

## Mobile Data Computer Use

### 446.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper access, use and application of the Mobile Data Computer (MDC) system in order to ensure appropriate access to confidential records from local, state and national law enforcement databases, and to ensure effective electronic communications between Department members and Dispatch.

### 446.2 POLICY

Vancouver Police Department members using the MDC shall comply with all appropriate federal and state rules and regulations and shall use the MDC in a professional manner, in accordance with this policy.

### 446.3 PRIVACY EXPECTATION

Members forfeit any expectation of privacy with regard to messages accessed, transmitted, received or reviewed on any Department technology system.

### 446.4 AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF AN MDC

VPD employees are authorized to use the MDC for official police communications only. When using the MDC:

1. Radio communications will be conducted in a clear, business-like manner using prescribed procedures.
2. Transmissions will be kept to a minimum.
3. Lengthy conversations are to be made by telephone, or on a secondary frequency.
4. Unnecessary radio use will be avoided so that frequencies are available for official and emergency business.

Messages may be reviewed by supervisors at anytime without prior notification.

### 446.5 RESTRICTED ACCESS AND USE

Members shall not access the MDC system if they have not received prior authorization and the required training. Members shall immediately report unauthorized access or use of the MDC by another member to their supervisors or Shift Sergeants.

Use of the MDC system to access law enforcement databases or transmit messages is restricted to official activities, business-related tasks and communications that are directly related to the business, administration or practices of the Department. In the event a member has questions about sending a particular message or accessing a particular database, the member should seek prior approval from his/her supervisor.

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Sending derogatory, defamatory, obscene, disrespectful, sexually suggestive, harassing or any other inappropriate messages on the MDC system is prohibited and may result in discipline.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message or access a law enforcement database under another member's name or to use the password of another member to log in to the MDC system. Members are required to log off the MDC or secure the MDC when it is unattended. This added security measure will minimize the potential for unauthorized access or misuse.

### **446.5.1 USE WHILE DRIVING**

The use of the MDC while the vehicle is being operated creates a potential risk to the officer because of the change of focus from driving to operating the MDC. Generally, use of the MDC by the operator should be limited to times when the vehicle is stopped. However:

1. Short transmissions, such as entry of a license number for a stolen or registration check are permitted if they can be done safely.
2. Reading messages while in motion by the operator should only be attempted when the message requires the operator's immediate attention.
3. In no case shall an operator attempt to send or review lengthy messages while the vehicle is in motion.

### **446.6 DOCUMENTATION OF ACTIVITY**

MDCs and voice transmissions are used to record the officer's daily activity. To ensure the most accurate recording of these activities, the following are required:

1. When communicating with dispatch, officers will first give their complete call number.
2. Officers shall promptly answer all calls from dispatchers.
3. Officers shall not argue with a dispatcher. An officer with cause for complaint shall notify their supervisor.

#### **446.6.1 STATUS CHANGES**

All changes in status (e.g., arrival at scene, meal periods, in service) will be transmitted over the police radio or through the MDC system.

Members responding to in-progress calls should advise changes in status over the radio to assist other members responding to the same incident. Other changes in status can be made on the MDC when the vehicle is not in motion.

#### **446.6.2 EMERGENCY SITUATION**

If there is an emergency activation and the member does not respond to a request for confirmation of the need for emergency assistance or confirms the need, available resources will be sent to assist in locating the member.

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All units should limit radio traffic during vehicle pursuits and other emergency situations so that the units in pursuit, or in an emergency situation, can maintain continuous communications with dispatch.

Officers not responding to the emergency shall refrain from transmitting on the police radio until a no-further-assistance broadcast is made or if they are also handling an emergency.

#### **446.7 MALFUNCTIONING MDC**

Whenever possible, officers will not use a vehicle with a malfunctioning MDC. Whenever officers must drive a unit in which the MDC is not working, they shall notify Dispatch via police radio or phone. It shall be the responsibility of Dispatch to record all information that will then be transmitted verbally over the police radio.

#### **446.8 REQUEST FOR DISPATCH RECORDS**

Officers must obtain approval from a supervisor prior to making a request for a recording of dispatch transmissions.