

Metro Region ARMER Standards

Section 3 – Metro 3.17.4 Non-emergent Event and Exercise Planning

Date Established

12-5-11

Date Revised/Reviewed

7-8-26

1. Purpose or Objective

The purpose of this standard is to establish protocols and procedures to be used for planning communications for full-scale or functional exercises and non-emergent/pre-planned events that affect multiple agencies or jurisdictions in the Metro region. This standard will also specify procedures for using statewide or metro-wide talkgroups during these types of events.

2. Operational Background

Full-scale or functional exercises and pre-planned events that include multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency disciplines, and use of more than one statewide and/or regional interoperability talkgroups require an All-Hazards, Type III Communications Unit Leader (COML) to establish a communication plan.

Non-emergent/pre-planned events are scheduled, non-emergency activities as defined by the National Incident Management System (NIMS). These events include, but are not limited to, a sporting event, concert, or parade.

A full-scale exercise (FSE) is a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline exercise involving a functional and/or field unit response. A functional response could include a joint field office, emergency operations center (EOC), etc. A field unit response could include firefighters or other first responders at a scene, along with mock victims, etc.

A functional exercise (FE) examines and/or validates the coordination, command, and control between various multi-agency coordination centers, such as an EOC, joint field office, etc. A functional exercise does not involve any field unit responders. Use of radio talkgroups should begin with the highest number available at the time (ex: ME TAC 10) and go towards the lowest.

Refer to Metro ARMER Standard 3.21.0 (Large Scale Incidents) for emergent events and/or Metro ARMER Standard 3.48.0 and SECB Standard IOP-30 (Communications Unit) and the Minnesota Communications Unit Standard Operating Guidelines for additional information about COMLs.

3. Operational Context

Full-scale or functional exercises and pre-planned events of any size can include complex communications issues. There is also potential for any event to grow quickly into a large-scale incident. Refer to Metro ARMER Standard 3.21.0 (Large Scale Incidents) for emergent events.

Since full-scale/functional exercises and pre-planned events have the potential to affect system loading, a COML must ensure that the event does not inadvertently affect normal, daily operational needs by over-utilization and/or overloading of ARMER system resources.

4. Recommended Procedure

When an entity develops a plan for a full-scale/functional exercise or pre-planned event that involves the use of ARMER resources, these procedures will be followed:

- StatusBoard must be utilized. When the exercise or event is planned farther out than seven days, the requested resource should be reserved on the StatusBoard at least one week in advance, but not more than one month in advance.
- Exercise or event planners must include the impacted local entities' (city or county) ARMER System Administrators in the exercise development process from the beginning so local system resources are properly utilized.
- Exercise or event planners intending to use more than one statewide interoperability talkgroup must engage a Metro-based Minnesota-recognized COML.
- A COML engaged for an exercise or event during which planners intend to use two or more statewide and/or regional interoperability talkgroup shall complete or approve an ICS-205 Communications Plan and that plan must be distributed to the ARMER System Administrators of impacted local entities, the Chair of the Radio Technical Operations Committee, the applicable Regional Interoperability Coordinator, and the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator.
- A COML engaged for an exercise or event during which planners intend to use two or more statewide and/or regional interoperability talkgroup must take into consideration the home zone mapping, priority levels, talkgroup patching, site loading, and site access approvals of talkgroups being considered as well as the channel count and capacity of impacted repeater sites.

If the event or exercise planner deems the services of a COML necessary but does not have access to one, the Radio Systems Coordinator or the Minnesota Duty Officer should be contacted.

5. Management

The system managers, administrators, and users will all be responsible to see that this policy is implemented as defined. Identified issues and concerns will be brought to the impacted Technical Operations Committee (TOC) for resolution. Maintenance of this standard will be the responsibility of the Radio Services Coordinator.