

Utilization of Tactical Channels

Supersedes: 01-01-13

Effective: 03-01-16

1. The repeater on Boston EMS TAC Channels controlled by Dispatch Operations should normally be enabled to allow unit-to-unit communication or when a unit is providing an update to Dispatch Operations about an incident. By enabling the repeater, Field Units, Supervisors and Command Staff will be able to monitor these updates.
 - 1.1. A TAC Channel repeater may be disabled upon request from a field unit when the information being transmitted is of a sensitive nature (such as telephone numbers or incidents involving department members).
2. The Operations dispatcher functions as the Net Control station in the BEMS Communications System. All requests to use a Tactical Channel must be routed through the dispatcher. Field users should not request a specific channel, instead the request should be made for a "Tac Channel", and the dispatcher will direct the user(s) to an available channel.
3. Whenever an incident involves multiple EMS resources (ALERT 2, PHASE 1, etc) or is expected to involve extended operations (such as a multiple alarm fire or building evacuation), every effort should be made to move the operations to a TAC Channel as soon as possible so as not to interfere with Citywide dispatch.
 - 3.1. Moving an incident to a TAC Channel should be coordinated with the incident commander, and consideration must be given to the Citywide call volume and the number of Dispatch Operations personnel available at the time. Units assigned to an incident shall not switch to a TAC Channel until directed to do so by Dispatch Operations personnel.
4. Whenever a TAC Channel is committed to an incident, it is no longer available for other traffic. For prolonged incidents, the Operations Dispatcher shall announce this fact on TAC-1 every 30-minutes for the duration of the restriction.

"All units be advised TAC Channel "x" is restricted for <incident location>"
5. The Incident Command System shall be utilized at any incident of enough size or scope to warrant a dedicated TAC Channel. In accordance with the Department's Mass Casualty Incident Plan, the first arriving unit at an incident shall assume (or be prompted by the dispatcher to assume) the "Incident Command" call sign until relieved by the first arriving Supervisor.

See Related: MassDOT Interoperability