
Quarterly Very High Frequency (VHF) Radio Tests

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Updated: September 7, 2021



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Record of Changes

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
 - VHF Basic Radio Instructions, 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

***The Net Control script is **bolded**. Red text should be altered by participants.*

A. Two (2) Minute Notification

- o Provide participants a two (2) minute notification prior to the drill. **“This is the (agency/station conducting test), we will be starting the Quarterly county-wide radio drill in approximately two (2) minutes on MCEM 1.”**

- o Complete the same transmission on “MCEM 2”.

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

“This is (agency/station conducting test), we are serving as Net Control for this drill. We will be conducting a radio drill from 10:00 am until complete.

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.

All stations will have an opportunity to check-in, please wait for Net Control to call your station. When called for check-in, please respond with your AGENCY/DEPT and quality of 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* and send to the MCEM Training & Exercise Specialist to ensure this issue can be addressed.

Each station will receive a request to check-in twice during the first frequency drill. Only stations that checked in during the first frequency will be requested to check-in during the second frequency. A general check-in will be offered prior to the conclusion of each frequency drill.

We will now begin the call-down process.

- *Call-Down Script: “(AGENCY/DEPT), please check in”*
- *Participant Response: “Net Control this is (AGENCY/DEPT), we read you (state quality of transmission)*
- *Receipt of Call Down: “(AGENCY/DEPT), this is Net Control, we read you (state quality of transmission).*

C. Call for General Check-Ins:

- o **“All Participants, this is Net Control. This is a call for any additional stations to check-in. Please check in with your station name and transmission quality.”**

D. Frequency Transition

- o **“All radio test participants, this is (agency/station conducting test), we will now be moving to the second repeater channel. Please move to “MCEM 2”. Only participants that have checked-in will be called. Check-in will begin at (provide expected time [provide a minute or two]).”**

E. Drill Completion

- o “All radio test participants, this is (agency/station conducting test), thank you for participating in the (date, year) quarterly radio drill. Please confirm the documented quality of transmission that will be distributed following this drill and available on the Google Calendar invite, and include any comments in the *VHF Radio Test Report*. Net Control is now concluding the (date, year) quarterly radio drill, and this 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.

Checkbox	Action Taken
<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">• <i>VHF Radio Drill Standard Operating Procedure</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Channels being tested
<input type="checkbox"/>	VHF Basic Radio Instructions, and
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The Radio Test Report</i>
<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">• confirmation of included information
<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates to contact information and/or radio title

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.

Time	Drill Action
0958	Two (2) Minute Notification by Net Control
1000	Quarterly Radio Drill Begins
1000 – 1020	First Radio Frequency Drill – “MCEM 1”
1020 – 1025	Transition to Second Radio Frequency
1025-1045	Second Radio Frequency Drill – “MCEM 2”
1045	Quarterly Radio Drill Conclusion