EMS INTEROPERABILITY COMMUNICATIONS OPTIONS &

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Purpose of this document is to assist EMS agency officials in determining mechanisms available to them to enable interagency multi-frequency communications using the systems in place and evolving in Idaho

1. **My agency is transitioning to 700 MHz, do we still need to keep the VHF radios?**

    A-   As long as you have the ability to communicate on the 155.340 (EMS VHF F1) and 155.280 (EMS VHF F2) MHz frequencies with your 700 MHz radio(s), you do not have to keep VHF radios. The current EMS Rule (IDAPA 16.02.03) states that all licensed EMS agencies must have mobile or portable (depending on the service type) radios that operate on 155.340 and 155.280 MHz with encoding capabilities to allow access to the Idaho EMS radio communications system. Having the ability to communicate on the 155.340 and 155.280 MHz frequencies has been determined to satisfy this requirement.

2. **Can StateComm "patch" my 700 MHz radio with a VHF radio on F1 or F2?**

    A- StateComm has patching capability for 700 MHz radios connected to the Motorola Master site.

    a. StateComm can patch a 700 MHz radio connected to the Motorola Master site to EMS F1 or F2
    b. The EMS agency must tell StateComm which mountain top needs to be patched
    c. If the EMS agency travels beyond the trunked radio coverage, they will lose the patch
    d. The agency must advise StateComm when the incident is complete and StateComm will physically turn off the patch

3. **Under what circumstances can my agency request a patch?**
   A- 700 MHz radio patch to EMS VHF F1 (155.340) can be requested for EMS unit to hospital base station communications. Communications between the EMS unit and the hospital must be immediate, brief, single message exchanges.
   A- 700 Mhz radio patch to EMS VHF F2 (155.280) can be requested for EMS agencies operating on 700 MHz that have a need to communicate via radio to another EMS agency operating on VHF F2 (155.280). Communications must be immediate, short term and incident specific.

4. **How do we request a patch?**
   A- Patching can be requested via radio directly to StateComm.

   State the 700 MHz frequency you are on, the EMS VHF frequency that you need to patched to and the Mountain top. Example "Requesting I3-EM-1 patched to EMS F1 on Shafer" or "Requesting I3-EM-2 patched to EMS F2 on Hawley".

5. **Can my agency's Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) patch our 700 MHz radio to EMS F1 or F2?**
   A- While many PSAP's have the ability to patch a 700 MHz radio to EMS F1 or F2, there are no MOU's in place to allow PSAP's to patch the EMS mountain tops.

6. **Will the EMS VHF frequencies F1 and F2 ever go away?**
   A- There are no plans to eliminate EMS F1 or F2. EMS F1-155.340 MHz is a National Hospital Emergency Ambulance Radio (HEAR) frequency. The purpose of the frequency is to assure multijurisdictional VHF interoperability between EMS units and hospitals. EMS F2 (155.280) should be used for transmissions with StateComm and ground or air EMS. The primary purpose of this frequency is for emergency dispatch and communications between StateComm and EMS units.

7. **Is StateComm connected to the 700 MHz Master site?**
   A- StateComm is connected to the Motorola 700 MHz Master site in Meridian.

8. **Can other individual 700 MHz trunked radio systems that are not connected to the Motorola Master site contact StateComm**

   A- An Inter-Sub System Interface (ISSI) (which is not in place) is required for other individual 700 MHz trunked radio systems to contact StateComm. More information on ISSI can be found by researching P-25 white papers.

Upper Snake River Valley (Madison, Clark, Bonneville, Jefferson and Freemont counties) operate off of a Raytheon 700 MHz trunked radio system. This system is not connected to the Motorola 700 MHz Master site. The system would be "connected" via the ISSI. The ISSI is not in place.

9. **On what frequencies can my agency contact StateComm?**

   A- StateComm's primary frequencies are EMS F1 (155.340) and EMS F2 (155.280). StateComm currently monitors I1-EM-1, I1-EM-2, I3-EM-1, I3-EM-2, I5-EM-1 and I5-EM-2, ID-EMS-AC and ID-HOSP-AC 700 MHz talk groups. StateComm will monitor other EMS talk groups around the state as they come on line.

10. **Are radio transmissions recorded when patched**

    Radio transmissions are recorded when patched.

11. **Can StateComm still page over a mountain top that is patched?**

    A- StateComm can still page over a mountain top that is patched, however the page will be held in a cue until the mountain top is clear of radio transmissions.

12. **Where can I get additional information on other responder's interoperability status?**

    A- Contact your District Interoperability Governance Board (DIGB) representative.

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