

<b>WAYNE COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS</b> <b>Standard Operating Guidelines</b>	
<b>Class: BY-LAWS</b>	<b>No. <i>Dept SOP ID Here</i></b>
<b>Title: Radio Communications</b>	<b>Date: February #, 2017</b>
	<b>Revised:</b>

**Scope:**

Wayne County Fire Departments utilize the Multi-Agency Radio Communications Systems (MARCS) for primary communications. This system is a 700/800 MHz, digital, P25 shared radio system that is interoperable throughout the State of Ohio.

The MARCS system has provided Wayne County eight (8) talk-groups to be shared between public safety organizations. Four (4) talk-groups will be utilized as primary “dispatch” channels and four (4) talk-groups will be shared for tactical operations. This policy will be utilized in addition to the Wayne County 700/800 MHz Radio System Interoperability Plan and the Wayne County ITAC Plan.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this guideline is to provide a standardized method of two-way radio communications that has been agreed upon by the Wayne County Fire Chiefs Assoc. This will SOG ensure that all users of the shared system are operating consistently and enhance radio communication’s effectiveness.

**Objective:**

It is the goal of the Wayne County Fire Chiefs Assoc. to utilize the shared radio communication system as efficiently as possible to ensure operational effectiveness. To achieve this objective, emergency responders should utilize the appropriate talk groups and methods of communication to enhance safety, reduce non-critical communication and reduce the impact on the systems capability.

**Responsibility:**

All participating emergency service organization is responsible for being good stewards of the Wayne County – MARCS radio system. A consistent and standardized approach to communicating over the radio will ensure effective communication for emergency responders, and will enhance command and control during emergency and non-emergency situations.

**Guideline: Basic Radio Communications**

A. *Plain Language*

The Wayne County Fire Chiefs shall utilize plain language while communicating on the radio system. No ten-codes, acronyms, or slang should be utilized. Plain language will ensure that the desired communication is understood. In Conjunction with the *WFCFA Apparatus Identification SOG*

Example:

- Wooster Engine 1
- Market St. Command
- Medic 146

## B. *Military Style Format*

The Wayne County Fire Chiefs shall utilize the military style format for communications. This format will ensure that the person you are “calling” is alerted to the communication request and ready to accept the information.

Example:

- **Receiver (Dispatch/8500), Sender (\_\_\_\_\_ Chief 1)-Message (In-service)**
- **“Dispatch from Engine 1. Go Engine 1. Engine 1 is in-service returning.**
- **“Market St. Command from Engine 2”**

### a. *Communications Order Model*

Under normal conditions, it is not necessary for mobile units to call and wait for acknowledgement before transmitting short messages. Such as, responding or on scene but we must maintain the military style format for standardization.

Example:

- **Dispatch/8500, Chief 1 is in-service**
- **Dispatch/8500, Medic 1 is enroute to WCH.**

However, in advance of sending a lengthy or high priority message, the user should make a preliminary call and wait for acknowledgment before proceeding.

Example:

- **“Dispatch/8500 from Market St. Command. Go Command. Please notify the Red Cross to respond to this location for 2 victims.**
- **“Market St. Command from Engine 1”**

### c. *Non-Essential Radio Traffic*

All members shall reduce or eliminate non-essential radio traffic. Communications that is not operationally pertinent should be conducted face to face, via alternative communications devices, or on a non-operational talk-group.

## **Dispatch Talk-Group**

Dispatch talk-groups in the Wayne County MARCS template are (Channel 1 & 16). This channel is a repeated & monitored channel by the users respective dispatch center.

This talk-group shall be utilized for normal dispatch communications radio traffic. The use of this talk group shall be utilized for communication between a single resource unit and the dispatch center. *This talk-group shall be designated for “rolling traffic”, short duration incidents, and/or single resource/agency incidents.*

Example:

- “Dispatch, E-1 is enroute to N. Market St”.
- “Dispatch, Medic 1 is in-service returning”.
- “Dispatch, Utility 1 is on the air-available”.

**Benchmarks-** A benchmark will be requested by the dispatcher as an *elapsed time notification*, every ten minutes. This benchmark is intended to provide situational awareness of your time on-scene and to help the IC maintain their IAP.

The benchmark must be acknowledged and may be discontinued if additional benchmark request are not warranted. If a benchmark is not acknowledged after three attempts, dispatch will notify the OIC and Policing agency, to respond to confirm the safety of the scene and crews.

Example:

- **“Medic 1 from Dispatch, Medic 1 this is your 10 min. benchmark.**
- **“Dispatch, Medic 1 Copies 10”.**
- **“Dispatch, Medic 1 Copies 10 you can discontinue”.**

## Tactical (TAC) Talk-Group

The tactical talk-groups available on the Wayne County MARCS system are:

- TAC. 1 (channel 2)
- TAC. 2 (channel 3)
- TAC. 3 (channel 4)
- TAC. 4 (channel 5)

These talk-groups are a shared set of talk-groups to support inter-agency and multi-unit communications within Wayne County. *Tactical talk-groups are available to all Wayne County public safety/service entities that establish an incident command system, have an operational period longer than one (1) hour, and/or have multi-unit/organizations operating together.*

The TAC talk groups are available to users on a “as need basis” and since these TAC talk groups are “shared” between all Wayne County entities. A standardized process for utilizing the “shared” TAC talk groups must be followed. (*See below*)

If the incident commander (IC) needs to utilize a TAC talk group, they should request a TAC channel from dispatch.

- Dispatch from \_\_\_ St. Command. Go ahead Command. I need a TAC Channel assigned to this incident. Copy, your TAC talk-group is TAC #.
- All Fire units from Market St. Command. All units will be operating on TAC #. Once prompted by Command or dispatch all units shall switch to the designated channel.

All operational communication should be conducted on the TAC talk-group. Upon termination of command, the IC should release the TAC talk-group.

- Dispatch from Command. Go ahead Command. \_\_\_ St. Command is terminated, you can release TAC #.

If the dispatch center receives a call for service, that is anticipated to be a multi-unit/organization incident. The dispatcher shall pre-assign a TAC talk-group and assign it to the first due- responding units, when calling enroute.

The First-Due responding units should switch to the designated TAC talk-group provided by dispatch enroute and communicate with the IC/dispatch on the designated TAC talk-group.

- Dispatch receives a call for a structure fire at N. Market St.
- The dispatcher will acquire and pre-assign a TAC channel.
- Dispatch, Chief 1 is enroute to N. Market St. for a structure fire.
- Chief 1, copy your enroute to Market St. your TAC channel is TAC #. Copy TAC #, have all my first-due responding units switch to TAC # enroute.
- Dispatch from Chief 1. Chief1 is on-scene with (scene size-up) & pre-arrival instructions.- This communication should be on the TAC Talk-group.

\* If an operational unit is communicating on the wrong TAC #, dispatch shall advise that unit to switch to the appropriate TAC #.

All Second-Due/Mutual Aid responding units should switch to the designated TAC talk-group provided by dispatch upon arrival on scene and then communicate with the IC/dispatch on the designated TAC talk-group. All operational communication should be conducted on the TAC talk-group. Upon termination of command, the IC should release the TAC talk-group.

- Dispatch from \_\_\_ St. Command. Go ahead Command. \_\_\_\_\_ St. Command is terminated, you can release TAC #.

It will be the responsibility of the dispatch center(s) to monitor the availability of the TAC talk groups and assign the requesting entity to an open and available TAC talk group.

If the IC would need to utilize additional TAC talk-groups, the IC should request an additional TAC # be assigned.

## Talk Around Talk-Group (MTA)

The talk around talk-groups available on the Wayne County MARCS system are:

- MTA. 1 (channel 7)
- MTA. 2 (channel 8)
- MTA. 3 (channel 9)

The talk around talk group is a common set of non-repeated talk groups to support line of sight and non-critical communications within Wayne County. The use of talk around talk groups reduces the demand on the MARCS system and allows the end user to communicate with each other via radio to radio methods (these channels do not utilize the repeater and are not recorded and/or monitored by the dispatch center).

MTA talk groups are available to all Wayne County any public safety/service entity and should be utilized for non-critical operations, and/or in the event that the portable radio is unable to reach a repeater.

*Examples:* The use of MTA's could be: public relations details, community festivals, tanker shuttles, traffic control, etc.

If an officer or IC needs to utilize a MTA talk-group, the officer/IC shall "call-out" of the talk group and request if anyone is currently utilizing the talk group.

- **Any units from Chief 1 on MTA #, requesting the use of MTA.**
  - No response, utilize the channel
  - If in use, move to another channel and "call-out" again.

\*Due to the fact that these MTA talk groups operate from radio to radio (Non-repeated), it is feasible that two entities within the County could utilize the same talk group and not interfere with communications. \*\*  
The IC should monitor the dispatch channel w/ another radio.

## MARCS State-Wide Radio Talk-Groups

There are numerous talk-groups for state-wide emergency communications. For additional detailed information on non-day to day operational radio channels, refer to the:

- Wayne County MARCS template
- Wayne County 700/800 MHz MARCS Radio System Interoperability Plan
- Wayne County ITAC Plan
- State of Ohio Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan  
[http://ema.ohio.gov/documents/pdfs/ohio\\_inter](http://ema.ohio.gov/documents/pdfs/ohio_inter)