

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Governor's Office of Administration
Public Safety Radio Technology Bulletin

ID and Title:	RTB002 Interagency Communication
Issued by:	Deputy Secretary for Public Safety Radio

Supporting Documents

Type	Document ID	Title
AD	USE002-01	Interagency Voice Groups
CD	GEN001	OpenSky Fleet Map Glossary
CD	GEN002	Intercommunication Types

Record of Changes

Ver.Rel	Issue date	Revised by	Status	Description
1.0	1/8/2007	J Seefeldt	Downlevel	Original issue
1.1	2/8/2007	J Seefeldt	Downlevel	Change system name to PA-STARNet
1.2	2/21/2007	J Seefeldt	Downlevel	Fix Deputy Secretary title
1.3	3/5/2007	J Seefeldt	Downlevel	Minor formatting corrections
1.4	11/5/2008	J Seefeldt	Downlevel	Apply boilerplate changes from OA Legal review.
1.5	2/2/2009	J Seefeldt	Downlevel	Remove categorization and rename from "USE002".
1.6	7/28/2010	J Seefeldt	Published	General review and update; apply Word 2007 format.

1. Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for ad hoc interagency communication using the Pennsylvania Statewide Radio Network (PA-STARNet): that is, communication across agency fleet map boundaries for which no agency-owned shared voice groups exist. These policies and procedures apply only to nonemergency communication between two agencies. Incident response requiring communication among multiple agencies follows the commonwealth's National Incident Management System (NIMS) plan.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all departments, boards, commissions, and other organizations using PA-STARNet.

3. Policy

3.1. The Office of Public Safety Radio Services (OPRS) coordinates establishment and operation of an Interagency Communication Center (ICC) to be staffed and available to PA-STARNet users for interagency communication.

3.1.1. OPRS establishes responsibility for interagency communication coordination and publishes current ICC contact information and procedures to all PA-STARNet users.

3.1.2. The ICC is available to respond to interagency communication requests at all times, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Governor's Office of Administration
Public Safety Radio Technology Bulletin

- 3.1.3. The ICC establishes and maintains a repository for agency contact information to help fulfill interagency communication requests quickly and accurately.
- 3.1.4. The ICC satisfies interagency communication requests by assigning a voice group from the reserved profile and directing the agencies requesting communication to initiate conversation using that voice group.
- 3.1.5. The ICC keeps a timely and accurate log of all calls and requests to the ICC.
- 3.2. Agencies using PA-STARNet must use the ICC for all nonemergency interagency two-way radio communication in preference to any other methods.
 - 3.2.1. In order to use the ICC, an agency must designate a voice group owned by that agency for use by the ICC in contacting it. The owning agency is responsible for monitoring the voice group to respond to ICC requests and instructions.
 - 3.2.2. When contacting the ICC, agency representatives must identify themselves by name, title or role, and agency, as appropriate: for example, "Jane Doe, Communications Officer, Department of Health, calling the ICC."
 - 3.2.3. ICC and agency representatives conduct all radio communication in plain language and common terminology, avoiding codes, acronyms, abbreviations, and unnecessary technical terms.
 - 3.2.4. Agency users of the ICC must notify the ICC operator at the conclusion of an interagency call, using the protocol specified below in **6.2** under **6. Procedures**.
- 3.3. OPRS establishes and maintains on behalf of all PA-STARNet users a set of common voice groups as a means of requesting and establishing interagency communication.
 - 3.3.1. The interagency voice groups are grouped in a reserved common systemwide profile, in slot 14, to be included in all production-level radio personalities.
 - 3.3.2. The reserved common Profile 14 and its voice groups are owned by the Office of Administration (OA) and administered by OPRS on behalf of OA and agencies using PA-STARNet.
 - 3.3.3. The first voice group in the interagency communication profile is reserved as a hailing channel, to be monitored at all times by the ICC for agency requests. Remaining voice groups in the reserved profile are available for fulfillment of interagency communication requests.
 - 3.3.4. Agencies must refrain from changing in any way the reserved interagency communication profile and the voice groups it comprises. All changes are to be requested and implemented through the Customer Support section of OPRS.
 - 3.3.5. Voice groups are named and arranged in the reserved interagency communication profile as specified in the supporting document USE002-01 Interagency Voice Groups.

4. Definitions

4.1. Agency

Any organization meeting the criteria under **2. Scope** and using PA-STARNet.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Governor's Office of Administration
Public Safety Radio Technology Bulletin

- 4.2. Interagency Communication Center (ICC)
The organizational entity responsible for monitoring and fulfilling requests for agency interagency communication.
- 4.3. Interagency Communication
(See supporting document *GEN002 Intercommunication Types* for classification and definition of the types of two-way radio communication.)
- 4.4. Voice Group; Profile; Personality; End User
(See supporting document *GEN001 OpenSky Fleet Map Glossary* for definitions of common OpenSky fleet mapping terms.)

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1. OPRS is responsible for the following:
 - 5.1.1. Establishing responsibility for setup and operation of the ICC.
 - 5.1.2. Creating and maintaining the reserved systemwide interagency communication voice groups.
- 5.2. The ICC is responsible for the following:
 - 5.2.1. Monitoring the voice group designated for interagency communication hailing.
 - 5.2.2. Making use of agency contact information to fulfill interagency communication requests promptly and reliably.
 - 5.2.3. Responding to agency requests for interagency communication by contacting the target agency, if possible, and directing the agencies to an available voice group in the reserved profile for communication.
 - 5.2.4. Maintaining a full, timely, and accurate record of all requests and their outcome.
- 5.3. Agencies using PA-STARNet are responsible for the following:
 - 5.3.1. Using the ICC to satisfy requirements for interagency communication.
 - 5.3.2. Understanding and observing all policies and procedures pertaining to ICC use.
 - 5.3.3. Providing clear, timely, and accurate contact information to the ICC.
 - 5.3.4. Ensuring that all calls are terminated according to the protocol specified below in **6.2** under **6. Procedures**.

6. Procedures

- 6.1. An agency with a requirement for interagency communication ("Calling Agency") uses the following procedure to establish communication with another agency ("Target Agency"):
 - 6.1.1. A representative of the Calling Agency contacts the ICC using the calling channel in the systemwide reserved voice group profile designated for this purpose, or using some other method defined for ICC initial contact should any be provided.
 - 6.1.2. The ICC operator responds to the Calling Agency representative by acknowledging its transmission and asking that it specify its request.
 - 6.1.3. The Calling Agency representative states the interagency communication request, identifying clearly the Target Agency, and stating any other pertinent information such as the level of urgency.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Governor's Office of Administration

Public Safety Radio Technology Bulletin

- 6.1.4. The ICC operator contacts the Target Agency after consulting the agency contact file to determine the voice group to be used for contact.
- 6.1.5. Depending on the outcome of the attempt to contact the Target Agency, the ICC operator continues with one of the following procedures:
 - 6.1.5.1. If the Target Agency has responded, the ICC operator designates a voice group available in the systemwide reserved profile, directs the Target Agency representative to switch to that voice group, and resumes contact with the Calling Agency representative to direct him or her to switch to that same voice group in order to initiate interagency communication.
 - 6.1.5.2. If the Target Agency has failed to respond, the ICC operator informs the Calling Agency representative, who may request that the operator repeat the cycle of contact attempts. If the second cycle succeeds in establishing contact with the Target Agency, the ICC operator proceeds as above in **6.1.5.1**. If the second cycle fails, the Calling Agency representative may request yet another cycle of up to two contact attempts after a specified period of at least 15 minutes.
 - 6.1.5.3. Should there be no contact with the Target Agency after three full cycles of attempts, the ICC operator aborts the attempt to contact, and informs the Calling Agency representative of this outcome.
- 6.2. The Calling Agency uses the following procedure to terminate an interagency call initiated through the ICC:
 - 6.2.1. Upon completion of interagency communication, the Calling Agency representative contacts the ICC operator using the voice group designated as the ICC hailing channel.
 - 6.2.2. The ICC operator responds to the Calling Agency representative by acknowledging its transmission and asking that it specify its request.
 - 6.2.3. The Calling Agency representative provides his or her name and designation, identifies his or her agency, and states that interagency communication has been completed, identifying the resources to be freed.
 - 6.2.4. The ICC operator notes that the resources freed are available to serve further communication requests.

7. Exemption

Any affected entity seeking exemption from this policy should complete a *Public Safety Radio Standards Waiver Request* and submit it by e-mail to RA-RadioPolicy@state.pa.us for review.

8. Questions

Any questions about this policy statement should be directed by e-mail to RA-RadioPolicy@state.pa.us.