

MABAS Communications Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. at Lisle-Woodridge Fire Station 1. Present were committee members Paul Maplethorpe, Round Lake; Dave Dato, Wauconda; Steve Rauter, Lisle-Woodridge; John Lozar, Ducomm; Bob Mierop, Bolingbrook; and Greg Riddle, IFCA. Also present were Chief Terry Lipinski, Bridgeview and Chief Frank Trout, Westmont.

Mobile Command Centers

Chief Trout stopped by the meeting to discuss the work of the Mobile Command Center Committee. He related the desire to have his committee work with the Communications Committee regarding the development of specifications for fire service mobile command centers. Copies of the draft specification were distributed to Communications Committee members for review.

Advocacy Statements

Statement #8 – Radio Programming: D/C Rauter distributed the final draft of *Advocacy Statement #8 – Technicians Guidelines for Configuring Fire Radios*. Committee members reviewed and discussed the proposed document. The Committee recommended Advocacy Statement #8 for approval by the MABAS Executive Board.

Statement #9 – Website Management: D/C Rauter distributed a revised draft of *Advocacy Statement #9 – Guidelines for MABAS-Affiliated Website Management*. The committee discussed including specific names for management or just indicate positions. It was decided that the various positions would be listing in the advocacy statement. Language was to be included that the MABAS Communications Committee would moderate the websites. Several other technical changes were completed, as well as a discussion concerning password access to secure areas of the IL-TF1 website. All changes were made and the Committee recommended Advocacy Statement #9 for approval by the MABAS Executive Board.

Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee

Chief Dato reported that he continues to lay groundwork to accomplish the formation of an SIEC. He reported on a meeting April 15th in Chicago regarding a Department of Justice sponsored program interoperability program. It was also learned that Cook County is operating repeater on the VTACH interoperability channels. Chief Dato will draft a letter for President Reardon's approval, formally requesting that an SIEC be formed in Illinois.

MABAS Box Alarm Cards

Generic Cards - Chief Maplethorpe reported that his staff is working on sample box alarm card formats to be included on the website. Departments will be able to download to the formats to assist with their card development.

Town Abbreviations - A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the continued use of the 4 character town/department abbreviation system for MABAS system. Many concerns have been raised concerning duplications and trouble maintaining the system as MABAS grows. Difficulty in dispatching alarms was also discussed, as MABAS dispatchers frequently misinterpret the abbreviations. The passport system was also taken into consideration. As a result the Communications Committee agreed to make the following recommendations to the Procedures Committee:

- **Box Alarm system cards should drop the use of the 4 character abbreviation and utilize the town/department name spelled out in plain language.**
- **The passport accountability system should use a five to seven digit identifier, assigned by the Division, approved by the Executive Board. This identifier will include the Division number followed by the Department abbreviation.** For example: 4-GURN would indicate Gurnee in Division 4. 101-PLPR would indicate Pleasant Prairie in Division 101.

Alarm Levels – The Committee Discussed the common practice of limiting MABAS Alarms to 5 levels. The consensus of the Committee was that there is no need to limit MABAS cards to 5 alarms.

This opened a discussion of advanced still alarm assignments and developing a standardized card format. Chief Lipinski related that a standardized card would improve dispatcher training activities and actual alarm dispatches. A revised format was discussed, separating the card into five areas:

- **Department Name, Box Alarm Number, Alarm Type, & Location**
- **Still Alarm(s)/Working Stills**
- **MABAS Alarms (not limited to 5 alarm levels)**
- **Change-of-Quarters**
- **Special Instructions/Effective Date/Authorization**

EMS Disaster Coordination Channel

D/C Rauter discussed correspondence he received from the IFCA EMS Committee concerning EMS disaster coordination frequencies for traffic between the Transportation Officer and Medical Control. The committee recommended they look at 155.280 and 155.190 as possible frequencies.

Tactical Frequency Uses (Incident Communications Plan)

Chief Maplethorpe distributed copies of Lake County's tactical Frequency Use Guideline developed in 2002. The purpose of the document was to assist an Incident Commander in developing a frequency use/incident communications plan for major incidents. The Committee discussed including the new narrowband frequencies as optional command level tactical frequencies. Chief Maplethorpe agreed to modify the Lake County document for use by MABAS.

Training Issues

MABAS Class – Tazwell County - Chief Maplethorpe & D/C Riddle reported on the very successful training held for Division 42 on April 3rd.

Procedures Training - Chief Lipinski was present to discuss the proposed revised procedures document and general MABAS training procedures. A general discussion was held concerning the need for one book containing all MABAS rules, guidelines and recommendations. Different types could be used to delineate different levels of need:

- **Bold type for required sections.**
- Normal type for recommendations.
- *Italic type for Division responsibilities.*

Unit Identifiers

A discussion was held concerning the need to standardize on the information transmitted to the MABAS dispatcher by responding units. The need for individual radio identifiers was the basis for the discussion. The Communications Committee will recommend to Procedures that the following minimum information be transmitted by responding units to the MABAS dispatcher:

- Department/Agency Name
- Apparatus Type
- Unit Radio Signature/Identifier

Old Business

None

New Business

CARMA Letter – D/C Rauter discussed a letter he received from the Chicago Area Radio Monitoring Association concerning a party utilizing their name to demand copies of MABAS Box Alarm Cards from area departments. It was agreed that the letter should be posted on the websites.

ISPERN – D/C Rauter discussed information concerning the State Police's plan to continue operating its VHF ISPERN base stations after they migrate to STARCOMM. The ISPERN governing board also recognized the need for planning to migrate their frequency to narrow-band operations.

Tollway – D/C Rauter distributed a letter from the Illinois Toll Highway Authority discussing their planned use of IREACH for interagency coordination, as well as their planned implementation of a unified incident command model.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 17, 2004 at 1000 hours. The location of the meeting will be either Lisle-Woodridge Station 1 or the Lisle Village Hall. Please mark your calendars