



**ACT Rural Fire Service  
Standard Operating Procedure 5.1  
Colour Coding Of Radio  
Messages**

**5.1**  
Communications

**Purpose**

With centralised radio communication for the operational agencies of the ACT Emergency Services Agency and with other ACT Government agencies also using that same Communication Centre (COMCEN), the radio traffic at times can become congested. To ease this congestion, there is a need to assist the radio operators to determine what is a routine call and what is a higher priority call, so informed decisions can be made as to which call they will answer first. A similar congestion can arise when incident communications are being run from an incident Control Centre and not from COMCEN

**Operating Procedure.**

All radio communications with COMCEN or the Incident Control Centre are to include a colour code in the message. This code will alert the Radio operators, and other units monitoring the radio channels, to the priority of the message. The colour codes are as follows:

Colour	Priority	Type of message
Yellow	Low	Routine, non incident related messages
Blue	Medium	Incident related messages
White	High	Initial reporting of an incident such as smoke from a fire tower
Red	Urgent	Immediate assistance required, threat to life or property

The unit response to a call and any subsequent exchanges in the conversation do not need a colour coding - only the message that initiates the conversation.



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## RED MESSAGES

Red messages require some care. Whenever COMCEN or the Incident Control Centre hears a "red" message (even if not directed to them) COMCEN or the Incident Control Centre will step in and send "All units stand-by", and if the call was directed to them "go ahead [unit name] and pass your RED message". Anyone hearing a red message should immediately cease use of the channel. You *may* emphasise the point when initiating a red message by saying "red, red, red". If it become obvious that a red message is not being heard then offer to relay the message if you can.

Maintained By: **Manager, Operations**

Approved By: **Andrew Stark**

Position: **Chief Officer RFS**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Stark", on a light green background.

Signature:

Date: 15/02/2011

Cross Reference SOP/s:

Amendments: