



Commonwealth of Virginia - Common Language Best Practice

Standard Transmissions

Signal 1/Mayday – Responder in immediate danger

A situation in which either the responder or dispatcher has identified an immediate threat and must convey this to a partner, other responders or dispatcher without alerting the subject.

Signal 2 – Responder needs backup/assistance

A situation that is unstable, but there is no immediate life threat. Backup/law enforcement should expedite, but an overt request could escalate the situation.

Signal 3 – Responder taking subject into custody

A situation in which a responder wishes to alert a partner, other responders or dispatcher that the intention is to take a subject into custody and resistance is anticipated. This could also be in the context of a directive to take the subject into custody and expect resistance.

Signal 4 – Holding transmission of sensitive information, Please indicate when ready for transmission

Indicates caller is holding sensitive information relating to an individual(s) that is possibly within earshot

To implement the Commonwealth of Virginia's Best Practice for Common Language follow these steps:

1. Based on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Requirements and Governor Warner's Executive Order 102, Adopt, Practice, and Use Common Language for all Situations Requiring Mutual Aid
2. Endorse and Begin Using Plain Language for All Day-to-Day Operations Observing the Standard Transmissions Presented to the Left
3. Endorse Adoption of the International Phonetic Alphabet (if applicable)
4. Simplify internal common phrases to eliminate confusion that could arise when speaking to another agency (10-4 is universal and may be maintained if desired)
5. Ask Your Training Academy to Contact the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator's Office to Gain Access to Upcoming Training Materials

For more information about the process that was used to derive the best practice and a description of the items presented above please read the *FY 2006 Common Language Overview and Recommendations Report* provided on the Interoperability in Virginia website.

Endorsement from Across the Commonwealth

The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, Virginia Sheriff's Association and Virginia State Police have officially endorsed the Commonwealth's Common Language Best Practice. If your organization/agency is interested in formally endorsing this Best Practice please provide the Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator's Office with a formal letter on your letterhead to the following address: **P.O. Box 1475, Richmond, VA 23218**

The Initiative Action Team for Common Language Protocol

The organizations/agencies that collaborated to develop this best practice include: Virginia State Police, Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator's Office, Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials, Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, Virginia State Firefighters Association, Virginia Association of Governmental Emergency Medical Services Administrators, Chesterfield County Sheriff's Department, City of Virginia Beach, Henrico County Division of Police, Powhatan County, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, Virginia Department of Corrections, Virginia Department of Transportation, Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, Virginia Department of Fire Programs, and Virginia Department of Forestry.

For more information: <http://www.interoperability.virginia.gov> or
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