

# Communications

## And It's Significance

Module II.C

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Study Guide

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## Importance of Internal Communication

At every security post, a written set of post orders or instructions should be made available for the security officer to reference whenever a question or problem surfaces. It is essential that a security officer read these post orders frequently to be certain they know what to do during an emergency. The following information is to be included in each set of internal communication information.

### **LIST OF NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS OF CLIENT STAFF (POST ORDERS AND EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST)**

This information should be sorted by various departments, listing the name of each person, their title, and the different ways or means they can be reached at (this will usually include cell phone numbers, pager numbers, e-mail addresses, and possibly home phone numbers). This list should easily show when the person should be contacted and in what order they should be called. Usually the names of the various clients are contacted in some order of preference or reporting structure. It is very important for the security officer to know the proper procedure for calling the client contact list. In some cases, employees alternate who is to report to the facility or to respond to an emergency or incident. If security contacts someone out of order, the client may have to pay additional overtime. Often, the contract security provider will be required to reimburse the client for this inadvertent mistake. Therefore, be sure to know the names and titles of the client personnel who are to be contacted after normal business hours.

Under no circumstances should a security officer ever provide the personal telephone number of a client contact to anyone without explicit prior consent of the client. If someone calls and asks for a person's phone number from the client contact list, you should ask the caller for his/her name, phone number they can be reached at, and if needed, a short message. Let the caller know that you will pass the information and message along to the client contact. By letting the client know someone has called by providing the client contact the caller's name and phone number, you will have provided proper customer service while maintaining the confidentiality of the phone call list.

In some cases, a security officer may only need to call one person from the client contact list. In other situations, 5-10 people may need to be contacted. Prior to calling, it is essential the security officer have all pertinent information to relay to the client contact:

1. Type of incident
2. Time the incident was discovered
3. Steps taken to minimize the problem
4. Names of other persons who have been contacted
5. Advise if anyone has responded to the site, such as maintenance, facility personnel, emergency personnel, etc.
6. Advise if there are any injuries, and if so, the extent of those injuries

Upon completion of the client notifications, it is important that the contacts of your employer (contract security provider) receive notification of what has happened and what steps have been initiated.

## **Importance of Timely Notification**

The quicker a security officer makes notification to client contacts, in addition to their own employer, the sooner assistance can be provided. Often, when a serious incident occurs, someone has been injured or a crime has occurred, and witnesses to the event may leave without another opportunity of contacting them in the future. If this happens, evidence may be lost and greater harm may occur if security fails to respond properly. Failure to act or a delay in action may result in:

1. A lost opportunity to provide valuable information
2. Further injury, damage to property, and/or loss of production
3. Liability for the contract security provider
4. Negative publicity, resulting in damage of the client's reputation
5. Loss of the contract.

## **Role of a Security Officer**

The role of a security officer is to minimize property loss and injury to employees or visitors when an event occurs. Security officers must always remember to obtain all the facts as quickly as possible and refrain from injecting their own opinion or commentary regarding any incident. Comments such as, "I knew that this would eventually happen. I have told them a hundred times about this." or "No one cares around here." can potentially be damaging legally to the client for the company or client where the officer is employed. Always remember that when in doubt, call for help-- and the sooner the better!

## **Types of Incidents Where Communication Is Essential**

The following information needs to be obtained by the security officer for each of the specific incidents listed below.

### **Fire**

1. The time the incident was reported to you
2. How were you notified of the incident and by whom?
3. The specific location of the fire.
4. The types of materials involved (solvents, flammables, etc...)
5. The extent of any injuries and the number of persons injured.
6. Were any fire protection suppression systems activated?
7. The time that 9-1-1 was notified and by whom.
8. The time emergency personnel arrived on scene.
9. Whether or not the facility was evacuated
10. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor.

## **Chemical Spill or Leak**

1. The time the incident was reported to you
2. How were you notified of the spill or leak and by whom?
3. The specific location of the spill or leak.
4. The type of materials involved (solvents, flammables, etc...)
5. The extent of any injuries and the number of persons injured.
6. Did any of the material that spilled or leaked enter a drain?
7. Whether or not the spill has been contained with absorbing clay or other cleanup material
8. The time that 9-1-1 was notified and by whom.
9. The time emergency personnel arrived on scene.
10. Whether or not the facility was evacuated
11. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor.

## **Environmental Emission**

1. The time the incident was reported to you
2. How were you notified of the incident and by whom?
3. The specific location of the emission.
4. The source of the emission (material or chemical)
5. Extent of injuries and number of persons injured.
6. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor.
7. The time that 9-1-1 was notified and by whom.

**Notes:**

## **Weather-Related Events**

1. Any damage done to the property.
2. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor.
3. The time that outside services were notified to remove tree limbs, restore power, etc...
4. The extent of any injuries and the number of persons injured.
5. The time 9-1-1 was notified.
6. The total number of persons in the building.
7. Advise of ability for extra security personnel to report on duty.

## **Assault/Domestic Dispute At Work**

1. The time the incident was reported to you
2. How were you notified of the incident and by whom?
3. The specific location of the incident.
4. The names of the persons involved.
5. The extent of any injuries and the number of persons injured.
6. If known, identify the type or kind of weapons involved.
7. If know, identify any hostages.
8. The time that 9-1-1 was notified and by whom.
9. The time emergency personnel arrived on scene.
10. Whether or not the facility was evacuated
11. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor

**Notes:**

## **Osha Inpection**

1. The time the OSHA officer arrived on the scene.
2. How were you notified of their arrival?
3. The specific location of the inspection.
4. Was the OSHA officer asked to provide proper photo identification?
5. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor

## **Theft**

1. What time was the theft reported to you?
2. How were you notified of the theft and by whom?
3. The specific location of the theft.
4. Type of property involved (personal or company)
5. Identification of the property (such as color, size, model and serial number, weight, if a vehicle obtain make, model, year, color and license number).
6. The names of any witnesses.
7. The names of any possible suspects.
8. If the police are involved, the time that the police were notified.
9. The time the police arrived on the scene.
10. The time you notified client contacts and your supervisor

**Notes:**

# Communications Systems

An essential element of any security officer's job will involve the ability to communicate quickly, efficiently, and in a manner that is completely and easily understood by all parties. To achieve this objective, security officers will rely upon a variety of communication devices which include:

- Two-way radios
- Telephones
- Intercoms
- Pagers

## Two-Way Radio Communication

Two-way radio communication is regulated by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). Security officers should use proper radio etiquette when transmitting messages. Two-way radios are used for fast communication and long conversations should be avoided. If a security officer needs to speak for an extended period of time to the base operator or to another security officer, the radio should be used to notify the second person that they should switch to using a telephone instead of the radio as a means of communicating. It is important to remember that when two people are using a radio frequency to communicate with one another, no one else who is in the vicinity can use the frequency. It is critical that communications be held to a minimum and used only for essential communication.

### Proper Techniques: Two-Way Radios

When using two-way radios, security officers must follow proper techniques and should know the following:

1. The operating procedure for the radio.
2. The identification number of the radio unit and the base station.
3. How to identify him/herself when using the radio.
4. The channel to which the radio should be tuned.
5. That the radio should be checked at the beginning of each shift.

6. If at a fixed post, whether or not the radio should remain in the battery charger when not in use
7. Is there an adequate supply of back-up batteries?
8. When earphone and microphones should be used
9. How the radio is to be carried
  - a. With a clip or belt
  - b. With a holder
  - c. Held in hand

When using a two-way radio, a security officer should hold the radio near his/her mouth and speak calmly, deliberately and in a normal tone of voice. The security officer should identify him/herself prior to making a statement or asking a question.

**Example:**

***"Unit 20 to base, do you copy?" "Unit 20 to base, please respond."***

The security officer should wait for five seconds to allow proper time for the base station or other officer with a radio to respond.

**Usually the response will be something such as:**

***"Unit 20, this is Base..."***

**The security officer should then clearly and distinctly speak to the base:**

***"Base, this is unit 20. I have a person requesting to see Mr. Jones. He states he has an appointment. Please advise."***

Often, because of past experiences, two security officer can easily communicate with two-way radios and not waste a great deal of time. They

do not necessarily have to say everything in order for the other person to understand what they are trying to say.

Abbreviations are often used in order to expedite conversations when using two-way radios. Additionally, certain words may be misunderstood because of similarity, in sound, to other words. Therefore, the Phonetic Alphabet was designed by the military:

**Equivalent/Phonetic**

<b>A</b> – Alpha	<b>J</b> – Juliet	<b>S</b> –Sierra
<b>B</b> – Bravo	<b>K</b> – Kilo	<b>T</b> –Tango
<b>C</b> – Charlie	<b>L</b> – Lima	<b>U</b> –Uniform
<b>D</b> – Delta	<b>M</b> – Mike	<b>V</b> –Victor
<b>E</b> – Echo	<b>N</b> – November	<b>W</b> –Whiskey
<b>F</b> – Foxtrot	<b>O</b> – Oscar	<b>X</b> –X-ray
<b>G</b> – Golf	<b>P</b> – Papa	<b>Y</b> –Yankee
<b>H</b> – Hotel	<b>Q</b> – Quebec	<b>Z</b> –Zulu
<b>I</b> – India	<b>R</b> – Romeo	

Numbers are also important in communications and should be clearly spoken in telephone and radio conversations. The pronunciation of numbers should be exaggerated to avoid any misunderstanding by the receiving party. Each digit of large numbers should be pronounced separately, even in the case of “hundreds” and “thousands”.

When using a two-way radio, security officers should transmit only when necessary and only approved messages.

Merely talking to pass the time or communicating for an extended period of time when telephones are available is inappropriate and prohibited.

As mentioned earlier, to be certain that your message has been properly received, wait for a return response indicating that the message was, in fact, received.

**The following phrases are an example of what may be utilized to expedite communication, but please refer to your company standards for correct and authorized radio procedures:**

**"Correct."** -You are correct, or what you have transmitted is correct.

**"Say Again."** - Repeat your last

**"Silence."** - Cease transmission immediately.

**"Wilco."** - I have received your message, I understand and will comply.

**"Correction."** - An error has been made.

**"More To Follow."** -Transmitting unit has more information to transmit.

**"Out."** - This is the end of my transmission.

**"Over."** - This is the end of my transmission.

**"Radio Check."** - What is my signal strength and readability?

**"Read Back."** - Repeat entire transmission.

## **Federal Communications Commissions (FCC) Rules**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates radio and television communication in the United States. The FCC has certain regulations which must be adhered to when using two-way radios. These include:

1. Broadcasting, which refers to transmissions that are intended to be received by the general public, is prohibited.

2. Radio communication may not be used for any activity related to program production or news gathering.
3. Transmission of music is prohibited.
4. Radio communication may not be used for any type of activity which violates any federal, state or local law.
5. The meaning of communication may not be hidden by using codes or ciphers. Universally accepted abbreviations may be used when the intention is not to hide the meaning of the transmission.
6. Transmission of obscene, indecent and profane words, or language is prohibited.
7. You may not use someone else's call sign or transmit a call sign without authorization. You may not transmit a communication that is intended to deceive someone.
8. Tape recording of previous radio communication and then broadcasting the recording is prohibited.
9. You may not willfully or intentionally interfere with someone else's radio transmission.
10. Two-way radio communication must be licensed and the original written authorization or a copy must be posted when operating.
11. You must identify your call station at the end of each contact and every 10 minutes during the contact, which may be done using any of the modes which are legal.

## Telephone

Most security officers are required to answer the telephone for a certain amount of time on a daily basis. In some cases, the security officer may be required to simply answer telephone calls which come into the security post from another interior telephone. At other times, security personnel may be required to act as the main telephone operator during evening and

weekend hours. No matter the level of telephone service provided by security, it is critical that all security personnel answer the telephone in a professional manner.

People make assumptions and reach conclusions about a person based upon their tone of voice and the way in which they speak on the telephone. A person's mood and mental outlook are expressed through the voice. A person who is tired, angry, happy, frustrated, etc., often conveys these feelings through their tone of voice. Therefore, if a security officer is not very happy with having to answer the telephone, this resentment is often transferred through his/ her tone of voice and their unfriendliness towards and unwillingness to help the caller is demonstrated.

The way workers and executives may view an entire security operation is directly related to image and perception. The way a security officer presents him/herself goes hand-in-hand with how the entire organization is perceived. Security officers who are required to answer the telephone may accept a call from the President or Chief Executive Officer of the corporation. If an executive of the corporation encounters a rude, angry, or uncaring security officer on the phone, the reputation of the security department as a whole can be damaged. Security officers should accept the responsibility of answering the telephone and perform this task to the best of their abilities in a professional manner.

#### **Suggestions for Answering The Telephone:**

1. Always answer the phone within three rings and have a pen or pencil ready to take notes.
2. Answer the phone by saying, "Good morning/ (afternoon/evening), ABC Company, Security Officer Jones speaking. How may I help you?"
3. Try to help the caller. If they ask for someone who is not currently at work, don't just say, "They are not in." Help the caller by saying, "Is there someone else who can help you?"
4. If the caller has a problem or complaint, listen to him/her and attempt to offer a suggestion or alternative.
5. If the caller asks for the home phone number of anyone, do not give it out. If the caller persists that he/she must talk to the person, ask

the caller for his/her name and phone number. Advise the caller that you will call the employee at home and give him/her the caller's name and phone number.

6. If the caller is a customer or client, be certain to obtain specific information regarding their questions or problems and then attempt to contact the appropriate executive at home.
7. If the caller states that he/she must speak to someone because of an emergency, take notes of his/her statements and be certain to notify the appropriate employee, or supervisor, if required, as soon as possible.
8. Security personnel must not convey their emotions in their voice. If the security officer is tired, or angry at someone, he/she must remember that in all likelihood, the caller is not responsible for his/her mood. Therefore, don't take out your aggression on the caller.
9. When answering the telephone, security personnel should always assume their boss is the person calling. Never think that you can play jokes or games on the phone because you know the person calling. You might think you know the identity of the caller, but you may be mistaken.
10. Smile on the telephone. Project a positive image. If you cannot understand the person or their message, ask them to repeat their message.

## **Public Address Systems, Personal Intercoms & Pagers**

Whether a security officer uses a two-way radio, telephone, public address system, intercom, or pager, the goal is identical - to send a message and for the receiver to understand the intended message.

## **Public Address (P.A.) System**

Security officers may use the public address system for routine paging of employees, for phone calls or during an emergency evacuation when all employees must evacuate the facility immediately. Many public address systems or satellite systems are stationed at security posts. Usually there are clear and explicit instructions as to when a security officer is permitted to use the public address system. If it becomes necessary to use the P.A. system, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. Speak slowly and confidently. It is best to have what you intend to say written down in front of you. Practice reading it a few times before using the P.A. system.
2. Keep your statement brief.
3. Upon completion, repeat your statement completely and you may want to state something to the effect that, "This message will be repeated in twenty seconds/minutes."
4. Have another security officer or member of management verify that the message could, in fact, be heard.
5. If necessary, continue to repeat the message.

As with all communication equipment, security officers must assume that all of their discussions, dialogue and background noise (music or conversation) can be overheard by others. Security officers must assume that others may be in the vicinity of the person receiving the communication. For that very reason, be sure that all communication is brief and professional at all times!

## **Intercoms**

Intercoms are either "hardwired" between receiving stations or they are "wireless", whereby transmission is relayed through the air. For security purposes, most intercoms are used to gain access through a secured area that is normally controlled by security, usually by way of an electronic lock. Ideally, a CCTV camera is used in conjunction with an intercom in order to ensure that the security officer on duty is not granting access to someone

based solely on voice recognition. However, it is not uncommon for intercoms to be used without a camera or other means for providing positive identification.

When a person calls using an intercom, the security officer will normally be alerted via a beeper, buzzer, chime, or bell. The security officer should push the "talk" button on the intercom and identify him/herself by stating, "This is s security officer Jones, may I help you?" The caller should identify him/herself and should be asked to state the reason they desire access. Once the security officer has positively identified the person, instructions should be given to the person and grant access, if warranted. If the security officer cannot identify the person, the visitor should be directed to an entrance to the facility that is controlled by a posted security officer.

## **Pagers**

Pagers are normally of two types: voice activated or phone activated. With voice activated pagers, the security officer will dial a number and after hearing a series of tones, will verbally transmit a message such as, "Bob, this is Officer Jones at the Acme plant. Please call me immediately at the plant at 216-555-3245." The message should be repeated a second time. Remember to speak slowly and clearly.

With phone activated pagers, the security officer will use the touch tone buttons of the telephone to call a number. After hearing the tones, the phone number that is to be called is "touch-toned" and either the # button is pressed or the caller can just hang up. With either type of pager, please listen to any available verbal instructions as different systems can vary.

# External Communications in an Emergency

Security officers can provide a valuable service in a facility's overall emergency preparedness plan. Generally, security personnel will play an active, key role in an emergency situation. Security officers may be called upon to notify local emergency services, assist in the evacuation of personnel, render first-aid to injured employees, announce emergency instructions over the public address system or be required to assume primary responsibility for initiating the emergency response in certain situations.

## Overview of the Emergency Response Plan

In planning any response to an emergency, identifying the objectives of the plan must be done first. Generally, the overall objectives of any emergency plan are to:

1. Protect the lives of all employees, visitors, and nearby residents of the facility.
2. Protect all property and physical assets belonging to the organization.
3. Prevent disruption in the daily operation of the business as much as possible and to restore the daily routine as soon as possible.
4. Provide outside agencies, such as local police and fire departments, with information and resources that allow them to carry out their duties and responsibilities without delay.

## Security Responsibilities

Generally, security personnel will have primary responsibility for initiating the emergency evacuation and contacting 9-1-1 emergency personnel. In addition, security personnel will often be asked to monitor emergency notification equipment, direct emergency services personnel to the specific

location of the incident, account for the number of employees and visitors who have evacuated the facility and have since moved to "safe-sites", and maintain proper access control.

## **Additional Responsibilities**

The following information should be detailed in writing as part of the emergency response plan:

1. Who will make the determination to evacuate the facility?
2. Who is responsible for communicating and answering questions of television, radio, and newspaper media personnel who respond to the facility? Will these individuals be segregated into one area or room until a company spokesperson addresses their questions, or will they have to remain off the facility's property?
3. Who is responsible for notifying company officials who are not present? Is an emergency telephone call list up to date and easily accessible within the post orders?
4. Has the local fire department recently toured the facility? Have maps and diagrams of the location of hazardous, flammable and combustible material been given to them? Are copies of these maps contained in the post orders?
5. Who is responsible for testing the plan by conducting drills? Who does security need to report to during an emergency? Who can answer questions?
6. Who is responsible for writing the final report of an emergency?
7. Who is responsible for conducting follow-up on the items which need to be addressed after a drill or actual emergency?
8. If an employee or visitor is seriously injured, what procedures are to be followed regarding communication of this fact? Who notifies next of kin?

Security officers who are extremely diligent during their patrols of a facility will learn all of the various nuances of a building so that if an emergency occurs, he/she will feel confident that they know where to respond and how

to escort emergency services personnel to the scene. Imagine if an emergency occurred today at the facility where you currently work--are you confident that you would know what to do and know who to contact?

Security personnel who are readily knowledgeable of their post orders and emergency plans and who know the "ins and outs" of the building he/she protects will perform their duties in a professional and time-efficient manner in an emergency.

**Notes:**