



To: Steve Dittoe, Operations Manager
From: Karl Christian, Operations Support Specialist
Rich McQuade, Operations Coordinator
Date: 6/7/2016
Re: EFD CFS 618 – 101 W Marine View Dr

This memo is to document the issues that occurred with the upgrade of the commercial fire in Everett on Saturday, June 4, 2016.

BACKGROUND:

Unless noted otherwise, times in this document are from the CAD CFS.

On 6/4/16 at 18:55:25, a FC (Fire Commercial) incident was entered for the above address. Recommendations were received, and the call was dispatched at 18:55:33 hours. Additional narrative was added at 18:56:19. BNSF employee advising no report of flames, just smoke. This was relayed to B1 at 18:57:17 (recorder time). At 18:57:39 (recorder time) B1 had dispatch cancel all non-Everett rigs due to the previous debris fires at this location. At 18:58:19, E61 and L62 acknowledged the cancelation, and were made AVL (available) in CAD at that time. At 19:05:55, the police side of the incident was change to the type code AF (assist fire) for traffic control.

At 19:07:36 (recorder time) upon arrival, B1 advised dispatch to upgrade to a second alarm, noted in CAD at 19:07:49. The dispatcher brought up the recommendation window at 19:07:53. As noted by the dispatchers involved, they were only able to see the unfulfilled recommendations from the initial dispatch (the canceled units). At that point, E4 and L62 were the units being recommended. Both dispatchers involved noted that the Upgrade button in the recommendation window was greyed out. Over the next approximately six minutes, three fire dispatchers and the dispatch Supervisor all tried to upgrade the alarm level with the same results, only 2 units recommended, and the Upgrade button greyed out. During this time IN3 self-dispatched at 19:09:42, and E4 self-dispatched at 19:09:58.

At 19:11:42, recommendations were viewed again by the dispatcher, and L62 was re-dispatched to the incident.

At 19:29:39 (Recorder time) B1 upgraded the incident to a third alarm.

At 19:30:26 the call was successfully upgraded to a second alarm, then immediately upgraded to a third alarm at 19:30:36. The third alarm was dispatched at 19:30:46.

On Sunday morning, June 5, 2016, I responded to SNOPAC to test scenarios in DELTA CAD. Below are the results of my tests:



TEST ONE:

I attempted to recreate the scenario the dispatcher suggested in his email detailing what occurred during the attempt to upgrade the alarm level. The dispatcher reported, "The only thing I can think of is that possibly New World was stuck on not fulfilling the initial alarm request because L62 was pulled off and canceled? Perhaps once it got added back then it was able to unlock itself and then get onto additional requests."

It is correct that two units made AVL after the initial dispatch were re-recommended to fulfill the original request, but the upgrade button was only greyed out during the refresh. The refresh was approximately 1 second. This was only when the recommendations window was refreshing upon opening again.

In DELTA I didn't have any issue as he described with the button greyed out. When upgraded to a 2 alarm, the refresh was again approximate with the stopwatch, 2.1 seconds.

Following this test I was forwarded an email from Rick Robinson. He questioned the change in the police type code to AF, and whether or not the change in the police type code could have caused the inability to upgrade the alarm level.

TEST TWO:

On my secondary test adding in the scenario suggested by R. Robinson, I followed the same steps as with the previous test:

- Initial entry of the FC – 101 W Marine View Dr
- Requested recommendations for dispatch
- Accepted the recommendation, and dispatched the call
- Made two units AVL that were canceled by the Batt Chief
- **NEW STEP:** Changed the Police type to AF
- **NEW STEP:** Made sure to select back the fire CFS on my screen
- Hit the Recommend button to bring up the Recommendations/Upgrade window

It was at this point the issue noted by the dispatchers was recreated. **The Upgrade button was greyed out.**

I contacted Operations Coordinator Rich McQuade. I wanted a second set of eyes to see the results of the second test. When Rich arrived, we tested it again, with the same results. Rich also tested a location in FD 1/Lynnwood area, with the same results.

It appeared a cascade of events caused the Upgrade button to be inaccessible to the dispatcher.

- The cancellation of units initially dispatched
- The change of the police type code to AF

With those two events added to any test of FC achieved the same results, a greyed out Upgrade button, with the canceled units being the only units in the recommendation window. This was tested again Monday morning to include mock calls in Everett, Monroe, Lynnwood, and Marysville.



After consulting with Director Kurt Mills and Operations Manager Steve Dittoe on Sunday afternoon, our recommendation was to not combine any FIRE responses (something burning) with police type incidents. This would be fires only, most medical calls don't use alarm levels (MCI being the exception).

We also consulted the on-call SNOCOM Operations Manager Karen McKay regarding our recommendation, and she concurred.

We notified SNOPAC staff, and she notified SNOCOM staff of the work-around until this issue could be addressed.

We conducted additional testing Monday morning, which included re-dispatching the canceled units from the recommendation window, then attempting to upgrade the call to a second alarm. We were able to determine through multiple tests this would have cleared up the issue and would have allowed the dispatcher to successfully upgrade the alarm level.

It is my observation from the events that occurred, the dispatchers became singularly focused on the issue with the Upgrade button, and did not seize the opportunity to troubleshoot anything other than retrying the recommendation again several times.

A suggestion was made that the dispatcher could have used the Preview function on the recommendation screen to manually dispatch the second alarm units. In theory this is true, but Preview only gives you the types of units to fulfill the second alarm, not the specific units. The dispatcher would then need to open a list of all available units, pick units on a best estimate basis, and add them to the call.

Since this would be a rare occurrence in normal day-to-day operations (the cascade of events), we are recommending returning to the normal procedure and combine fire/police incidents when appropriate. This would be backed up with immediate additional training for the dispatchers to accept the recommendation and re-dispatch the canceled units to fulfill the original recommendation prior to upgrading the alarm level. This would not be an everyday occurrence since it appears the specific set of circumstances outlined above would need to occur before this would happen again.

This issue has been submitted to NWS as a high priority issue, SysAid #5139 / Case 2218453, and NWS (Tim Morehouse) is already engaged and working on the issue.

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