



# Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Communications Committee

## Meeting Minutes

### June 4, 2007

**Members Present:** Paul Maplethorpe, Round Lake; Dave Dato, Wauconda; Steve Rauter, WESCOM; John Lozar, Ducomm; Bill Bouma, Mt. Pleasant; Larry Matkaitis, OSFM; John Lozar, and Gregg Riddle, IFCA.

**Guests Present:** Alan Choutka, IL EMnet Coordinator; Carl Guse, WI Highway Patrol

| Agenda Item:               | Discussion/Decision:  |
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| Call to Order              | Co-Chair Paul Maplethorpe welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1005 hours at Lisle-Woodridge Station 1.   |
| Approve Minutes            | Chief Maplethorpe reported that the minutes from the April meeting were not available at this time. Approval was tabled until June 25 <sup>th</sup> .   |
| EMNET System Brainstorming | <p>Mr. Choutka provided the following status report on the EMnet installations for fire departments in Illinois:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 Fire Departments are currently released for installation.</li> <li>• Installation survey responses from fire departments have been slow.</li> <li>• 42 departments have been scheduled or already installed.</li> <li>• 20 departments refused a terminal because they are co-located with their PSAP or EMA terminal.</li> <li>• 30+ departments have not responded to Comlabs survey or telephone calls.</li> <li>• Second batch of 100 fire departments will be released to Comlabs in June.</li> <li>• The initial 283 fire departments should be installed by the end of 2007.</li> <li>• IDPH EMS Region 9 is using HERSA funding to install EMnet terminals in all 12 hospitals within the region for use during bypass and mass casualty situations.</li> </ul> <p>Other EMnet related discussions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding a bullet point that EMnet is to be used for secured message system for deployed technical rescue teams, etc.</li> <li>• Using EMnet for secured communications for transportation systems between Gary and Milwaukee.</li> <li>• EMnet is beta testing the ENAWAS system.</li> <li>• The need for representation from RED Center was discussed.</li> </ul> |

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| <p>Green Fireground</p>          | <p>The need for a MABAS Advocacy Statement addressing the EMnet system for the fire service was again discussed. Messer's Rauter and Choutka agreed to prepare a draft for the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Guse questioned the history of the frequency 150.790 MHz being identified as "Green Fireground". Mr. Rauter and Chief Maplethorpe related that this was a frequency identified by Lake &amp; McHenry counties prior to the MABAS Communications Plan being developed. It cannot be used statewide in Illinois or Wisconsin due to repeater input conflicts. Mr. Guse related that Wisconsin has the same issues with the frequency, although MABAS members in southern Wisconsin are using the frequency anyway.</p> <p>Chief Maplethorpe agreed to contact MABAS-WI president Paul Gilbert to inform him of the restrictions on the use of this frequency. He also agreed to contact Flight-for-Life to inform them of the restrictions outside of Lake &amp; McHenry counties in IL.</p>   |  |
| <p>Bases on MABAS Channels</p>   | <p>Mr. Guse reported that Milwaukee area UASI is looking to invest grant funds in VHF/800 overlays. They desire to install VHF base stations on up to five frequencies and patch them into the Milwaukee area trunking systems. Mr. Guse related that patches were being considered for both IFERN and BLUE Fireground. A discussion ensued and the following points were presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Dato suggested that patches be installed between the V_Tac, U-Tac and I-Tac frequencies. Narrowband and programming issues could be a current issue, however.</li> <li>• Chief Maplethorpe raised concerns over the proposed patches on IFERN &amp; BLUE Fireground. The use of high antennas will cause harmful interference well beyond the area of the emergency.</li> <li>• Mr. Rauter suggested the better solution was incident scene patches using low-power mobile radios.</li> </ul> <p>Mr. Guse asked that the MABAS Comms Committee provide guidance. As a result, the following consensus was reached:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No base radios should ever be allowed on RED or WHITE fireground.</li> <li>• Base radios on BLUE fireground in WI should be discouraged.</li> <li>• IFERN patches should be limited to a rule of thumb of 25 watts of power with antennas not exceeding 25 feet, or otherwise be engineered to only cover a limited area.</li> <li>• An advocacy statement should be developed to address these issues.</li> </ul> |  |
| <p>800 MHz Tactical Channels</p> | <p>Mr. Guse related that he is preparing to license statewide 800 MHz frequencies for simplex tactical communications. He also encouraged the licensing of 700 MHz frequencies for the same purpose.</p>   |  |

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| <b>OLD BUSINESS:</b>                             |   |  |
| MERCI Base Stations                              | No report.  |  |
| VHF Interoperability                             | No report   |  |
| Rock Island County                               | No report.  |  |
| Southwest Central                                | No report.  |  |
| EMnet  | See prior notes.  |  |
| MABAS Dispatch Yahoo Group                       | No report.  |  |
| Statewide Radio License                          | Chief Maplethorpe reported that MABAS President Reardon has authorized the Comms Committee to proceed with the licensing of additional frequencies for statewide operation on the MABAS FCC authorization.  |  |
| Carbondale Area                                  | No report.  |  |
| Statewide Interop Executive Committee            | Chief Dato reported that the SIEC is making progress. The SIEC will be the governance component for interoperability programs.  |  |
| Starcom21  | Chief Dato reported that delays continue and that the State of Illinois has yet to accept the system from Motorola.   |  |
| BLUE Fireground                                  | Chief Bouma reported that as of June 1 <sup>st</sup> , the Milwaukee County patch between BLUE Fireground and their 800 trunking system has been permanently disabled.  |  |
| PS Interoperable Communications Grants           | Chief Dato reported that the US Department of Commerce is developing rules for the grant program. IEMA will be the lead agency for this grant program in Illinois.  |  |
| Cook County UASI Interoperability Committee      | A brief discussion was held concerning Cook County UASI plans to develop a public safety trunking system for all police and fire departments in the County piggy backed on the Sheriff's trunked system. The new Cook County Sheriff is not agreeable to the proposed plan. |  |
| <b>New Business:</b>                             | None  |  |
| <b>Information for the Good of the Committee</b> |   |  |

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| IR Camera Bid                            | Mr. Matkaitis reported that CMS will award Thermal Imaging Camera bids to both MSA and Bullard. MSA will be awarded the bid for both fire and law enforcement. Bullard will also be awarded a bid for fire service. Cost for the TIC cameras will range from \$4700 to \$7300 each.  |  |
| Chicago Satellite Truck                  | <p>Chief Dato reported on Chicago's new satellite communications vehicle and related equipment. Highlights of the vehicle include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tents and Equipment for 100 person dispatch center.</li> <li>• Laptop Computers</li> <li>• VOIP Capability</li> <li>• Cellular COW</li> <li>• High capacity up and down satellite capacity, including video capabilities to send news feeds to networks.</li> <li>• Ability to remote the Chicago 9-1-1 center to anywhere in the country.</li> </ul> <p>Chief Dato also related that Chicago is willing to make the truck and its services available to suburban communities to assist with a major disaster.</p> |  |
| FCC Proposed Rulemaking – VHF Paging Ban | Mr. Lozar discussed a proposed rulemaking by the FCC that would limit, or eliminate, one-way paging on all VHF frequencies, including fire and mutual aid channels. The deadline for comments is July 13 <sup>th</sup> . Proposed language will be developed for the June 25 <sup>th</sup> meeting.  |  |
| Adjournment                              | <b>Mr. Rauter moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Chief Dato. All AYES; the meeting adjourned at 1222 hours.</b>   |  |
| Next Meeting                             | <p>The next meeting will be held on Monday, June 25, 2007 at Lisle-Woodridge Station 1 beginning at 1000 hours.</p> <p>Minutes taken by Paul Maplethorpe.</p>  |  |