

**STATE INTEROPERABILITY COUNCIL
MUTUAL AID FREQUENCY COORDINATING GROUP**

MAY 15, 2012
OFFICE OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
1 S PINCKNEY STREET
MADISON, WI 53703
10:00AM

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AT 10:04AM

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS

- Thomas Czaja, Chair
- Paul Wittkamp
- Robert Goldstein
- Warren Warrington
- Carl Guse
- William Bouma
- Gerry Thorpe
- Jim Meilahn (for Kent MacLaughlin)
- Dave Spenner

VIA TELECONFERENCE

- Jennifer Lord

GUESTS

- Tim Pierce
- Doug Meier

OJA STAFF

- Jim Westover
- Peter Fiala, Program Support

Quorum Established

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN TOM CZAJA AT 10:00AM

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 3, 2012 MFCG MEETING
MOTION**

- Motion made by Robert Goldstein to approve the January 3, 2012 meeting minutes.
- Motion seconded by William Bouma
- Motion carried

CORRESPONDENCES

Carl presented an email regarding Racine County's use of the UTAC41 repeater. Testing had been done for field coverage. UTAC41 was turned on only by request.

Tom Czaja asked if national channels come under our view. Dave Spenner gave clarification on the federal vs. non-federal issue. Racine County built UTAC 41 and is wondering about using it. In the NIFOG there are VHF and UHF channels designated by the federal government (NTIA) for federal interoperability.

Discussion continued to address the following questions:

- As Racine County is the only county with a repeater, can it be left on 24 hours per day?

Carl Guse responded saying that the repeater can be left on all the time. Normal protocol is to turn the repeater off when not in use. Racine has the only fixed UTAC repeater in the state. We are not sure what exists in Illinois. Presently, it probably wouldn't be a problem. Initial reaction is that even though it is counter to standard, to extent that it wouldn't cause interference for anyone, this is okay. At least until it is determined that there is a problem. It was decided that Carl would respond to the email.

- When multiple FD from Racine County responds to a single incident, can UTAC41 be used as a common operation channel for EMS operations?

Only FDs are on UHF in Racine County. Some fire departments in Walworth County are also on UHF. There are very few other potential users. It could be patched at the console. Typically the definition for interoperability allows can use when you don't have another common channel to use. Other interoperability frequencies are not designated on UHF except for UTAC channels.

- Is there foresight of any problems using UTAC for training activities?

Tom Czaja suggested this would be viable familiarize them with the frequency. If it is used for multiple jurisdictions it would be a problem.

- If UTAC is live 24/7 and is continuously patched, do we want to speak to the issue of patching?
It was agreed that there would be not permanent patch at this point except for during incidents.

OLD BUSINESS

Dane County application for authorization to use various State licensed mutual aid frequencies -

Rich McVicar requested that this be removed. Harris Radio has not given this top priority, and is not done with the application.

MARC 1 on Dane County - Dane County submitted an application and due to the tower height and power, it may cause signals to propagate into Illinois. We assured the Forestry Conservation Communication Association that we would watch this. We requested Dane County to resubmit the application to the MFCG with reduced power and antenna height. They are not ready at this point. There is no action on this item at this point.

Update from SOP sub-committee on incorporating IC 205 into Appendix D of the SCIP Plan -

There isn't an update at this point. This is Dave Spenner's last meeting. Tom Czaja commended Dave Spenner as an outstanding member to IC and MFCG. He will be missed. We thank Dave for his contributions. Tony Peterson will replace Dave on the MFCG. Jim Westover will also be available. OJA hasn't announced Dave's replacement. Dave will be meeting with Tony to update him on this committee.

Update regarding NEWCOM's action concerning the procedure for an encryption code to be used statewide and review of draft policy developed by Dave Spenner - There isn't an update on this. This work will continue to move forward.

Discussion and feedback regarding draft SOP manual which was distributed at the October 11, 2011 meeting - This item is also transitioning to Tony Peterson.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion regarding NEWCOM modifying the name of State mutual aid channels – NEWCOM has published a new mutual aid channel recommendation list and renamed some of the channels including VTAC36DG which has been renamed to VTAC36DG-R. This is not in line with the channel naming

conventions in Annex K of the SCIP Plan. Rock County has done the same thing. There was discussion with Gene Oldenburg about this.

NEWCOM also changed MARC 1 to MARC 1 This can cause confusion especially during an incident with multiple jurisdiction/multi discipline response. This shouldn't present a problem with CASM. The names are automatically programmed as a keystroke. Tom Czaja stated that all agencies operating under authorization to use a State license must comply with the SCIP Plan.. All radios funded by OJA must conform to the SCIP Plan.

Tom Czaja presented a sample sent a letter which will be sent to NEWCOM and Rock County stating that all radios under state license and funded by OJA must comply with the SCIP Plan. All MFCG members agreed with an addition to the letter a description of CASM and how it works.

MOTION

Jennifer Lord requested that Jim Meilahn represent her vote

Motion made by Tom Czaja to authorize Tom to send a letter to NEWCOM and Rock reminding them that they must comply with the SCIP Plan and the grant requirements if OJA grant funds were used to purchase the radio(s).

Modification:

Add a suggestion in the letter to implement training on the use of MARC and MARC 2. The following language was suggested: "We strongly suggest that stakeholders and users are trained on the use of these frequencies."

Motion seconded by Paul Wittkamp and Robert Goldstein

Motion carried

Tom Czaja will send the letter to NEWCOM and Rock County.

Discussion concerning the State obtaining a license to operate on VHF Incident Response and VHF law enforcement frequencies contained in the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG) - P 34-37 background and discussion: Tim Pierce contacted Jim Jarvis and came back with good guidance. Authorized agencies are DOC, DAI, DOJ, and HS. Reference was made to documents from Hennepin County, MN, and an MOU between the Department of Interior and Minnesota. These documents allow the use of these frequencies.

MOTION

Motion by Carl Guse that MFCG has authorization to initiate MOU with the US Marshal's Service for the Western District of WI.

Motion seconded by William Bouma

Dave Spenner and Tom Czaja are looking at the charter to verify if this group has the authority to do MOUs or if that belongs to the IC. The charter lists frequencies that the MFCG is allowed to authorize. This should be presented to the IC to change the charter and expand the scope. The IC could delegate management of this to the MFCG.

Carl Guse suggested that the signatory would need to change the scope through the IC. Tom Czaja will be the authorized signatory.

Motion carried

AUTHORIZATIONS

Request from lower St. Croix (MN) Valley Fire Department to operate on several Wisconsin mutual aid channels - This is an application from Kevin Kirby to Carl Guse. Frequencies would be used only in conjunction with a St. Croix and/or Pierce County Fire/EMS response. The lower St. Croix Valley

FD operates on 800 MHz but has retained VHF radios for use in Wisconsin. All future radios will be Motorola dual band radios.

MOTION

Motion made by Gerry Thorpe
Motion seconded by William Bouma
Motion carried

Tom Czaja will send the authorization.

Request from the Mt. Horeb Fire/EMS for Tyrol Basin Ski Patrol to operate on several mutual aid channels, letter of request for EMS channel access - Eight of thirty one radios will contain common frequencies. Tyrol asked the MFCG for authorization to operate EMS A,B,C; IFERN; VCALL 10; MARC 2,3,4 and FG Blue.

MOTION

Motion made by Gerald Thorpe for authorization
Motion seconded by Robert Goldstein
Motion carried

Tom Czaja will send the authorization.

Update to the MFCG on other approvals

- Carl Guse received an email from Northlake Communications regarding Thorpe Fire Department which was previously licensed on FireCom Blue. They would like to know if they may be licensed on this frequency.

A motion is not required for this, guidance is sufficient.

- Request from Waupaca to operate on numerous mutual aid frequencies for 600 countywide radios. Channels will accommodate LE, EMS and fire radios and will follow MABAS standards and procedures set forth in Annex K for each. Waupaca County fire channels do not follow the naming standards in Annex K.

It was suggested that the naming standards in Annex K be used. Tom Czaja will include a copy of Annex K. Carl Guse will send an email to Tom Czaja that will indicate the need to conform to annex K.

MOTION

Motion made by William Bouma for caveat (requiring all radios to conform to Annex K.
Motion seconded by Doug Meier.
Motion carried

Carl Guse read the email which stated Waupaca Red as the main fire county channel. The frequency doesn't conflict. Then there is Waupaca Black. There are channels with similar names too. They are fixing some things with regard to fire ground red and white.

Carl Guse will send the email to Tom Czaja.

- Carl Guse received an authorization request from Iron County Forestry Department in Hurley in December of 2011 request ing authorization to use 3 frequencies: DNR Red, Fire Ground Blue and DNR air to ground. This is still on hold. Doug Meier is not sure if DNR will give them air to ground frequency and DNR Red would be important.

MOTION

Motion made by Doug Meier to use Fire Ground Blue

Motion seconded by Warren Warrington

Motion carried

Carl Guse will send the email to Tom Czaja

- Letter from Grant County on Platteville EMS letterhead requesting authorization to include on mutual aid frequency for listed agencies - All radios being asked for are through OJA grants.

MOTION

Motion made by Warren Warrington to authorize with the addition of MARC 2 (required channel). This will be indicated in the authorization letter.

Motion seconded by William Bouma

DISCUSSION

Concerns were addressed as to sponsorship. Dave Spenner suggested to favor a sponsorship of an agency that carries responsibility.

The Motion was withdrawn by William Bouma and Warren Warrington. An amendment was suggested to the motion by William Bouma to give Grant County authorization (rather than Grant County EMS) to have their EMS agencies use the mutual aid frequencies and the motion was seconded by Dave Spenner.

Carl Guse suggested directing the EMS Association to request Grant County to submit letter. Then this could be addressed at the next meeting. It is preferred to do this on a countywide basis. The Fire Association holds a license for fire frequency.

The motion was withdrawn by William Bouma.

This will be an agenda item at the next MFCG meeting.

NEXT MFCG MEETING DATES

The next MFCG meeting will be scheduled on Tuesday, September 11, 2012 at OJA.

OTHER NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Paul Wittkamp gave an update of the State EMS Plan - Since last October there have been many more layers for document approval so this has been taking longer. These have to go through the process. Approval is expected within 2-3 weeks. Paul will forward it to the committee.

Gerald Thorpe - NEWCOM will have a show and tell with mobile command at the Nokomis Fire Department which is located north of Tomahawk, on May 27.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Motion made by Paul Wittkamp to adjourn

Motion seconded by Robert Goldstein

Motion carried