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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the duties, responsibilities, and expectations of the Communications Officer within the Winsted Fire Department. The Communications Officer ensures that all department communication systems operate effectively and reliably to support emergency response operations, interoperability, and internal coordination.

SCOPE

The Communications Officer shall oversee radio systems, communication procedures, and technology used for operational and administrative purposes.

POLICY

The Winsted Fire Department shall appoint a Communications Officer who will manage, maintain, and improve all communication systems and ensure the department remains compliant with all applicable regulations, including those set forth by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the State of Connecticut Office of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications (OSET).

RESPONSIBILITIES

General Duties

The Communications Officer shall:

- Oversee the management and maintenance of all department radios, pagers, and associated communication devices.
- Coordinate radio programming, repairs, and upgrades in consultation with the Fire Chief or designee.
- Maintain an accurate inventory of all communication equipment, including assignments and serial numbers.
- Serve as the primary liaison between the Winsted Fire Department and Litchfield County Dispatch.
- Monitor radio performance and address communication issues promptly.
- Ensure the department remains compliant with FCC licensing and communication standards.

Training and Operational Readiness

- Develop and deliver training on proper radio use, radio discipline, and communication protocols to all department members.
- Conduct periodic communication drills to evaluate readiness and effectiveness.
- Promote consistent radio terminology and professionalism on all radio channels.

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Communications Systems and Technology

- Maintain and oversee department alerting systems, paging systems, and mobile data technologies.
- Support integration of department communication tools, including mobile applications and CAD systems.
- Ensure communication technology is always current and operational.
- Recommend upgrades or improvements to communication systems to the Fire Chief.

Incident Support

- Provide communication coordination during multi-agency incidents, large-scale emergencies, or special events.
- Ensure operational readiness of command and tactical channels during incidents.
- Assist the Incident Commander in managing communication plans when required.

Administrative Duties

- Maintain communication-related documentation, including inventory records, licensing information, and maintenance logs.
- Prepare reports and recommendations regarding communication systems, budget needs, and improvements.
- Assist in the development and maintenance of Communication Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs).
- Ensure all communication-related records are properly filed and retained in accordance with department policy

QUALIFICATIONS

- Active member in good standing of the Winsted Fire Department.
- Basic understanding of fireground communications and radio procedures.
- Prior experience with radio system management, dispatch operations, or communications technology.
- Familiarity with FCC regulations and public safety communication standards.
- Completion of FEMA IS-100, IS-200, IS-700, and IS-800 courses
- Demonstrated reliability and organizational skills.
- Strong interpersonal and technical aptitude.