

Operating Guideline # 1001

Incident Radio Channel Assignments & Usage

July 3rd, 2025



1.1 ISSUE / RATIONALE

Clear channel assignment and communication protocols are critical for safe and efficient incident management. With multiple departments and agencies operating within shared communication zones, this SOG ensures disciplined radio usage, prevents channel congestion, and maintains control during multi-unit and mutual aid responses.

2.0 RADIO CHANNEL & INCIDENT COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

- All apparatus must notify Dispatch via MLFD Main Channel when responding.
 - *Note:* MLFD Main shall not be used for out-of-service notifications, training, or routine maintenance unless authorized by the Fire Chief.
- While en route, responding crews may communicate relevant information (e.g., road conditions, traffic obstructions).
- The first-arriving apparatus operator shall initiate Command, Control, and Communications by providing an Initial Radio Report (IRR) on MLFD Main.
- Units will remain on MLFD Main unless otherwise directed by Command.

3.0 INCIDENT CHANNEL ASSIGNMENTS BY TYPE

Incident Type	Primary Channel Use
<i>Low-Traffic Incidents</i>	MLFD Main Channel
<i>Two or More Task Groups</i>	MLFD TAC Channel (e.g., interior attack, RIT, ventilation)
<i>Support Functions</i>	R2R1 or OFM 2 (e.g., water supply, traffic control)
<i>Wildfire Responses</i>	MNR-OFM 1 (including air asset coordination)

4.0 CHANNEL MONITORING & REPEATER USE

- The Incident Commander must monitor all active radio channels or assign an aide to monitor and relay transmissions on secondary channels.
- When repeaters are activated:
 - The apparatus operator shall announce repeater activation.
 - No apparatus on scene with its lights on will be turned off to ensure radios and repeaters are being left on and remain operational for the duration of the incident.
 - R2R1 or OFM 2 shall be used as the associated Tactical Channel.

5.0 MUTUAL AID COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

- Units responding to mutual aid calls shall notify Dispatch via MLFD Main.
- Upon reaching the municipal boundary:
 - Notify Dispatch of switching to the host department's channel.
 - Contact the host Dispatch with location and availability.
- Upon release from the mutual aid call:
 - Switch back to MLFD Main.
 - Advise Dispatch of status, location, and availability.

6.0 CHANNEL DIRECTORY & USE GUIDE

Channel Name	#	Use	Available On
MLFD MAIN	1	Dispatch, Apparatus Status, Command, Strategic	M / P / PAL
MLFD TAC	2	Tactical Tasks, Interior SCBA Operations	M / P
R2R1	3	Short-Range Tasks (e.g., Traffic Control)	M / P / PAL
MOBILE RPTR	4	Mobile Repeater Channel	M / P
MNR-OFM 1	5	Wildland/Aviation Coordination with MNR	M / P / PAL
OFM 2	6	Tactical Channel when Repeater Active	M / P / PAL
GEORGIAN BAY	7	Mutual Aid - Georgian Bay	M / P
GRAVENHURST	8	Mutual Aid - Gravenhurst	M / P
HUNTSVILLE	9	Mutual Aid - Huntsville	M / P
LAKE OF BAYS	10	Mutual Aid - Lake of Bays	M / P
SEGUIN EAST	11	Mutual Aid - Seguin East (MacTier)	M / P
SEGUIN WEST	12	Mutual Aid - Seguin West (Rosseau)	M / P
SEVERN	13	Mutual Aid - Severn	M / P
PUBLIC WORKS	14	Communications with Public Works	M / P
WEATHER	15	Marine Weather Channel	M / P
MARINE 16	16	Emergency Traffic for Marine Incidents	M / P
PAGING	—	Chief 101, 102, PC Station Paging Only	M / P

7.0 CHANNEL SWITCHING PROCEDURE

- When directed to change channels, task units must announce their presence on the new channel back to Command to maintain situational awareness and communication continuity.