

STATE INTEROPERABILITY COUNCIL  
MUTUAL AID FREQUENCY COORDINATING GROUP

JUNE 8, 2010

CONFERENCE ROOM D  
OFFICE OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE  
1 SOUTH PINCKNEY ST, SUITE 615  
MADISON, WI 53703

MEETING MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER 10:05 AM**

**ATTENDANCE**

**MEMBERS**

William Bouma  
Carl Guse  
Kent MacLaughlin  
Tom Czaja  
Robert Goldstein  
Doug Meier  
Gerald Thorpe  
Paul Wittkamp  
Jeff Ohnstad (by conference)

**GUESTS**

Tim Pierce, CHAIR, SW Interoperability Region  
David Sleeter, Rock County 911 Center  
Reporter, Wisconsin State Journal

**OJA STAFF**

David Spenner  
Jennifer Lord

**APPROVAL OF 1-19-10 PAST MEETING MINUTES**

Motion made by Robert Goldstein to approve the 1-19-10 meeting minutes  
Motion seconded by Gerald Thorpe  
Motion carried

**NO CORRESPONDENCE**

**NOTES**

Dave Spenner distributed proposed plan of work for MFCG to create updated SOPs for the group, to be further submitted to SIC. He reviewed sections 1, 3, 8, 10, and 11 already in SCIP. Other sections will need to be refreshed. Dave proposed a one day workshop at OJA for a subcommittee to do this. The date chosen for this workshop was 7-1-10 from 9:00 AM until 4:30 PM. Content and format to follow.

Tom Czaja overviewed the Racine County MARC issue. Racine and Lafayette Counties want to install a MARC tower and repeater. This action needs a letter of concurrence from Illinois. Illinois has denied this letter. Their reasoning is that 151.28 MHz (repeater output) is used by the Illinois DNR, and they are complaining of interference, actually excessive traffic, on this channel. Wisconsin has offered to fund re-

programming of Illinois affected radios to include tone coding. Illinois declined this as an option. Wisconsin has asked for documentation indicating times, dates, and call signs of interfering transmissions. To date, no documentation has been received from Illinois, despite follow ups from Tom. To ensure proper usage of MARC by Wisconsin users, a MARC Procedure Worksheet has been placed on the Interoperability website. To further assist in rectifying this situation, Jefferson County has reduced output on their MARC repeater to 10 watts. Illinois has not replied. It is recommended that RF output on all MARC repeaters be limited to 75 watts. The group thought that these actions will show a good faith effort to work towards a compromise. Illinois – Wisconsin border county meeting is scheduled at OJA for Monday 6-14. The outcome of this meeting is hoped to be a letter of concurrence for the Racine Lafayette Counties MRAC repeater.

Tom Czaja has given Illinois 90 days from 3-29-10 to respond with the requested documentation. So far, no reply has been received.

Carl Guse gave a brief history of the MARC initiative in Wisconsin.

Gerald Thorpe stated that directional antennas installed at MARC repeater sites could reduce unwanted coverage.

### **BREAK**

The Wisconsin SIC needs to produce a narrow-banding guidance document by 11-1-2011. The MFCG needs to create a draft of this guidance document to present to the SIC to support this effort. Dave Spenner distributed copies of Policy Statement Four regarding narrow-banding of VHF and UHF frequencies. Dave also reviewed plans of border states on their narrow-banding efforts. A guidance document from Motorola was also distributed to the group as a model.

It was noted that the Illinois SIC has a well created document already in place that might be used as a model.

Carl will draft this narrow-band guidance to be reviewed by the MFCG at the 10-19 meeting. This in turn will be forwarded to the SIC at the November meeting.

Narrow-banding will be the first and primary focus for the newly formed interoperability regions. This project can be used as the initial outreach as the regions contact their counties.

A brief discussion ensued regarding pros and cons of waiting to implement narrowband until the Federal 2013 deadline.

Carl spoke about how FCC licenses must be modified to show narrow band compliance. If no other changes to the license, the emission designator must still be changed. The FCC will in the near future allow this function to be done on their ULS on line system, with no coordination needed. Licenses must be modified by 12-31-2012.

Carl brought up a topic he has been working on; that is issuing a blanket letter of authorization for use of VHF mutual aid channels to the EM Director of each county to in turn grant to appropriate local users. After discussion, the MFCG approved Carl to follow through with an authorization letter to each County EM Director and Sheriff, along with a cover letter on Interoperability Initiative letterhead. This will authorize the appropriate use of appendix K channels. One common document will be hosted by OJA, but channel control will still be retained by the “owning” agency and SASIG.

## **LUNCH**

Bill Bouma spoke about a request that Wisconsin MABAS received from a bordering Illinois FD. This FD requested permission to use digital transmission. Wisconsin MABAS does not endorse the use of digital or encrypted transmissions on the MABAS mutual aid channels.

The recent SIMCOM 2010 exercise was reviewed. National naming of mutual aid channels proved to be an issue during this exercise. Carl addressed this issue as an FYI for future consideration. Does the MFCG adopt national naming standards or retain the current state standards? Radios will need to be reprogrammed to change naming standards; narrow-banding might be a good time to consider this as the radio will need to be touched anyway.

There are still PL tone inconsistencies between national and state naming standards for a given channel.

The MFCG would recommend to the SIC that as agencies adapt narrowband standards, they also include another 16 channel bank to include national names and PL tones, as charted in the SCIP. Bill Bouma moved and Kent MacLaughlin seconded the adoption of this recommendation. After further discussion, the motion was withdrawn. Carl will develop a guidance draft to be reviewed during the MFCG SOP teleconference on 7-1. This will then be presented to the SIC at the 7-22 meeting with action taken at that time.

Doug Meier led a discussion on having WISCOM interoperability talk groups that would include MARC repeaters named by the tower sites.

Carl discussed having several WISCOM channels available for public / private partnerships such as calling stand by tow trucks on off ramps or commercial vendors during hazmat spills. After discussion on how to control private usage, it was thought that formal written application to MFCG for private authorization could be done electronically to the newly created MFCG e mail address. Doug Meier moved and Carl Guse seconded to establish MARC4 as the private / public liaison channel with a SOP to be established. Motion passed.

## **APPLICATIONS**

Kettle Moraine Ambulance requested the usage of all VHF and UHF mutual aid channels for both mobile and base. Bill Bouma moved to grant this request for mobile but to deny base operation. Jerry Thorpe seconded. Motion passed.

Civil Air Patrol with its Wing application has requested usage of all VHF and UHF mutual aid channels. Jerry Thorpe moved to accept this request. Doug Meier seconded. Motion passed.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The SCIP Workshop at FVTC on 6-23 was announced. The SSMG meeting will be held at the same location the day before.

The next MFCG meeting will be held 10-19. The MFCG SOP committee will meet by teleconference 7-1 at 9:30 AM.

Doug Meier moved to adjourn. Bob Goldstein seconded. Motion carried.