

	Queen Anne's County Fire & EMS Commission Operations Manual	No. 04.04
		Effective Date: December 6, 2012
	Signal 13 Policy	Revised Date: February 3, 2014

I. SCOPE

- A. This policy applies to all Queen Anne's County Volunteer Fire Service Personnel.

II. PURPOSE

- A. This policy establishes a standard procedure for fire service members faced with a life threatening situation to quickly and effectively broadcast the immediate need for law enforcement intervention.

III. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All personnel affiliated with a Queen Anne's County Fire Department will be responsible for making sure that they understand the procedures within this policy.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Fire Service Personnel/Unit/Member – any member or apparatus associated with and/or employed by any Volunteer Fire or EMS department within Queen Anne's County.

V. POLICY

- A. When a fire service member identifies that they or a member of their crew is faced with a life threatening situation requiring immediate law enforcement intervention they shall:
 - 1. Depress the emergency button on their mobile or portable radio.
 - a. Personnel should be aware that activating the emergency button will result in the radio emitting several loud beeps – adjust the volume if necessary.

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- b. Firefighters should be aware that once the emergency button is activated the radio will give you ten seconds of “Hot Mic”, these ten seconds could be used to notify DES that personnel are in danger without the use of pressing the transmit button on either the portable mic or the radio itself.
- c. The radio channel will remain on the current tactical channel that the emergency button was activated on.
- d. Do not activate the button if this will compromise personnel safety.

2. Transmit a verbal message on the tactical channel stating:

“SIGNAL 13, SIGNAL 13, SIGNAL 13”

- 3. Once acknowledged; the distressed personnel shall provide a brief description of the nature of the Law Enforcement request, if possible and so long as the transmission does not compromise personnel safety.
- 4. If possible remove all personnel and apparatus from the dangerous environment and relocate to a safe location.

B. Incident Commander’s Response to a Signal 13 (if IC has been established):

- 1. Once a Signal 13 has been declared all personnel should be directed to maintain radio silence. During this time all radio transmissions shall be restricted to emergency messages only.
- 2. Consider deploying on-scene resources to assist the distressed personnel.
- 3. Confirm that DES-Communications has dispatched law enforcement.

C. DES-Communications’ Response to a Signal 13:

- 1. Acknowledge the Signal 13 request and immediately dispatch a law enforcement response.

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- a. Ensure that law enforcement personnel are aware that they are responding to a Signal 13 request from a fire or EMS service unit.
 - b. Follow the established DES-Communications' SOG titled "*Law Enforcement Signal 13 Policy*" when dispatching the law enforcement units.
2. Dedicate an operator to monitor the Signal 13 event and channel.
 - a. If the distressed personnel transmits a message on an unassigned radio channel a Dispatcher shall remain on the channel with them and will notify the Incident Commander for further guidance (if IC has been established).
 3. Notify any other responding fire service units of the Signal 13 event.
 4. If the emergency button is not activated, the Signal 13 event will remain on the originally assigned tactical channel.
 5. Any unrelated incidents and radio traffic will be immediately reassigned to another tactical channel.
 6. Notify the Chief of the department or designee of the effected department(s) of all involved personnel.

William H. Faust, Chairman
Queen Anne's County Fire & EMS Commission