numbering system has been established. Fire company numbers and fire apparatus numbers will be utilized for all radio traffic.

7.2 Designation Numbers

7.2.1 Fire company designation numbers are delineated in Appendix B In the interest of standardization, all numbers will be assigned by the ECC.
Any variation must be approved by the Director prior to implementation.

7.2.2 Fire Chiefs will be numbered and identified as follows:
The Chief (number of venue in which located) i.e. Chief 35 or if more than one Chief the designation will be Chief 35-2 or 35-B etc.

7.2.3 Fire apparatus will be numbered and identified as follows:
All unit numbers will be assigned by the ECC and will correspond with the Venue number of where the Unit is located. I.e. E35 or R35 etc.
Unit designations will be as follows; **E**- Engine or Pumper, **R**- Rescue, **L**-Ladder or Truck, **T**- Tanker, **SQ** or **S**- Squad, **MP**- Mini Pumper, **BT** or **B** -Brush Vehicle. In venues where more than one of a certain type of unit is in service, a suffix number designation of 1, 2 3, etc will be used to designate the particular unit. I.E., the first unit would be E35, then E351, E352 etc.

7.2.4   Prior to placing a new, previously non-existing unit into service, the Chief Officer of the organization will inform the Director or Deputy Director, in writing, of the type of unit and the in service date, so that a proper radio designation may be assigned. The same procedure will be followed for Officers and/or portables and for MDC ID.

7.3   Radio Procedures

7.3.1   The proper radio procedure for calling and/or responding to the ECC or a field unit is as follows:

To call the ECC: "{Unit number) to Lackawanna"
The ECC will respond: Lackawanna, Go Ahead,, {Unit number}"

The calling field unit may then transmit their message.

7.3.2   A field unit will not call the ECC and immediately transmit their message. The field unit will wait for the call to be acknowledged by the ECC before transmitting its message. Failure to follow this procedure may result in missed messages with dangerous results.

7.3.3   To call a field unit:

ECC: "Lackawanna to {Unit number}"
Field unit: "Go ahead, Lackawanna"

The ECC may then transmit their message.

7.3.4   If an officer or piece of apparatus does not sign on the air within four (4) minutes, of a Dispatch, the ECC will attempt to contact the dispatched units/station via radio. If there is no response, the ECC will re-dispatch the call. If after four (4) additional minutes (8 total) only an Officer is on the air, the ECC will ask the Officer his/her wishes for a re-dispatch. If after eight (8) minutes total no unit (Officer or apparatus) is _responding_, and no one has acknowledged the dispatch, the ECC will re-dispatch the first due companies and also dispatch the companies from the second alarm level based on the information on the run card in the CAD system. After this dispatch, the PST will advise the Shift Supervisor of the situation. Immediately, the Supervisor will function check all ECC equipment related to the dispatch. If all equipment is found to be functioning properly the Supervisor will monitor the situation and attempt to notify by telephone or pager, the Chief or Officer of the first alarm company dispatched. The Police Department on duty for the location (unless PSP venue) of the alarm will also be notified and advised of the situation and requested to check that their siren (if

used) or related equipment is functioning. If the ECC Shift Supervisor has doubt that the ECC equipment may not be functioning properly, he/she may request a neighboring county ECC or other agency that has the capability of dispatching the requested units to do so. The ECC will still continue to attempt to contact the Chief of the Department or other Officer to advise them of the situation.

7.3.5 Use of "ten codes" or any other type of codes is not authorized for use within the fire communications system of Lackawanna County. This is to avoid potential confusion. The Brevity Code in Section 4.6 shall be employed. The use of nicknames, slang and any type of profanity is also strictly forbidden.

7.3.6 The use of alert tones will be limited to making units aware of important traffic about to be transmitted from the ECC and just before broadcasting a message to an officer in charge at times other than during an emergency call.

7.3.7 To avoid congestion on the dispatch frequencies, companies that have the ability to use a fire ground frequency (F2), are to use them as much as possible, especially for non-emergency incidents. The choice to use a fire ground frequency will be made by either the Officer in charge or the ECC. The Officer will advise that he wishes to move his operation to F2, and the ECC will then sound an alert tone and announce for all units to utilize F2. If the ECC wants traffic moved to F2, the PST will contact the Chief in charge and request he move his units to F2. When possible, the Fire Company will try to comply with such a request. If communications are moved to a fire ground frequency, the Incident Commander will be responsible for monitoring the dispatch channel (F1). The ECC does not monitor fire ground channels.

7.3.8 After a call is dispatched, stations that have base radios may sign on the air to take over communications; however, when that base station signs in service, it is responsible for all radio traffic. This includes keeping record of all units responding, all times, and making any phone calls related to the incident. If a local base takes over an incident they should do so on their Fire Ground Frequency so that a conflict does not arise with normal dispatch operations.

7.3.9 Stations should not sign on the air and take over communications when an incident involves a rescue, hazardous material incident, or an incident involving aircraft or one that requires or may require mutual aid dispatch. When a station has signed on the air and the incident requires Mutual Aid, the station at that time will relinquish communications to the ECC for coordination.

7.3.10   Incident information will be provided to one fire station in each municipality by remote CAD printers. Information provided includes: the incident number, the time dispatched, time responded, time on scene, and time back in service and any other pertinent information that may have been transmitted to the ECC and entered into the incident narrative.

In communities having multiple fire stations, the above information should be obtained from the station at which the CAD printer is installed. The individual companies should not call via radio or phone requesting dispatch, on scene times, etc.

7.4   House Sirens

7.4.1   Dispatching of all fire calls will be the same for all companies. The ECC
will sound pager and/or house sirens for all fire calls during the initial dispatch. If a fire company has a tone code assigned to them for a house siren, it will be activated. If a company does not want their siren activated during certain hours, then it will be their responsibility to place a time-out device on their siren decoder. *Dispatches will follow the same procedure at all times for all venues.*

7.5   Command Post

7.5.1   A Command Post or Command Officer should be established for all fire calls. This will enhance the flow of information between field users and the ECC. **All requests from the fire ground will come through the Command Post or Officer.** All communications from the ECC to the fire ground will go to the Command Post or Officer. The Command Post can be either a piece of apparatus or person, just as long as the ECC has a radio unit to address all questions or information. Ideally, the Command designation should be as follows; Command (Venue number in which the incident is located) i.e. Lackawanna to <u>Command 35</u>. If more than one incident is ongoing in the same municipality, the ECC will assign a unique identifier to each Command Officer so that a distinction can be made between the command for each incident. *i.e. 35 Main St. Command*

7.5.2   The first arriving Chief or unit on the fire scene will advise the ECC that he/she is on scene and in command with a location and condition report. The ECC will automatically assign a location identifier if more than one incident is ongoing in that Department's coverage area. The identifier can be anything directly related to the location of the fire, such as the street name, type of building (Barn, Garage, School etc.) a known landmark (Library, Church, School

etc.) or any other title which is appropriate and will be preceded by the Venue number of the incident. (I.e., 35 Route 12 Command) When the fire officer informs the ECC that he/she is "In Command", the ECC will respond with the identifier, naming the location of the incident such as "Meeks Lane Command", the Command Officer will repeat the identifier that the ECC has assigned to that particular incident. The ECC will respond to requests from the command officers only. All communications to the ECC from other than the Command should go through the Command Officer. The Command officer should also give periodic updates to the ECC in regard to the ongoing situation and request entries of that information into the Incident Narrative. The ECC in turn should also advise the Command Officer of the amount of time they have been operating at the incident at approximately 30-minute intervals.

7.6 Brush Fires

7.6.1 Whenever a fire is reported that appears to be a brush fire or poses significant hazard to a large forested area, the PST will report the fire and available related information to the appropriate Forestry District and/or Bureau of Forestry Fire Inspector. This will take place after dispatching the proper Fire Company and receiving an on scene report from the Command Officer.

7.6.2 Requests for Forestry notification may also come from Fire Chiefs in the field.

7.6.3 Using the phone numbers in the Forestry RCF File, make contact in the following order.

1. District Office
2. Assistant District Forester or Designated Supervisor
3. County Communications Center for that Forestry District if out of our coverage area.
4. District Office by radio (if such communications is available)

7.6.4 Time of Forestry notification will be recorded in the narrative of the incident or note that has been entered into the CAD system.

7.6.5 In situations where the fire is large enough to exceed the capabilities of the companies of that general geographic area, the PST will also alert the Lackawanna County Emergency Management Agency who will file a PEIRS Report and respond as necessary.

7.7   **Personal Phone Calls**

7.7.1   The ECC will not make personal telephone calls for fire units/personnel in the field. This will include hook flashing calls for an individual who calls in on Cellular Phone via 911 lines for purposes of bypassing the Cellular air time charge.

7.8   **Personal Paging**

7.8.1   The ECC will not page individual fire fighters, except in extreme emergencies and at the discretion of the ECC Supervisor.

7.9   **Drills/Training Exercises**

7.9.1   The ECC recognizes the need for drills and training exercises in the fire service. The ECC must be notified by the respective fire chief at least 60 minutes in advance of such a drill or training exercise. The ECC encourages fire chiefs to consult with ECC staff well in advance of major training exercises so that the appropriate arrangements may be made in the Communications Center.

7.9.2   The on-duty Communications Supervisor has the right to delay, cancel or refuse to participate in any drill which may adversely impact current Communications Center operations. The Communications Supervisor will document such an incident for the Director.

7.10   **Duty Chief**

7.10.1   Fire companies may establish a separate telephone paging number for a duty chief.

7.10.2   If a fire company implements a duty chief system, the duty chief will be used by the ECC for all questions and chief's calls. A duty chief is to be available at all times with the authority to make decisions for his/her company.

7.11   **Notifications**

7.11.1   The ECC will make notifications to any utility agency, service, or individual at the request of a fire chief or incident commander, as long as the request is pertinent to the incident in progress. Examples include, but are not limited to, utility companies, state agencies, building maintenance and business owners.

7.12   **The Run Card System**

7.12.1   The purpose of the Run Card System is to provide the Communications Center with dispatch procedures and mutual aid response for designated areas and facilities within each jurisdiction served by the Communications Center. It will also establish a standard format and procedure to accurately and quickly process the incident information and determine the necessary mutual aid response. It also relieves the Command Officer of having to remember what additional resources are available to him/her, where they are located, and which individual pieces of equipment he/she wants.

7.12.2   Each Fire and EMS Company utilizing the Lackawanna County Communications Center will be required to utilize the Run Card System for dispatching mutual aid.

7.12.3   **The Run Card**

A Run Card will be completed by each fire department, not the Communications Center. The apparatus reference will be completed as follows:

SAMPLE **RUN CARD FOR STRUCTURE FIRE**

Current Level 01		Response Level 02		Resp. Level 03		Resp. Level 04	
Unit	Action	Unit	Action	Unit	Action	Unit	Action
___ E112	D	___ E101	D	___ R17	D	___ E772	D
___ E113	D	___ E203	M	___ E203	D	___ E911	M
___ R11	D	___ L19	D	___ E772	M	___ E822	S
___ 11-9	D	___ 10-9	D	___ L34	D	___ 19-9	D

(responses are <u>not</u> limited to four units per level)

D indicates dispatch, **M** relocate or move, and **S** standby. If a unit is to relocate, it should also be indicated to which station it should relocate.

A Special Response Narrative **(SRN)** may also be included with the run card to indicate instructions for special units or individuals that should be notified, dispatched, etc.

7.12.4   **Definitions of Incidents**

7.12.4.1   **CHIMNEY FIRE**: See Structure Fire. All chimney fires will be dispatched as a structure fire even if confined to the flue only. The run card information should also be the same as that for a structure fire. Chimney Fire will be indicated as the incident type for tracking and recording purposes.

7.12.4.2   **STRUCTURE FIRE**:   Any fire involving, within, against, or endangering a structure. This will include Taped or Automatic Alarm Systems. Taped Alarms and Activated Alarms reported by Alarm Companies will be treated as real fires and dispatched as Structure Fires but the responding officer/unit will be advised of such so that the response may be adjusted as the officer in charge sees fit. Should the Alarm Company call back prior to dispatch to cancel an activated fire alarm, the incident will still be dispatched, but as an investigation. The Telecommunicator will advise the Commanding officer of the circumstances surrounding the situation.

7.12.4.3   **VEHICLE FIRE**: Any fire involving an automobile, motorcycle, truck or any other type vehicle.

7.12.4.4   **BRUSH FIRE**: Any fire involving vegetation, brush, grass, leaves, or forest fires.

7.12.4.5   **ACCIDENT** (vehicle): Any vehicle crash involving transportation type vehicles with injured persons whether or not there is entrapment.

7.12.4.6   **FIRE**: Miscellaneous fires such as Dumpster, Rubbish. Any fire which may be of an unknown type or a type not classified.

7.12.4.7   **GAS**: Any incident involving a natural gas or LP gas leak. ***This incident type is not to be used for a GASOLINE spill or leak***

7.12.4.8   **CHEMICAL**: Any incident involving a hazardous material leak or spill such as gasoline, oil, other chemical or haz mat etc.

7.12.4.9   **RESCUE**: Any situation requiring rescue other than a vehicle accident

7.12.4.10 **PUMPING**: flooding or other condition requiring pumping or removal of water and/or safety or hazard control due to water

7.12.4.11   **SEARCH:**   Any incident requiring search party involvement

7.12.4.12   **HELICOPTER**: An incident requiring set up of a landing zone for an air ambulance or other type helicopter

7.12.4.13   **FIRE POLICE**: An incident requiring call out of fire police. This run card may be only a listing in an SRN of individuals to be called

7.12.4.14   **UNKNOWN**: An incident in which fire department services are requested for unknown or uncertain reasons.

7.12.4.15   **CARBON MONOXIDE**: Carbon Monoxide alarm activation

7.12.4.16   **INVESTIGATION**: An uncertain situation requiring the fire department to make further investigation before a decision on response can be made. i.e. smell of smoke outside, of unknown origin or situation, alarm cancelled by the Alarm Company etc.. This incident type **WILL NOT BE USED** if there is a report of smoke or smell of smoke in a building or other situation that may indicate that there may be a structure fire.

7.124.17   **BOMB :**   Primarily a police incident type, this Incident Type will be used to determine response to a bomb threat or actual bomb incident for which a *Fire Department response has been requested by Police***.**

7.12.4.18   **DIVE:**   Water rescue/recovery related incidents

7.12.4.19   **WIRE:**   Utility wires, i.e. cable TV, electrical, telephone etc., downed**,** dug up or disturbed from their normal means of installation

7.12.4.20   **AIRPORT:**   ON AIRPORT Aircraft incidents only. OFF AIRPORT incidents will be dispatched as a RESCUE Type incident.

7.13   Run Card System Activation

7.13.1   The PST is authorized to use the Run Card protocols. These protocols replace and supersede any previously established procedures governing fire dispatch.

7.13.2   With the assistance of the Computer Aided Dispatch system, the PST will make a determination, from information received, as to the jurisdiction of the fire. The PST will then dispatch, without delay, the appropriate initial response and any additional mutual aid companies as indicated by the system. *The PST will not alter the response from that indicated on the Run Card unless*

specifically told to do so by the Incident Commander or Officer in charge for the venue/incident.

7.13.3   Response Modification

7.13.3.1   After the initial dispatch, the response may be modified or upgraded **ONLY** by a responding officer or incident commander.

7.13.4   Data Maintenance

7.13.4.1   Individual fire and ambulance services will be responsible for updating and modifying their Run Card data.
The department/service chief officer must submit any additions, deletions or modifications to existing data in writing, a minimum of 15 days prior to their implementation. The 15-day time frame does not apply to a unit(s) temporarily out of service for repair, training, etc.

7.13.4.2   The Director or Deputy Director will make the modification exactly as submitted unless there is a procedural conflict, in which case the change will be returned for re-evaluation.

7.13.5   Annual Review

7.13.5.1   In February of each year, the ECC will distribute copies of the appropriate Run Cards upon written request of the appropriate agency official for review by that agency. After review, any updates will be returned by the companies involved, within the specified time period for entry into the CAD Run Card System.

7.14   Towing

7.14.1   The Communications Center will honor towing requests from Chief Officers only, and the requesting officer must specify the towing agency requested. The fire department assumes all responsibility in requesting a towing agency. The Fire Chief or Command Officer should consult the Police Officer on scene of any vehicle accidents prior to request for towing services, unless the towing service will be directly involved in a rescue situation.

8.0   MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

8.1   Pager and Siren Tests

8.1.1   Tests for pagers and house sirens will be conducted only upon the request of a Chief or Line Officer and only when time and situations permit.

8.1.2   Special Announcements and Units *Out/In Service* notifications will be made at 0800 hours each day. As per FCC Regulations, The Communications Center will NOT make any announcements concerning manpower for bingo, suppers, work details, carnivals, parades or any similar activities. Regularly scheduled meetings will NOT be announced. The Radio Frequency is for emergency and dispatch purposes only and must not be used by individual fire stations for non-emergency announcement purposes as outlined above.

8.1.3   The Communications Supervisor will make the final determination as to the suitability of a requested announcement.

8.1.4   Announcements will be made on the appropriate County frequencies, circumstances permitting.

8.1.5   During times of emergency or heavy traffic, any such test, announcements or notification may be canceled at the discretion of the Communications Supervisor.

8.2   KNOX Box Key Release Procedure

8.2.1   The procedure for releasing a KNOX KEY will be as follows. To Maintain security and control of the keys, this procedure will be followed exactly as written without exception. For purposes of explaining this procedure we will assume that a fire incident has been dispatched and units are responding or are already on scene.

The Officer in charge will call the ECC as follows.

Field Unit: Chief 35 to Lackawanna County

ECC: Lackawanna County Go Ahead Chief 35

Field Unit: This is Chief 35. Jones requesting release of the KNOX Key in Rescue 35

ECC: OK Chief 35, Stand by for release of key in R35

ECC: Transmit KNOX Tones

Field Unit: Chief 35 to Lackawanna County, the key is
        released. I will be making entry at this time

ECC: OK Chief 35 making entry time now (give current time)

Field Unit: (After entry has been made) Chief 35 to Lackawanna
        County

ECC: Lackawanna County, go ahead Chief 35

Field Unit: This is Chief 35 I am placing the KNOX Key into the
        security lock in R35

ECC: OK Chief 35, KNOX Key secured, time now (give current time)

 All of the above will be documented in the narrative of the incident. If
the key is needed at any time other than an incident dispatched by
Lackawanna County, i.e. Box Upgrade or maintenance, the Officer
requesting the key will follow the procedure above and an incident will
be created in CAD for an Investigation (INV), and a narrative kept
recording the release and return of the key and by whom the request
was made. *There will be no exceptions to this procedure.*

8.2.2   **KNOX TONE Transmit Procedure**

- Obtain the correct tone code in the RCF for the vehicle that the
  Officer is requesting.
- Press the orange "**K"** key on the console
- Enter the code
- Press the SIGNAL Key (SIG) on the console
  The tone will be transmitted over the pre-programmed frequency.

8.3   **Fire Frequency *Code Red***

In support of a Fireground *"Mayday"* and subsequent action that may
take place on the scene, a " Code Red " may be called for by the Incident
Commander. In the interest of standardization and Emergency
Responder Safety, MAYDAY will be the term used by all to indicate to
Incident Command, a sudden change to a life-threatening situation has
occurred. To request such priority, the field unit will call the ECC as
follows;
Lackawanna County, this is (Unit ID), requesting Code Red this
Frequency

8.2.1 The ECC will immediately respond to the calling unit, determine the unit's needs and proceed accordingly. If the PST determines that the calling unit does, indeed, have a priority need, the PST may restrict the frequency for all units as follows;

Lackawanna County to All Units this frequency, Unit (Unit ID) has priority on this channel, Repeating, Code Red this Channel, Only units assisting (Unit ID) may transmit. All other units may transmit Emergency Traffic only
Or switch to your fireground frequency for on scene operations.

8.3.2 *All* field units will comply by reducing their radio traffic and giving the requesting unit priority. If a unit not assisting the requestor of the Code Red has "Emergency Traffic" they may transmit, but only after determining that their message will not interfere with that of the Code Red Incident thereby possibly affecting both radio transmissions.

8.3.3 Due to the serious nature of such a request, violations will be noted and reported to the Communications Supervisor who will in turn report the violation to the Director. Any unit transmitting in violation of the Code Red will be politely reminded by the PST and instructed to transmit Emergency Traffic only and to switch to their fireground frequency for on scene operations.

8.3.4 The PST will limit his/her traffic to the Code Red Incident Specific information and necessary dispatches and will also remain monitoring the Code Red Frequency.