

Rock County, Wisconsin



Communications Center  
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911 COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

**Wednesday, March 17, 2010, AT 1:30 PM**

ROCK COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Agenda

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda
2. January 20, 2010 minutes approval
3. Comments from the Public
4. Election of 911 Commission Vice-Chairman
5. Countywide Communications System – Update
6. Software Systems – Update
7. Policy Changes – C1 and M2
8. Informational Items and Updates
9. Adjournment

*Commission members:*

*Please contact the Communications Center  
if you are unable to attend.*

*In order to conduct official business,  
A quorum must be present*

## SUMMARY

Policy: A comprehensive reporting system is essential for maintaining accurate information for all calls for service from citizens and public safety agencies. All Communications Center staff will work together to make certain that all calls for service are properly documented and that they receive the appropriate public safety attention.

### A. Recording of incidents within Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System

1. All citizen reports to the Communications Center, which require a public safety response or public safety review, will be recorded. To include, but not limited to:
  - a. Automatically generated CAD event number
  - b. Automatically generated date and time of request
  - c. Location of incident reported
  - d. Type of incident reported
  - e. Pertinent information concerning incident (to include officer contact requests)
  - f. Responder and citizen safety information
  - g. Name and address of complainant, if possible
2. All unit status and disposition information will be recorded. To include, but not limited to:
  - a. Identification of unit(s) assigned
  - b. Time of dispatch
  - c. Time of arrival
  - d. Time of last unit to return to service
  - e. Any other status changes required by agency
  - f. Disposition or status of reported incident
  - g. Report number
3. If different callers report duplicate incidents, the primary incident will be updated with any additional information and the secondary incident will be cleared with the proper disposition code.

4. Self-initiated (criminal and non-criminal) activities reported by public safety personnel will be recorded.
5. All incidents involving arrests, not already related to another incident, will be recorded.
6. If a caller wishes to have an incident reported by telephone versus personal contact, the call taker will ascertain enough information to determine whether the incident can be teleserved (according to that user agency's policy).
  - a. If the incident does fit the teleserve criteria the caller will be transferred to that user agency and the agency will contact the Communications Center to create the incident.
  - b. If the incident does not fit the teleserve criteria or the user agency does not offer that service, the caller will be advised of such and the incident will be recorded for officer response.
  - c. Extenuating circumstances (ie; caller locale, anonymity, etc.) where the caller is unable to make personal contact with an officer will be recorded in CAD and the user agency's supervisor will be notified to determine the best way to handle the call.

#### B. Recording of incidents during/after CAD downtime

1. Call takers will be required to manually document all calls for service on paper incident cards any time the CAD System is not functional due to technical difficulties or maintenance issues.
2. Dispatchers will manually log all times, notes, responder status changes and incident disposition information on the paper incident cards.
3. The incidents will be back entered as soon as possible after the CAD System is back to normal operation.

**Section: C1**  
Date: 4/9/96

**Title: CAD Incident Recording**  
Authority: 911 Commission

4. Incidents will be entered, and report numbers generated, in the order in which they were received to maintain the proper order of events.
5. Additional documentation will be added to the incident CAD notes explaining the reason for the delay of entry along with the proper times, responding units and any other pertinent information related to the incident.
6. Once all incidents have been back entered, the paper incident cards and any other written logs will be forwarded to the Operations Manager for auditing and records retention.

## **SUMMARY**

Policy: The Rock County Communications Center will use the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) to assist Rock County Fire/EMS agencies and surrounding Fire/EMS agencies with automatic, pre-approved mutual aid for fire and EMS emergencies.

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) is comprised of Fire/EMS Departments from the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Michigan and Wisconsin.

### **B. PURPOSE**

1. The primary purpose of MABAS is to coordinate the effective and efficient provision of mutual aid during emergencies, natural disasters, or manmade catastrophes. MABAS is not intended to relieve a community of their responsibilities of providing adequate emergency services for all local emergencies, since all communities should have their own first line of defense. When a community exhausts its resources, MABAS can be activated by the stricken community and through a systematic plan, MABAS will provide:
  - a. Immediate assistance of personnel and equipment at the scene of an emergency or disaster.
  - b. Response teams of firefighters, paramedic/EMT's, hazardous material technicians, divers, technical rescue squads, etc.
  - c. Access to specialized equipment.
  - d. A contractual agreement covering responsibilities and liabilities for all of its members.
  - e. Standardized policies and procedures for mutual aid responses.
2. The structure of the MABAS organization is subdivided into geographical areas that are called "Divisions". Each division consists of a number of fire/EMS departments

within their own division, the only exception being Chicago, Division IX.

### C. COMMUNICATION

1. The MABAS organization operates on the IFERN radio frequency of 154.265 MHZ. This frequency has been designated for interdepartmental use of emergency fire department radio traffic and is commonly referred to as the "Mutual Aid Frequency" or simply, "MABAS".
2. To facilitate a Mutual Aid Box Alarm, each division has designated a MABAS dispatching center and backup with MABAS tone encoders, which activates all alerting receivers of all participating departments.

### D. GENERAL INFORMATION

#### 1. DESIGNATED BOX CARDS

As the mutual aid system modified itself, it became necessary to address specific emergency situations that warrant special equipment, therefore, designated box cards are used for: underwater rescue, medical emergencies, hazardous materials, special high-rise rescues, tenders, target hazards, health-care facilities, etc.

#### 2. INTER-DIVISIONAL BOX CARDS

This card is to be used when and if a division is requested to send equipment to another division. In the case of an emergency in one (1) division going beyond a 5<sup>th</sup> alarm and a majority of resources in their division being exhausted, they can call another division and ask for equipment from the Inter-Divisional box card of that division.

### 3. TASK FORCE BOX CARDS

- a. A task force is defined as a predetermined response, under the command of a chief officer from a MABAS Division that has common communications capability. This will allow the task force to operate independently at an incident. When requested, a division task force will assemble at a pre-determined location and respond to the stricken division as a unit.
- b. The recommended Task Force composition is as follows:

i.	Engines	2
ii.	Trucks	1
iii.	Squads	1
iv.	Ambulances	3
v.	Chief Officer	1

### E. GENERAL OPERATING GUIDELINES

- 1. In order to have continuity within the entire MABAS organization, there must be consistency in our general operating guidelines. The following general operating guidelines have been established:

#### a. BOX CARD ALARM BINDERS

- i. The binders for MABAS Division 104 are located at the designated fire dispatch console. Binders for other departments, outside Division 104 are also located at the designated fire dispatch console.

#### b. COMMUNICATION

- i. The MABAS Division 104 operates on the IFERN radio frequency of 154.265 MHZ. Therefore, all MABAS alarms are toned-out on and transmitted on this frequency. It should

- be noted that MABAS Division 104 does not own the IFERN frequency, but has been granted the right to use the frequency for emergency situations between two (2) or more towns at the scene of a MABAS alarm.
- ii. The alerting encoders are located in the main and backup dispatch centers for each MABAS division. When the tones are activated on the IFERN frequency, all the departments having the alerting receivers will get the tones and the message on their alerting receivers. Some dispatch centers have total access to the IFERN frequency in place of the receivers. Some fire departments may not have alerting receivers or be able to monitor the IFERN frequency.
  - iii. The IFERN frequency may be used by two (2) or more departments on the scene of a fire or other emergency even though no MABAS box alarm has been requested, providing the towns involved have no other common frequency that they could use.
  - iv. Each division will have two (2) communication centers capable of acting as MABAS Central Dispatch. There will be a primary dispatch center and a backup dispatch center for each division. The primary center will handle all MABAS alarms. The backup dispatch center will handle MABAS alarms when the primary center turns the alarms over to the backup center due to; dispatch equipment failures, multiple alarms, multiple towns with calls, etc.
  - v. Any response by a MABAS department will be voluntary. MABAS can be used to notify member departments of a major disaster in a fire department that is not a member of MABAS. Any response by a MABAS department will still be voluntary.



c. TESTING MABAS

- i. The testing of the MABAS tones will be done once a month by the divisions. The alerting receivers will be tested on the ~~first~~ (4<sup>st</sup>) ~~Monday~~ third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Wednesday of each month to determine that all receivers and tone encoders are working properly.
- ii. There will be a two (2) minute delay between each test to allow departments to reset the receivers for the next test and to establish that the auto reset is functioning properly.
- iii. Rock County Division 104 will test at 10:07 hours on the third Wednesday of each month. The Town of Beloit Fire Department (Division 104 backup) will follow at 10:09 hours.
- iv. The test will be given as follows:  
“Rock County Testing Division 104 Mutual Aid Box Alarm alerting receivers. Test 1- 2- 3- 4- 5- 5- 4- 3- 2- 1- at 10:07 hours: reset all receivers. Rock County clear. WXL609.”
- v. The last department to test will announce, “end of test” at the end of their test.

2. RADIO DRILLS

- a. From time to time, radio drills will be announced by MABAS dispatch centers and their members to test procedures and equipment. When these drills occur, the request for dispatch of and all subsequent radio traffic regarding the alarm will indicate that it is for a radio drill.
- b. **Example:** “MABAS Division 104 to all locals, the Town of Beloit Fire Department is requesting a box alarm for a radio drill for Box # 20-11 at Speedway Gas, 2760 S. Prairie Ave., repeating this is a drill only for a box alarm for the Town of Beloit Fire Department Box #20-11 at Speedway Gas, 2760 S. Prairie Ave. Staging area is at Beloit Clinic. Engine: City of Beloit,

Town of Turtle, South Beloit, Trucks: Janesville, Chief: City of Beloit, Town of Turtle. Repeat this is a drill only. All responding units switch to and acknowledge on the IFERN frequency. Once again this is only a drill. Rock County clear at 1515 hours. WXL609 .”

### 3. DISPATCH PROCEDURE

- a. The following information must be obtained from the stricken department when an alarm is requested:
  - i. Name of department requesting alarm, and incident commander radio ID.
  - ii. Box alarm number being requested.
  - iii. Level of alarm needed (AVOID skipping alarms).
  - iv. Nature of Incident (Fire, EMS, Haz-Mat, etc.).
  - v. Location of Incident and name of building, if applicable.
  - vi. **Staging area.**
- b. The FIRE DISPATCHER will acknowledge the request for a MABAS alarm and activate the appropriate box alarm card.
- c. At this point the FIRE DISPATCHER will become the MABAS DISPATCHER and shall handle the dispatching of the MABAS alarm.
- d. This MABAS DISPATCHER will:
  - i. Maintain and monitor all radio traffic on the IFERN frequency.
  - ii. Keep track of all units' statuses and record the times on the Division 104 MABAS alarm form.
  - iii. Turn in form to Operations Manager after completion of incident.
- e. The other FIRE DISPATCHER(s) will:
  - i. Handle all other dispatching responsibilities (to include the dispatching of the Rock County

- FIRE/EMS agencies to MABAS alarm(s) over the Rock County Fire Paging Channel. The main incident will be cloned for each Rock County agency responding.
- ii. Assist the MABAS FIRE DISPATCHER in making the necessary contacts, as needed, with departments that do not monitor or have MABAS.
  - iii. Contact departments that have not responded in a timely manner.
  - iv. Contact police and other state agencies.
  - v. Contact utilities.
  - vi. Any other agencies requested by command (i.e. ESDA, canteen, etc.)

#### 4. DISPATCHING THE ALARM:

- a. Switch to IFERN frequency.
- b. Activate the "MABAS" tones (which are pre-programmed to tone out twice in succession.)
- c. After **all** tones have cleared, announce:
- d. "MABAS Division 104 to all locals, the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department is requesting a (level of the alarm) on box # \_\_\_\_\_ for a (type of incident) at (location) with a staging area at \_\_\_\_\_. Departments due on the (level of the alarm) are (State equipment type & department name due to the scene, then the departments due change of quarters.) All mutual aid departments switch to and acknowledge on the IFERN frequency. **REPEAT ENTIRE MESSAGE.** WXL609 at (time)."
  - i. **Example:** "This is MABAS Division 104 to all locals, the Town of Beloit Fire Department is requesting a box alarm on BOX # 20-41 for a BRUSH FIRE on the railroad tracks at 1400 E. Cranston Rd. Staging area is at Telfer Park. Engines: City of Beloit, Tenders: Town of Turtle, Chief: Town of Turtle. Change of quarters: Engine: South Beloit, Ambulance:

City of Beloit from your station & South Beloit Chief on Standby. All mutual aid departments switch to and acknowledge on the IFERN frequency. Repeating MABAS Division 104 to all locals...WXL609 at 1023 hours.”

- e. Once the MABAS dispatch alert is complete the FIRE DISPATCHER will notify all recommended Rock Fire County agencies by simultaneously paging the agencies on the Rock County paging channel. Non-MABAS agencies must be contacted via phone or other radio frequency through their appropriate dispatch centers.
- f. Departments that are due to respond and have not acknowledged within **five** minutes (during normal weather conditions) or **ten** minutes (during severe weather conditions) must be notified by radio or telephone.
- g. If a department that is due to respond on an alarm cannot supply properly manned apparatus, **THEY MUST** notify the requesting division's MABAS DISPATCHER immediately, so the fill-in apparatus can be assigned from another department (usually this is done from the next level of the alarm.)
- h. If a department sends the wrong equipment, it is up to the MABAS DISPATCHER to return the equipment and advise them of the equipment they were due to respond with.
- i. If they are unable to send the proper equipment, the MABAS DISPATCHER should refer to the next level of alarm to replace the missing piece of equipment.
- j. When a MABAS alarm is called, the MABAS DISPATCHER will tell all apparatus responding to the scene to switch to the IFERN frequency and acknowledge.
- k. MABAS Division dispatch centers have the authority to advise apparatus that are not due to respond to return to their quarters until called. This is important when agencies begin sending apparatus at will when they hear a box alarm dispatched.

- l. Each request for additional alarms will require the repeating of the alerting sequence and revising only the level of the alarm and equipment due. If a fill-in was used on a previous alarm level, then a fill-in piece of apparatus will have to be provided on each subsequent alarm.
- m. The MABAS DISPATCHER will contact the Incident Commander initially at 10, 20, and 30 minutes after the first arriving fire unit, or whenever the alarm is requested, and then every 30 minutes thereafter advising the Incident Commander of the amount of time into the alarm and request a progress report on the incident.
- n. If a second fire or emergency in the same area should require a box alarm during the original box alarm, it may be to the advantage of the MABAS DISPATCHER to use the remaining equipment from the next level of alarm from the box alarm in progress. This should only be done after checking with the incident commander to see if he/she thinks any additional equipment will be needed at the box location.
- o. If the alarm involves a Haz-Mat incident keep command updated of any severe changes in weather conditions.
- p. The MABAS DISPATCHER will ensure that all of the appropriate notifications are made via the paging system.

## 5. DUTY OFFICER

Starting with the Box alarm level, the MABAS dispatcher will notify the on-call Duty Officer of the MABAS alarm, once responder paging has been completed. (The MABAS division will notify dispatch of the on-call schedule and contact numbers throughout the year.)

6. STRIKING OUT THE MABAS ALARM

- a. When a box alarm is struck out (no further alarms will be needed), activate the MABAS tones (which will automatically repeat twice), then announce the following:
- b. This is MABAS Division 104 to all locals the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Department has struck out box # \_\_\_\_\_ by the authority of (Incident Commander).  
**REPEAT** WXL609 at (time).

**EXAMPLE:** This is MABAS Division 104 to all locals; the Janesville Fire Department has struck out box # 80-11 by the authority of JC5. Repeating MABAS.....WXL609 at 1522 hours.

- c. The MABAS DISPATCHER shall continue to control the MABAS communications until all companies at the scene are released and are returning. At this time, units leaving the scene may switch back to their main fire frequency.
- d. The order in which equipment is returned is at the discretion of the Incident Commander.

7. EMERGENCY TRAFFIC PROCEDURE

- a. The emergency traffic procedure was adopted to assure a quick and uninterrupted communication to the Incident Commander or Dispatch. The term "**EMERGENCY TRAFFIC**" will be utilized by any unit or firefighter encountering an immediate perilous situation. The term "**MAYDAY**" will only be utilized when a responder is trapped, injured, or buried. The term will receive the highest communications priority from Command, Dispatch and ALL OPERATING UNITS on the frequency. Units may initiate emergency communications by verbally contacting Command or Dispatch.

**EXAMPLE:** "Engine 26 to Command with  
"EMERGENCY TRAFFIC", Response: "Unit with  
emergency traffic go ahead"

- b. Command or Dispatch will then repeat the emergency traffic message.
- c. At the transmission of "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" or "MAYDAY" all units on the frequency are to cease transmissions. The frequency will absolutely belong to any unit or firefighter giving the "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" or "MAYDAY" call.
- d. "EMERGENCY TRAFFIC" and "MAYDAY" can only be terminated by command.
- e. Any EMERGENCY TRAFFIC evacuation announcement made by a unit on the incident will be immediately re-broadcasted by the dispatcher on all frequencies that are being utilized by the Communications Center for the incident to make certain that all units copy the information.

## F. DEFINITIONS

1. Following is a glossary of terms and terminology that relates to the MABAS:
  - a. **ALARM CARD:** The alarm card is a form which is used to records the times, equipment type, town name and vehicle number.
  - b. **ALERTING ENCODERS:** A tone encoder at a Division dispatch or backup center used to activate receivers.
  - c. **ALERTING RECEIVERS:** A receiver tone activated by the MABAS Dispatch Center.
  - d. **BOX ADDRESS:** The address of the incident.
  - e. **BOX ALARM:** For the purpose of MABAS, a box alarm is a fire or other emergency requiring mutual aid. A box alarm is the first request for MABAS assistance. A 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup> alarms are additional alarm levels for equipment to the same fire or disaster area.

- f. **BOX CARD:** A printed form containing details of a equipment to respond to a given geographic area within a community.
- g. **CHANGE OF QUARTERS:** Apparatus assigned that physically changes to the stricken department to be available for simultaneous calls or move up to the fire scene on an additional alarm.
- h. **COMMAND POST:** The location of the officer in charge or the fire or emergency scene. An orange flag and/or a green revolving light should identify the command post at the scene.
- i. **DUTY OFFICER:** On-call fire officer that must be available 24/7 for consultation during a MABAS alarm assignment.
- j. **INTERDIVISIONAL BOX CARD:** A box card designated for use between divisions. Listed is the MABAS division's equipment available to respond based on type of equipment and location.
- k. **MUTUAL RESPONSE:** Contractual agreement between several departments to respond with specific equipment to a special area or building in that town on an initial alarm. This equipment should be listed in the "STILL" column, or on a separate column between STILL and BOX, on the box alarm card, as it is due prior to the calling of a box alarm. Mutual response is sometimes referred to as AUTOMATIC AID.
- l. **REQUESTING A BOX ALARM:** It is the responsibility of the department with the fire or other emergency to notify their dispatch center and request a box alarm or subsequent alarms. The department alarm, level of the request, box card number, location, nature of the alarm, staging area, and authority are to be given.
- m. **SKIP ALARM:** A department, at the time of the alarm, may request to go to a 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, higher alarm. Realizing all the equipment assigned to respond or change quarters on each previous alarm will need to respond or change quarters to the emergency. This may occur at any other level as well as when the original box alarm is called.



- n. **STAGING AREA:** A location near the emergency scene where additional equipment is directed to assemble for further instruction and organization.
- o. **STILL & WORKING STILL ALARM:** The alarm response to an incident. A still or working still alarm may involve a mutual response or change of quarters. These alarms will not be paged over the IFERN channel.
- p. **STRIKING OUT:** The Incident Commander feels the emergency is under control and the EXTRA ALARM will not require additional equipment, the box alarm is struck out. The striking out of the box alarm is only done once and not for each level of the alarm. The Incident Commander will notify the Divisions' dispatch center, give his/her name/number, the location, and request that the alarm be struck out per his/her order. This means companies due to respond on additional alarms will not be needed.
- q. **TASK FORCE ALARM:** The special request, of a pre-determined response, for assistance by another division, to handle emergencies in a stricken area.