
# Audio Verification and Notification Procedures

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**Sponsor** Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA)

## Contents

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## Introduction

It has been proven that verifying an alarm signal by a monitoring central station will drastically reduce false dispatches. This standard defines just one such method by which false dispatches can be reduced in systems that are audio enabled to allow the monitoring facility to communicate with the end user in a means other than traditional telephone communications. This standard takes an alternate approach to verification and defines various methods of attaining audio verification.

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# Alarm Verification and Notification Procedures

## 1 Scope

This standard has been prepared under the direction of the Security Industry Standards Council (SISC) members with the participation of Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA) members, Security Industry Association (SIA) members, National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (NBFAA) members, ASIS members and Canadian Alarm Association (CANASA) members. This standard has been developed to allow a consistent method for processing audio enabled alarms and to achieve increased efficiencies by reducing costs and eliminating wasteful efforts associated with potential false alarms. This standard is to be used by alarm monitoring facilities and by state and local units of government in their development of consistent administration criteria for alarms. New technologies and successful efforts to reduce false alarms have led to this standard.

### 1.1 General

If differences exist between this standard and other Special Instructions with the monitored premises, the Special Instructions shall take precedence.

## 1.2 Definitions

### 1.2.1 Alarm Verification

Alarm verification is a generic name given to many techniques used (1) to permit authorized personnel to appropriately identify themselves, thereby preventing emergency response agencies from being requested to respond to situations that do not represent an emergency; and (2) to confirm or deny the validity of alarm signals received at a Central Station or monitoring facility.

### 1.2.2 Enhanced Verification

Enhanced Verification is the attempt by monitoring facility personnel to verify that no emergency appears to exist, at the monitored premises, by means of more thorough procedures such as two (2) or more verification calls, live audio or video, cross zoning, other means or a combination of these procedures.

### 1.2.3 Audio Verification

An event activated method that provides live real time audio from the protected premises to the central station that enables the monitoring agency to verify whether activity is occurring that appears to warrant the immediate emergency response of responding agencies.

### 1.2.4 NRTL Certificated Service

The term NRTL Certificated Service, as used in this document, refers to burglar alarm systems that have a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) certificate in force and therefore follow verification procedures outlined in UL 827, UL 2050, ULC S301 or ULC S304 Standards.

### 1.2.5 Types of Audio Verification

Three broad forms of verification may be employed. These include:

#### 1.2.5.1 Listen-In Audio

An audio device capable of being activated by the initiation of another security device. A one-way audio feed will be available to the monitoring facility when a device such as a hold-up button, audio detector or door contact has come into alarm.

#### 1.2.5.2 Two-Way Audio

An event driven, two-way, hands free communications session at the premise with the monitoring facility caused by the activation of an alarm event at the premise for the purpose of verifying the validity of an alarm condition and/or gain additional information regarding the cause of the condition.

#### 1.2.5.3 Impact Activated Audio

An audio device capable of being activated by the sounds of an intrusion or unauthorized entry. The audio device after activation will cause the control panel to contact the central station and provide the premise sound.

### 1.2.6 Methods of Verification

#### 1.2.6.1 Electronic Verification

An electronic signal transmitted to the monitoring facility that indicates to its personnel or to its dispatch computer that no emergency appears to exist.

#### 1.2.6.2 Verbal Verification

A personal contact by means of telephone or audio conversation with an authorized pass code holder or other authorized person for the protected premises to verify that no emergency exists.

### 1.3 Notification Call

The call to the law enforcement authority, such as police, fire emergency or medical emergency rescue.

### 1.4 Dispatch

Notification of law enforcement agency as defined in 1.3. a guard, guards, a runner, runners, other response entities or predetermined combination of the above to respond to the premises.

### 1.5 Special Instructions

A, separate set of instructions from the monitoring contract document, that specifies a specific set of instructions to be followed in the event of an alarm, between the monitored premises and the alarm monitoring company.

### 1.6 Audio Device

Hardware that produces or hears sounds

### 1.7 Security Device

Hardware that detects a change in a protective status such as a motion detector or door contact.

### 1.8 Alarm Event

A change in status that indicates an emergency situation and call to action.

### 1.9 Call Back Mode

The state of readiness by the audio verification system where a ring on the telephone line will result in the audio verification system immediately taking the telephone line off hook in order to permit a two way voice interval.

### 1.9.1 Capture

The event of the audio verification system holding the line off-hook after the digital communicator has received an acknowledgment from the monitoring station.

## 2 Standard Verification Procedures for Burglar Alarm Signals

### 2.1 Procedures for Alarm Signals Received from Systems without "NRTL Certificated" Service with Audio Verification Capabilities

Unless Special Instructions exist to indicate otherwise monitoring facility personnel shall communicate via the audio verification system with the protected premises for identification and verification of persons authorized to be on the customer's premises and/or listen for the sounds that may indicate something out of the ordinary is apparently happening.

### 2.1.1 Two-Way Audio Verification

To insure all reasonable efforts are expended in attaining a verification of an alarm condition and avoiding the necessity for a dispatch the following best practices must be carried out:

### 2.1.1.2 Initial Verification Session

Upon receipt of an alarm condition the central station operator will

a) initiate the audio session via capture, call back mode or impact activated audio according to the manufacturers stated command set. Upon initiation the central station operator will challenge the user on the premises for a valid code.

b) Upon acknowledgment of valid code, alarm dispatch will be avoided and the central station operator can continue to communicate with the verified, valid user on premises.

### 2.1.1.3 If No Contact

If there is no response or non-communication with the premises via the two-way audio session, the monitoring facility personnel shall

a) make a second attempt via a standard telephone call to an alternate phone number(s) such as a premise, cellular or work number and

b) if the authorized person states that no emergency exists, responding entities shall not be notified or shall be recalled.

c) The operator will disconnect the two-way audio session via manufacturers stated command set.

### 2.1.1.4 Wrong Code

If communication is established with the premise and a valid code is not communicated by the person (s) on premise via the two-way audio session,

a) the monitoring facility personnel shall make a notification call to the proper responding agency.

b) The operator will disconnect the two-way audio session via manufacturers stated command set.

c) Upon proper termination the operator will dial the responding agencies telephone number.

### 2.1.1.5 If Audio Communication is Established

If contact is made via the audio verification system, the monitoring facility personnel shall

a) obtain pass code verification or other electronic identification that the person is authorized to be on the premises.

b) Upon receipt of correct identification, and the authorized person states that no emergency exists, responding agencies shall not be notified or shall be recalled,

c) if already notified, and the alarm is considered aborted.

### 2.1.1.6 No Code

If no code or authorization is provided, the monitoring facility personnel shall

a) attempt to reach an authorized person off premises to verify the authenticity of the on premises person, and

b) failing that shall make a Notification Call.

c) Further explanatory material on this can be found in Annex A.

### 2.1.2 Listen-In Audio

The general purpose of this technology and service is to allow the monitoring facility to gain additional information from the protected premise on certain alarm conditions that traditionally are not verified such as hold up or ambush alarm conditions.

### 2.1.2.1 Initial Verification Session

Upon receipt of an alarm condition the central station operator will

a) initiate the audio session according to the manufacturers stated command set).

b) Upon initiation the central station operator will maintain a “Listen Only” status and not initiate any communications with the premise.

c) During the Listen in Period another operator should follow the dispatch instructions.

d) Should the operator listening to the premise hear a valid code, the dispatching operator should be notified in an effort to cancel or abort dispatching.

### 2.2 Procedures for Alarm Signals Received from Systems with NRTL Certificated Service

Signals received from certificated systems shall be handled in accordance with the procedures defined in UL Standard 827, UL 2050, ULC S301 or ULC S304.

## 3 Enhanced Audio Verification of Burglar Alarm Signals

### 3.1 Extended Time

The maximum time permitted for enhanced verification of a non-certificated system can be extended beyond the time constraints imposed for certificated systems defined in UL 827, UL 2050, ULC S301 or ULC S304.

### 3.2 Procedure

For burglary alarm signals received from non-certificated commercial burglary alarm systems or any residential alarm system, the following procedures shall be followed (further explanatory material on this can be found in Annex A):

### 3.2.1 Audio Verification Session - Attempt #1

The monitoring facility shall attempt an audio verification with the protected premises after receipt of the alarm signal.

3.2.1.1. The procedure defined in 2.1.5 above shall be followed if audio contact is made with premises.

3.2.1.2. Otherwise proceed to 3.2.2.

### 3.2.2 Attempt #2

When monitoring facility personnel can not attain contact or verification during the first attempt to the protected premises,

3.2.2.1. a second attempt via a standard telephone call shall be made to an alternate phone number(s) such as a premise, cellular or work number and

3.2.2.2. if the authorized person states that no emergency exists, responding entities shall not be notified or shall be recalled, if already notified, and the alarm considered aborted.

### 3.3 Answering Machines

When any call reaches an answering machine a message shall be left, clearly stating that it is the alarm company calling and leaving necessary information for the alarm user to promptly contact the monitoring facility.

### 3.4 Scheduled Events

If an alarm signal is received in connection with a scheduled opening or closing event, additional telephone numbers shall be called on the call list in order to determine whether the alarm signal is caused by an opening or closing error.

3.4.1. If no answer or no determination can be made that a false alarm exists, a Notification Call shall occur.

### 3.5 Verified False

If the alarm is verified as being false during the first, second or succeeding calls, monitoring facility personnel shall suspend activities relating to the specific signal being worked.

### 3.6 Call Lists and Priority

Following the Notification Call, attention shall be placed on contacting the emergency call list, until someone is reached to achieve a cancellation of the notification if it is determined that no emergency exists. 3.7

### Compliance with Enhanced Call Verification

The Audio verification procedure defined in 3.2.1 shall be in compliance with the CSAA's published Enhanced Verification Standard (CS-V-01).

## 4 Hold-Up

### 4.1 Commercial Hold-Up Alarm

The monitoring facility shall follow the Standard Verification Procedures as defined in section 2.1.2

### 4.2 Residential Panic/Duress/Emergency Alarm

The monitoring facility shall follow the Standard Verification Procedures as defined in section 2.0.

### 5.1 Coverage

Installation of microphones and/or speakers must be installed to provide adequate coverage of the premise and in compliance with manufacturer's recommendations and instructions.

### 6.1 Surreptitious recording

Some jurisdictions limit remote listening and recording of audio Check local and state regulations

# Annex A (Informative)

**A.2.1.2.1**

If the monitoring facility personnel reaches the protected premises on the first or second call and the person answering the phone does not have the proper code then, if possible, the personnel may attempt to make a 3-way call with the premises person retained as a party to the call. The monitoring facility personnel may attempt to reach others on the call list to verify the authenticity of the person on the protected premises. If this process fails to resolve the issue then the monitoring facility personnel should proceed to make a Notification Call.

**A 3.2**

Verification Phone Accessibility Guideline. Care should be taken to verify that the emergency call list phone numbers are to phones without call waiting, or alternately that *70 is programmed in front of the monitoring center phone number in the electronic digital communicator. The verification phones at the monitored premises should be accessible after hours (not locked up in an office), such as in the vicinity of commonly used entrances and not be sent to voice mail after hours so the after hours users and cleaning people can hear and answer the phone.

**A 4**

Most current manufacturers comply with the SIA Audio Verification Standard command set