

20 June 1991

Proposal:

To provide a mechanism for the emergency clearing of a radio channel.

Radio communication with spotters, look-outs, and out of sight hose teams are required for firefighter safety. This is sometimes difficult or impossible because of heavy use of the few available operations channels on large, multi-agency scenes.

I believe a call and response form of emergency channel clearing, if practiced by all radio operators prior to the actual event, should be sufficient to clear an operations channel in case of an emergency on a large scene. Then the channel would be clear for emergency or life threatening communications.

The termination of the emergency traffic would then be signaled to everyone via a call and response. Normal traffic would then resume. This emergency status would only be initiated in life threatening situations and would only last until the situation is resolved, minutes at most.

During a "clear channel" call, no traffic would be allowed except for the parties involved. Exceptions would be another emergency that could be handled concurrently.

Example:

Situation: A large, multi-agency scene.

Initiation phase:

"Break- Emergency Traffic"

"Break - Emergency Traffic!" repeated by initiator until channel is clear. All units hearing the "Break emergency traffic" will repeat it one time and then refrain from using the channel except for immediate life threatening emergencies until the "Channel clear" is heard. Try three times then use contingency plan.

During emergency phase:

"Hold your traffic"

If anyone should utilize the channel for non-emergency communications during the "Clear channel" phase one person should repeat the "Hold your traffic", this should not be repeated by everyone.

Termination phase:

"Channel Clear"

At the termination of the emergency situation, the initiating party signals "Channel clear" over the affected channel. Personnel hearing the "channel clear" will repeat it once.

Initiation and Termination phrases may be done "in the blind". In the blind means transmitting without listening or expecting a reply. This is useful when the situation is not favorable to radio traffic (eg. chaos). This should only be used for a general broadcast to no-one in particular.

Contingency Plan:

If the standard plan fails then goto RED 1 and have communications relay emergency traffic on the channel needed.

Please Note:

This is not meant to be used by the sector boss who doesn't want to walk 100 yards uphill in the dark to talk to the dozer pilot. On most scenes, the "radio emergency" call would never be used.

Thank You,

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