GENERAL ORDER
PORT WASHINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT:	**MOBILE DATA COMPUTER SYSTEM**	NUMBER:	6.1.7
		ISSUED:	5/5/09
SCOPE: All Police Personnel		EFFECTIVE:	5/5/09
DISTRIBUTION: General Orders Manual		☒ RESCINDS	30.1
		☐ AMENDS	
REFERENCE:		WILEAG 3RD EDITION STANDARDS: 10.2.1	

INDEX AS: MDCS
Mobile Data Computer System
Open Records Law, Mobile Data Computer System

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Order is to provide officers with guidelines for the proper use of the Port Washington Police Department's mobile data computer system and mobile data computers.

This Order consists of the following numbered sections.

I.   POLICY
II.   PROCEDURES: USE OF MOBILE DATA COMPUTERS IN GENERAL
III.   SYSTEM SHUT DOWN
IV.   DUTY STATUS
V.   ACCESS TO INFORMATION
VI.   HIT CONFIRMATION
VII.   INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION
VIII.   MAINTENANCE
IX.   VOICE COMMUNICATION
X.   SYSTEM USE; ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING
XI.   OPEN RECORDS LAW

I.   **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Port Washington Police Department to install mobile data computers in department patrol vehicles, as necessary.

II.   **PROCEDURES: USE OF MOBILE DATA COMPUTERS IN GENERAL**

The mobile data communication system (MDCS) is a communications component of the Port Washington Police Department. The use of the MDCS is, in part, an

extension of the Wisconsin TIME system and, as such, usage is governed by the TIME system and Port Washington Police Department Policy #24.03.

Only personnel authorized by the Chief of Police shall be allowed to operate the MDCS, and those authorized personnel will be trained and certified through the TIME system – Mobile Data Terminal training program in the operation of the TIME system. Information received on the MDCS is provided for law enforcement purposes. MDCS users should guard against the unintentional or improper dissemination of information and messages received via the MDCS. The MDCS also allows officers to communicate between themselves and other officers, the Sheriff's Department and other local police departments.

The MDCS should only be used while the police vehicle is stopped, except for short transmissions regarding incident information. While the police vehicle is in motion, the mobile data computer (MDC) and mount should be kept in the "airbag compliant" position. **DO NOT USE THE MDC AS A TRAY OR REST FOR ANY ITEMS OR ANY THINGS.**

III. SYSTEM SHUT DOWN

Officers shall shut down all computer, radio and radar equipment when they are going to be away from their police vehicle for an extended period of time or pending completion of their tour of duty so as to prevent the vehicle battery from discharging unnecessarily.

IV. DUTY STATUS

Logging in service, out of service, on duty or off duty on the MDCS does not replace the need to also properly log in and out of service with the dispatcher using the voice radio system. MDCS users shall log on to and off of the system in the following manner:

1. Log on to the system at the start of a shift or after proper temporary log off using correct identifying information. Using log in identification other than your own at any time on the MDCS is prohibited.

2. Properly log off of the MDCS at the end of each shift.

V. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The MDCS may be used to access driver's license files, vehicle registration information and other information through the TIME System. MDCS operators shall adhere to the following:

1. TIME System rules regarding use of the TIME System shall be adhered to. (See TIME System Mobile Data Terminal Training Handout and Port Washington Police Department Policy #24.03.)

2. The system shall only be used for valid law enforcement purposes.

3. TIME system resources shall not be used unnecessarily, for personal gain, commercial gain or for personal entertainment.

4. Whenever a revoked or suspended driver is encountered, MDCS users should confirm the driver's status with the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Consolidated Dispatch Center in a timely manner, using voice or telephone communications.

VI.   **"HIT" CONFIRMATION**

MDCS users shall confirm all NCIC, CIB or other hits through the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Consolidated Dispatch Center in a timely manner using voice communications. Do not use the MDCS to make direct contact with other agencies or officers to confirm warrant or wanted status. Use the regular voice channels to confirm the following situations with the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Consolidated Dispatch Center:

1. Anytime a hit or wanted status is received as a result of an MDCS generated inquiry.

2. Anytime the MDCS operator cannot accurately interpret a response.

VII.   **INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS**

The MDCS can be used for official communications between the mobile unit and other department units, other law enforcement units or agencies. The MDCS has the capability of sending interdepartmental messages to "all points" or to a restricted group. Officers using this capability must be careful to follow-up on the continuing status of this type of message.

In most cases, it is preferable to have general information or emergency notification messages transmitted by the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Consolidated Dispatch Center so that proper follow-up procedures can be observed by dispatch center personnel. The following guidelines shall be followed by all MDCS users:

1. The interdepartmental message capability of the system shall not be used for personal gain, or commercial gain of others, or for personal entertainment.

2. Interdepartmental messages must relate to legitimate law enforcement purposes.

3. Clear and concise language should be used, avoiding slang, personal codes or ten signals.

4.   The use of obscene, profane, discriminatory, demeaning or degrading language in any MDCS message is strictly prohibited.

5.   The MDCS shall not be used to send greetings or other personal messages to other officers, groups of officers or agencies.

VIII.   MAINTENANCE

Officers shall not remount, rewire, tamper with or modify any MDCS terminal, computer or radio equipment except as otherwise authorized by department policy. All equipment and system malfunctions should be reported to the supervisor.

IX.   VOICE COMMUNICATION

The MDCS is not a replacement for voice communications. Proper use of the system can increase officer safety and reduce the load on the voice radio channels. Officers shall, however, follow regular radio procedures with the Port Washington Police Department or Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department dispatch center using the voice radio channels to keep the dispatch center and other officers advised of updated information.

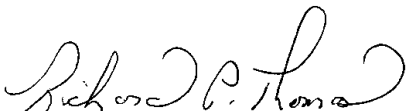## X.   SYSTEM USE; ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING

The Chief of Police, Sheriff or his/her designee will periodically review the MDCS messages initiated and received by units in this police department to insure full compliance with this policy. Whenever possible, and when required by law, the Chief of Police, Sheriff or his/her designee will make and provide copies of MDCS message traffic to persons making valid requests for information under applicable state statutes.

XII.   OPEN RECORDS LAW

While the information received on the MDCS is often confidential, messages and other traffic may fall under the Wisconsin Open Records Law and may be available to defendants or the public under either discovery statutes or the open records provisions of Wisconsin law.

APPROVED: **DATE:**

Richard P. Thomas   5/5/09

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Chief Richard P. Thomas