



MUKWONAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT
OPERATING PROCEDURES

Radio Communications		Approved by: Chief Jeffrey R. Stien	
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PURPOSE:

To establish a clear radio communications model for the Mukwonago Fire Department to follow while responding to incidents involving more than one agency.

SCOPE:

This procedure is to be followed by all officers and members of this department. Authority to deviate from this procedure rests with the officer in charge of the incident who will be responsible for the results of any deviation.

SAFETY:

Safety is the responsibility of all personnel on the fire ground. High quality, clear, and consistent communications must be established and followed to provide the desired fire ground safety.

DEFINITIONS:

Affirmative- Acknowledgement (Yes – that is correct) of a transmission.

All Clear – Benchmark - Scene is “Clear” of those persons threatened as a result of the emergency (primary – secondary search).

Available – Unit or company is on the scene but available for another assignment.

Assignment Complete – Upon completion of a task, designation shall be reported to command. Unless otherwise specified, companies or crews with an ‘assignment complete’ designation are available for another assignment.

Benchmark – A tactical objective/measurement of a company’s achievement.

UCAN-L Report – “Unit, Conditions, Actions, Needs, Location”. A UCAN-L report consists of the reporting of your unit, the conditions you are encountering, the actions you are taking, any anticipated needs and your current location.

Companies/Crews – Teams of personnel assigned by command to perform duties at an incident.

Command – Person in charge of an emergency incident.

Incident Designation – A geographic name for the location of an emergency. This name will preface Command (Example: Fox street Command).

Loss Stopped – Benchmark - The activities required to stop or reduce additional loss to property have been accomplished.

Negative – Acknowledgement (No that is **not** correct) to a transmission.

MABAS – Mutual Aid Box Alarm System

MABAS Division – The Dispatch Center responsible for a MABAS event. Waukesha County is Division 106 and Milwaukee County is Division 107.

PAR – Personnel Accountability Report completed at the end of each tactical benchmark or when requested by command. The number of personnel accounted for should also be given (i.e. PAR 3).

Report of Conditions – Incident status report should be done every 20 minutes.

Resource Status – A report from a unit acknowledging: Available, an assigned objective or out of service.

Size-Up Report – Initial report of conditions found from first arriving units on an emergency scene.

Staging – A location for responding units to standby while waiting for an assignment.

Level I Staging – typically used below the box alarm level where units responding directly to the scene and stage with their unit until deployed by command

Level II Staging – typically used at the Box alarm level or higher. This is a pre-determined location typically well away from the incident. Units are not responding to the scene rather to the Level II staging area where they are

managed by a staging officer. Command notifies the Staging officer when he/she needs a resource and the Staging officer is responsible to deploy the requested unit from Level II staging.

Stand-By - Status for units waiting an assignment. Units on Stand-by mode shall contact command after 15 minutes for a status update and/or assignment.

Strike-the-Box – Benchmark – Notifies the Division that no further alarms will be requested for the incident.

Under Control – Benchmark - The fire has been controlled; the incident has been stabilized.

PRIMARY TALK GROUPS

For the purposes of this SOG, each community must have its own communications plan intended to facilitate the day-to day operations of their respective departments. Departments that utilize neighbors on Auto-Aid may have pre-determined communications plans but are expected to adhere to the following SOG when responses exceed the Auto-Aid agreement.

RECEIVER SENDER MODEL

When using radio communications at events that exceed local capability, the following communication guidelines shall be followed:

Sending a transmission:

- To determine the receiver is listening and ready to receive the message, transmit your receiver's call sign followed by your call sign. (Example: "Dispatch, From 3462"). **After the receiver acknowledges**, inform receiver of your message (Example: "3462 on scene")
- All transmissions require that the receiver acknowledge before proceeding with the message (Example) Dispatch from 3462, (dispatch; go ahead 3462) 3462 is on scene.

Receiving a transmission

- To verify that the message has been fully understood the receiver repeats the context of your transmission (Example: Dispatch repeats "3462 on the scene").

Affirmation of communication

There is no longer an affirmation of communication, however if the message that is repeated is incorrect, the sender should correct the receiver.

Example 1

3451: "Dispatch, from 3451"

Dispatch: "3451 go ahead"

3451: "Please send 3410 to the scene"

Dispatch: "Copy, send 3410 to the scene"

Example 2:

3451: "Dispatch, from 3451"

Dispatch: "3451, go ahead"

3451: "Please send 3410 to the scene"

Dispatch: "Copy, send 3462 to the scene":

3451: "Negative – Send 3410"

Dispatch: "Copy, send 3410 to the scene"

FIRST IN REPORT (SIZE UP)

Upon arrival of the first unit, a first-in size-up report must be completed. The size-up report should contain the following: Address confirmation, building type and size, smoke and flame conditions, actions observed such as evacuation in progress, deployment strategies and who is in command (Example) 3462 is on scene at 15600 West National Avenue, we have a two story small residential home about 30 by 40 with heavy smoke coming from the second floor and attic space, it appears all occupants are out. 3462 will be laying a line to the front door to begin an offensive attack, 3462 Officer is National Avenue command and "Alpha" side accountability.

REPORT SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Report on the inability to complete assigned tasks or objectives, and requests for assistance or modification of orders.
- Report of completion of tactical benchmarks: primary search, all clear, fire under control, and loss stopped and followed by accountability report (PAR) for each.

EMERGENCY TRAFFIC

The term "Emergency Traffic" is to be used to report an immediately perilous situation, condition or any other event or situation and will receive the highest communication priority from Command, Dispatch, and all other units. Co/Crews receive Emergency Traffic by requesting Emergency Traffic from Command. Command will then declare emergency traffic and ask the crew to proceed with the message. The co/crew requesting emergency traffic should then transmit their information. Once the emergency message is sent the member who declared the emergency traffic message shall conclude it by transmitting the statement "'Emergency traffic clear - resume radio traffic'".

Examples of when Emergency traffic should be used include:

- a. Evacuation due to hazardous conditions (collapse, etc.) *Note - when used for an emergency evacuation the radio transmission may be followed by the **"three consecutive air horn blast"** evacuation signal.

- b. Reporting of imminently hazardous conditions or changes that may impact on strategy (Arcing power lines down in Charlie Division).
- c. Emergency Traffic should be used to transition from offensive to defensive attack.

MAYDAY

Whenever an emergency involves firefighters lost, trapped or in distress, the term “Mayday” repeated 3 times will be used to communicate the need for assistance. “Mayday” will be the only acceptable term to report firefighters lost, trapped, missing, or in trouble and needing rescue. ANY member may use “Mayday” to report a firefighter lost, trapped, or in trouble and needing rescue.

Examples of when Mayday should be used include:

- Fall
- Collapse
- Activated (low air or PASS device)
- Caught
- Lost
- Trapped
- Unable to contact firefighter after 3 attempts

The MAYDAY message should include: (UCAN-L)

- Your **U**nit, company, or last name
- **C**onditions a description of what the conditions are like are you trapped etc.
- **A**ctions, what are you doing, sitting still, conserving air, attempting a right handed search etc.
- **N**needs, what you need, help finding way out, air, wire cutters, etc.
- **L**ocation, where you are or your last known location

When declaring the “Mayday”, the firefighter calling the mayday shall remain on the currently used talk group. The firefighter calling the Mayday shall call the Mayday and continue on with the entire message. Once complete, operations or command shall repeat the message and activate the RIT. Once activated, an additional level of alarm shall be transmitted. All companies not working to locate the distressed crew may switch upon command’s discretion to a secondary talk group if non-rescue communications is needed. (Example) Mayday Mayday Mayday, this is firefighter Jones from 1361 crew, I am separated from my crew and lost. I believe I am on the second floor Alpha side. I am activating my PASS devise and attempting a left hand search to locate a window or the stairs.

RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM (RIT)

The rapid intervention team shall monitor the scene operations' primary talk group RED or other simplex channel, when the crew is needed for an emergency they shall be assigned and operate on the same talk group as the fire crews calling for the Mayday.

MUTUAL AID (Below the Box Alarm Level)

Mutual Aid is performed below the MABAS level and for purposes of this SOG to include mutual aid, automatic aid, Full Still and Working Still response.

- Receiving Mutual Aid
 - Units from the stricken community shall remain on their primary talk group to communicate with their respective PSAP.
 - All Tactical operations shall be done on a simplex talk group. "8tacRed" shall be the default with "8tacWhite" and "8tacBlue" to be used as a back-up or for additional tactical needs.
 - **(This step is recommended)**; If the stricken community wishes to communicate with in-coming units, the stricken community shall hail the incoming Mutual Aid Units on IFERN-800 (MABAS 800). If there is no need to contact them the stricken community will remain on their primary
 - As the Mutual Aid units arrive, units are to Level I stage and be given direction on "8tacRed" or face to face
- Responding Mutual Aid
 - Units responding shall notify their respective PSAPS on their primary talk group.
 - **(This step is recommended)** One radio shall be placed on IFERN-800 (MABAS 800) and **MONITORED** in the event the stricken community wishes to speak to the in-coming units.
 - If no communication is provided on IFERN, the responding unit shall assume they are to report to the scene (Level I Staging)
 - Once approaching, notify their PSAP on the primary talk group that they are on scene, Level I stage, and notify the stricken community on "Red" that you are on scene.

MABAS Event Radio Model

During a MABAS event the following communications guidelines shall be followed:

- Radio designations
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- Companies shall be designated by their department name, and apparatus kind (Example) City of New Berlin Engine.
- Units responding to a MABAS event or change of quarters shall first acknowledge and mark en-route with their local PSAP (If you are dispatched by WCC, this step can be skipped).
- After going en-route with the local dispatch, utilize the respective IFERN-800 Waukesha or IFERN-Milwaukee to transmit en-route, at staging/in a change of quarters, and returning.
- Communications between Command and Level II staging is done on IFERN
- Fireground operations shall utilize “Red” (either 8tacRed or VHF Red) as the primary talk group with the respective “White” and “Blue” as secondary groups.

MUTUAL AID CHANGE OF QUARTERS

- Change of Quarters Company shall notify dispatch or the stricken Division when they arrive at the designated fire station. For a MABAS event, switch to IFERN and monitor. The local dispatch centers are directed to notify change of quarters units on IFERN; however, if possible also monitor the respective department’s dispatch. Response for change of quarters shall be non-emergent.
- When released, personnel shall notify either the Mutual Aid Dispatch or Division and their local dispatch that they are returning to their own dispatch talk group.