

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: October 2, 2015

NUMBER: 2.07 – COMMUNICATIONS

SUBJECT: SIGALERT BULLETINS

RELATED POLICY: [2.07](#)

ORIGINATING DIVISION: COMMUNICATIONS

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

SUPERSEDES: DP 2.07 – 01/18/2013

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for initiating and implementing Sigalert Bulletins.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. BACKGROUND

Sigalert is a means of advising the general public of emergency conditions that may exist within the County. This is accomplished through the dissemination of bulletins by local participating commercial radio stations in cooperation with this Department.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Requests for Sigalert Bulletins may originate from any law enforcement agency in the county. A ranking officer from the originating agency must make the request, except for the California Highway Patrol. Requests from the California Highway Patrol will be received from any of their members.

B. Guidelines for initiating Sigalert Bulletins:

1. Severe traffic congestion - the general rule should be that the congestion would extend for more than thirty minutes. In some cases, it is appropriate to suggest detours as part of the bulletin, but generally it will be desirable to simply state the location of the congestion with no suggestion as to detours.
2. Heavy fog conditions - isolated areas which are a definite hazard to traffic.
3. Flooding conditions.
4. Major fires - bulletins on fires should contain information relating to the potential danger to homes in the area and an appeal for the public to stay away from the area (this will allow unimpeded movement of fire fighting equipment).
5. Snow or icy road conditions.

V. RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREPARING SIGALERT BULLETINS

- A. The San Diego Police Department Communications Division will administer the Sigalert Program.
- B. Communications personnel shall relay requests for Sigalert Bulletins to the Watch Commander's Office.
 1. Upon approval from the field sergeant, Communications shall prepare the bulletin and broadcast it.
 2. The Watch Commander's Office shall notify the Public Information Officer as soon as possible, with the information for a general press release, if appropriate.
 3. The Public Information Officer will forward the information to the local news media for public broadcast and post the information via social media.
- C. Information on emergency conditions that will affect only a small number of persons or a select group should not normally result in a Sigalert Bulletin. Exceptions can be made in life-threatening situations.
- D. When preparing bulletins, the following factors should be considered:
 1. Special attention should be given to content and wording;

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2. Bulletins must be prepared in plain language. Codes should never be used;
 3. When possible, the bulletin should contain an estimated time the emergency condition is expected to continue; and,
 4. Each bulletin shall be consecutively numbered, dated, and timed.
- E. Sample Bulletin:

Sigalert Bulletin #02-53, 051492, 1430 hours. The San Diego Police Department advises El Cajon Boulevard between Fairmount Avenue and 43rd Street will be closed in both directions due to a major traffic accident. This condition is expected to continue for several hours. Motorists are advised to take alternate routes and avoid the area.

VI. CANCELLATION OF BULLETINS

- A. Public compliance to these bulletins is directly related to promptness and accuracy. It is imperative that the public be informed as early as possible of the commencement and cessation of the condition.
- B. Sample Cancellation Bulletin:

Sigalert Bulletin #02-53, 051492, 2045 hours. The San Diego Police Department advises El Cajon Boulevard between Fairmount Avenue and 43rd Street is now open for normal traffic.