

York County Comprehensive Communications System Essential Operations Plan

Purpose:

During disaster or large scale emergency situations, many field responders will be utilizing the York County Comprehensive Communications System. While the radio and data systems are capable of handling large amounts of priority traffic, it may be necessary to limit non-critical traffic to eliminate system overload. This overload condition can be mitigated by limiting talkgroup access at the radio system level.

Background:

The York County Comprehensive Communications System has the capability of carrying 14 talkgroup conversations at one time. The network uses talkgroup priorities to establish a hierarchy of system access during system busy conditions by giving system access to the most urgent communications over routine traffic. These predetermined priorities are adequate to mitigate short term system busy conditions, but multiple hour or multiple day responses may require the overall number of allowed talkgroups in the radio network to be reduced.

Principle:

Each participating agency in the York County Comprehensive Communications System would be required to pre-determine which talkgroups would be necessary to continue priority communications in a large scale/long term emergency situation. Talkgroups that are identified as non-critical or would carry routine traffic would be considered for temporary removal from the radio system infrastructure. This temporary removal from system access would decrease the number of talkgroups competing for airtime within the overburdened radio network thereby increasing the amount of system availability.

Implementation:

Criteria - The Storm Plan would be considered for implementation once talkgroup/channel grant time has increased to *8 seconds duration over 15 minutes or other severe system limitation that may impact immediate system operations.*

Determination – The Storm Plan would be implemented based on recommendation of the Director of Emergency Communications or his/her designee based on the implementation criteria.

Duration – The Storm Plan would only be implemented for the minimum time necessary to relieve the radio system of overloading.

Notification - The decision to implement the Storm Plan talkgroup reduction would only be implemented once a notification of all system users had taken place. Radio users would need to relocate to an operational talkgroup so that they could continue communications.

Departmental implementation – Each agency participating in the YCCCS will need to develop an individual implementation plan for their radio users. User agencies will have the best use of the remaining talkgroups during the Storm Plan.

Talkgroup Identification:

Primary system users - Each agency utilizing the York County Comprehensive Communications System as their primary means of voice communications would be required to identify their Storm Plan talkgroup usage at the time they join the radio network. Changes to an agency's Storm Plan talkgroup usage would be reviewed on an individual basis by the User's Group.

Non-primary system users – Agencies that receive talkgroups as part of sharing agreements would not have access to the YCCCS talkgroups during implementation of the Storm Plan.