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Valcour Community Alert Code & Bulletin Policy

Approved By:
Valcour Governance
Board

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of an alert code is to convey to responding police personnel a public safety concern to protect themselves and the public from potential harm. They are also used to provide pertinent information and resources to assist officers in dealing with people, vehicles, and incidents.
- 1.2 The purpose of a bulletin is to convey timely and relevant information to police personnel and to protect themselves and the public from potential harm. They are also used to provide users with system wide information relevant to the operation of the Valcour system.
- 1.3 The purpose of the alert code and bulletin policy and procedure is to provide guidelines for their establishment, use and removal.

2. Goal

- 2.1 The goal is to maintain accurate and credible alert codes and bulletins.
- 2.2 The goal is also to provide responding police personnel with both timely and accurate information that will allow them to protect themselves, the public and to provide information to properly handle an incident.
- 2.3 An ancillary goal is to use bulletins to provide system wide information relative to the operation of the Valcour system.

3. Policy

- 3.1 It shall be policy of the Valcour Governance Board to establish alert codes and define them for use by all contributing agencies of the network based on the recommendation of the Program Managers.
- 3.2 It shall also be the policy of Valcour Governance Board to encourage users and user agencies to ensure the accuracy of the alert codes by only establishing a code in accordance with this policy, to remove a code whenever it no longer applies to the situation and to hear appeals regarding their use.
 - a. Agency Heads/Program Managers shall also be the point of contact for the Valcour Governance Board should they need assistance.
- 3.3 It shall be the policy of the Valcour Governance Board to establish rules for when a bulletin is posted and for when a bulletin is removed.

4. Alert Codes

- 4.1 The following alert code types are established:
 - a. Location
 - i. Hazard – This code shall be used to indicate any object, situation, or behavior at the location that has potential to cause injury, ill health, or damage to property.

- ii. Contact – This code shall be used to list names of people/businesses who can be contacted about the location.
- iii. Other – This code shall be used to indicate any other important information about this location that does not fall under the code of Hazard or Contact.
- b. Name
 - i. Danger – This code shall be used on a name to indicate any threats to responder safety. **Examples include Universal Precautions, Carries a knife, Threatened Police, etc**
 - ii. Informational – This code shall be used on a name to provide any relevant information about the person that does not fall under the code of Danger, Trespass or Contact.
 - iii. Trespass – This code shall be used to indicate that the individual has been trespassed from a certain location(s).
 - iv. Contact – This code shall be used to indicate that the individual has someone that can be contacted about the individual. Examples include parents, caregivers, parole officers, etc.
- c. Vehicle
 - i. Vehicle Alert – This code shall be used to indicate any responder safety issues as well as any other important information regarding the vehicle.

5. Alert Code Procedures

- 5.1 Any authorized system user from a contributing agency may assign an alert code to an individual, location or vehicle adhering to the following procedure.
 - a. Documentation in the Notes field for each alert code type entered is REQUIRED. This shall include the name of the user who entered it, their agency and the date it was entered.
 - b. Alert codes shall be removed by the contributing agency when they no longer apply to the situation or individual.
 - c. An agency must be prepared to justify the use of an alert code if it's questioned by anyone.
 - d. Generally, it is the responsibility of the user agency to maintain the accuracy of their data. Program Managers shall ensure that their respective agencies use the appropriate alert codes, maintaining the accuracy of reporting, and sun-setting inappropriate alert codes should they no longer apply.
- 5.2 Appeal of the use of an alert code.
 - a. If a complaint is received by the Valcour Governance Board concerning the use of an alert by a contributing law enforcement agency, then that agency shall be contacted, and the complaint forwarded to the agency head and program manager.
 - b. If anyone wishes to appeal the decision of a contributing law enforcement agency head regarding the use of an alert code, they may appeal to the Valcour Governance Board.
 - c. The Valcour Governance Board shall determine whether the alert code was properly applied and adheres to this policy.
 - d. If the use of the alert code does not fit within this policy, then the Valcour Governance Board may recommend that it be modified or removed.

6. Bulletins

6.1 The following bulletin types are established

- a. System Notifications (purple)- These bulletins shall be reserved for the sole purpose of notifying users of system updates, changes, or other issues globally affecting users. The use of system bulletins is restricted to Crosswinds and Super Users only.
- b. High Danger/Critical bulletins (red)- These bulletins are used for officer/responder safety items where there are threats to life safety or to indicate a hazard to a responder.
- c. Medium Cautionary bulletins (orange)- These bulletins are used to notify users that a person, place, or thing may be wanted or stolen.
- d. Low Non-critical bulletins (yellow)- These bulletins are used to notify users that a person may be a suspect, need to be trespassed, need to be cited for a non-violent offense.
- e. Informational bulletins (green)- These bulletins are used to notify users of noteworthy items such as events, low priority BOL notices, etc, which may not fall in any other category.

7. Bulletin Procedures

7.1 Any authorized system user from a contributing agency may enter a bulletin adhering to the following procedure:

- a. Documentation as to who/what is being sought must be noted in the body of the text.
- b. Bulletins shall be removed by the contributing agency when the person/item/vehicle is no longer being sought after. If the bulletin relates to an NCIC entry, the bulletin MUST be removed when the NCIC entry is removed.
- c. It is the responsibility of the user agency to ensure the accuracy of the bulletin. Program Managers shall ensure their respective agencies use the appropriate bulletin level(s) and that data contained in the bulletins are timely and accurate.
- d. Bulletins should generally be short lived, less than one week. Only in officer safety or critical incident cases should a bulletin last longer than one week. The duration of bulletins which are only displayed within a user's own agency may exceed the one-week guideline at the discretion of the Program Manager or Agency Head.

7.2 Appeal / Removal of Bulletins

- a. If a complaint is received by the Valcour Governance Board concerning the use of a bulletin by a contributing law enforcement agency, then that agency shall be contacted, and the complaint forwarded to the agency head and program manager.
- b. If anyone wishes to appeal the decision of a contributing law enforcement agency head regarding the use of a bulletin, they may appeal to the Valcour Governance Board.
- c. The Valcour Governance Board shall determine whether the bulletin was properly applied and adheres to this policy.

- d. If the use of the bulletin does not fit within this policy, then the Valcour Governance Board may recommend that it be modified or removed.