



# INTEROPERABILITY Initiative

**To:** Users of the MARC (Mutual Aid Radio Channel) Frequencies

**From:** Tom Czaja, Chairperson, Mutual Aid Frequency Coordinating Group  
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**Re:** Proper Use of the MARC Frequencies

The Mutual Aid Frequency Coordinating Group (MFCG) is a sub-committee of the Wisconsin State Interoperability Council which is overseen by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance. The MFCG's mission is to manage the day-to-day use of Wisconsin's statewide mutual aid frequencies. One of the MARC frequencies, 151.28 MHz, is a frequency which is managed by the MFCG. This frequency is also used by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for multiple purposes including controlled fire burns. The Illinois DNR brought to the attention of the MFCG that transmissions from Wisconsin have been interfering with Illinois DNR transmissions, especially along the Illinois border. There are Wisconsin agencies within border counties of the Illinois line which have filed requests for licensing on the MARC frequencies and because of their proximity to the border, a letter of concurrence is required from the State of Illinois. The State of Illinois will not grant the letters due to the current interference. The MFCG is working with the State of Illinois to mitigate the interference.

All MARC users are asked to comply with the MARC procedures. The procedures are available on the State Interoperability Initiative web site, <http://interop.wi.gov/> at the documents page, under frequency coordination. The MFCG is asking agencies with base stations and repeaters, especially agencies within 2 counties of the Illinois border, to reduce the power of the transmitters. A recent engineering study found the power levels of these repeaters range from 30 watts up to 310 watts. The MFCG is asking users to limit the power to 75 watts.

The MFCG would also like to remind users of the following policies:

- All MARC repeaters must have voice identification with the call sign and county or site name or number every half hour while in repeat mode.
- Repeater must be turned off until a request is received from an incident commander or other use.
- **The MARC frequency is not to be used for routine traffic.** The MARC frequencies are to be used by public safety and local government agencies involved in an incident requiring multi-discipline response where no other common frequency exists between responding agencies. This channel is for on scene command and coordination. **It is intended to facilitate communications when the Incident Command System is used.**
- Agencies with repeaters must monitor the repeater and the MARC 1 and MARC 2 frequencies 24 hours a day. Communication centers operating repeaters are required to minimize interference and must have the ability to turn off the repeater function at any time.

Any questions regarding the MARC frequencies can be directed to Carl Guse, the State Frequency Coordinator, at (608) 266-2497 or [carl.guse@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:carl.guse@dot.state.wi.us).