

Beep Beep?

08/25/09 45 W - + 14 - 6

What's the story on the beeps instead of street names on some Locution dispatches lately? Are those words or names not available in the system's vocabulary, for whatever reason? Or perhaps a concealment for certain call types, for privacy? Inquiring minds are curious.

I've been hearing that beep a lot lately instead of the street name.

lee - 08/25/09 - 11:14

Story on fire departments not using, or "boycotting" million-dollar failures- ahem, radio systems from the secret list:

WHEN THE FIRE RADIO SYSTEM DOESN'T WORK, Fire Chiefs JUST SAY NO!

3 SW York County (PA) FD's will stop using the county's new \$36 million Harris radio network at fires because of reliability concerns. Instead, they will instead rely on radios tied into the county's old analog network. Another FD plans to stop using the new radios at fires where firefighters operate inside a building.

While many fire officials are generally pleased with the new network, those in southwestern York County have reported continuing problems that include temporary blackouts when the system appears to malfunction, big gaps in coverage and unreliable communication between firefighters at incidents.

The folks who are heading the project for the county have said the new system is meeting or exceeding coverage expectations and their testing results in southwestern York County have been satisfactory. As we have voiced before, the BEST "new system tests" are to give the new radios to the FIREFIGHTERS and let them do the testing in THEIR 1st due area, in THEIR buildings under THEIR conditions. Nonetheless, the county is looking at whether it can improve system performance in the concerned and surrounding area.

One option discussed for firefighters to remedy the problem at incidents is to change settings so that they don't have to rely on the new network towers to transmit signals. The signal would instead transmit directly from one portable radio to another.

But the negative with that is then if there is an emergency in the fireground, the dispatch center will not hear it. That can be a problem.

As one York County Commissioner appropriately stated: "We paid a lot of money for the system, and they (the radios) need to work," he said. nuff' said.

For those of you who are young or new to The Secret List, here are 2 past pieces related to fire service radio systems and design:

FIRE RADIO SYSTEMS: PREVENTING DEAD FIREFIGHTERS:

<http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/mai..>

KILLER FIRE RADIO SYSTEMS:

<http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/mai..>

J.Boggs ([Email](#)) - 08/25/09 - 11:50

I actually have been talking with Scot at ECC and he turned it in to the IT guys down there to investigate.

Silver - 08/25/09 - 13:58

AARRRGGGHHH!!!! Listening to several major incidents going on in the city right now. First, do away with locution, get back to a human dispatcher. Locution is still, at this very moment, beeping over words and screwing up.

Second, we (RFD) need to define terminology for our alarm assignments. Switch to the nationally recognized "first alarm", "second alarm". and so on...And, for God sakes, call the dispatch after a confirmed working fire the "working fire dispatch".

Silver - 08/25/09 - 22:36

What's broken with RFD terminology and alarm assignments, and the working fire dispatch, Jeff?

Question - 08/26/09 - 08:06

Well Mr. Mysterio, it isn't that it's broken, it's that it can be tweaked a little. I'll give you an example; a "first alarm" would consist of 3 engines, 1 ladder, 1 rescue and a battalion chief. If units get on scene with a working fire, they can request a "second alarm" if need be (the "major working fire" is dumb in my opinion, and a fine example of the wheel being re-invented; does this mean a third alarm is a major, major fire?).

Your second alarm shouldn't include an additional rescue, due to the fact that you begin to minimize your heavy rescue resources. Make every additional alarm after the first 3 engines and 1 ladder, unless something else is special called by the I.C.

I've heard the "working fire dispatch" referred to plenty of times as a "second alarm" (by dispatchers as well as members), when it isn't. If you give it a designated title, EVERYONE will know what to refer to those "additional notifications" as.

The "working fire" term is fine, as it tells everyone that we are all going to work and it is part of a size-up. However, when you get into "major working fire" (I cringe every time I hear the words spoken) you may as well bring back the "Code 2 or Code 3" designation. If we are supposed to be using clear text, let's do it 100% and not half a\$sed. Do away with radio designations of "1-08" and "10-02", use designated riding positions ("Engine 1 nozzle", "Ladder 1 officer"), and for pete's sake get rid of "major working fire". There have already been communication problems when a Chief asks for a "second alarm" and the dispatcher has no idea what they're talking about.

My \$0.02....OUT!

Silver - 08/26/09 - 14:27

Silver, it is just more from the "we've always done it this way so it has to be right" crowd....

DJ ([Email](#)) ([Web Site](#)) - 08/26/09 - 14:46

Tell it like it is Silver. Raleigh and Wake County are much too big to still be having these topics of conversation in 2009.

I would have thought this would have been put to rest eons ago. Geez!

Buckwheat - 08/26/09 - 15:46

Silver, I'm surprised by the number of companies in Raleigh that don't have riding assignments. Until my recent rescue assignment every engine company I was assigned to prior have always held the same riding assignment of back left being the senior firefighter and job was forcible entry, search, and back-up the nozzleman. Back right was the firefighter and job was either water can or nozzleman. Now that I'm having to float out a lot I'll go to put my stuff on the engine only to find a probie has his/her stuff on the left side and the only idea they have as to their job at a working fire is "do what the Capt. tells me to do, I guess.". Is it just me or is this how it is everywhere? How do y'all do it on L-1?

RescueRanger - 08/26/09 - 19:31

RescueRanger- You bring up an excellent topic. I would be very curious as to how others do it and exactly how many people out there have predetermined riding positions. I know that on my engine company, the senior firefighter rides behind the Lt and is responsible for stretching the line while the newer firefighter rides behind the captain and goes with him on all calls with a can and irons (fire alarms and investigative mode on structure fires) this is done so that the firefighter gets more "experience" in the operations of the department as opposed to standing by the engine.

Silver- look at it this way bro...at least the city has some sort of terminology/system for an extra alarm or a working fire. The county can't get that much going.

Wayne - 08/27/09 - 00:37

Wayne...."code 2 condition red!" as heard recently with a county structure fire

JBoggs - 08/27/09 - 09:28

Boggs- You are SO RIGHT! I was working that day and heard it myself and just shook my head and laughed!!

Wayne - 08/27/09 - 10:36

I hope when I grow up I can be like Silver one day. I'm sure your fellow RFD Brothers love the way you bash the way the RFD does things. Way to be a team player Jeff!!!!

SilverismyHERO - 08/27/09 - 11:46

Silver..I always love to look on here and find out what you think should change in the county/country...some things would definately be nice, but ive been in the county for a little shy of 10 years and what i have noticed is that "It is what it is". I think what we have alot of now is guys moving down south from up north and are having a hard time dealing with the way stuff has been done here for SOOOOO Very long. But with that comes another saying..."If u dont like how its done here, Move back up there".

This county has alot of different agencies in it with chiefs who have been in the position way too long and will never quit doing things that they have done for the last 30 years. I agree that somethings need to change but know that it wont happen over night or the next 5 to 10 years. Topics will be discussed at county meetings and disappear for a while just to come back a few years later to talk about the same ole mess. But keep in mind that every one doesnt want to do things the "Raleigh or Cary way". What may work in Knightdale or Fuquay or Garner, would never be thought about in Raleigh and same goes for the other way around.

I once thought i could change the world in the fire service then quickly realized that the fire service has been here a hell of alot longer than i have. I was broke down very early in my career and learned to do things the way i was taught and do the best that i could at it. If for some reason, i didnt think i could live by that advice, i was always directed to where the door would be if i ever wanted to leave.

The Fire service is always changing along with technology, but I have no say so in what my department does to keep up with it or go beyond it. All i know is that when i get to work in the morning as long as ive done what im suppose to and listened to what my officers tell me, then i know that after 24 is done i go home and turn around and do it all over again. One Day when YOU become a chief, you will have an awesome @\$\$ department. But until then..you are wasting your energy on typing and too much time talkin about things that just wont happen anytime soon. The "Wake County Way" was here along time before me or you were.

CTK - 08/27/09 - 15:03

Hahahahaha, I love it!! I love how providing suggestions, BEING INVOLVED, and sharing new ideas means I'm not a team player. How dare you even say that. It's obvious you haven't worked a day with me, or been with me on the fire ground. I think I've shown where my loyalty is, more than once, and will continue to contribute because I love my job. It's not an issue of WE do something wrong, it's that we might be able to tweek something here or there to make us operate more efficiently. I've listened to the fires, and heard the confusion, and it's time to stop sweeping things like that under the rug. Don't you think it's an issue, when a Battalion Chief requests a second alarm at a working fire, and the voice on the other end says they already sent one (when all they sent was a working fire dispatch)? Thankfully, that Chief took the time to explain to the other voice the difference and the situation was eventually resolved.

Mystery poster, I'd like for you to take a look in the mirror, and ask yourself; "what have I done to contribute today"? While that answer might scare you, it's fine, it's reality and it's who you are as a person. I know full well, I can go to bed and sleep well, because I DO contribute, everyday. I took more flack when I first came here for my "yankee strap", but look at what every piece of apparatus has, and people actually like them. I was told I was trying to turn this place into FDNY when I exposed people (and let them use) to the Halligan Hook, with my own money, but eventually people saw how much better and versatile the Halligan Hook is compared to a pike pole. I saw a need to make trading time easier at the RFD, so I created a web site to do so, with my own money, for EVERYONE to use. Don't say I'm not a team player, because that's way out in left field.

I understand some people are closed minded (you included), it's just a matter of exposing "your type" to new ideas and showing you how well they actually work. I'd like to extend an invitation to you to visit Ladder 1's quarters, you might learn something (we're at 121 Northway Ct.).

I realize change is difficult, and it isn't just change for the sake of change. It is change that will better us as a department, as fire-fighters, and the community too.

RescueRanger, the issue of riding assignments is being addressed, and will change within the next few months. It will greatly enhance the way we operate at fires, and frankly I'm excited and proud to be a part of the group affecting the change(s).

Stay safe, and Go Yankees!!

Silver - 08/27/09 - 15:08

CTK, ouch, a little harsh on the "go back up there". But, here again, I never brought up the "up there", you did. I'm doing my part, with affecting change, by getting on a committee (or two) that is actually taking the helm for the way we do things here (RFD). I've been a career fireman for 11 years, and have been involved with the Wake County Fire Service since 1995. We've come a long way, but, unfortunately there are still some things that can be adjusted (staffing levels countywide, standardized practices).

I'd never say that my suggestions have to work in Apex, Cary, or anywhere else. I don't work there, so there's no point. I really hate for change to happen because of a LODD or a "Routley Report" though, because then it's too late.

Silver - 08/27/09 - 15:19

"SilverismyHERO", speak for yourself whoever you are...I am a RFD brother of Silver and I don't consider his comments bashing by any means. Perhaps you should look up the word bashing, it means to attack. That is not what Silver has done or will probably ever do. To me, he is doing nothing more than thinking outside the box and challenging others that just because we have always done it this particular way, it is not always the best way to do something. That is being smart in my opinion, definitely not bashing. Perhaps more people should share in this type of proactive way of thinking.

"CTK", I think you are right in saying that some things that work well for one department may not for another. As having experience as a volunteer firefighter and part-time firefighter in this county, as well as a RFD firefighter, I have seen this first hand. I don't think you should ever break down and give up trying to make your department better. I also disagree that it is a waste of time discussing topics like these on this weblog. Sure, most of us have no authority to change anything, but I think it makes us better and more well-rounded firefighters to discuss it and learn the perspectives of others.

RFD574 - 08/27/09 - 15:25

i would love to see staffing levels county wide improve. I think its horse crap for it to be as bad off as it is in some places. But i also think that having a few people in the county that can actually see the need for it will never reach far out enough in the tax payers mind to approve that. Look at the economy now and before.....still short on manpower at town and county departments. One good thing comes out of it though, Ive been on Engines to be taken off of it to drive a tanker or then taken off that to ride a rescue or the ladder...u learn alot more at how all levels of your fire fighting career are important and what needs to be done in those positions. I wish things could be seen in the eyes of the ones who want to make a difference but regular citizens dont see that way and never will. They forget about us until they need us....perfect world maybe one day???

CTK - 08/27/09 - 15:29

By the way, to the poster that got their post deleted; I am no way the fire God, Chuck Norris is. If I feel like I'm being called a non-team player, I feel it's only fair to back myself up with facts.

Silver - 08/27/09 - 15:58

Silver, send me some photos of the haligan hook. I want to check this thang out.

JG ([Email](#)) - 08/27/09 - 16:35

Sure thing!! Standby....

Silver - 08/27/09 - 16:47

JG, your email address got returned. Double check it and I'll resend the pic...

Silver - 08/27/09 - 16:54

Thanks anyways Silver. I saw after Mike posted. We call em New York tools in the southern part of the county. But it's whatever.

JG - 08/27/09 - 21:35

Silver call me at Apex when you get a chance or on cell 3697964

Apex Batt Chief - 08/27/09 - 21:56

Back to the original question. The technical issue was addressed and largely corrected by ECC personnel this week. As long as you have a system with unit numbers, addresses, and event types in flux, you are always going to encounter some hiccups. We monitor the system, and have a feedback mechanism in place for end users. Typically, the quicker the feedback, the quicker things get fixed.

[RWECC] - 08/28/09 - 11:18

Excellent discussion. Thanks RWECC for the fix. Gentlemen-perhaps I use the term loosely but that's ok- you should never shy away from an opportunity to trade thoughts and ideas to learn from each other. Agreement is not a requirement. An open mind and a willingness to discuss is. I don't always agree with Jeff, or some of the rest of you, however, I have been around the fire and rescue service, and other services, for over thirty years and there is one incontrovertible fact you must face-we will always have different ideas and ways. Face them, embrace them, whatever it takes, and work with each other to grow and improve. Don't get so little and self absorbed you cannot find ways to improve your lot. You are working for that next generation. I want to be able to say I did my part to make things better!

Goose - 08/30/09 - 18:09

Name: (real name preferred)
E-mail: (optional)
Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?

Yes
No

Comment:

/ [Textile](#)

Comment moderation is enabled on this site. This means that your comment will not be visible on this site until it has been approved by an editor.

To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?

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Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

Small print: All html tags except and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.