



ANN ARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures – 3.62 Radio Communication



Effective: August 17, 2018
 Scheduled Review: August 17, 2021
 Replaces: 213 Radio Procedure
 214 Radio Communications
 215 Reporting Radio Problems
 Approved: Fire Chief Mike Kennedy

I. PURPOSE

The intent of this policy is to provide direction on radio communication.

II. SYSTEMS

A. Michigan Public Safety Communications System (MPSCS): The MPSCS is the primary radio system used by law enforcement, fire, and EMS in Washtenaw County. This system has a capacity of thirteen (13) voice paths, i.e., thirteen people can talk on separate talkgroups simultaneously. All MPSCS Washtenaw County and Statewide Event talkgroups are recorded by the Washtenaw County Radio Consortium.

If on MPSCS and the user is “bonked” when attempting to get a channel grant (chirps), the system is busy, and there are no voice paths available at that moment. Having pressed the PPT (press to talk) button once, the user should wait for the channel grant tone and not continue to press the PTT button. The system knows that a request to talk has been made and will notify the user with the channel grant chirp when the next frequency is available. When the user hears the channel grant, press the PTT button and talk. If there is a queue of users waiting for a frequency, pressing the PTT button will take you to the end of the line each time you press it.

If additional talkgroups are needed for sector / division / group assignments, the Incident Commander may consider using the Zone F 8TAC direct channels. This will reduce the load on the trunked talkgroups. The 8TAC channels are conventional radio to radio frequencies and do not have the capacity limitations of the trunked MPSCS or U-M talkgroups. MPSCS Direct (Talkaround) Channels – 8TAC91D, 8TAC92D, 8TAC93D, 8TAC94D

B. University of Michigan Radio System: The University of Michigan (U-M) owns and maintains an 800 Mhz analog radio system. This system has a capacity of ten (10) voice paths, i.e., ten people can talk on separate talkgroups simultaneously. This system provides significant in-building coverage throughout campus and hospital buildings.

III. TALKGROUPS

A. FIRE 1: The Ann Arbor Fire Department and Pittsfield Township Fire Department share “Fire 1” as their primary dispatch talkgroup. This talkgroup is on the Michigan Public Safety Communications System (MPSCS) and is assigned by the Washtenaw County Radio Consortium. For routine EMS incidents, fire alarms, and general service incidents, AAFD and Pittsfield Twp will do all communications on “Fire 1.”



ANN ARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures – 3.62 Radio Communication



- B. InterOp: For incidents that require three (3) or more apparatus and / or two (2) or more departments, Central Fire Dispatch will assign an InterOp talkgroup. All responding units assigned an InterOp talkgroup will complete all radio traffic on that assigned talkgroup, i.e., enroute, arrival, requesting additional resources. When departments are assigned an InterOp talkgroup, the dispatcher will reserve the next corresponding InterOp talkgroup for the command staff to use as needed. The dispatchers will need to monitor both interop channels. This second interop channel will no longer be announced during the initial dispatch.

A fire officer cannot refuse to move to an assigned InterOp talkgroup. It is essential that “Fire 1” be left available for additional incidents in either the City of Ann Arbor or Pittsfield Township.

- C. UM Fire Med 1 and UM Fire Med 2: These talkgroups operate on the U-M radio system. Central Fire Dispatch can monitor and communicate on these talkgroups. The battalion chief or Incident Commander may order that all responding units to a U-M building switch to either of these talk groups. Once on this system, units are encouraged to stay to minimize radio communication problems. When the incident is terminated, units should be reminded to switch back to Fire 1.

“UM Fire Med 1” will also be used as the primary dispatch talk group if the MPSCS goes out of service for maintenance, experiences site trunking, or fail soft error.

- D. 81 Com: Any unit may communicate directly with Metro Dispatch via 81 Com.

- E. U-M DPS Dispatch: Any unit may communicate with the U-M Division of Public Safety & Security (DPSS) Communication Center via “UM DPS Dispatch.”

IV. RADIO IDENTIFIERS

Radio identifiers are modeled after the standard forth by the Washtenaw Area Mutual Aid Association. In addition to this SOP, AAFD has adopted the Washtenaw County Central Fire Dispatch Communications Handbook.

Radio designators are comprised of three parts.

- A. Radio designator type
- B. Department base number
- C. Number

Examples include “Engine 1-6” or “Rescue 1-1.” Similarly, stations would be identified as “Station 1-5”

- A. Chiefs, training division, mechanic division, and fire prevention shall follow the following standard.
 - i. Fire Chief: Chief 1 (Using only the designator and base number.)
 - ii. Assistant Chiefs: “Chief 1-2” and “Chief 1-3”
 - iii. Training Officer: “Training 1-1”
 - iv. Assistant Training Officer: “Training 1-2”
 - v. Master Mechanic: “Mechanic 1-1”



ANN ARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Standard Operating Procedures – 3.62 Radio Communication



- vi. Fire Marshall: “Fire Prevention 1-1”
- vii. Fire Inspectors: “Fire Prevention 1-2” and “Fire Prevention 1-3”

Unless assigned an incident-specific identifier, e.g., safety, personnel assigned to an apparatus will use the following protocol.

- A. Officer: “Rescue 1-1”
- B. Driver/Operator: “Rescue 1-1 Driver”
- C. Senior fire fighter: “Rescue 1-1 Fire Fighter 1”
- D. Second senior fire fighter: “Rescue 1-1 Fire Fighter 2”

Other fire departments in the county may identify individual command officers or fire fighters using their department base number, followed by the officer abbreviation (“C” for captain, “L” for lieutenant, “S” for sergeant, and “F” for firefighter), followed by a number. Examples include 12-C-3 (Twelve-C-Three) or 10-L-2 (Ten-L-Two) or 16-F-26 (Sixteen-F-Twenty six). This format should be used by AAFD personnel when a member is communicating on the radio who is not associated with an apparatus and who does not have an administrative identifier. This may be applicable in situations when individuals are using administrative vehicles for training or are on specialty teams. The “number” used will be the individual’s NFIRS number. An example would be “1-F-187.”

When communicating on talk groups to dispatch centers other than Central Dispatch or to agencies outside of Washtenaw County, radio users must identify themselves as members of the Ann Arbor Fire Department as the initial part of their identifier, e.g., “Engine 1-6” would become “Ann Arbor Engine 1-6.”