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# **Quarterly Very High Frequency (VHF) Radio Tests**

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Updated: December 8, 2022



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## I. Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) details the process for completing the Multnomah County quarterly Very High Frequency (VHF) Radio Drill. This SOP addresses the efforts necessary prior to, during, and following the completion of each radio drill.

This drill is the responsibility of the County Office of Emergency Management (MCEM), in collaboration with identified County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Communications Unit Leaders.

## II. Drill Preparation

### A. Determine Net Control Facilitator

- o The MCEM holds the responsibility to determine Net Control, and will perform duties if the responsibility is not delegated.

### B. Provide One (1) Week Reminder

- o The MCEM has responsibility to notify drill participants.
- o Disseminate the following information to participants:
  - *VHF Radio Drill Standard Operating Procedure*
  - Channels being tested, and
  - *The Radio Test Report.*
- o Remind participants to find channels in advance, as not all VHF radios have the same channels. The channels routinely tested are, “MCEM 1” and “MCEM 2”, however these two channels have different names on different radios (**MCEM 1** = MC EMMGT and **MCEM 2** = MC EMMGT 2, MC ANSVC).

### C. Pre-Drill Radio Test

Perform a radio test with an external partner to test Net Control capabilities. The MCEM should attempt to use different partners each drill pre-test.

### D. One (1) Hour Reminder

The identified net control will disseminate a Drill reminder to the *Radio Users Group List* and *Department Radio Users list* at least one (1) hour prior to the drill expected start time.

## III. Drill Conduct

### A. Net Control Script (*starting at 10:00 am*)

“This is **Multnomah County Emergency Management**, we are serving as Net Control for this drill. We will be conducting a radio drill from 10:00am - 10:30am.

If a real-world response requires an interruption of this drill, please state, “emergency traffic, real world emergency”, all traffic following that statement are outside the scope of this drill.

This drill used to follow a call-down list, however this quarter drill will be an open call-in to Net Control. This drill will first have an open call-in on MCEM 1 from 10:00-10:15, followed by an open call-in from MCEM 2 between 10:15 and 10:30 AM. An example of the script is below:

- A. Stations will call out to Net Control (ex. “**Net Control, this is [state you AGENCY/DEPT]**”),
- B. Net Control will then respond (ex. “**[AGENCY/DEPT], this is Net Control**),
- C. Stations will respond with their **quality of transmission**,
- D. Net Control will then respond with their **quality of transmission**.

**Stations will need to consider other stations calling in when attempting their transmission.**

**Quality of transmissions are listed on the *VHF Radio Test Report*, disseminated prior to this drill. Responses are as follows:**

- (5) We read you loud and clear;
- (4) We read you with light static;
- (3) We read you with some static;
- (2) Net Control is largely unreadable;
- (1) Net Control is unreadable & mostly static.

**If your transmission is a 1 or 2, please detail that on the *Radio Test Report* to ensure this issue can be addressed.**

**The MCEM 1 frequency is now open for station check-in.**

**B. Call for General Check-Ins - MCEM 1**

- A call for general check-ins will occur at 10:15am, with the following statement: “**All Participants, this is Net Control. This is a call for any additional stations to check-in on MCEM 1. Please check in with your station name and transmission quality.**”

**C. Frequency Transition**

- “**All radio test participants, this is Net Control, we will now be moving to the second repeater channel. Please move to “MCEM 2”. Check-in will begin at (provide expected time [provide a minute or two]).**”

Net control will then transition to MCEM 2 frequency, and state the following at the provided check-in start time; “**All participants, this is Net Control. The MCEM 2 frequency is now open for station check-in.**”

**D. Call for General Check-Ins - MCEM 2**

- A call for general check-ins will occur at 10:30am, with the following statement: “**All Participants, this is Net Control. This is a call for any additional stations to check-in on MCEM 2. Please check in with your station name and transmission quality.**”

#### E. Drill Completion

- o The drill will conclude at 10:30am, with the following statement: **“All participants, this is Multnomah County Emergency Management, thank you for participating in the 2Q23 quarterly radio drill. Please confirm the documented quality of transmission in the VHF Radio Test Report. Net Control is now concluding the 2Q23 quarterly radio drill, and both frequency will return to normal operations.”**

#### IV. Drill Information Accessibility

- The *Radio Test Report* is stored on the County Google Drive through the following path:
  - o MCEM Shared Drive    Operations Division    Training & Exercises    Exercise  
(Retain Permanently)    VHF Radio Drills

#### V. Maintenance

- This standard operating procedure (SOP) should be reviewed by the Multnomah County Office of Emergency Management (MCEM) Operations Division, in collaboration with County Communications Unit Leader positions, at least once (1) per year.

## Appendix A: Drill Checklist

This checklist should be used by the Office of Emergency Management staff for each quarterly radio drill. This checklist ensures each step is addressed to accomplish a successful radio drill.

<i>Checkbox</i>	<i>Action Taken</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify individual to facilitate Drill
<input type="checkbox"/>	Send out one (1) week reminder with:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>VHF Radio Drill Standard Operating Procedure</i></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Channels being tested</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	VHF Basic Radio Instructions, and
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Radio Test Report</i></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Send out one (1) hour reminder
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide two (2) minute drill notification
<input type="checkbox"/>	Send follow-up to request:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confirmation of included information</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates to contact information and/or radio title</li> </ul>

## Appendix B: Quarterly Radio Drill Schedule

This schedule provides a structured approach to the quarterly radio drills. Radio drill schedules will remain flexible dependent on the number of participants.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Drill Action</i>
0958	Two (2) Minute Notification by Net Control
1000	Quarterly Radio Drill Begins
1000 – 1015	First Radio Frequency Drill – “MCEM 1”
1015 – 1017	Transition to Second Radio Frequency
1015 - 1030	Second Radio Frequency Drill – “MCEM 2”
1030	Quarterly Radio Drill Conclusion