



MABAS Communications Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2006

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. at Lisle-Woodridge Station 1. Present were committee members Paul Maplethorpe, Round Lake; Steve Rauter, Lisle-Woodridge; Dave Riddle, Channahon; Bill Bouma, Mt. Pleasant; and John Lozar, DuComm. Also attending the meeting was FF Andy Orth, Lisle-Woodridge, who works with the MABAS websites.

II. Approve Prior Meeting Minutes

Gregg Riddle e-mailed corrections to the November minutes: Page 2 NPSPAC instead of NIPSPAC and on Page 4 IL TERT instead of ILERT.

D/C Rauter moved to approve the November meeting minutes as amended. Second by Chief Riddle. All AYES; motion carried.

III. MABAS Conference

Chief Maplethorpe reported that the 3rd Annual MABAS Conference is scheduled for March 6 – 8 in Peoria. A MABAS Dispatchers Conference has also been scheduled for March 9 & 10 in Peoria. The program has yet to be finalized and Chief Reardon has been contacted concerning the MABAS Communications Committee's participation at these conferences.

A discussion was held concerning topics appropriate for these conferences that the Communications Committee could participate with, including:

- Command Vans & ITECS Trailers
- IL Telecommunicator Emergency Response Teams
- Communications Support Teams
- MABAS Alarm Training for Dispatchers
- Training on Advocacy Statements
- Training on Frequency Use Matrix

These topics will be forwarded to Jerry Page and President Reardon for consideration in the conference programs.

IV. Division 39 Training

Chief Maplethorpe reported that a new division training session will be held for Division 39 on Saturday, February 11th at the Colona Fire Department. This course will be similar to the course taught at Tazewell County in 2005. Volunteers will be needed to help teach the course and moderate the practical sessions. Bill Bouma volunteered and indicated that he would bring an Assistant Chief along. Steve Rauter and Dave Riddle both tentatively agreed to participate.

V. Statewide Radio License

Chief Maplethorpe suggested that additional interoperability frequencies be added to the MABAS statewide radio license in Illinois. A discussion was held with the following conclusions reached:

- Add 45.88 for mobile and fixed base temporary locations.
- Add low power low band mobile interoperability frequencies.
- Add V-Call and V-Tac channels for fixed base temporary.
- Add UHF low power interoperability frequencies for mobile use.
- Add U-Call and U-Tac channels for fixed base temporary and temporary repeaters.
- Obtain FBT and FB2T licensure on the NPSPAC interoperability channels
- Obtain STA on 700 MHz channels for Fire, EMS & All Discipline interoperability pairs.

The consensus of the committee members present was to apply for the additional interoperability frequencies on the existing statewide FCC authorization.

VI. Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee

A brief discussion was held concerning the current and proposed make-up of the SEIC. Further discussion was tabled until the February meeting to permit Chief Dato to comment.

VII. Old Business

A. MERCI Base Station Project

Chief Maplethorpe reported for Chief Dato that the base radios have been shipped by Motorola. D/C Rauter reported that antenna multi-couplers have been backordered. Several members have received inquiries from hospitals questioning how the equipment was to be implemented.

B. VHF Interoperability Radios

Chief Maplethorpe reported for Chief Dato that the VHF Interoperability Radios have been delivered by Motorola. D/C Rauter reported that he was notified that the CTCSS tone for GRAY Fireground may not be programmed correctly. Mr. Lozar agreed to check several codeplugs to determine if a problem exists.

D/C Rauter was asked to post a copy of the ITTF radio configuration on both the MABAS and MABASRADIO websites. D/C Rauter agreed to post the information along with a brief description of regulations regarding the radios use and reprogramming.

Chief Maplethorpe also reported that hard plastic carry cases with pre-cut foam inserts are available for the radios. Contact Chiefs Dato or Maplethorpe for additional information or to receive a case.

C. Rock Island County

Chief Maplethorpe reported that progress to move these departments off IFERN for routine dispatch has been slow. He mentioned that FCC rules require that new stations be constructed within one year. Chief Maplethorpe agreed to draft a letter to the affected departments, reminding them of the construction deadline, and urging them to complete the frequency change.

D. Gibson Area Ambulance

Chief Maplethorpe reported that the FCC application for Gibson Area Ambulance's new repeater output has been forwarded by IMSA to the FCC for processing. Once approved, this should clear the use of BLUE Fireground in the Champaign area.

E. Southwest Central Dispatch

No recent interference has been heard on 154.280 MHz by committee members. D/C Rauter agreed to follow-up on this matter to see if they did indeed change frequencies for their station alerting off of WHITE fireground.

F. LEADS/EMnet

Chief Maplethorpe read an e-mail from Mike Moos at the OSFM. Mr. Moos reported that the ITTF Communications Committee made the EMnet system for all Illinois fire departments a priority. However funding is not currently available.

Installation of LEADS type III terminals at fire only dispatch centers remains a possibility. Mr. Moos will continue to follow-up with this project.

G. IFERN CTCSS

Mr. Lozar questioned how many MABAS Divisions have gone full CTCSS on the IFERN frequency since the January 1, 2006 deadline has passed. Members present at the reported that Divisions 4, 15, 102 and Ducomm have deployed full CTCSS.

Chief Maplethorpe suggested that an announcement be made at the January MABAS Executive Board meeting that a radio test will be conducted with all divisions at a date and time in February. Mr. Lozar agreed to make facilities available at Ducomm to monitor for the use of transmit CTCSS by the various divisions in the Chicago area.

VIII. New Business

MABAS Reorganization: D/C Rauter questioned the role of the Communications Committee as the result of the proposed MABAS reorganization. A discussion ensued. It was agreed that at the State level, communications falls under the Logistics branch. However, the committee feels that a more regional approach should be maintained for MABAS and fire service interoperable communications. As a result, the following suggestions will be forwarded to President Reardon:

- The MABAS Presidents' Council should create a standing Communications Committee to coordinate the efforts of the state communications committees. Each state would be represented on the Standing Communications Committee. The current Communications Committee and its work would be the basis for the standing committee.
- Each state franchise would have a state Communications Committee. The purpose of the state committees will include maintaining the integrity of the overall MABAS communications plans and advocacy statements as well as address issues on a state level.

IX. Information for the Good of the Committee

Website Updates: D/C Rauter reported that several updates and upgrades have been applied to the IL-TF1, MABAS and MABASRADIO websites. Additional information and updates will follow.

MABAS Cards on the Internet: Chief Bouma questioned the practice of placing completed MABAS box alarm cards on the internet. The concept of open access availability versus password protected availability.

Chiefs Riddle and Maplethorpe are opposed to placing completed cards on website due to security reasons. Chief Bouma expressed the opinion that having cards available makes it easier for departments to maintain current MABAS cards at their departments. D/C Rauter reported that various levels of password protection are available if administered properly. Chief Maplethorpe reported that passwords can be shared and then the security is violated.

No consensus was reached.

X. Adjournment

D/C Rauter moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Mr. Lozar. All AYES; the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

The next meeting for the MABAS Communications Committee is scheduled for **Monday, February 20, 2006** at 1000 hours. **The location of the meeting will be at Lisle-Woodridge Fire Station 1.** Please mark your calendars.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Maplethorpe

Paul Maplethorpe
Co-Chair