

DEKALB POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: **Mobile Data Browser (MDB) Use**

Policy #: **301.4**

Effective Since: 8-21-03

Originally Issued As: General Order # 43 of 1-20-97

Revision Effective: 1-1-19

FTO Training Task: # 11

Reference Material: MDC Manuals

ILEAP Standards Covered: OPR.01.06(b)

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for the use of mobile computers.

POLICY: It is the policy of the DeKalb Police Department to develop and provide the most effective, efficient and reliable technology to all members of the department, and to provide increased efficiency in communications, report writing, and other automated tasks through mobile computers.

DEFINITIONS:

MDB: Mobile Data Browser and associated software applications.

MDC: Mobile Data Computer; the computer system and associated applications.

Mobile Data Terminal: The actual computer which is used by officers in the field to run communications, report writing, NCIC/VIN inquiries, and other software applications.

Mailbox: An electronic holding area in a computer at headquarters where reports awaiting completion or approval are stored. Each user of the reporting software has a mailbox.

NCIC: National Criminal Information Center.

NLETS: National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System.

LEADS: Law Enforcement Agency Data System.

CAD: Computer Aided Dispatch.

CCH/CQH: Computerized Criminal History.

RMS: Records Management System.

System Administrator: Designated person in charge of the operation of the MDC's; currently the Support Commander.

PROCEDURES:

I. Training and Security :

- A. Only officers who have been trained to use the mobile computers will use them.
- B. Physical damage to or loss of the mobile computer and/or its components shall be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor, or on-duty supervisor if the employee's supervisor is not readily available.
- C. Officers using mobile computers must attain a minimum of Less Than Full Access LEADS certification prior to accessing LEADS inquiries. Information obtained through LEADS/NCIC is for criminal justice use only and may not be disseminated or provided to non-criminal justice personnel, unless otherwise prescribed by law.
- D. Officers will ensure that no unauthorized person(s) can view information on the mobile computer screen.
- E. Officers will ensure that the mobile computer is only used in a secure area, such as in a police vehicle or under the officer's immediate control if used outside the police vehicle. If left unattended, the mobile computer must be locked in a secure location such as a locked police vehicle, with the computer mount in the locked position.
- F. Officers are reminded that ALL information sent over the mobile computer is recorded and can be retrieved for review. MDB's are subject to the department's Computer Use & Electronic Messaging Policy, Policy 301.3.
- G. The department utilizes a designated System Administrator to coordinate the MDB system, the Records Division Commander or their designee.
- H. Passwords will be issued by the System Administrator for each software program that requires one. Users may also choose their own passwords. Officers will notify the system administrator of the need to have a new or revised password implemented.
- I. Passwords are confidential and may not be shared or disclosed.
- J. Officers will only use the password(s) assigned to them and may not use the password of another officers.

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- K. Officers who believe their password may have been discovered or used by another person will advise the system administrator of the breach of security and request that a new password be assigned.
- L. If a mobile computer is lost or stolen, the system administrator or his designee will be contacted immediately in person, by phone, or by electronic message in order to disable the wireless communication.
- M. Employees may not, without authorization from the System Administrator, introduce or download new software programs or other files. Employees may not manipulate or alter any current software running on the MDB or other agency-owned computer.
- N. Also see Policy 301.3, Computer Use & Electronic Messaging for complete information on computer use and electronic messaging.

II. Care of Mobile Computers

- A. Employees are responsible for the use and care of the mobile computers in their possession and may be held administratively and financially liable in the event of loss or damage, as with other department property.
 - 1. Mobile computers needing repair will be left in a location designated by the System Administrator. A repair request will be completed and left with the computer.
 - 2. Users will report to the System Administrator, prior to the end of the shift, any damage to mobile computers or vehicle mounts, except for normal wear and tear.
- B. Employees will not place drinks, food, or other items directly on the computer, or in a location that may cause a spill onto the computer.
- C. Magnetic objects shall not be placed close to the mobile computer.
- D. Only the System Administrator or authorized personnel may add, delete, or modify the software on the computer.
- E. The System Administrator will conduct an annual inventory and routine maintenance of the mobile computers.

III. Data Communication Procedures

- A. When operating a vehicle, the safe operation of the vehicle is the officer's primary responsibility. Using the mobile computer is always of secondary importance. When the vehicle is moving, officers shall limit use of the mobile computer to the following:
 - 1. Single keystroke operations, such as the arrival button, in-service button, etc.
 - 2. Vehicle registration or person checks - only when traffic conditions permit safe submittal.
- [ILEAP OPR.01.06(b)]
- B. If available, the mobile computer will be used for the routine communication of:
 - 1. Marking in and out of service.
 - 2. Messages.
 - 3. Status Changes.
 - 4. Marking en-route and on-scene.
 - 5. Changing officer's location
 - 6. Clearing calls; backup officers will mark "available" and the officer clearing the call will use the appropriate disposition, along with any comments necessary. Officers will use the comments area whenever possible to document information about the disposition or any actions taken during the call.
 - 7. Other information between dispatchers and officers.
 - C. By using the mobile computer, the radio is kept clear for emergency traffic. This does not preclude officers or telecommunicators from using the radio during emergencies or for officer safety reasons, or when officers are away from their vehicles.
 - D. Officers will NOT mark out on traffic stops over the mobile computers alone (without calling in the traffic stop via the police radio system), unless engaged in a special traffic assignment

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where a telecommunicator is directly monitoring the stops on a CAD dispatch computer.

Officers on a traffic stop will mark "available" at the conclusion of the stop, unless a case report will be written, at which time the stop will be cleared with a disposition. Officers should confirm their status with the telecommunicator when they clear.

- E. The MDB's automatically refresh the status of on-duty units signed into the system.
- F. Unless marking in for an extra-duty or off-duty detail, officers will NOT change their status from available to busy without first advising Telecommunications. Officers may select the appropriate busy status for their detail (e.g. court, training, personal break). Officers already dispatched on a call or assignment may also, without telecommunicator approval, change their busy status to give updates on location changes or other information.
- G. Information sent over the car-to-car messaging section should be limited to short messages that are appropriate in nature. Generally, if inappropriate for the radio it is also inappropriate for the computer. The same standards as for radio communications apply also to communications over the mobile computers.
- H. **All messages sent via the mobile computer are recorded and subject to open records discovery.**
- I. Officers will report any problems with mobile computers relating to communications personnel or communications procedures through their supervisor to a communications supervisor.
- J. When an officer experiences an error or malfunction during the transmission of a message to communications, the officer should contact communications by radio or other means to confirm that Communications received the message and has their correct unit status.
- K. Communications personnel will give a radio broadcast when a malfunction in CAD or other systems causes the communications to the mobile computers to go offline. A broadcast will also be sent once the system is back online. Officers may need to restart their computers in order to re-establish communications.

L. **Signing On/Signing Off**

- 1. Officers must sign on to the mobile computer immediately after roll call, or when beginning duty if not attending a roll call.
- 2. Sign on steps are as follows:
 - a. Turn mobile computer on, if not already on.
 - b. Activate modem if necessary.
 - c. Activate MDB program if necessary (some MDB's log on automatically)
 - d. Enter employee number in field labeled "Officer 1."
 - e. Enter employee MDB password in field labeled "Password." Officers may change their password by contacting the system administrator.
 - f. Enter badge number in field labeled "Beat," e.g., 12, D6, C4, S5, L1.
 - g. Enter numeric shift designator in field labeled "Shift." Appropriate numeric shift designators are:
 - 1 = Day Shift
 - 2 = Second Shift
 - 3 = Night Shift
 - 4 = Overlap Shift
 - h. Enter patrol car mileage in field labeled "Start Mileage."
 - i. Complete field labeled "Officer 2" and associated password field, if appropriate.
- 3. Officers shall not sign on to the mobile computer if they are off duty. Signing on to a mobile computer is permitted only when the officer is working his/her regular tour of duty or regular tour of duty in an overtime capacity.
- 4. Officers must sign off at the end of their tour of duty and enter ending mileage in the field labeled "Mileage."
- 5. If an officer has to work over on reports, booking a prisoner, paperwork, etc. they should remain on duty in CAD and reassign unit status as needed. Once the officer

completes their task(s), they should then sign off in CAD as well as make an on-the-air notification of going off-duty.

M. **LEADS Access** : LEADS access on the mobile computer shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Motor vehicle registrations:
 - a. By vehicle license number.
 - b. By vehicle identification number.
 2. Motor vehicle wanted inquiries:
 - a. By vehicle license number.
 - b. By vehicle identification number.
 3. Drivers license inquiry:
 - a. By name and date of birth.
 - b. By drivers license number.
 4. Wanted persons check:
 - a. By name and date of birth.
 - b. By name and social security number.
 5. Stolen article inquiry:
 - a. By article type and serial number.
 - b. By article type and owner applied number.
 6. Haz Mat Inquiry - by placard number
- M. When officers receive a "hit" (wanted response) on a person, vehicle, or article, they must notify a telecommunicator who will submit the LEADS entry and institute standard procedures for verification on wanted returns. Officers are not to take action based solely on hits via the mobile computer.
- N. Telecommunicators may not electronically forward a CCH return to an officer's mobile computer.
- O. LEADS returns are printed as follows:
1. When requested by the officer either verbally or via e-messaging.
 2. When the officer submits any LEADS requests to a telecommunicator for processing, i.e., the officer is not able to print a response from the mobile computer.

IV. Procedures for Dispatching Events Via the CAD /MDC System

A. Telecommunicator 's Responsibilities :

1. Receive and process calls for service.
2. Select and dispatch police units.
3. Prioritize calls for service according to Communications' Standard Operating Procedures.
Call priority is listed below, in order from most to least urgent:
 - a. Immediate - a life-threatening situation or when there exists a potential for personal injury to a citizen or officers.
 - b. Urgent - an event less serious than an immediate call but nevertheless requiring an urgent response.
 - c. Normal - an event that is of low priority and will be dispatched as soon as practical, after more urgent and immediate calls.
4. Assign calls to specific units for all cases except when units are not readily available; however, for immediate or urgent calls when no units are shown in service, telecommunicators are authorized to pull officers from breaks, follow-ups, non-police activities, or low-priority calls to handle the more urgent call.
5. The dispatching of units carries the full authority of an order unless countermanded by a supervisor.
6. Enter officers into service if the officer does not have a mobile computer, or the mobile computer is not working.
7. Monitor the status of officers.

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8. Control the number of police units that check out of service on non-police activities (e.g. breaks) so there are sufficient units available to answer calls for services, unless countermanded by a supervisor. Telecommunicators should notify the shift supervisor whenever a majority of on-duty police units have a busy status for non-police activities.
9. Check on an officer's status within an appropriate time, depending on the nature of the call.
10. Notify the Communications Commander or Coordinator of any violations of department policy.
11. Maintain a working knowledge of the CAD System.

B. Officer's Responsibilities :

1. Mark in service for duty or extra-duty details, using the mobile computer when possible. Mark out of service when the duty is ended, also using the mobile computer when possible. Units without access to mobile computers will use the police radio.
2. Respond to all dispatched calls for service promptly, using the most direct route available and obeying all traffic laws.
3. Field officers below the rank of Commander will be available for assignment by mobile computer or radio.
4. Police officers, except command and staff positions, will check in and out of service when on-duty.
5. Zone officers will remain in their assigned areas unless directed by a supervisor or telecommunicator, or when a police purpose is to be served.
6. Officers will respond to all calls sent by the telecommunicator or supervisor.
7. Officers in proximity to a dispatched call, and not assigned by Communications, will advise the telecommunicator prior to responding to the call.
8. Use their assigned number and receive clearance from the telecommunicator prior to transmitting any message other than a unit number with a single ten code.

C. Traffic Stops :

1. Officers may NOT use the mobile computer to self-initiate a traffic stop; radio notification must be made.
2. Officers shall check in-service from a traffic contact via the mobile computer, but they must notify Communications by radio they are available as well.
3. Officers may use the mobile computer to check a subject through LEADS. Officers must exercise caution in using LEADS - they should not become engrossed in reading the MDB screen to the detriment of safety. When necessary for safety, officers should radio their LEADS request to Communications to allow better observation of their contact.

D. Calls for Service:

1. All emergency calls for service will be audibly dispatched by radio as well as by MDB.
2. Officers shall use the MDB for checking en route to a call, if not done so by the telecommunicator.
3. Officers shall use the MDB to show their arrival to a call, if not done so by the telecommunicator.
4. Officers shall use the MDB to check in service from a call, as well as broadcasting 10-8 and/or 10-24 over the air. Officers shall not delay checking in service either on the air or by MDB for the purposes of avoiding assignment to another call for service.
 - a. Back up officers check in service using the "Available" button.
 - j. Primary officers check in service using the "Disposition" button - making sure to select the proper disposition code and to enter appropriate comments.

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5. Officers shall enter sufficient comments to all calls for service not generating an official police report for review and call comprehension by supervisors. As a general rule, this will include names of people the officer contacts, a statement of the situation, and a summary of actions taken by the officer to resolve the call.
6. Once assigned to a call for service as a back up unit, officers may check out as a back up unit using the MDB on non-emergency calls.
7. Officers may use the MDB for all busy status changes, such as breaks, meals, court, etc. When using the MDB to show a busy status, patrol officers must check to see if there are calls on hold that may need to be handled first.
8. Officers should select the appropriate busy status from the CAD options, including location information and any other noteworthy items.

E. Supervisor's Responsibilities :

1. Ensure that employees under their command use the communications system properly and that all dispatched calls are handled promptly and appropriately.
2. Notify the Communications Coordinator of circumstances that may affect the normal dispatching of police units.
3. Ensure that special assignments are made known to Communications at the beginning of a shift, or as soon as practical, thereby allowing telecommunicators to consider these assignments when dispatching calls for service.
4. Appropriately coordinate the police response to an emergency.
5. Employees must adhere to the procedures in this policy, and supervisors should address any deviations or direct disobedience of established procedures with a counseling session or disciplinary action.

Policy originally issued 8-21-03; this revision becomes effective on 1-1-19 by authority of the Chief of Police.

NOTE: This policy and procedure summarizes the department's position on this specific matter. This policy is for general direction and guidance primarily designed for use by the department's members. This policy is for internal use only and does not create or enlarge an officer's liability in any way. This policy shall not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of an internal departmental complaint and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.