

# Fresno Operational Area Emergency Alert Tone

## Standard Operating Guideline

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3.0 **Purpose:** To establish a guideline for use of the Emergency Alert Tone

3.01 **Scope:** All Fire Department Personnel

### **POLICY**

#### 3.02 **Use of the Emergency Alert Tone**

The Emergency Alert Tone is a separate and distinct tone designed to alert on-scene personnel of a potential hazard or other emergency operation. Examples of situations that may prompt the use of the Emergency Alert Tone:

- Down power lines
- Structural instability/collapse
- Entrapment/engulfment hazard
- Chemical release
- Firefighter emergency (Mayday)
- Emergency evacuation

1. The emergency alert tone will be initiated by the Incident Commander based upon reports, recommendations, and evaluations of fire ground personnel.
2. In the event where immediate action is necessary to prevent possible injury, the emergency alert tone may be activated by any personnel who observe the need for such action.
3. Immediately after the Emergency Alert Tone is transmitted, all units on the incident shall discontinue radio transmissions until Command provides a description of the problem. Command may conduct a roll call of each unit or assignment for acknowledgement of information.

#### 3.03 **Emergency Traffic**

“Emergency Traffic” is a term to be broadcast over the radio to get immediate attention of everyone on a given frequency to inform them of firefighter safety issues.

Use of Emergency Traffic shall consist of:

1. A verbal alert by any fire personnel over the assigned tactical or command channels consisting of "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" followed by the reason for the alert, i.e., *"power line down at the Alpha/Delta corner of the structure," "Collapse imminent,"* etc.
2. Upon hearing the verbal alert, all Companies shall discontinue radio traffic.

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3. Command will contact the Dispatch Center and advise them to activate the emergency alert tone.
4. The Dispatch Center will transmit an emergency alert tone over both the command and, if capable, the tactical channels. Command shall then announce the EMERGENCY TRAFFIC situation over the fire-ground channel.
5. The Dispatch Center will provide the information to any incoming apparatus.
6. Command will be responsible for alerting all personnel operating on tactical channels if the Dispatch Center is unable to do so.

At the conclusion of the EMERGENCY TRAFFIC situation, the Incident Commander shall transmit *"ALL CLEAR, RESUME RADIO TRAFFIC"* to notify members that the emergency situation has ended and normal radio Dispatch can resume. This information shall also be relayed to the Dispatch center.

### 3.04 **MAYDAY**

A MAYDAY is specific to a firefighter in distress and in need of immediate assistance. The emergency alert tone will be initiated by the Incident Commander based upon reports, recommendations, and evaluations of fire ground personnel.

(Reference: Operational Area Firefighter Emergency Standard Operating Guideline)

### 3.05 **Emergency Evacuation**

In the event of an emergency evacuation, a standard audible signal consisting of three (3) short blasts, with a pause, from an apparatus air horn will be initiated by Command. This audible signal will have the duration of ten seconds, followed by ten seconds of silence, and repeated until Command cancels the audible signal.

#### **Building Evacuation Signal:**

1. Three blasts of the air horn
2. Pause
3. Three blasts of the air horn
4. Pause
5. Three blasts of the air horn.

This shall be in conjunction with the "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" radio announcement. The apparatus conducting the audible signal shall not be in close proximity to the Command Post, unless unavoidable, thus reducing the chance of missed radio transmissions.

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Upon hearing an evacuation signal, all members shall immediately evacuate to a safe area outside the incident zone. The incident commander shall initiate a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) following the evacuation. Company officers shall immediately verify the status of their companies.

### 3.06 **Weekly Test**

The Emergency Alert Tone will be tested on both repeated channels by the Dispatch Center each week immediately following the weekly pager test. The on-duty Battalion Chief will acknowledge hearing the Emergency Alert Tone at the completion of the test.

### 3.07 **References**

FIRESCOPE ICS 910, 2007  
Operational Area Rapid Intervention Standard Operating Guideline  
Operational Area Emergency Alert Tone Standard Operating Guideline (Dispatch)  
Operational Area Electrical Hazards Standard Operating Guideline  
Command & Control Decision Making at Multiple Alarm Incidents, 2nd 2013 (NFA)