



Portage County Public Safety Communications Board
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy Number:	5	Subject:	Frequency Utilization
Effective Date:	April 28, 2016	Revised Date:	Number of Pages: 3
Related References:			
Policy Statement:	This policy is intended to provide guidance to users of the simulcast radio system as to the intended use for each frequency and other related matters.		

I. DEFINITIONS:

Communications Center – The Portage County Sheriff’s Office Communications Center.

EM – Emergency Management.

EMS – Emergency Medical Service; includes ambulance services and emergency medical responders.

EOC – Emergency Operations Center.

Field Unit – Any unit which is interacting with the Communications Center from out in the field, such as squad cars, fire apparatus, EMS units, etc.

IC – Incident Commander.

Major Event – Any planned or spontaneous occurrence of significant complexity to warrant a dedicated radio frequency reserved exclusively for that instance and the units involved therein.

NEWCOM – North East Wisconsin Public Safety COMmunications group; a group of counties that have entered into an intergovernmental agreement pursuant to §66.0301, Wis. Stats, with the mission of providing participants with a reliable and responsive communications link between all emergency services and public safety agencies.

Portage County Public Safety Radio System – The communications organization consisting of radio system related real estate, equipment, procedures, and radio frequencies owned or licensed in the name of the Sheriff of Portage County, primary intended for use by emergency services and public safety organizations.

Radio Alerting Systems – Any number of devices used to alert specific units, agencies, or area users to a potential emergency or call for service. Examples include municipal fire/weather/attack warning sirens, Portage County Parks warning sirens/public address systems, and weather radios.

Tactical Frequency – A radio frequency used for field units to communicate directly with each other, primarily intended to bypass the Communications Center.

Unit-to-Unit – Communications primarily between field units.

II. STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

- a. Philosophy. Radio traffic should be organized by function and intent, sufficiently separated to provide more opportunities to be able to communicate, while not overtaxing the resources of the Communications Center.

- b. Communications Center. The Communications Center will act as the primary radio control station, and as such, shall have the authority to direct, redirect, suspend, and prioritize radio transmissions and the assignment of frequencies that are part of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System.
- c. Incident Commander. The IC will have the authority to move field units off of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System onto tactical frequencies, and to move field units between tactical frequencies. The IC may also move field units to frequencies that are a part of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System, subject to the authority of the Communications Center outlined above.
- d. Users granted permission to operate on any frequency licensed as part of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System implicitly agree to operate in accordance with this policy, emergencies notwithstanding.

III. SPECIFICS

a. Radio Channel Usage

i. **Sheriff 1.** This frequency is designated for:

- 1. Primary direct contact with the Communications Center by the Sheriff's Office and Village of Plover Police Department.
- 2. Primary direct contact with the Communications Center by law enforcement agencies outside of Portage County (e.g. State Patrol, Department of Natural Resources).
- 3. Limited unit-to-unit communications by law enforcement for the purpose of coordinating responses when the use of a tactical frequency is impractical, or relaying brief initial reports.

ii. **Sheriff 2.** This frequency is designated for:

- 1. Primary law enforcement repeated tactical frequency.
- 2. Primary law enforcement frequency for major events, or as the alternate primary frequency for field units not directly involved during a major event.
- 3. Secondary direct contact with the Communications Center when radio traffic on Sheriff 1 is too heavy to properly communicate.

iii. **Paging.** This frequency is designated for:

- 1. Primary transmission of paging tones, intended to activate or alert fire service, EMS, and EM agencies across Portage County, as well as the activation of radio alerting systems.
- 2. Emergency direct contact with the Communications Center in the event of system failure on another frequency or some other bona fide emergency situation that prevents the adequate use of another frequency.

iv. **Public Safety 1.** This frequency is designated for:

- 1. Primary direct contact with the Communications Center for fire service, EMS, and EM field units.

2. Secondary direct contact with the Communications Center for other assisting field units and organizations. Examples include transit drivers, Humane Society of Portage County, and Portage County Highway Department.
 3. Limited unit-to-unit communications by all disciplines for the purpose of coordinating responses when the use of a tactical frequency is impractical, or relaying brief initial reports.
- v. **Public Safety 2.** This frequency is designated for:
1. Primary fire service, EMS, and EM repeated tactical frequency.
 2. Primary fire service, EMS, and EM frequency for major events, or as the alternate primary frequency for field units not directly involved during a major event.
 3. Primary direct contact between the Communications Center and an activated command post or EOC during a major event.
 4. Secondary direct contact with the Communications Center when radio traffic on Public Safety 1 is too heavy to properly communicate.
 5. Extended EMS related patient care instructions and information between EMS field units.
- b. Encryption
- i. The primary law enforcement radio encryption code utilized throughout Portage County shall be the NEWCOM radio code. This will provide better interoperability throughout the NEWCOM Group area and across the State.
 - ii. The use and distribution of the NEWCOM encryption code shall be strictly restricted to conform to the approved policy created by the NEWCOM Group, and all users implicitly agree to abide by the NEWCOM related policy on encryption.
 - iii. The NEWCOM encryption code shall be maintain only by authorized members of NEWCOM and shall not distributed in violation of the NEWCOM encryption policy.
- c. Radio Disable
- i. The radio disable feature can be used to stop any inappropriate use of a radio, or to prevent a stolen radio from functioning.
 - ii. All users of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System shall have their mobile and portable radios configured to allow the Communications Center to remotely disable that radio, so long as that model of radio has that feature.
- d. Radio Identification
- i. All users of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System shall have their mobile and portable radios configured to transmit a unique identification code when transmitting, so long as that model radio has that feature. Such codes shall strictly conform to the plan approved by Portage County.
 - ii. All users of the Portage County Public Safety Radio System shall provide their unique identification codes to the Communications Center prior to putting those radios into operation, or as soon as practical afterwards.