

Monterey County Fire Chiefs Association
FIRE OPERATIONS MANUAL
Section 11 – Appendix G

DISASTER COMMAND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

GOAL: The goal of this plan is to establish frequency assignments and guidelines to support/coordinate command and tactical emergency communications during period of local emergency, during a local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) emergency activation, or during any countywide emergency.

POLICY: The frequency assignments, information, policies and procedures identified in this plan are intended for local and countywide communications to be utilized during large-scale emergencies or disasters.

CONDITIONS & GUIDELINES:

1. The National Incident Management System (NIMS)/California Standardized Emergency Management (SEMS) requires that local government (i.e., cities, special districts, and counties) coordinate and support tactical response of their agencies. Effective and efficient communication is essential in coordinating and supporting response. Thus, each jurisdiction needs to have a communication system that is effective, reliable and independent. With the exception of Big Sur, Gonzales, Greenfield, and Spreckels Volunteer Fire Agencies, most other Fire Volunteer Agencies use the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Communication networks.
2. The information provided within this Plan represents a cooperative effort between the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association, Monterey County Office of Emergency Services, Monterey County Emergency Communications Division, Monterey County Telecommunications Division, and responsible Public emergency management agencies.
3. It is the responsibility of the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association to update this Plan as necessary. Any changes should be submitted to the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association for inclusion in the Operations Manual. It is the responsibility of each participating agency to familiarize and train their respective personnel on the information contained within this section. All agencies are encouraged to conduct periodic drills in order to assess the functionality of the emergency communications plan.
4. Communications during an emergency paramount to the success of the operations. In a major emergency, there is information that is needed by emergency organizations and the communication systems are usually strained beyond their limits in time of emergency. Therefore, it is critical to develop a communication infrastructure that will support agency dispatch, tactical and command requirements. Emergency command and response agencies are inter-dependent on each other and must be aware of another's operating areas, policies, frequencies, and jurisdictional capabilities. Due to the high volume of radio traffic that can occur during any escalating situation

or disaster, radio discipline is of paramount importance and radio transmissions need to be kept to a minimum.

5. This plan may be activated (i.e. the utilization of these frequencies) by the Local Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Director/ Fire Incident Commander, or the Monterey Office of Emergency Services/ Monterey Operational Area EOC. The Monterey County Emergency Communication Center (911) will be notified and may recommend agencies switch to the predetermined Disaster Command and Communication Plan Frequency as listed below.

6. The Disaster Command Frequency (DCF) is the designated means of communication between the City/ Special Fire District Emergency Operation Center and tactically deployed resources. All local response jurisdiction resources, including the EOC, should incorporate the use of the jurisdictionally assigned DCF in addition to those already required elsewhere in Chapter 11 of the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association Operations Manual. In addition, in order to support mutual aid/ auto aid response, it is recommended that all mobile resources incorporate the use of all identified Disaster Command Frequencies.

ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION	TRANSMIT FREQUENCY	PL	RECEIVE FREQUENCY	PL	USE
Pacific Grove	POM Tac 2	148.8500	CSQ	148.8500	CSQ	B/M/P
Carmel City	POM Tac 2	148.8500	CSQ	148.8500	CSQ	B/M/P
Carmel Valley	POM Tac 2	148.8500	CSQ	148.8500	CSQ	B/M/P
Monterey City	SE Red	155.3250	CSQ	155.3250	CSQ	B/M/P
Airport	SE Red	155.3250	CSQ	155.3250	CSQ	B/M/P
Seaside City	POM Tac 1	148.8000	CSQ	148.8000	CSQ	B/M/P
POM	POM Tac 1	148.8000	CSQ	148.8000	CSQ	B/M/P
Marina City	POM Tac 1	148.8000	CSQ	148.8000	CSQ	B/M/P
North County	SE Green	155.2050	CSQ	155.2050	CSQ	B/M/P
Salinas City	Orange	154.235	CSQ	154.235	CSQ	B/M/P
Salinas Rural	SCRAMP	159.585	146.2	151.895	146.2	B/M/P
Spreckels	SCRAMP	159.585	146.2	151.895	146.2	B/M/P
Gonzales	Laguna Sec	153.980	162.2	153.980	162.2	B/M/P
Soledad	Laguna Sec	153.980	162.2	153.980	162.2	B/M/P
Greenfield	Grey	153.890	CSQ	153.890	CSQ	B/M/P
King City	Grey	153.890	CSQ	153.890	CSQ	B/M/P
Big Sur	Big Sur	153.785	123.0	153.785	123.0	B/M/P
Monterey Co. OES	EOC Coord	453.400		453.400		B

ACTIVATION: This policy may be enacted when a dispatch level is at HIGH (Dispatch Level II).

The level of service will utilize a system to delineate the status of Fire Comm activity and available support services that can be expected from Fire Comm. The levels are:

Normal: *Dispatch Level I:* No other actions need to be taken by radio users.

High: *Dispatch Level II:* 9-1-1 Center or an individual agency is experiencing a high call volume that may overwhelm resources such as a local emergency requiring the opening of the local Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Extreme: *Dispatch Level III:* 9-1-1 Center or multiple agencies are experiencing extreme call volume that has resulted in the opening of more than one local and Monterey County Emergency Operations Center.

When events dictate the need to escalate the dispatch level, agencies will be notified over the radio, or by telephone should the communications equipment be out of service. Many agencies will already have units in the field because of the activity; these agencies can be notified without page tones. This will alert field units and base stations that Fire Comm is at a level above normal, and communications will need to be adjusted until such time as the Communications Status Level is returned to normal.

Status:	Normal: Level I
Status Definition:	This is a normal/daily level of activity, which will require no changes on the part of participants.
Person Changing Status:	Senior Communications Dispatcher on duty.
Initiating Trigger Point:	Senior dispatcher on duty determines when system is no longer functioning normally and the system must switch to Level II or Level III operations.
Ending Trigger Point:	When a reduced Communications Status Level is reached.
Action Taken in Field:	Normal daily radio actions are taken for all system participants.
Service Level Expectations:	Normal service levels.
Notification:	Only if changed to Level II or Level III
Action Review:	Only necessary if changed to Level II or Level III. Routine management by the Monterey County Emergency Communications Department with support from various standing committees, Monterey County Fire Chief's Association, and assigned review team.

Status:	High Level II
Status Definition:	This is a high level of activity, which may be due to any number of large-scale incidents occurring simultaneously or a significant localized event.
Person Changing Status:	Senior Communications Dispatcher on duty, or can be triggered by an individual agency.
Initiating Trigger Point:	When an overwhelming number of incidents, which if paged out in the normal manner, would cause a delay to emergency services to the public.
Ending Trigger Point:	When a reduced Communications Status Level is reached.
Action Taken In Field:	Each fire agency affected by the local emergency will maintain their own Sitstat/Restat and track their own times for all calls. Requests to Fire Comm would be of an urgent life safety issues only. A local EOC may be opened/operating. Agencies may be asked to switch to their designated Disaster Command and Communication Plan Frequency.
Service Level Expectation:	All details would be broadcast over the radio by priority with emergency calls being preceded with an alert tone.
Notification:	Dispatch Operations Supervisor, area Fire Coordinator, BEU CDF-ECC, Monterey County OES, and local fire departments.
Action Review:	Routine management by the Monterey County Emergency Communications Department with support from various standing committees, Monterey County Fire Chief's Association, and assigned review team.

Status:	Extreme Level III
Status Definition:	This is an extreme level of activity, which may be due to an escalation of the High Dispatch Level, or a loss of communications equipment and Fire Comm may have lost some of their dispatch capabilities.
Person Changing Status:	Senior Communications Dispatcher on duty or Monterey County Emergency Operations Center.
Initiating Trigger Point:	Senior dispatcher on duty determines part of the communications system is not

	functioning and may render emergency dispatches to some or all fire agencies as unreliable.
Ending Trigger Point:	When a reduced Communications Status Level is reached.
Action Taken In Field:	All fire agencies must will maintain their own Sitstat/Restat and track their own times for all calls. Requests to Fire Comm would be of an urgent life safety issues only. Prepare to monitor and change dispatch/communications frequencies or methods until system is restored. One or more local EOC's and Monterey County EOC may be opened/operating. Agencies may be asked to switch to their designated Disaster Command and Communication Plan Frequency.
Service Level Expectation:	Emergency traffic will be a priority; non-emergency calls for service may be delayed. Fire Comm may ask fire agencies to switch to another dispatch frequency or receive dispatches in another format.
Notification:	On-call Radio technician or CAD Coordinator as needed, Dispatch Operations Supervisor, area Fire Coordinator, BEU CDF-ECC, Monterey County OES, and local fire departments.
Action Review:	Routine management by the Monterey County Emergency Communications Department with support from various standing committees, Monterey County Fire Chief's Association, and assigned review team.