



## **MABAS Communications Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

### **January 17, 2005**

#### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. at the DuComm Communications Center. Present were committee members Paul Maplethorpe, Round Lake; Dave Dato, Wauconda; Bill Bouma, Mt. Pleasant; David Riddle; Channahon; Gregg Riddle, IFCA; Bob Mierop, Bolingbrook; and Dennis Higgins, Livingston County.

#### **II. Approve Prior Meeting Minutes**

**Director Riddle moved to approve the December 20, 2004 meeting minutes as presented. Second by Chief Riddle. All AYES; motion carried.**

#### **III. Box Alarm Card Sub-Committee**

Chief Bouma reported on the meeting of the box alarm card sub-committee that was held just prior to the monthly Communications Committee meeting. The following points were presented:

- Reserve the last line on the box alarm card for interdivisional responses. The department could specify, in order, what divisions should be contacted for an interdivisional response.
- A master template be placed on the website for any department/division to utilize.
- Recommend that each division standardize a numbering system for their box alarm cards.
- Box Number 999 to be reserved for weapons of mass destruction responses.
- Box number 888 to be reserved for METRA evacuation response.

John Lozar, DuComm, entered the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

- Eliminate 4 letter MABAS identifiers.
- Prepare a CD Rom with blank cards, samples and best practices for distribution to all divisions and/or new member departments.
- Prepare sample cards for fire, EMS, haz-mat, tech rescue, dive, investigator, disaster, brush fire, and interdivisional task force responses.

A discussion about the topics ensued. It was agreed that the new Box Alarm Card format should be presented as a "Recommended Practice" instead of a MABAS rule. This will allow Divisions that have already standardized their box alarm cards to maintain their system. Chief Bouma will prepare the Recommended Practice document. Director Riddle volunteered to draft the definitions section of the recommended practice. Chief Bouma will also prepare sample box alarm cards.

#### **IV. Rock Island County**

Chief Maplethorpe reported that radio equipment inventories for departments in Rock Island County have begun to be received. He indicated that a financial figure would be developed to switch these departments off the IFERN frequency. This figure would be forwarded to the ITTF for a grant funding request.

Chief Riddle suggested that Rock Island County be responsible for developing the required funding amount, similar to what Division 15 did. This shifts the responsibility for over/under funding of the frequency change to the departments affected. The committee concurred with Chief Riddle's recommendation.

#### **V. New Lenox-Southwest Central Dispatch (154.280)**

Chief Maplethorpe reported that data bursts on 154.280 MHz (White Fireground) are frequently audible in Lake County. Chief Riddle reported that he has not made any progress on this matter.

The consensus of the Committee was that a formal letter be mailed to both New Lenox and Southwest Central Dispatch Center regarding their suspected use of this frequency for station alerting. Chief Maplethorpe will draft the letter.

#### **VI. Gibson Area Ambulance (154.295)**

Director Higgins reported that Gibson Area Ambulance Service is willing to relocate to a different frequency if one can be located. Chief Maplethorpe agreed to work with them on frequency coordination issues.

#### **VI. MERCI Base Station Project**

Chief Dato distributed a drawing depicting the desired equipment configuration for the ITTF Hospital MERCI Base Station Project.

Chief Dato reported that M/A-Com base station equipment is no longer on the state-bid contracts, but is available through GSA. He priced out the desired system using both M/A-Com and Motorola MTR 2000 (state-bid) equipment. Motorola priced out at \$12,900 per station while M/A-Com GSA was approximately \$500 higher.

The only radio console that will have the required features, and is within the approximate budget, is the Gaitronics Model ICP9004. This unit is available GSA for approximately \$4,100 with a handset. This combined package is slightly higher than the budgeted amount per hospital.

**Director Riddle moved to endorse the planned MERCI base station project as proposed utilizing a T4-4R base station including MERCI 340 with a local receiver, MERCI 340 with a statewide receiver, MERCI 400 with a local receiver, and MERCI 280 with a statewide receiver. Second by Chief Maplethorpe. All AYES; motion carried.**

## **VII. CTCSS for Fireground Frequencies**

Chiefs Bouma and Maplethorpe reported on a meeting held by Division 104 in Rock County, WI concerning MABAS communications issues. Several questions were raised concerning the use of CTCSS (PL) tones for firegrounds RED, WHITE and BLUE. A discussion ensued concerning the use of transmit and receive CTCSS tones and a proposed effective date.

Use of CTCSS on IFERN is slated to begin on January 1, 2006. However, since many departments are already in their budget cycles, it was suggested that the fireground channel effective date be at least a year away.

**B/C Mierop moved to advocate the use of transmit CTCSS (PL) tones on Red, White and Blue firegrounds effective January 1, 2007. Second by Director Riddle. ALL AYES; motion carried.**

## **VIII. IREACH Base Station Project**

Chief Dato reported that the deadline for spending grant funds slated for the IREACH base station project is close and time is of the essence. The MABAS Communications Committee reiterated its opposition to supplying mobile radios with power supplies to accomplish the intent of this project. Chief Dato researched current state-bids and presented a package that is within the budgeted amount.

**Chief Dato moved to recommend the Motorola MTR2000 base radio with desktop remote and antenna system for the ITTF IREACH base station project. Second by B/C Mierop. All AYES; motion carried.**

## **IX. Old Business**

### **Training Power Points**

B/C Mierop questioned the availability of MABAS training documents and power point presentations on the website. It was felt that many of these programs are currently available.

### **MABAS Website**

Chief Bouma reported that the MABAS.org website is somewhat out-of-date. He feels that updates should be posted for the division map, division and department listings.

D/C Rauter, webmaster, was absent due to illness. However, it was noted that Steve is very prompt in updating the website when information is forwarded to him.

## **X. New Business**

### **Vice-President Tonne**

The Committee was saddened to learn that Deputy Chief Jerry Tonne, Lombard Fire Department and MABAS Vice-President, retired on January 1<sup>st</sup>. His cancer treatments are not working. Jerry is at home but his wife has requested no visitors. Doctors are managing his pain.

Deputy Chief Tonne was instrumental in organizing the MABAS Special Communications Committee and was an integral member during our initial meetings.

### **Railroad Signaling**

Director Higgins reported that Livingston County was receiving high-level interference from Amtrak/Union Pacific railroads. Transmitters installed to control signals and switches on the rail corridor between Chicago and Springfield were operating as much as 200 -300 MHz off frequency. Director Higgins reported that these units were designed to operate in the 800 or 900 MHz bands.

**Milwaukee County**

Chief Bouma reported that Milwaukee County has received a communications grant to facilitate communications projects related to their joining MABAS.

**MABAS Conference**

The 2005 ITTF/MABAS conference is slated for February 28 - March 2 in Peoria.

**XI. Adjournment**

**Chief Dato moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by B/C Mierop. All AYES; the meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.**

The next meeting for the MABAS Communications Committee is scheduled for Monday, February 21, 2005 at 1000 hours. **The location of the meeting will be at the DuComm Communications Center in Glendale Heights.** Please mark your calendars.

Respectfully submitted,

*Paul Maplethorpe*

Paul Maplethorpe  
Co-Chair