

## Metro Region ARMER Standards

### Section 5 – Metro 5.2.0 Disaster Relief Organization Access

Date Established

2-26-03

Date Revised/Reviewed

1-26-16

#### 1. Purpose or Objective

To establish a policy that provides for non-government organizations (NGOs) providing disaster relief services to be included as “Authorized Users” of the metropolitan region of the ARMER system.

#### 2. Policy Background

NGOs providing disaster relief services are defined as “Eligible Users” of the metropolitan region of the ARMER system as provided for in section 90.20(a)(2)(vii) of the FCC Rules and Regulations. The Board is empowered under Minn. Stats. §403.36 to enter into system use agreements with such eligible NGOs for inclusion in the system.

#### 3. Operational Context

An umbrella organization entitled “Minnesota Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster” (MnVOAD) has approximately 30 member organizations which provide a broad mission in times of emergency and disaster.

During disasters, MnVOAD member organizations independently provide a variety of relief and recovery services to victims. MnVOAD facilitates routine conference calls to assist in interagency communication and relocate resources efficiently. Additionally, it helps to identify unmet needs and locate available resources. These services help to ensure best practices, thereby saving organizations money by reducing duplication of services, lost time and productivity, and reduce response time to meet victims’ basic needs.

Current member organizations are listed on the MnVOAD web site:

<http://www.MNVOAD.org/members-2/members-list/>

Two member organizations (the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army) provide initial response disaster services to both large scale and smaller scale emergencies occurring in the community. These organizations often work directly with public safety agencies. Other MnVOAD members are not normally mobilized until a substantial disaster has occurred. Since MnVOAD radios may be deployed elsewhere in the country for disaster response they should be equipped with 700 MHz and 800 MHz nationwide interoperability channels.

#### 4. Recommended Protocol/Standard

MnVOAD and its member disaster relief organizations will be authorized to use the system for the following types of communications: Government Agency to MnVOAD members; MnVOAD members to Government Agency; MnVOAD members to other MnVOAD members; and internal MnVOAD member communications. All communications using the system shall be limited to the protection of life and property, emergency situations, disaster relief planning, response, mitigation, recovery and related supporting operations including planned drills. Internal day-to-day, administrative and other non-disaster relief related communications are not permitted.

Assignment of priorities and use of the system by MnVOAD members for internal MnVOAD communications will be considered “Public Service” and “Non-Critical Operations” as defined in Appendix 2 of the Board’s Standards.

The following four priority 7 talk groups will be established for internal MnVOAD operations: DRO-1, DRO-2, DRO-3 and DRO-4. These talk groups will not be capable of encryption. DRO 1 will be assigned as primary use by the American Red Cross Disaster Services and DRO 2 by the Salvation Army Disaster Services. DRO-3 and DRO-4 will be assigned as needed by MnVOAD. Operation on other public safety, public service and interoperability talk groups by MnVOAD members will be at the direction of the Responsible Government Official coordinating the incident. It is recommended that MnVOAD radios be equipped with the following capabilities:

DRO-1	8SOA1
DRO-2	8SOA2
DRO-3	8CALL90
DRO-4	8TAC91
ME TAC5	8TAC92
ME TAC6	8TAC93
ME TAC7	8TAC94
ME TAC8	
STAC1	8CALL90 D
STAC2	8TAC91 D
STAC3	8TAC92 D
STAC4	8TAC93 D
	8TAC94 D

## 5. Recommended Procedure

MnVOAD shall enter into a User Agreement with the Board. MnVOAD shall be responsible to coordinate all use of the system by MnVOAD members. Individual MnVOAD members shall sign a Memorandum of Understanding, on a form approved by the Board, with MnVOAD agreeing to comply with the Board’s Standards, MnVOAD’s User Agreement with the Board, and Board approved Standard Operating Procedures for disaster relief organization use of the system prior to use of the system. The User Agreement shall specify the maximum number of radios that may be owned by MnVOAD and its members and activated on the system. The User Agreement shall also specify enforcement provisions including consequences of misuse.

The acquisition cost of radio equipment for use of the system is the responsibility of MnVOAD and its member organizations. There will be no access fee charged by the Board for access to the system, however, users may be responsible for the actual costs associated with programming the radios to operate on the system and any Board assessed User Fees. The Board shall designate an entity or entities to perform the programming.

The Board or any Authorized User, at their discretion, may loan, lease or otherwise temporarily provide radios to MnVOAD or any other eligible disaster relief organization for the authorized purposes provided for within this Standard.

The talk groups programmed in MnVOAD radios shall be limited to those specified within this Standard, the User Agreement and those additional public safety talk groups that have been

authorized by the respective agencies owning those talk groups. Requests for talkgroups that are not in this standard, must be obtained by contacting the owning agency for written permission per SECB Standard LMR-1 'Talkgroup and Multigroup Ownership.'

## **6. Management**

The staff of the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) shall manage the User Agreement process and maintain a list of DROs that have been approved to use the Metro regional interoperability talk groups. Billing users for the cost of programming shall be the responsibility of the programming entity.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is the lead agency for planning and coordination of MnVOAD communications operations. MnVOAD radios shall be considered part of the State of Minnesota subscriber fleet for purposes of FCC licensing. Radio IDs will be allocated by MnDOT.

MnVOAD has entered into an interoperability participation plan agreement with MnDOT for operations on the ARMER system.

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