
	LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT Ardmore, Pennsylvania	
	Policy 3.21.2	
Subject:		Distribution:
Mobile Data Computers		All Personnel
Date of Issue:	Expiration Date:	Rescinds:
06-10-2019	Until Amended or Rescinded	3.21.2 (Issued 06-07-2018)
References:		
N/A		
By Authority of:		
		Superintendent of Police

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines regulating the access and dissemination of information contained in national, state and local databases and records systems. This policy also sets forth guidelines and procedures for use and care of the Mobile Data Computers (MDC).

POLICY

Information displayed on the MDC is confidential, and it is prohibited for unauthorized persons to view or receive such information. Only Lower Merion Township Police Department personnel who are trained and certified MDC operators are permitted to access CLEAN/NCIC information via the MDC.

Certified MDC operators are not permitted to access CLEAN/NCIC information for personal use or any use that is other than for official police business. All Department personnel who access databases or reporting systems from an MDC or other electronic equipment shall strictly observe regulations for such operations set forth in policies, procedures and guidelines of the Federal Communications Commission, CLEAN, NCIC, Township and the Police Department.

DEFINITIONS

CLEAN – Commonwealth Law Enforcement Assistance Network. A state-maintained computer system that provides vital criminal-record, driver-license and motor-vehicle data to Pennsylvania law-enforcement officers.

Mobile Data Computer (MDC) - A communication device capable of transmitting and receiving data between mobile units and locations equipped with fixed radio equipment. An MDC provides direct user access to national, state and local computer databases

and records systems.

NCIC – National Crime Information Center. A federal computerized index of criminal justice information (i.e., criminal record history information, fugitives, stolen properties, missing persons) available to federal, state, local law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies.

PROCEDURE

A. Use and Dissemination of Information

1. Information contained in the national, state or local databases is not in the public domain and is made available for law enforcement purposes only.
2. Information received from national, state and local databases shall not be considered probable cause for arrest until the information has been properly verified for accuracy and confirmed with the agency that entered the record. “Hit” information shall be relayed immediately to Communications Center personnel who will verify the validity of the “Hit.”

B. MDC Communication

1. MDCs are intended to be used in conjunction with voice radio communications and are not intended to replace voice radio communications. MDCs may be used to reduce voice radio transmissions, enhance field personnel safety and provide a secure means of transmitting information and messages.
2. Initiating incidents, arriving at and clearing scenes, coding, and the providing of dispositions should still be conducted via radio. If unusual circumstances warrant the use of the MDC for any of these purposes, a supervisor shall be informed as soon as practicable.
3. MDCs may be used to reduce radio traffic between communications personnel and field personnel by allowing the officer to query vehicle, person, article, and firearms information directly from the MDC. Certified field personnel shall normally conduct these checks via the MDC unless it is deemed unsafe to do so. Officers should utilize appropriate cover/contact safety measures when involved in subject/suspect investigations while actively using the MDC.
4. During routine patrol, common sense and safe driving practices dictate that the officer will focus his/her attention on the safe operation of the patrol vehicle and will view the MDC screen ONLY when the vehicle is not in motion. The MDC screen will be placed in the down position when the vehicle is in motion to prevent a sight obstruction or distraction to the officer. The officer will acknowledge an MDC message ONLY when the vehicle is stationary.

C. Specific Prohibited MDC Messaging

1. Only appropriate business messages, either between MDCs or between communications personnel and field units, are permitted. Messages or transmissions containing any of the following material are strictly prohibited:
 - a. Any remarks or comments derogatory to the reputation or image of the Lower Merion Township Police Department.
 - b. Any remarks or comments derogatory to the reputation or character of any employee of Lower Merion Township, the Police Department, Township official, or the public at large.
 - c. Any remarks or comments that are derogatory or demeaning to any individual's or group's race, sex, ethnic origin, or religious affiliation.
 - d. Any remarks or comments containing or implying vulgar, degrading, obscene or unprofessional language.
 - e. Any remarks or comments not authorized by either the Lower Merion Township Police Department or the Montgomery County Emergency Communications Center Policies or Training Programs.

D. General Responsibilities, Training and Equipment Care

1. Officers shall inspect the condition of the MDC and log on to the system at the beginning of the shift. Inspection of the MDC for damage or missing parts shall be recorded on the officer's daily vehicle sheet at the start of the tour of duty and any damage or problem is to be noted and immediately reported to a shift supervisor. A report is required if any damage is detected. The vehicle operator shall be held responsible for any damage to an MDC that is not immediately reported to a supervisor.
2. Officers experiencing MDC malfunctions shall notify their immediate supervisor and prepare an ALERT report, classified as an "Equipment Breakdown" (code 6021), in which the malfunction is described.
3. All officers are to log off the MDC system at the end of their tour of duty, and if the vehicle is not being used on the next shift, the screen is to be placed down in a locked position and the MDC must be shut down properly and shut off as to not drain the vehicle battery.
4. The MDC system may only be used by personnel who have received Department sponsored training. Use of the CLEAN/NCIC system is regulated by federal and state criteria and all users are required to be certified prior to utilizing this system.

5. All transmissions shall be in support of official law enforcement duties and responsibilities and conducted in a professional manner and purpose.
6. Supervisors shall ensure that the procedures articulated in this policy are strictly adhered to. All message and CLEAN/NCIC activity via the MDC is monitored, recorded and stored by the Police Department Server and NCIC Center in Harrisburg. The State Police and authorized Police Department personnel may do a periodic review of all MDC activity. Inappropriate use of the MDC may lead to disciplinary action.