



South Australian Country Fire Service

Region 5 Communications Procedures

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Government
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COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE REGION 5 GRN OPERATING PRINCIPLES/PROCEDURES

The following procedures have been established to provide a standard for communications across CFS Groups within Region 5 and allow ease of operation for all personnel.

1. Group Control Centres

Group Control Centres have been provided with 3 GRN Radios to allow seamless incident operations to occur. These centres shall monitor the following *Talkgroups*:

Radio 1: Regional *Talkgroup* 232 R5 OPS.

Radio 2: Group *Talkgroup* eg: Lacepede 224Lacepede

Radio 3: Incident *Talkgroup* allocated to the Group or Interagency *Talkgroup* as listed below eg: Lacepede utilise 235 R5 INC01.

2. Turnout

All appliances shall turnout on the Regional *Talkgroup* (232) with the initial response message, then change to own Groups *Talkgroup* (eg: 224 Lacepede) and remain on this until advised by the Incident Controller or Group Control Centre to change.

3. Incident Communications

For all minor incidents the Groups *Talkgroup* shall be used for all communications. However, should the incident escalate or it be deemed necessary by the Incident Controller, VHF Simplex shall be used for Fire Ground communications.

VHF Simplex shall **NOT** be used between the Fire Ground and Group Control Centre (or brigade station) unless a GRN Network outage/failure is experienced or the Incident Controller approves the change.

Fire Ground Example:

Minor Incidents, vehicle accident, rubbish fire, small grass fire etc, the incident Controller shall communicate to all Fire Service resources on the Groups *Talkgroup*.

For larger or more complex type incidents, the Incident Controller would communicate to Group Control Centre on the groups *Talkgroup* along with incoming resources and the fire ground traffic (eg: traffic control, CABA etc) would be done on VHF Simplex, this means the Incident Controller requires access to 2 Radios.

4. Interagency Communications

Please refer to page 6 of this plan.



CFS/FSA REGION 5 GRN OPERATING PRINCIPLES/PROCEDURES



The following procedures have been established to provide a standard for communications across CFS Groups within Region 5 and allow ease of operation for all personnel. The CFS is committed to having all Fire Related communications undertaken utilising the CFS GRN Talkgroups.

1. Group Control Centres

Group Control Centres have been provided with 3 GRN Radios to allow seamless incident operations to occur. These centres shall monitor the following *Talkgroups*:

Radio 1: Regional *Talkgroup* 232 R5 OPS.

Radio 2: Group *Talkgroup* eg: Mt Gambier 226 GambierC

Radio 3: Incident *Talkgroup* allocated to the Group eg: Mt Gambier utilise 237 R5 INC03.

2. Turnout

All CFS appliances shall turnout on the Regional *Talkgroup* (232) with the initial response message, then change to own Groups *Talkgroup* (eg: 226 GambierC) and remain on this until advised by the Incident Controller or Group Control Centre to change. Forestry shall undertake turnout on FSA *Talkgroup* 160, then change to the appropriate CFS *Talkgroup* as soon as possible well before arrival on scene. (Refer attached channel plan indicating CFS *Talkgroup* usage).

3. Incident Communications

For all minor incidents the Groups *Talkgroup* shall be used for all communications. However, should the incident escalate or it be deemed necessary by the Incident Controller, VHF Simplex shall be used for Fire Ground communications.

VHF Simplex shall **NOT** be used between the Fire Ground and Group Control Centre (or brigade station) unless a GRN Network outage/failure is experienced or the Incident Controller approves the change.

Fire Ground Example:

Minor Incidents, vehicle accident, rubbish fire, small grass fire etc, the incident Controller shall communicate to all Fire Service resources on the Groups *Talkgroup*.

For larger or more complex type incidents, the Incident Controller would communicate to Group Control Centre on the groups *Talkgroup* along with incoming resources. The fire ground traffic (eg: traffic control, CABA, appliance to nozzle etc) would be done on VHF Simplex, this means the Incident Controller requires access to 2 Radios.

4. Forestry Fire Towers

ForestrySA *Talkgroup* 160 shall be utilised by the Towers to report smoke sightings to Forestry SA HQ. On receipt of any smoke sighting South East Forestry base will broadcast this information on CFS Regional *Talkgroup* 232 R5 OPS, utilising the following standard message immediately. Despatch of the Bomber also achieves this requirement.

This is South East Forestry Base with a smoke sighting from x Tower Bearing xxx degrees, distance xxx.

This will ensure CFS personnel are aware at the earliest possible opportunity of potential incidents.



**COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE
REGION 5
GRN OPERATIONS
BOMBER & SPOTTING AIRCRAFT**

The following procedures have been established to provide a standard for communications across CFS Groups within Region 5 and allow ease of operation for all personnel.

1. Despatch

When the Bombers are on Standby at Mt Gambier they will turnout on CFS Talkgroup 232, fly to the incident and make contact with the Incident Controller (IC) on 232.

Once initial contact is made between the Bombers and IC, the Bombers will change to CFS Talkgroup 234 along with the IC.

2. Air Attack Supervisor

The Air Attack Supervisor (AAS) will contact the IC on CFS Talkgroup 234 on arrival at the Incident and request the IC go to VHF Channel 3 where all air to ground comms will be achieved.

The IC will then be able to switch away from 234, as it will only be used between the Bombers and Airbase crew and the AAS and Region 5 HQ.

In the case where the AAS arrives before the Bombers, the AAS will contact the IC on CFS Talkgroup 232 and request the IC go to VHF Channel 3. The AAS will contact the Bombers on F-CTAF (aeronautical frequency) and advise all comms will be via AAS.

3. Air Operations Manager

Where an Air Operations Manager has been established as part of the Incident Management Team, this person will undertake on behalf of the IC the liaison with the AAS on VHF Channel 3.

4. Ground Support

To achieve communication between the Bombers and ground Support crew at the Airbase, CFS Talkgroup 234 will be utilised.

SOUTH EAST SOUTH AUSTRALIA INTERAGENCY GRN OPERATING PRINCIPLES/PROCEDURES

Procedures for allocating a SA-GRN Multi-agency talkgroup

Guidelines

The SA-GRN provides a common communications medium, which allows all users of the SA-GRN (independent of which agency they are attached to) to communicate statewide on a common talkgroup, should the need arise. The Coroner, during the inquest into the Ash Wednesday Bushfires, raised the need for various agencies to communicate with each other.

These talkgroups are known as Multi-agency talkgroups and are programmed into all SA-GRN radios in the same position. Multi-agency talkgroups have been divided into three categories.

- **State Disaster and Multi-agency Talkgroups 17 to 36**

These talkgroups provide statewide coverage and are to be used where the incident/operation covers a wide area, or over terrain where local communications is not possible. The user must be within the coverage range of the SA-GRN for these talkgroups to function.

- **Multi-agency Local Talkgroups 37 to 41**

These talkgroups can be used anywhere and are not network reliant. They provide a local (line of sight) coverage over a small distance. (This distance will vary depending on the nature and topography of the area.)

- **Multi-agency Repeater Talkgroups 42 to 46**

These talkgroups can be utilised when repeaters are established outside of the SA-GRN coverage area.

These guidelines and procedures apply to the State Disaster and Multi-agency talkgroups 17 to 36 only.

Multi-agency Talkgroups should be used when a need to communicate with another agency that is also on the GRN arises. The following agencies utilise the SA-GRN:

- SA Country Fire Service
- Department for Environment and Heritage
- Department for Administrative and Information Services - Forestry SA

- Passenger Transport Board
- SA Metropolitan Fire Service
- State Emergency Services SA
- SA Police
- Department of Primary Industries and Resources South Australia
- South Australian Ambulance Service
- Department of Human Services
- Courts Administration Authority
- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- Department for Correctional Services

For more details regarding the extent of SA-GRN use per agency you may contact Agency Principal Authorised Representatives - as this is subject to significant variation during agency transition/migration.

The Officer in Charge of the Police Communications Centre is responsible for the allocation of the statewide multi-agency talkgroups. This responsibility is delegated to the Communications Sergeant for normal day-to-day activities.

Procedure

1. When the need for Multi-agency communications is identified, the person requesting the talkgroup selects talkgroup **017** on their SA-GRN radio, which is displayed as, **17 DIS 01 MA** (or similar). This talkgroup is known as the “**go to**” talkgroup.
2. The callsign for the operator on Talkgroup 017 is “**Police Communications**”
3. The person then calls “Police Communications” on Talkgroup 017 and advises the operator of their callsign, agency, the nature and exact location of the incident/operation, and requests a Multi-agency talkgroup.
4. Police Communications will then allocate a talkgroup for the duration of that incident/operation.

(NB. This can be done whenever the requesting person believes that a Multi-agency Talkgroup would facilitate communications, however to alleviate any confusion or communications problems at a later stage, this should be done at the earliest opportunity.)

5. Agencies attending an incident/operation who are not aware of which Multi-agency Talkgroup is being utilised, can establish this by contacting Police Communications on Talkgroup 017.
6. Once the incident/operation is complete and the talkgroup is no longer required, the Talkgroup 17 Operator must be advised of such, to enable re-allocation of that resource.

Note: Police Communications will not facilitate agency tasking, service requests or resource requests on multi-agency talkgroups except in an emergency. In this context the sole function of Police Communications is only to manage State Disaster and Multi agency talk group allocation.

Under no circumstances are agencies to select a Multi-agency talkgroup on their own behalf. These resources are shared amongst all government agencies, and have statewide coverage. They are only to be allocated by Police Communications via talkgroup 17.

CFS/CFA/NRE CROSS BORDER COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE/INFORMATION

The following procedures have been established to provide a standard for Cross Border communications within the South East of South Australia/South West of Victoria and allow ease of operation for all personnel.

1. *Incidents in South Australia*

When resources from Victoria respond into SA, initial contact from the Victorian resources should be achieved on CFS VHF Channel 2 (CFA 193), all CFS Group Control Centres (GCC) will be monitoring this channel, and will advise the resource which go to channel is being utilised.

The following table shows the CFS Channels fitted to CFA Radios and should be used by the CFS Groups as indicated.

| Group | CFS VHF Channel | CFA Channel |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Mt Gambier | 5 | 198 |
| Naracoorte | 10 | 195 |
| Pt MacDonnell | 11 | 197 |
| Wattle Range | 18 | 196 |
| Tatiara | 19 | 217 |

2. *Incidents in Victoria*

Wattle Range, Mt Gambier and Pt MacDonnell CFS Groups

When resources from SA respond into Vic, initial contact from SA resources should be achieved on VHF Channel CFA4A, CFA Bases will be monitoring this Channel, and will advise the resource which go to channel is being utilised.

Naracoorte and Tatiara CFS Groups

When resources from SA respond into Vic, initial contact from SA resources should be achieved on VHF Channel CF17A, CFA Bases will be monitoring this Channel, and will advise the resource which go to channel is being utilised.

DSE

When resources from SA respond to incidents in Vic managed by DSE, initial contact should be achieved on VHF Channel CFA4A, as per the instruction above.

CFS REGION 5 RADIO TALKGROUP/CHANNEL PLAN

The following chart sets out the Talkgroup and VHF Channel initial usage for CFS Region 5. The Groups are able to use the Talkgroups and VHF Channels allocated to them for initial response and training etc (Where Incident Talkgroups [Secondary] have been reused, Groups need to check to ensure it is not being utilised already). Should additional Talkgroups or VHF Channels be required, the Regional Duty Officer will need to be contacted to facilitate the allocation of these additional resources.

| Group | Primary Talkgroup | Incident Talkgroup | Second Incident Talkgroup | Fire Ground VHF Channels |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| LACEPEDE | 224_LACEPEDE | 235_R5_INC01 | 239_R5_INC05 | 4, 14 |
| LUCINDALE | 225_LUCINDAL | 236_R5_INC02 | 240_R5_INC06 | 6, 15 |
| MT GAMBIER | 226_GAMBIERC | 237_R5-INC03 | 244_R5_INC10 | 13, 16, 7 |
| NARACORTE | 227_NCOORTEC | 238_R5_INC04 | 223_R5_SE | 12, 17, 9 |
| PT MACDONNELL | 228_PT_MACDO | 239_R5_INC05 | 235_R5_INC01 | 11, 19 |
| ROBE | 229_ROBE_CFS | 240_R5_INC06 | 236_R5_INC02 | 8, 20 |
| TATIARA | 230_TATIARA | 241_R5_INC07 | 243_R5_INC09 | 19, 11 |
| WATTLE RANGE | 231_WATTLE_R | 242_R5_INC08 | 240_R5_INC11 | 18, 10, 5 |
| Spare | | | | 21, 22, 23 |
| REGIONAL USE | Regional Talkgroup | Logistics Talkgroup | Air Operations Talkgroup | VHF Air Operations |
| | 232_R5_OPS | 233_R5_LOGS | 234_R5_AIR_O | 3, 2, 1 |