

City of Bellingham
Classification Specification - Civil Service or AFSCME

CLASS TITLE	Communications Operations Officer
DEPARTMENT	Fire
UNION:	114F
SG:	M-3
CS:	Yes
FLSA:	Y
EE04CODE:	TE

NATURE OF WORK:

Oversees daily operations of the Prospect Fire Dispatch Center and provides day-to-day direction to on-duty fire dispatchers. Oversees maintenance of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) computer files and associated computer and radio equipment. Operates as a fire dispatcher when necessary to ensure timely call processing and dispatching of emergency incidents. Implements and administers dispatch Quality Assurance Programs to ensure accurate triage and dispatching of emergency response resources. Conducts and oversees training of new dispatchers. Acts as liaison with What-Comm and other user agency representatives regarding operational issues.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This position is distinguished from Fire Dispatchers by its responsibility for overseeing the direct delivery of emergency dispatching functions and related quality assurance programs.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the Communications Division Chief. Directly oversees and coordinates Fire/EMS dispatch services. Works closely with Operations Battalion Chiefs, What-Comm and representatives from other user agencies to coordinate service and activities.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Directs day-to-day activities of Fire/EMS dispatchers. Administers dispatcher work schedules, including voluntary and mandatory hire-back of off-duty personnel to ensure minimum staffing requirements are met.
2. Assigns work and is responsible for training and providing input to Communications Chief on performance evaluations, corrective actions and/or discipline.
3. Conducts and oversees training and associated performance documentation of new dispatchers. Coordinates and/or delivers initial dispatcher training. Monitors progress of probationary dispatchers. Ensures progress reports are accurate, complete, and submitted in a timely manner.
4. Coordinates and/or delivers continuing education and training related to fire/EMS/hazardous materials response communications to dispatchers. Coordinates and/or delivers continuing education to user agency personnel regarding dispatch operations on an as needed basis.

5. Coordinates daily activities between the Prospect Fire Dispatch Center, What-Comm, and other Fire/EMS user agencies.
6. Implements and administers the Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) Quality Assurance Program. Collects data, prepares reports, conducts training, and initiates corrective actions related to improving the accuracy of EMD and EFD programs.
7. Collects data and prepares reports related to the effectiveness and efficiency of dispatch center and user agency communication operations.
8. Develops and recommends updates to comprehensive dispatch policies, procedures, and protocols as necessary for the efficient operations of the Center. Identifies and recommends new policies and procedures to improve dispatch operations and minimize liability.
9. Participates in the purchase of, and oversees the maintenance of, all Dispatch equipment and furnishings such as radios, pagers, telephones and furniture.
10. Oversees and coordinates with the Division Chief, emergency repairs on remote repeater towers used for emergency radio dispatching. Coordinates emergency repairs of fire frequency radio transmission facilities to ensure reliable emergency radio communications 24/7. Oversees maintenance of computer aided dispatch (CAD) computer files to ensure accurate dispatching of emergency resources for each fire jurisdiction.
11. Participates in public relations for the Communications Division.
12. Creates audio/written record of specific incidents as needed for call review or legal purposes.
13. Performs all duties of a dispatcher/call receiver as required.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Other related duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- All knowledge, skills, and abilities related to Fire Dispatcher.
- Knowledge of the fire and EMS systems of Whatcom County, communications protocols, department policies, and procedures
- Knowledge of the Incident Management System and modern fire/EMS emergency operations procedures.
- Working knowledge of laws, regulations, and practices specific to fire department radio and communication systems.
- Ability to effectively supervise and coordinate the efforts of Prospect Center staff.
- Thorough knowledge of County/City geography, including street and fire district jurisdictional locations.
- Extensive knowledge of radio/telephone operations.
- Skill in using personal computers for basic word processing, data management and spreadsheet work.
- Demonstrated ability to solve problems and make decisions under stress. Adaptable and flexible to meet the needs of differing circumstances.
- Ability to plan, organize, and implement programs to meet Department needs.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of service orientation, results orientation, and teamwork and cooperation.
- Excellent oral communication skills, including the ability to make presentations to Department staff, user agencies, and the public.

- Excellent written communication skills to create a variety of reports for the Division.
- Working knowledge of the operation and maintenance of the various communication devices used by the Dispatch Center.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

The work is performed in an office environment or dispatch center at a computer workstation using different computer systems, multi-line telephone systems and radio communications equipment to receive, input and process information. Circumstances may require response to an emergency scene to provide and/or coordinate on-scene emergency communications.

The work is performed primarily on a rotating 40 hour work shift schedule that ensures continued contact with each dispatch shift. It also may require attendance and participation in certain fire service drills and training. The work environment requires long periods of sitting or standing.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- A minimum of five years as a Prospect Fire Dispatcher.
- Keyboard entry skills at a minimum of 40 wpm net.
- Experience or training in the use of the following computer software: word processing, spreadsheets, database management, Northrup Grumman CAD.
- Experience in computer multi-line telephone systems.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Must possess and maintain EMD and EFD certifications.
- Must possess and maintain Washington State Telecommunicator I and II certifications.
- Must obtain Telecommunicator IV certification within 12 months of hire.
- Must obtain Communications Training Officer certification within 12 months of hire and maintain for duration of employment.
- Must have a telephone at place of residence and be willing to carry a pager.
- Willingness to work flexible shifts that rotate between day and night shifts, and respond to callouts and overtime needs, when available, including weekends and holidays.

PREPARED BY: L. Hill
 A. Day
 L. Klemanski
 114F Committee
 3/07

REVIEWED BY: _____
 Bill Boyd
 Fire Chief

COMMISSION ADOPTION: _____ March 14, 2007