

Monterey County Fire Chiefs Association
FIRE OPERATIONS MANUAL
Section 8

FIRE COMMUNICATIONS

PURPOSE

This chapter establishes uniform guidelines for the use of fire and associated frequencies in Monterey County. It applies to all agencies in Monterey County which have the capability to originate radio transmissions.

It will be the responsibility of all fire agencies and authorized users of these frequencies to be familiar with these guidelines.

It will also be the responsibility of all fire agency personnel in Monterey County in the course of day to day operations to monitor their respective frequencies for compliance. Any use of frequencies not authorized by this guidelines should be reported through their agency chain of command to the chairman of the Operations Committee.

It will be the responsibility of any agency, other than those specified herein, desiring to originate transmissions on those frequencies covered in this guidelines, to obtain written permission from the Operations Committee of the Monterey County Fire Chiefs Association.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Monterey County Fire Agencies, are authorized to have the following frequencies FIRE RED, FIRE GREEN, FIRE GOLD, FIRE BLUE, FIRE ORANGE, FIRE SILVER, for their use in the appropriate function as set forth in the Communications section of this manual.

Fire agencies outside Monterey County can be granted authorization for use of fire frequencies on a case by case basis by the Monterey County Fire Chiefs Operations Committee. See Appendix A for list of authorized users.

Monterey County agencies, other than fire, can be granted authorization for use of fire frequencies on a case by case basis by the Monterey County Fire Chiefs Operations Committee. See Appendix A for list of authorized users.

FIRE COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The manner and usage of Monterey County Local Government Fire frequencies is determined by: 1) Federal Communications Commission Regulations, 2) Adopted policies by the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association, 3) Adopted policies of the Monterey County Office of Emergency Services, 4) County of Monterey, and 5) controlling factors from state agencies and other limiting factors.

The County of Monterey is the licensee for all Monterey County Local Government Fire Frequencies. A listing of authorized user fire agencies within Monterey County, outside Monterey County, and authorized agencies other than fire are listed in Appendix A "Authorized Users of Fire Frequencies".

A. FREQUENCY ASSIGNMENTS

1. Frequency assignments and authorization for use by specific users are coordinated by the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association, Operations Committee, in conjunction with Monterey County Emergency Services, and the County of Monterey.
2. A Fire Frequency Plan, as follows, has been adopted by the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association for mandatory implementation in ALL Monterey County Local Government Fire response resources.
3. All Strike Team leaders will have a 32 channel mobile radio as per FOG manual.
4. The frequency listing for fire frequencies used in Monterey County are listed in Appendix F.
5. **The following identifies the Primary and Alternate Dispatch and Command firefrequency assignments:**

SOUTH COUNTY AND NORTH COUNTY AREAS

(King City, Gonzales, Greenfield, Soledad, North County, Salinas Rural, Spreckels)

1. Red Dispatch and Command
2. Gold Alternate Dispatch and Command

SALINAS CITY

1. Green Dispatch and Command
2. Red Alternate Dispatch and Command

PENINSULA and CARMEL VALLEY AREA
(Carmel, Carmel Valley, Pacific Grove)

1. Gold Dispatch and Command
2. Red Alternate Dispatch and Command

SEASIDE/MONTEREY/AIRPORT

1. Blue Dispatch and Command
2. Gold Alternate Dispatch and Command

B. PRIORITY OF USE - RADIO FREQUENCIES

The priority of use for assigned radio frequencies shall be as follows:

1. Emergency Dispatch
 - a) Dispatch, resource assignment, acknowledgment, response to scene, arrival on scene.
2. Command and Tactical
 - a) Command or Tactical operations at the scene of an incident and associated status reports.
3. Normal Operations
 - a) Day to day communications essential to official operations and activities of the department, i.e.: drills, hydrant maintenance.
 - b) Area wide announcements by Fire Comm, i.e.: burn day, fire weather or other pertinent information which more than one agency has need to know.

C. INCIDENT CHANNEL CONTROL

1. Fire Comm will control channel use as necessary through coordination with the responding Incident Commander based on:
 - a) Established policies (ref. policy on "Assigning Fire Radio Frequencies")
 - b) Interference with on-going incidents in other departments
 - c) Overload on the dispatch channel at the incident
 - d) Pre-arranged or pre-planned channel use i.e. tactical channels.

D. CHANNEL MONITORING

Fire Comm will monitor the following dispatch channels:

RED	GOLD
GREEN	BLUE
WHITE 1	

1. The fire agencies in Monterey County shall use the following identifier FIRECOMM for the Monterey County Communications Center.

E. MUTUAL AID OPERATIONS (Basic Guidelines)

1. Command channels for mutual aid operations will normally be the channel of the agency which has jurisdiction.
2. If a change of channel is needed, it will be requested by the I.C. and assigned by Fire Comm or Fire Comm may initiate a channel change.
3. Resources responding to Mutual Aid Requests shall be limited to only those requested by the Incident Commander. Self-dispatching and solicitation of dispatch will not be allowed.
4. During automatic or mutual aid incidents, responding equipment will acknowledge receipt of dispatch information when going in service on their dispatch channel.
5. The responding resources, will acknowledge response on their dispatch channel, shall switch to the assigned command, tactical frequency or as assigned.
6. County Fire Red (Toro Repeater) is a coordinating channel for County OES operations and shall be used in strict accordance with established priorities and procedures. ASK PAUL IRELAND FOR CLARIFICATION
7. The Monterey County Fire Chief's Association requires the use of the Incident Command System on all mutual aid incidents.
8. The Monterey County Fire Chief's Association requires the use of Clear-text on a day to day basis and on all mutual aid incidents, in accordance with Appendix "D" to this policy. This is a pre-requisite for participation in the County Fire Mutual Aid System.
9. The Monterey County Fire Chief's Association requires the use of approved Incident Command System resource identifiers on a day to day basis as a pre-requisite for participation in the County Fire Mutual Aid System. (Ref. Appendix E).

F. TACTICAL CHANNELS

1. Fire net channels - SILVER - ORANGE - will be used as tactical channels on a day-to-day basis (Intra-agency and Mutual Aid).
2. WHITE 2 and 3 are available for use to all departments with capable radio equipment. These channels are appropriately used when more than one department is involved in the incident. The use of the WHITE net channels shall be in accordance with the prescribed uses allowed by the Office of Emergency Services Bulletin # 28, found in Appendix "B" of this chapter.
3. Fire net talk-around channels - BROWN, YELLOW, BLACK, GREY - may be used as tactical channels. Current usage is limited to those agencies who use these channels as part of their day-to-day operations on their dedicated mobile relay operations.
4. California On-Scene Coordination Channel - CALCORD - is available for use by ALL public safety agencies for emergency coordination. The use of this channel is to be in accordance with Appendix "C" of this chapter.

G. COMMAND CHANNELS

1. Fire RED, GOLD, BLUE, and GREEN channels should be limited to essential command communications. These channels are required to dispatch new incidents and should not be congested with on-going incident communications.
2. Fire WHITE, GOLD, RED, GREEN and BLUE may be used as Alternate Command channels. A request for use shall be made by the Incident Commander to the

communications center. Fire Comm shall determine the availability of the requested channel and assign accordingly.

3. Fire WHITE 1 remote base station on Mount Toro is available to use for authorized fire traffic to Fire Comm. GOLD and WHITE are on the same transmitter, Mt. Toro only, and may not be used at the same time.
4. WHITE 3 shall be the primary usage channel of the WHITE series, while Santa Cruz County shall primarily utilize WHITE 1.

H. ASSIGNING FIRE RADIO FREQUENCIES

Tactical Channels

The proper usage of tactical channels helps relieve the primary dispatch/command channels of excessive mobile to mobile radio traffic. Dispatchers must take the lead in assigning tactical channels. A tactical channel will be assigned to an incident anytime the following circumstances occur:

1. Anytime that radio traffic is becoming excessive and interfering with the dispatch of new incoming incidents on a primary dispatch/command channel.
2. Anytime that an Incident Commander requests additional tactical channels, such as on a major incident.

When the dispatcher assigns a tactical channel to any incident, the dispatcher must take into consideration whether or not this incident just involves local government or outside resources such as: CDF, USFS, or outside county resources. If the incident involves outside agency resources, the dispatcher must assign either WHITE 3/CALCORD. This will ensure a tactical channel common to all involved agencies. If only local government resources are involved, then local government fire tactical channels such as SIVER or ORANGE should be utilized first.