

Metro Region ARMER Standards

Section 3 – Metro 3.15.0 Use of Metro ARMER ME LSEC Talkgroups

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12-04-23

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1. Purpose or Objective

The purpose of this standard is to establish policy and procedures for use of the metro region ARMER ME LSEC 1E – 16E talkgroups. These talkgroups are designated for law enforcement only and are configured as region-wide resources to facilitate interoperability communications. This policy will serve to minimize usage conflicts when an interoperability talkgroup is needed for an event or operational task that requires secured communications.

2. Technical Background

- Capabilities –

It is possible to have access to ME LSEC talkgroups in radios used by metro law enforcement agencies that share use of the ARMER system. These common talkgroups can be used for a wide range of interoperable communication when coordination of activities between personnel of different agencies is needed on an event or operational task. Patching of these talkgroups is prohibited to non-encrypted (clear mode) talkgroups.

- Constraints –

Some of these talkgroups may be used as part of a soft patch to local encrypted talkgroups that are restricted for use by personnel of specific services. The dispatch center creating the patch is responsible for checking for proper talkgroup authorizations when creating soft patches.

Because many different agencies may be communicating with one another, for purposes of safety, plain English/common terminology must be used when communicating on these regional resources. The use of ten codes is not permitted. This pertains to direct or indirect (when in a soft patch) use of these regional resources.

Radio user personnel using these talkgroups should understand the restrictions and availability of the use of these resources as primarily communications as it relates to their communication needs.

ME LSEC are not to be used for an internal operations or events where only local agencies are communicating. ME LSEC should be used when secured interoperable communications is needed, or likely, with multiple regional agencies.

ME LSEC 1E – 9E are DES-OFB encrypted.

ME LSEC 10E – 16E are AES encrypted.

Metro region-wide ARMER talkgroups may only be in one patch at a time.

3. Operational Context

These talkgroups are metro region resources meant to facilitate communication between law enforcement agencies that typically do not communicate with each other on a regular basis.

If regional non-law enforcement agencies desire use of the ME LSEC talkgroups, a waiver proposal should be sent to the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) Radio Services Coordinator for consideration by the Radio Technical and Operations Committee (TOC).

Law enforcement agencies not included under the MESB joint powers agreement require written permission from the MESB for use of the ME LSEC talkgroups. A proposal request should be sent to the MESB Radio Services Coordinator for consideration by the Radio TOC.

4. Recommended Protocol/Standard

TG Requirements

Highly Recommended
Highly Recommended

For Whom?

Metro law enforcement mobiles and portables
All console positions where law enforcement agencies are dispatched, mobiles and portables

To meet the communication needs for an event or operational task, ME LSEC talkgroups may be patched to local encrypted talkgroups only. These talkgroups can be used and reserved in a “first available” fashion (i.e. – do not have to start at 2 and go up, or 15 and go down).

ME LSEC 10E – 15E talkgroups use AES encryption algorithm and may not be supported in all subscriber radios or console positions.

Some Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) may not have the current console capacity to accommodate ME LSEC 5E-8E. It is important to note ME LSEC 2E-9E are all home zone mapped to Zone 1, while ME LSEC 10E-15E are all home zone mapped to Zone 2. This should be taken into consideration when reserving these resources in the event they need to be included in a soft patch.

Cross Patch Standard	Yes/No	Talkgroup(s)
Soft Patch	Yes	Encrypted only
Hard Patch	No	None
LTE Gateway	No	None

Note: These talkgroups are mapped to different home zones. The recommended method of utilization in a patch is as follows:

Recommended for Zone 1 PSAPs (Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Isanti, Scott, Washington, City of Minneapolis): ME LSEC 2E-5E

Recommended for Zone 2 PSAPs (Hennepin, Ramsey): ME LSEC 6E-9E

Sherburne County is home zone mapped in Zone 4, so the recommended guidelines above will not apply.

To minimize the use of RF resources in a patch, it is encouraged for PSAPs to utilize the talkgroups in the PSAP's home zone referenced in the preceding sections.

ME LSEC talkgroups may only be patched to another talkgroup encrypted by ADP, DES, or AES encryption.

None of the ME LSEC talkgroups shall be part of any system-configured multi-group configuration.

The ME LSEC talkgroups shall only be used when there is a significant need for interagency communications and other suitable means for interagency communications are unavailable, to avoid a reduction in availability of these resources when needed for important events.

The Status Board application will be used to manage reservations and usage of these talkgroup resources.

5. Recommended Procedure

The ME LSEC talkgroups may either be used directly or be patched to other encrypted resources to meet the communication needs of an event or operational task.

When formulating communications plans, Communication Unit Leaders (COMLs) should check with the agencies involved in interoperability events to see what shared resources are available.

When a resource is needed, the requesting agency will contact the appropriate metro region dispatch center to have the next preferred available talkgroup granted. The dispatch center will utilize the Status Board application to identify the status of the resource.

At the conclusion of the event, the dispatch center will remove any patches that were used for the event and update Status Board.

NOTE: PSAPs initiating any soft patches must announce the patch after it is set up AND prior to it being taken down.

6. Management

Metro region PSAP managers and supervisors for agencies on the ARMER system shall ensure that this procedure for usage and assignment of the ME LSEC talkgroups be adhered to, as well as the creation of soft patches for which they are responsible.

The Minnesota Status Board System Administrator shall be responsible for the Status Board application.

Public safety telecommunicators shall receive initial and continuing training on the use of this procedure.

The MESB is responsible for the ME LSEC encryption keys.