



# *Modesto Police Department*

## *DISPATCH DIRECTIVE*

### **Verified Response to Alarm Calls**

Originated:

**Revised:** November 1, 2006

#### I. POLICY

**Effective November 1, 2006.** Verified Response—Due to the high number of false burglary/property intrusion alarms, the Modesto Police Department will not routinely respond unless additional information is received to verify the validity of the alarm. Police will be dispatched whenever the alarm company, or some other source, can verify the alarm was tripped as the result of criminal activity or other emergency.

This policy does not change response to panic, duress, or robbery alarms.

#### II. PURPOSE

The former policy for alarm dispatch and response caused the inefficient use of scarce resources to the point that continuing this approach without adjustment would jeopardize public safety. The decision to implement verified alarm response policy and enhanced-call verification is based upon the immediate need to more efficiently use the limited resources we have in the Modesto Police Department. Our situation in Modesto requires that we implement a verified alarm response policy. It is anticipated that this policy change will cause a more rapid police response to valid alarms, while removing thousands of false alarms from the response queues.

#### III. DEFINITIONS

A. **Verified Alarm:** Means on-site verification by a responder to determine whether or not a police response to a property/intrusion/burglar alarms due to a crime, attempted crime, or other emergency occurring at the premises protected by an alarm is warranted. Verification of a crime or emergency may be accomplished through the use of an audio and video combination system monitored

by the alarm system monitoring company. Witness reports (i.e.: private security) of glass breakage, suspicious persons in the area of the alarm, or suspects observed entering the business/residence, etc. should be considered verification of the alarm. There may also be any other events or circumstances that indicate the alarm may be valid which include, but are not limited to, recent criminal activity in the area and/or no history of false alarms. Examples include:

1. Audio feedback alarms where the monitoring company has heard evidence of criminal activity.
2. If responder/key holder is at the scene and requests a walk through by police officers then 2 officers will be dispatched depending on current activity levels and if we are responding to priority three calls at the time of the request.
3. Video feedback alarm location showing evidence of possible criminal activity.
4. Verification by a guard service or private security that has responded to the location.

IV. PROCEDURE (to commence at 0000 hrs on November 1, 2006)

- A. The Communications Center receives a call of a burglary or intrusion alarm.
- B. The Communications Center obtains as much information as possible from the alarm monitoring company.
  1. If the information received fits the verification criteria (see above), the call should be entered appropriately for the circumstances (i.e.: "**459 In-Progress**") at least two officers will be dispatched to respond.
  2. If the information received does not fit the verification criteria, the Communication Center will ask if two (2) different phone numbers were called and will record those phone numbers for future reference. If two different numbers were called and the customer or monitoring company has not canceled the alarm, then the call will be entered as either a "**C8AR**" or "**C8AC**", and given a Priority 3 and will be **silently broadcast via the mobile data computer (MDC) system** as a "Be-on-the-lookout" (BOL) **only**. The purpose of the BOL of unverified alarms is to make officers aware of the activation of an alarm in their assigned area. Officers may, at their discretion, respond to the alarm if time permits.

3. Officers should pay particular attention to unverified alarms where the BOL indicates that a responder/key holder from the business will be responding to the location. Further, officers should consider their knowledge of the history of false alarms at the location, the current patterns of burglaries in the area, and other information they are aware of when determining response to check the location and area when the BOL is broadcast.
4. If there is no response after approximately 15 to 30 minutes, the Dispatcher enters "No Officer Response" in the supplement text and closes the call.
5. If an Officer responding on an alarm deems the alarm to be false, the Officer will close the call with the disposition code **MALF** (Malfunction/Employee Error) and no report is required. Using this dispo code is very important for billing and records keeping purposes.
6. If an outside party (i.e.: neighbor) calls in an alarm which does not meet the above procedures then Dispatch will enter the call and broadcast as a **BOL only**. For example: A neighbor calls in reporting hearing an alarm bell somewhere on their block.

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CHIEF OF POLICE