

POLICY FOR INTEROPERABLE RADIO USE

Policy #2, dated January 13, 2014

It is the Policy of the Washtenaw County 800 MHz Radio Consortium and Project Oversight Committee that the following procedures will be followed when using the County's 800 MHz radio system by the user agencies in the County. This policy is meant to provide guidance to facilitate uniform dispatching and radio use by all emergency service users in Washtenaw County so that everyone can be easily understood, especially when working on an event that involves multiple agencies from differing disciplines.

1. USE COMMON LANGUAGE WHILE DISPATCHING

Dispatchers shall use plain English when dispatching over public safety radios to avoid confusion and to save time. There is still a need to use some 10-codes for situations involving officer safety. It is also recognized that not all agencies in Washtenaw County used the same 10-codes in the past. It is therefore the policy of the Washtenaw County 800 MHz Radio Consortium (Consortium) that agencies throughout Washtenaw County will use plain English when broadcasting on the radio, with the exception of the use of the following 10-codes, abbreviations, and Priority codes:

10-13 Calling personnel need emergency assistance

10-37 Is suspect present? (Can you speak freely?)

10-72 Dispatch calling to check on your security, or after activation of the emergency button.

10-74 I am secure, or, emergency button was activated in error.

EDP – this abbreviation will be used to refer to an “Emotionally Disturbed Person”

Intox – this abbreviation will be used to refer to an “Intoxicated Person”

Priority 1 – This response necessitates the use of lights and siren.

Priority 2 – This is an immediate response that allows the use of lights and siren as necessary to arrive in a timely manner.

Priority 3 – This is an immediate response that does not require emergency equipment.

In all other cases, dispatchers and radio users shall use plain English, not some form of code, slang or jargon that would not be understandable to the uninitiated. It should also be noted that if a dispatcher or a user in the field does not understand some form of instruction given over the radio, they should ask in plain English for clarification of the conversation.

2. USE OF COUNTY-WIDE RECOGNIZABLE CALL SIGNS

Because agencies county-wide use differing types of call signs to communicate with their own units (some use badge numbers, some use car numbers, and some use area assignments), it is the policy of the Consortium that when calling another dispatch center other than one's own, or another unit from another agency, the calling person will precede their normal call sign with the agency name. Thus, Saline Police unit 738, when calling in to Metro Dispatch would identify themselves as "Saline Police 738".

3. MOVING UNITS ASSIGNED TO AN INCIDENT TO AN "INTEROPERABLE TALK GROUP"

It is the policy of the Consortium that any dispatch center or Incident Commander may, at their request, have all units responding to a particular incident move to an Interoperable Talk Group. This is necessary at times to preserve the integrity of the dispatch operations, or the command and control of a particular incident.

The person making such a re-assignment will announce it to all responding units, the respondents' home dispatch center main talk group, and then make the announcement of the assignment on the "81COMM" talk group.

4. PRE-ASSIGNMENT OF INTEROPERABLE TALK GROUPS TO DISPATCH CENTERS

In order to provide for the timely use of the Washtenaw County Interop Talk Groups, it is the policy of the Consortium that each PSAP will be assigned specific Interop Talk Groups that they will be primarily responsible for assigning for use in the field. Once a PSAP assigns an Interop Talk Group to a particular incident, that dispatcher will click on the dispatch screen to indicate that the talk group is in use by an active incident. That will give a visual indication to all other PSAPs that that Interop Talk Group is in use. Once the incident is complete, and the Interop Talk Group is no longer in use, the dispatcher will again click the button on the dispatch screen to indicate that the Talk Group is no longer in use.

If another PSAP wants to use the Interop Talk Group assigned to another agency, they may do so if it is not in use at that time (with the exception of Interop 13). These assignments are only suggestions for use, and should not be construed as limiting use of any one Talk Group to any one PSAP (with the exception of Interop 13). Interop 13 is reserved for use for in situations involving a fire ground emergency. The primary assignments of the Interop Talk Groups are as follows:

Ann Arbor Police Dispatch: Interop 1
Central Dispatch: Interop 2 and 3
HVA Dispatch: Interop 4 and 5
Pittsfield Township Dispatch: Interop 6

Saline Dispatch: Interop 7
Milan Dispatch: Interop 8
Chelsea Dispatch: Interop 9
EMU Dispatch: Interop 10
Fire Ground Emergency: Interop 13
Unassigned Interops: Interop 11, 12, 14, and 15

5. USE OF CALL ALERT TO NOTIFY A FIELD UNIT OF AN ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THEM

In recognition of the fact that end-users may stray off their main dispatch talk group, users will be trained that if they hear the “call alert” on their radios, they should switch their radio to the “home” talk group, as the call alert will be the signal that their dispatch center has lost contact with them, and is trying to locate them.