

Metro Region ARMER Standards

Section 1 – Metro 1.5.3 Variances & Waivers

Date Established

3-19-01

Date Revised/Reviewed

3-27-19

1. Purpose or Objective

The purpose of this section is to set forth the process by which variances or waivers to these standards, protocols and procedures will be granted to a requesting agency.

- Variance is defined as an allowed divergence from full adherence to an adopted standard, protocol or procedure.
- Waiver is defined as a complete release from an adopted standard, protocol or procedure.

2. Technical Background

- **Capabilities: None**
- **Constraints: None**

3. Operational Context

The Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) is charged with setting standards and determining protocols and procedures for the smoothest possible operations between and among the users of the metropolitan region of the ARMER system.

The users fall into two groups:

- Full participants in the shared infrastructure
- Conventional users who will have access to the regional system by utilizing interoperability equipment that has been designed into the system

The ability to communicate between these two groups is possible due to the interoperational hardware and software installed on the region-wide system. The improper use of this equipment can have minor to grave consequences. These standards, policies and procedures have been set forth by teams consisting of radio users and managers from both groups to maximize service to the citizens of the metropolitan area and minimize potential negative consequences. Therefore, variances and waivers must not compromise the integrity of the Regional Public Safety system or any of its participants.

4. Recommended Protocol/Standard

Each request for variance or waiver from the adopted standards, policies and/or procedures must be made in writing to the MESB.

Each request for variance or waiver will be reviewed by the Radio Technical Operations Committee (RTOC) prior to being reviewed by the State.

5. Recommended Procedure:

1. A written request for the variance and/or waiver must be sent to the MESB and include:
 - A. A full description of the desired variance or waiver including section and sub-section references;
 - B. The reason for the variance or waiver (including the potential consequences if the request is not approved);
 - C. A preliminary assessment on the other regional system users, and an estimate of any associated costs.

2. At their discretion, the MESB may act on the request, but will generally forward requests to the RTOC for review, analysis and/or recommendation.
 - A. The Executive Director, or his/her designee, in consultation with the affected system manager, may approve a temporary variance or waiver until the official process is completed.
 - B. Emergency deviations from the standards must be communicated to all affected parties.
3. An assessment will be conducted by the RTOC and will address:
 - A. Technical impact to current and future system performance, including which system or subsystem will be or may be affected.
 - B. Operational (including capacity) impact to current and future system performance, including which system or subsystem will be or may be affected.
 - C. The degree of conformance with MESB plan and standards.
 - D. Cost impact to the MESB and current participants.
 - E. Potential alternative solutions.
4. The RTOC will forward the completed assessment to the MESB along with recommendations including ways to mitigate negative impact if appropriate.
5. The MESB will advise all affected agencies of all requests along with potential impact and invite their comment.
6. The MESB may approve, disapprove or modify the request. The Board will notify all affected parties of their decision.
7. If approved or modified, the MESB will set forth operational and/or financial responsibility as appropriate and notify all affected parties.

6. Management

The Executive Director and staff of the MESB, acting on behalf of the board, will manage this process.