

ScannerDigest Newsletter

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- ◆ **AMATEUR RADIO: EMERGENCY PUBLIC SERVICES**
- ◆ **MONITORING THE JOINT SERVICES – OPEN HOUSE**

GENERAL EDITOR

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The following article was submitted by Tom Sundstrom W2XQ.



AAR frequencies

My wife and I took our second trip to Denver on Amtrak. PHI to DC to CHI to DEN and return. Great service in the sleepers; good food and wine. For this trip, I programmed all 97 AAR channels into a VX6. What an education! All transmissions were in the clear. It was very easy to find the frequencies by scanning. In a large station, it helps to know the train number as there are many active channels used by the switch yards, freight and other trains. Once out of the station, the AAR frequency used by our train was even easier to find. We learned.

(1) **Amtrak** has no control of time with delays caused by track and station work areas and freight trains. Freight has priority on the CSX (DC-CHI) and the BNSF (CHI-CA). Two tracks, but in the work areas we were often routed onto the second rail after oncoming freight trains (as many as 5 at a time) passed us.

(2) **The train conductor** and engineers were in constant communication with the freight dispatchers which we heard on the same channel. That included clearing crossings, reductions of speed for work areas, stoppages for oncoming freight, and switching yard control.

(3) **There were communications** for making two stops at stations that have a short platform. One stop was for the coach cars, the second for the sleeper cars. One of our longer stops was to take off a passenger having chest pains, positioning the car by the waiting ambulance and medical team; the medical alert was called into the dispatcher before we arrived.

(4) **On the CSX** and BNSF rails the train's maximum speed is limited to 79 mph. My GPS showed the Amtrak-controlled DC-PHI run was averaging 110 mph in the open areas, and reached a maximum of 127 mph.

(5) **I noted a change of AAR** frequencies used on the DC-CHI run. It changed during the overnight hours when I was asleep.

(6) **Occasionally I would hear** two on-board personnel change to a different AAR frequency, referring to the AAR channel number. These brief conversations were typically for "what do you want from the dining car" Q&A.

(7) **We often heard estimates** of time to the next stop. Not all these announcements were made over the PA to passengers.

Bottom line: the train communications and GPS made for a very interesting trip. Highly recommended.



Now, where can you find the AAR frequencies? There are many Web sites, but I liked "On Track On Line" (<http://www.on-track-on-line.com/scanner-radio.shtml>) as the easiest to in use in running into the VX6R. RadioReference (<http://www.radioreference.com>) has a bit of a leaning curve. It's quicker and supports a number of differ rent authors" and that additional packages are ARC500 the Butel.

The one thing I'll recommend (for my learning) was to backup the working file before changes, then save the

new file with a version number increase. I might have 2011-09-17_2347_v1 in hand, Then new to-be-worked is saved as 2011-11-18_0103_v1 and the version number rises during the day.

And if you read the comments on changing frequencies in various areas of the rail line, there is some discussion about AAR, but IMHO that is far down the road. I just like to know why the train as slowed or stopped, and where we may be. I found the "assigned" AAR channel lists are someone's pipe dreams; orders go to the engineer at the start of the run and can change in route.

Tom W2XQ

ILLINOIS

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Most scanner listeners enjoy emergency communications, and thus they have all the local police, fire and EMS channels. What many may not even know is that there are other channels which are essential and should be entered into your scanning bank if you have room. In Illinois several years ago several analog non digital radios were issued to many agencies throughout the state. Health Departments, Emergency Management, Police Departments, and Fire Departments were some agencies that received these radios as part of the grants. These channels are named and are considered interoperable radio frequencies, the whole intention is that someone can take the radio and respond to a disaster in another area and be able to communicate. The channels are analog only, and contain no PL tones on the calling channels, except under certain circumstances on operations channels. Also digital operations are allowed on the Operations channels under certain circumstances.

The channels are as follows:

VHF Channels

V-CALL 155.7525	
V-TAC 1 151.1375	V-TAC 2 154.4525
V-TAC 3 158.7375	V-TAC 4 159.4725

UHF Channels:

U-Call 453.2125 (458.2125)
U-TAC 1 453.4625 (458.4625)
U-TAC 2 453.7125 (458.7125)
U-TAC 3 453.8625 (458.8625)

ITAC channels may also be in use. All the channels below use a PL of 156.7 Hz nationwide.

I-CALL 866.0125 (821.0125)
ITAC 1 866.5125 (821.5125)
ITAC 2 867.0125 (822.0125)
ITAC 3 867.5125 (822.5125)
ITAC 4 868.0125 (823.0125)

Starcom 21

Starcom 21 is a Motorola owned statewide digital communications network in use across Illinois. The system was rolled out and the state of Illinois was one of the first users to sign up. The system is an P-25 system, which carries digital encrypted and unencrypted communications.

For several years Illinois has been using the system for various uses. The system covers nearly all of Illinois with radio communication coverage, with some sites in neighboring states also. The primary user of the system is the Illinois State Police, which dumped their HF channels for the system. Every ISP district in Illinois has several talk groups on the system. Most districts include a Dispatch A, and Dispatch B talk group, or more.

There are normally Detail talk groups for the district as well as patches which simulcast on ISPERN, and to other channels. Car to Car is a great talk group to have, since old communications on car to car were done on old HF channels, you were lucky to hear a car unless they were in your local area. I have in the past heard an officer request a patch to helicopter, and the dispatcher was able to setup a patch so the officer was able to guide the helicopter to the landing zone. I believe the patch may have been IREACH to Starcom 21. So that IREACH transmitted to the officer's portable and when he talked on the Dispatch Channel, it went back to IREACH. I have also heard during a pursuit, a dispatcher ask the units, if they wanted her to patch to IREACH so they had local communications with some of the other agencies involved in the pursuit after it ended with a foot pursuit, he declined.

The system has its features which when they work properly are unmatched. The system is much like a cellular phone network, when a user from one tower travels into another area covered by another tower, that tower starts receiving talk groups programmed into the radio that has traveled away from home. The system includes statewide talk groups for MABAS, ILEAS, and other statewide response agencies. The state of Illinois tried to get local agencies to sign on to the system, many agencies considered the costs high. There is a per radio cost, per month, plus one time programming fee. The exact cost is not known, but for a large department could be costly.

One commercial user has signed on and migrated their communications to the system. Ameren, a power, and gas supplier across Illinois moved their trucks and operations

over to the system. One might hear a couple of electric company trucks discussing a power outage, or a substation problem or might hear a district wide attempt to locate regarding a reckless driver. The system's vast uses are really amazing. There have been complaints that the system does have its quirks. There are times when towers go offline, and users cannot connect to transmit. Illinois State Police agencies still have their VHF channels as backup, although in most areas the towers are stable, other reports from online groups report that some agencies have to switch back and forth from Starcom to old channels. Other Illinois users include; Illinois

Department of Public Health, which has talk-groups in each region, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, that also has groups for each region and statewide groups. The Illinois Secretary of State Police also has talk groups on the system. Some encryption has been used, including drug task force operations, and governor security details, which are normally constant encryption. The system will not be affected by narrow banding. There is continuous changing of towers, including changing the frequencies with certain sites as re-banding has occurred.

In the future we will give you some of the must have talk group ID's and who is using them. As a reminder, you will need a digital scanner capable of receiving P-25 communications.

10-what?

Several years ago there began a push from the federal government to get agencies to voluntarily have their employees complete NIMS (National Incident Management System) classes. Many of the classes are available from the FEMA independent study program on line. There are classes required by anyone who is a supervisor, or administration, classes for employees in emergency management, police, fire, EMS and even hospitals. They have been saying for years they would be required. Then they rolled out a time line. The time line was established, and some agencies didn't see it to fit their needs, either due to being a volunteer or just avoiding the issues all together. These classes actually provide you with the methods for operating during a disaster under national emergency management guidelines, from forms, and operations to communications and structure.

During the first rounds of requirements the government was asking for all agencies to go to common terminology on the radio and avoiding using 10-codes. Many police agencies defended their use of the 10-codes and other. The powers to be finally rolled back their push on police agencies, and have so far allowed police agencies to maintain their codes. Fire and Emergency Management agencies were not so lucky. NIMS compliance includes not using any codes. Failure to comply with NIMS has many repercussions, including by not limited to, loss of chances for federal grants, loss of chances for

reimbursements following disasters, and also failure to receive equipment.

Fire departments have migrated from using 10 codes to making things sound simple. Simple terms may vary, but a majority of them are common, including en route, on scene, message received, units clearing, and units arriving. It may take some time getting used to, but after a while it will grow on you, and you might start to enjoy it, and realize how professional it sounds. Sometimes it's not what you say; it's how you say it.

VERMONT

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Barre Town Starts Using New Frequencies

Last spring, the Barre Town Select Board decided to break its long-standing dispatch relationship with Barre City dispatch services and signed a contract with the Lamoille Co. Sheriff's Office. Lamoille dispatch is located in Hyde Park, about 40 miles north of Barre Town. As of the end of July, Lamoille is now dispatching all Barre Town public safety agencies; police, fire and EMS.

The new frequencies are:

453.4500 - Barre Town PD dispatch
154.7250 - Barre Town Fire & EMS dispatch

There appears to be a link frequency on 155.5350 that carries the same traffic as 154.7250. I also signal stalked 155.5350 in the Hyde Park/Morrisville area, suggesting that it's some kind of input to the link on the Hyde Park end. And I have heard ambulances talking to Lamoille on 155.5350 when arriving and departing the hospital.

Rather disturbingly, there is other voice traffic on 154.7250 and the frequency appears to be in use by public safety agencies in both New Hampshire and New York. There is a CTCSS tone of 118.8 in use on that frequency so if you're in an area like the eastern part of the town near the Orange heights, you may find using the CTCSS tone will be helpful to eliminate out-of-state traffic.

Barre City dispatch continues to dispatch its PD on 460.0750 and fire and EMS on 154.1900. I talked with a couple of Barre Town EMS staff and they told me they still have the Barre City dispatch frequency in their radios and routinely monitor it in case they are called upon to assist mutual aid.

And that's it from Vermont this time around. Happy listening!

Best Wishes, Jim

MILITARY

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Lockheed-Martin USMC KC-130J/T

CH-46Es have just completed their assignment; forward deploying a Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) to the designated target. They climb to five hundred feet to meet a USMC KC-130J, *Titan 01*, for some much needed fuel. It's a night operation and the helicopters search for the drogue lines that are illuminated by lights and six luminescent paint spots located on the horizontal stabilizer. With the tanker's air-to-air refueling (AAR) checklist complete, the lower rotating breakaway beacon is switched off indicating "clear for contact". With the red, amber and green AAR pod status lights clearly visible, the two helicopters traveling at 120 knots approach the tip of the fully extended ninety-three feet drogue-hose and begin to take gas.

The Lockheed-Martin KC-130 tanker is a version of the C-130 Hercules modified for [aerial refueling](#). Entering service in 1962, the KC-130F was designed to undertake multi-mission roles in support of [USMC](#) tactical fixed-wing and rotary aircraft. Equipped with wing-mounted drogue-hose refueling pods (one mounted on each wing outboard of the engines), the KC-130 is employed eighty percent of the time in the AAR capacity.

In support of the MAGTF, *Yankee 12* has been tasked to air deliver cargo, insert combat troops and equipment, and resupply the landing zone. Twenty percent of the KC-130's function is performing such logistical chores. Meanwhile below, *Ranger 23* lands on (and will later takeoff from) a short unimproved landing strip. The KC-130T is providing support for emergency medical evacuation of personnel and special warfare advanced reconnaissance. On the ground, *Sumo 34* is providing rapid refueling to UH-1Ns, AH-1Ws, CH-53Es, light amphibious assault vehicles and hummers. The KC-130J feathers (slows) the props to "Hotel Mode" eliminating prop wash behind the tanker allowing ground forces to operate in relative calm while the aircraft offloads six hundred gallons per minute. The additional fuel is provided from a removable 3,600-gallon aluminum fuel tank carried inside the cargo compartment.

Based on the Lockheed Martin C-130J Super Hercules, the KC-130J is the latest operated by the [United States Marine Corps](#), replacing older variants beginning 2010. The KC-130J is a force multiplier capable of operating day or night, under adverse weather conditions, increased speed and range, improved AAR system and survivability which significantly enhance performance and capabilities while lowering costs through system reliability and reduced maintenance.

Loitering at twenty-three thousand feet, a formation of F/A-18s and A/V-8's have been providing tactical coverage for the operation and are now running low on fuel. As the jets slow to 225 knots they encounter *Otis 45* and the KC-130J's extended independently operated hydraulically powered white refueling drogue hoses with black markings designating range and providing hose movement cues. The tanker is capable of simultaneously transferring up to three hundred gallons per minute to two aircraft, allowing rapid conveyance to multiple-recipients. Under emergency conditions receivers will look for hand held ALDIS lamps lights illuminated from the paratroop door windows located at the rear of the plane. A steady light signals they are clear for contact. A flashing lamp means no more fuel available or the tanker is experiencing difficulties and the receivers should disengage, moving to a position outboard the hose.

The last aircraft to participate are MV-22s. Approaching *Raider 56* they notice four Hellfire and ten Griffin GPS guided missiles hanging off the wings of the tanker along with an AN/AAQ-30 Targeting Sight System (infrared television camera) mounted under the left wing. They are being re-fueled by the USMC's newest KC-130 example, the Harvest HAWK (Hercules Airborne Weapons Kit).



Photo courtesy of Ken Kula

USMC Active Duty Units flying KC-130J Aircraft
VMGR-152 MCAS Futenma, Japan **Sumos** [283.30]
VMGR-252 MCAS Cherry Point, NC **Otis** [353.00/236.25]
VMGRT-253 MCAS Cherry Point, NC **Titans**
[342.60/342.05]
VMGR-352 MCAS Miramar, CA **Raiders** [249.80/281.00]

USMC Reserve Units flying KC-130T Aircraft
VMGR-234 NASJRB Fort Worth, TX **Rangers**
[289.80/233.90]
VMGR-452 Stewart ANGB, NY **Yankees**
[301.25/240.425/310.425/133.30]



Photo courtesy of Ken Kula

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Monitoring the Joint Services Open House



The 2011 Joint Services Open House (JSOH) was May 21 and 22 at Joint Base Andrews in Camp Springs, Maryland. This annual event provides an opportunity for the public to get an up-close look at dozens of aircraft and other military vehicles. The event is also an all-day air show, featuring military and civilian acts. The Air Force Thunderbirds and the Navy Blue Angels demonstration teams perform on alternate years. (This year, the Thunderbirds performed.)

The JSOH provides an opportunity for some great monitoring. Not only can one listen to the air frequencies of the performers, but also the land mobile frequencies of all the people who organize the show. This latter category is what I focused on. (For those interested in the performers, an extensive listing of air frequencies can be found in the annual Monitoring Times Air Show Guide, available as a PDF at the MT website.)

Most of my monitoring centered on two Project 25 trunked systems. Joint Base Andrews uses a 380 MHz Phase I system, and Prince George's County uses a 700 MHz Motorola X2-TDMA system. The Andrews system can be monitored with several digital scanners, but most transmissions on the Prince George's system can only be monitored with the new GRE PSR-800 scanner. This is because this scanner is the only one on the market that can decode TDMA talkgroups, which account for the majority of the traffic on the Prince George's system.

On the Andrews system, most of the talkgroups that were directly related to the JSOH were in the 5xx range, as they have been for several years. But talkgroup 157 was used by security at the show, and 703 and 705 were used by personnel working the show.

On the Prince George's system, talkgroup 1055 was used by PGFD for first aid/medical. Talkgroup 2001 was used by PGPD for parking and traffic control at FedEx Field, and 2015 was used by PGPD for traffic control on the streets around Andrews.

Listening to these systems allowed for an inside look at what was happening behind-the-scenes at the show. I've listed all the talkgroups I found and some relevant websites below. Until next time, enjoy the monitoring.

Joint Base Andrews Trunked System Talkgroups:

- 157 Security
- 259 "utilities"; "electrical"; "toilets"
- 261 EOC
- 501 Show Control
- 503 "Director"; "Chairman"
- 509 Joint Information Bureau (Media/Public Affairs)
- 513 Airboss
- 529 Audio/Visual, Comms
- 531 Medical
- 703 "bus"; "hanger 9"
- 705 Golf Carts/Deliveries

Prince George's County Trunked System Talkgroups:

- 1055 PGFD First Aid/Medical
- 2001 PGPD Parking/Traffic at FedEx Field
- 2005 "respond to command post" (brief use)
- 2015 PGPD Traffic Control around Andrews

- 464.5500 [d023] Shuttle Bus Coordination at Andrews (S)

Monitoring Times Air Show Guide:
<http://www.monitoringtimes.com/0311airshowspecial.pdf>

RadioReference - Joint Base Andrews:
<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/db/?sid=3822>

RadioReference - Prince George's County:
<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/db/?sid=6341>

Dave Schoenberger

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

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A few weeks ago the country and the world marked the 10th Anniversary of the September 11th attacks. They watched helplessly as the biggest terrorist act on American soil unfolded right before their eyes on T.V., the Internet and over the police scanner. I vividly remember my father waking me up, all he could say was "Turn on the TV". Like countless other people I saw the smoke pouring out of 1 World Trade Center, commonly referred to as "Tower 1". I quickly flipped on the scanner and quickly tuned to the NYPD SOD frequency (470.8375) and heard

the call for all units to go to the Twin Towers, later named "Ground Zero".

- 40.100- FM) NJ NG Helos (transporting high ranking officials/supplies)
- 41.050 - (FM) NJ NG Helos
- 121.500 - VHF Emergency*
- 122.750 - Air to air government
- 125.125 - Reported to be CAP – Very active in Northern NJ
- 123.100 - NYPD Helo traffic
- 126.200 - Military Control Towers
- 134.550, 134.975
- 138.125 - Inter-plane above NY area
- 138.300 - Occasional Air-to-Air (AM)
- 138.425 - Fighters coordinating with tankers
- 138.550
- 139.875 - McGuire AFB Tankers (AM) - Primary
- 139.825, 139.925, 138.225 - FEMA
- 142.350, 142.375, 142.425, 142.975 - FEMA
- 143.825 - McGuire Tankers (AM) - Secondary
- 148.150, 149.925 - Civil Air Patrol
- 155.340 - Medical frequency
- 156.300 - Search and Rescue
- 162.687 - Air Force 1
- 233.525, 235.900
- 237.900 - Coast Guard Search and Rescue
- 243.000 - UHF Emergency*
- 243.600
- 249.800 - Hi Altitude Fighters
- 252.000
- 252.100 - Mid air refuel
- 254.200 - "Huntress" & "Northern Light"
- 257.800 - Military Control Towers
- 259.900
- 263.000 - NY ATC JFK
- 265.400
- 265.800 - Presidential Helicopters
- 271.000 - Fighters and tankers talking to Huntress-AWACS
- 282.600, 282.700
- 282.800 - Coast Guard Search and Rescue
- 288.400, 293.700
- 295.800 - Air to Air Tactical
- 303.000 - Tankers and Fighters (Also heard AWACS (Bandsaw)
- 305.550 - Air Force 1
- 311.000 - Mid air refuel
- 319.100 - Hi Altitude
- 319.400 - McGuire AFB tankers), reference to orders from "Huntress"
- 320.900 - Occasional use – possible tankers
- 336.800 - Air Force 1
- 352.600, 364.200
- 381.700 - Coast Guard
- 384.100 - North American Air Defense

The World Trade Center, along with the bridges and tunnels connecting New York and New Jersey, is operated by the Port Authority which is on an EDAC System. They

have replaced the antenna site that was destroyed during the attacks on the Freedom Tower, when completed will reach 1776 feet, including an antenna on top.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey operates on an EDACS system with multiple sites throughout New York's five boroughs and Northern New Jersey. These frequencies have gone through the 800 MHz rebanding process. Remember with an EDACS System you need to program the frequencies in order.

Primary Trunking Site:

851.2125	851.8125
852.3750	852.6000
852.8750	853.5500
853.9125	

Holland Tunnel Site

851.4125	852.7875
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World Trade Center (Freedom Tower Site)

851.0750	851.3875
853.1000	

JFK Airport

852.0875	852.9625
853.3375	

Newark Airport

Display	Talk group
POLICE DESK	00-080
PATROLS	00-081
AIR RESCUE & FD	00-082
TAC 1	00-083
TAC 2	00-084
TAC 3	00-085
TAC 4	00-086
AREA WIDE TAC	00-087

JFK Airport

<u>Display</u>	<u>Talk group</u>
POLICE DESK	00-120
PATROLS	00-121
PATROL	00-121
AIR RESCUE/FD	00-122
TAC 1	00-123
TAC 2	00-124
TAC 3	00-125
TAC 4	00-126
AREA WIDE TAC	00-127

La Guardia Airport

<u>Display</u>	<u>Talk group</u>
POLICE DESK	00-140
PATROLS	00-141
AIR RESCUE/FD	00-142
TAC 1	00-143
TAC 2	00-144
TAC 3	00-145
TAC 4	00-146

AREAWIDE TAC 00-147

Interstate Transportation Department

<u>Display</u>	<u>Talk group</u>
Police Desk	00-100
Bus Terminal	00-101
George Washington BR	00-102
Pier Patrols	00-103
Lincoln Tunnel	00-104
Staten Island BR	00-105
Tac	00-107

That wraps up another issue!! Like always I welcome any suggestions or comments for this column. Please e-mail

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AMATEUR RADIO

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Amateur Radio: Emergency/Public Services
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As I write this there are folks cleaning up from hurricane Irene as well as preparing for the remnants of tropical storm Lee. There are wildfires raging out of control in Texas, and two new tropical storms, Nate and Maria, threatening more rain and more flooding. And just to add insult to injury, millions of people in California, Arizona, and Mexico lost power for hours when a utility worker swapped out a piece of equipment incorrectly.

All of this on the eve of our nation's remembrance of 9/11/2001, a day which changed our country, and our understanding of emergency communications forever. While we have been blessed to not have a repeat of 9/11 thus far, man-made disasters loom heavily as a real possibility because of the nature of our country's enemies. Emergency preparedness is not just an option any more, indeed it never really was; it was just easy to get comfortable when trouble seemed far away. No longer.

Natural Disasters

The last few years have seen many, many different natural disasters affecting millions of folks in our country alone. All of these events require emergency communications in terms of police/fire/rescue operations, and also with volunteer organizations and individuals. Amateur radio plays a big role in getting out health and welfare messages, as well as providing emergency communications support when traditional public service channels are down.

You might be surprised at how often hams act as liaisons between hospitals and Red Cross/SATERN/County EOC's (I'll describe these connections more in a moment). Many amateur operators are constantly training for such emergencies, as well as seeking to expand their possibilities for service with various organizations.

Emergencies offer a wealth of scanning and amateur radio opportunities, but more opportunities exist than just when an emergency occurs. Like public safety professions, amateur radio folks spend a lot of time training for things they hope will never happen, but want to be prepared for “in case.”

SATERN

While you are likely most familiar with the Red Cross agency, the SATERN organization I mentioned above is a very active group as well, and you will likely find them wherever the need for emergency communication arises. SATERN stands for **Salvation Army Team Emergency Network**. These amateur radio operators train through various nets (Hamspeak for on-air meetings) and disaster simulations, and they are active in various parts of the country not only on HF frequencies, but on the VHF bands too. To find out more about the group as well as find frequency listings, visit: www.saturn.org

ARES

Another group which is very active in emergency communications is the ARES group, sponsored and organized through the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). Ares stands for **Amateur Radio Emergency Services**, and every state (and county) is divided up into regions and districts with (hopefully!) folks who coordinate within their districts and regions to train and place volunteers as the need arises. Groups hold weekly nets as well as training scenarios, all of which can be monitored, usually on the VHF band. Nets and training sessions are usually held on the same frequencies as would be used for actual emergency communications, so these are frequencies/repeaters well worth programming into your radio. You can find out which groups are in your area by going to the ARRL website at: www.arrl.org/sections & www.arrl.org/ares for more information.

State and counties have emergency operation centers, even if it is just the local fire department building, where emergency communications can take place. Some offices are housed within National Guard Armories for coordination purposes. These centers are tied in together with the Department of Homeland Security, but also with local amateur radio operators, either through ARES groups or MARS (**Military Auxiliary Radio Services** see below).

ARES groups are by far the most common and prolific emergency services groups, but some clubs organize their own emergency groups apart from the ARRL. The groups may be an offshoot of an amateur club in your town, or they may be affiliated with someone like the Red Cross. If you have a local Red Cross chapter, it is very likely there is at least one group of amateurs in the area who provide additional communications support for them.

In times of emergencies the local ARES group is a great place to find out what is happening locally. If the event is

weather related, you may also find SKYWARN activated, an amateur radio network which liaisons with the National Weather Service to track specific weather conditions not always observable by the Weather Service’s radar.

MARS

MARS groups operate just outside of the amateur radio bands, using both voice and digital modes of transmission. While they do not actually make public their operating frequencies, a little work will turn up the information for your area. Like ARES groups nets, MARS net frequencies are good to have in your radio when there is an emergency. They hold regular training nets, and they participate in emergency drills of all sorts throughout the year.

Public Service Events

There are likely to be a number of public service events in your area where amateur radio operators are present acting as communication resources and safety partners. I have participated (as a ham) in marathons and festivals where hams helped city officials and community organizers be the “eyes and ears” of the event, both in terms of tracking progress and helping with medical issues as needed. One of the more well-known events to happen here in the Cincinnati area is an event known as **Paddlefest**, an event held on the Ohio River each year. Hams operate on the shore as well as in boats along the river helping to ensure boater’s safety, as well as relieve officials of some of the more mundane communication needs. Events like this are both interesting to monitor and good experience in training folks how communications are handled in an orderly way.

How do you find out about these monitoring opportunities? Get on the mailing lists of local amateur radio clubs. Most clubs now have electronic versions of their newsletters, and many are posted on the web. Of course, local events are commonly posted in the newspaper, but they usually don’t list who’s volunteering to help.

Find out which clubs regularly participate in local activities—usually groups work the same yearly events, and often you can find out information on upcoming events on a club’s web pages. The ARRL section manager for your region, as mentioned above, is also a good source for information on public service participation by groups in your area.

Repeater Directory

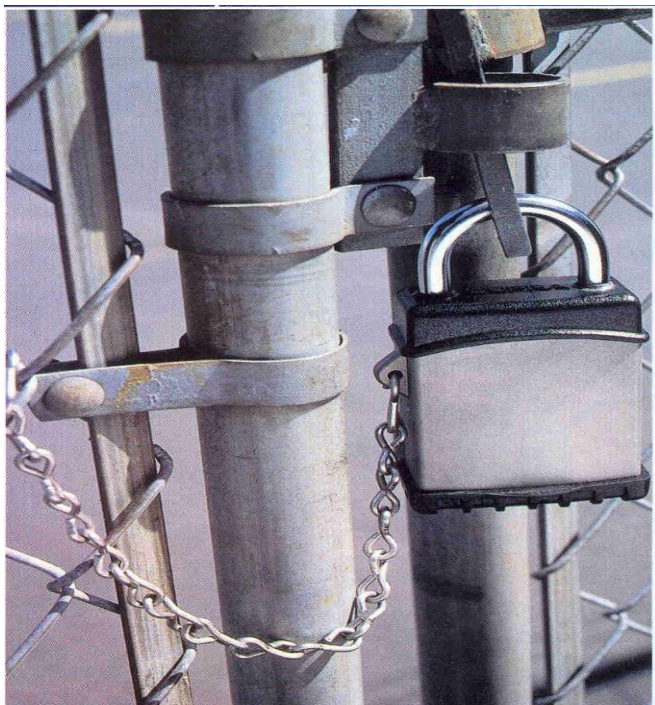
Finally, let me make a pitch for getting a repeater directory if you don’t already have one. The ARRL (no, I am not a pitch man for them!) offers a repeater directory available in a desktop size or in a “pocket” size, as well as software for loading on your computer called “TravelPlus.” This software allows you to plot trips and find out where repeaters are in the area you are traveling to, and you can usually get it packaged with a bonus repeater guide to boot! Be forewarned, however, the pocket edition has

really small print, so if this is an issue, get the desktop size.

Another software program just recently made available through the ARRL is "TravelPlus Mobile GPS" which allows you to download repeater data to a Garmin Nuvi-type GPS. Definitely make sure the software will download/run on your GPS before purchase, and call them if you have any doubts. While I haven't downloaded this software myself, for those who travel a lot this could be a valuable resource for sure.

That's all for this round, but I hope you have been inspired to seek out new opportunities to partake in some of the many monitoring and public service opportunities available in your area. Whether you are an active ham or a scanning enthusiast looking for more things to hear, public service events and emergency groups offer a wide range of radio traffic in the amateur bands. Until next time, happy hunting!

ScannerDigest Newsletter



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MASSACHUSETTES

*Peter Szerlag
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Massachusetts Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) - selected information from the July 2011 FCC PSAP Registry

PSAPs run by Fire Departments - Rutland, Taunton, Middleton, and Lunenburg

PSAPs in Berkshire County - Adams, County Sheriff, Great Barrington, Lee, Dalton, North Adams, Pittsfield, and Williamstown

PSAPs in Franklin County - Greenfield, Montague, and MSP Shelburne Falls

PSAPs in Hampshire County - Amherst, Belchertown, Easthampton, Granby, Hadley, MSP Northampton, Northampton, South Hadley, Southampton, and Ware

PSAPs in Barnstable County - Sheriff, Barnstable, Bourne, Dennis, Easthampton, Provincetown, Sandwich, Truro, Wellfleet, and Yarmouth

In contrast, New Hampshire just has 4 PSAPs - Belknap County Sheriff, Grafton County Sheriff, Rockingham County Sheriff, and NH Statewide

Pending radio licenses in Massachusetts September 2011

Boston EMS - 155.115 - I suspect this might be a new data system to link hospitals and maybe private ambulance companies

Hanover Public Works - 470.35 R (R = repeater output)

Jones Lang LaSalle - Bldg Maintenance - 461.4375 R - at 1 Financial center high-rise in downtown Boston

Marlborough - 72.78 - maybe fire boxes or a radio link

Methuen FD - 472.70

Gordon Newell in Leeds - 151.6025 R

Orleans FD - 453.8625 R (this is a UTac freq) - 453.125 R

Rutland area police - 460.2375 R - 3 repeaters and 20 mobiles

Scituate - lifeguards - 155.9775 R - 159.33 in - 1 repeater and 25 portables

Springfield College - 464.8625

Staples Store (HQ) in Framingham - 452.80 R

Hello everyone and welcome once again, guess it has been some time but things have been busy with work and home life but now that the summer season is over things should be quiet up north until the ski season kicks off or lets hope anyway. Here's the current county frequency listing for Northampton County, Pennsylvania.

Northampton Co. FIRE / EMS FREQUENCIES

Channel Name	Use	Type	RX	PL
A-1	North PW	VHF	154.0250	186.2
A-1	North PW	UHF	500.9375	203.5
A-2	Easton PW	VHF	153.8150	167.9
A-2	Easton PW	UHF	501.4875	203.5
A-3	Palmer PW	VHF	154.9800	114.8
A-4	Lower Saucon PW	VHF	155.7450	107.2
A-5	Wilson PW	UHF	501.2125	203.5
A-5	Wilson PW	VHF	155.1000	110.9
County-Wide	Dispatch/Emergency Hailing	UHF	501.1875	192.8
DISPATCH 1	Dispatch Channel	VHF	154.3400	136.5
DISPATCH 2	Dispatch Channel	VHF	154.0550	186.2
OPS 1	EMS/Fire Ops	UHF	500.6375	192.8
OPS 2	EMS/Fire Ops	UHF	500.7125	203.5
Regional MED	Hosp Patches	VHF	155.3400	173.8
Regional MED	Hosp Patches	UHF	501.4125	192.8
Tac 1	Scene Operations	UHF	500.8875	192.8
Tac 2	Scene Operations	UHF	500.8125	192.8
Tac 3	Scene Operations	VHF	153.9200	167.9
Tac 3	Scene Operations	UHF	500.8375	203.5
Tac 4	Scene Operations	UHF	501.2625	192.8
Tac 5	Scene Operations	UHF	501.1375	192.8
Tac 6	Scene Operations	UHF	500.7375	203.5
Tac 8	Scene Operations	VHF	154.3850	136.5
Tac 9	Scene Operations	VHF	154.1900	206.5
TAC 10	Scene Operations	VHF	155.2350	173.8
TALKABOUT 1	Unit to Unit Ops	UHF	501.9625	179.9
TALKABOUT 2	Unit to Unit Ops	UHF	501.9625	203.5
TALKABOUT 3	Unit to Unit Ops	UHF	501.9625	192.8

**Northampton County, PA
LAW ENFORCEMENT FREQUENCIES**

New Name	Band	RX	PL	Departments
City PD 1	UHF	500.3125	203.5	P20
City PD 2	UHF	500.4625	203.5	
East PD 1	UHF	500.6625	203.5	P24,P27
East PD 2	UHF	501.0375	203.5	
				P22, P25, P30, P31, P32, P33, P34, P35, P36, P38, P42, P47, P48, P50, P51, P52, P54, P91
North PD	UHF	500.5125	203.5	
South PD 1	UHF	502.3875	192.8	P12, P13, P16, P17, P90
South PD 2	UHF	500.4125	192.8	

I have been trying to save up for a digital scanner but unfortunately other expenses come first in the life of "I want this and I want that".

Not much in line of changes in the area, The LTR system our community uses on Pimp Hill in Monroe County was hit a few times this summer by lighting the service provider did take care of the problem but nothing was really noticed until we ran out of back up battery which had be contact the provider. Luckily it's a cost to them and not on our end.

A friend of mine has Sprint as a provider for some reason the 3G coverage for a few months, after some digging we found out the one tower site went down and they went out to repair the problem. According to them a tech was not out at the site in a few months and they did not realize the tower was down. It's amazing what you can accomplish by making a few complaints.

Few frequency updates:

- 154.1750 CSQ Lehigh County Fire & EMS Alerting
- 158.2500 206.5 Lehigh County Fire North
- 159.0600 206.5 Lehigh County Fire South
- 155.8350 136.5 Lehigh County EMS A-5 Response
- 151.2200 CSQ Berks County Fire & EMS Alerting
- 033.9400 77.0 Berks County Fire F-1
- 154.3100 173.8 Berks County Fire Zone 4

- 155.2950 173.8 Berks County EMS Response
- 154.3400 Northampton County Fire & EMS
- 154.0550 186.2 Northampton County Fire & EMS - North
- 453.7500 CSQ Monroe County Fire & EMS Alerts
- 460.5750 DPL664 Monroe County Fire West

453.0750 DPL664 Monroe County Fire Central
460.6250 DPL664 Monroe County Fire East
155.2800 186.2 Monroe County EMS A-1
453.1000 CSQ Carbon County Fire & EMS Alerts
453.0250 136.5 Carbon Fire North
460.1750 127.3 Carbon Fire South
155.2050 156.7 Carbon EMS Response
154.0700 CSQ Schuylkill Co Fire & EMS Alerting
46.5000 123.0 Schuylkill Fire -South
155.1750 Schuylkill Co EMS

Keep monitoring and as always be safe and take care!
Steve

PHILADELPHIA METRO

Column Editor Wanted

The following was submitted for the new Chester County Radio System.

Chester County (PA) 800 MHz Trunked Radio System

867.0500. 867.9625. 858.2625. 852.8250. 853.60000.
867.8250. 868.6000.
851.0625. 851.1250. 851.2125. 851.3875. 851.6125.
851.7500. 851.8625.
852.3250. 853.1125. 853.2625. 866.0625. 866.1250.
866.2125. 866.3875.
866.6125. 866.7500. 866.8625. 867.3250. 868.1125.
868.2625. 855.4875.
855.7375. 855.9875. 867.5125. 868.0125. 867.0125.
867.5125. 866.5125.
866.0125. 852.5125. 853.0125. 852.0125. 851.5125.
851.0125. 852.01250.
859.2375. 860.2375. 854.3125. 854.4125. 856.2375.
858.2375. 854.2125.
867.0750. 867.1000. 867.5750. 852.4500. 852.9875.
867.4500. 867.9875.
860.4375. 860.4875.

CHESTER COUNTY MICROWAVE BAND .

10755.0000. 10835.0000. 10715.0000. 10795.0000.
11115.0000. 11185.0000. 10915.0000.
6256.54000. 6315.84000. 6286.19000. 10995.0000.
10875.0000. 10955.0000. 11075.0000.

CHESTER COUNTY CONVETIONAL VHF/UHF

160.1850. FIRE DISP
159.6000. EAST/CENTRAL FIRE -
159.7350. WEST FIRE
33.4200. FIRE TAC
33.8000. FIRE TAC
33.8600. FIRE TAC
33.8800. FIRE TAC
33.9000. FIRE TAC

463.0000. MED
463.0250. MED
463.0500. MED
463.0750. MED
463.1000. MED

463.1250. MED
463.1500. MED
463.1750. MED
467.9500. MED
467.9750. MED
468.0000. MED
468.0250. MED
468.0500. MED
468.0750. MED
468.1000. MED
468.1250. MED
468.1500. MED
468.1750. MED

Chester County (PA) 800 MHz Trunked Radio System

155.4750. NATPL PL-71.9
156.1500. P-TAC PL-71.9
156.2100. P-TAC PL-71.9
158.8500. P-TAC PL-71.9
158.9100. P-TAC PL-71.9
159.0300. P-TAC PL-71.9
33.1000. NAT EOC.
155.2200. C-TAC PL-71.9
500.8875. CHESCO FARM PL-186.2
72.6400. CHESCO TALK
72.2800. CHESCO TALK
500.4375. EOC-1 PL 71.9
460.5000. EOC-2 P25 DIGITAL W/ DARKSTAR
ENCRYPTION

SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY

Column Editor Wanted

The following has been submitted by Jerry Dubzak W2GLD.

As many of you may already know, Gloucester County has been moving all Police agencies over to new UHF narrowband FM frequencies. The updates have been posted to RadioReference.com; however, here is a list of these frequencies and their associated zone/agencies.

Zone 1	Zone 2
453.8125 (DPL 114) NFM	460.2125 (DPL 205) NFM
Zone 3	Zone 4
460.3375 (DPL 306) NFM	453.6375 (DPL 445) NFM
Zone 5	Zone 6
460.1625 (DPL 503) NFM	460.2625 (DPL 606) NFM
Zone 7	Washington Twp
460.0625 (DPL 703) NFM	453.1875 (DPL 265) NFM
Monroe Twp.	
453.3625 (DPL 155) NFM	

I hope this information clarifies some of the confusion out there. Happy monitoring!
Jerry - W2GLD

SCANNING & THE INTERNET

Brian Baldwin
c/o Scanner Digest
ScannerDigest@gmail.com

The following was submitted Alan Cohen, KB3QLE.

I have been monitoring public safety communications for over forty years now and I can remember the old days of tunable radios to accomplish this. A great improvement was the advent of crystal controlled radios that would obviously allow the scanner buff to select their monitoring preference. For 25 years, we've had the luxury of direct entry programming of specific frequencies right into our radios. Today, the standard operating procedure is to utilize software to "program" our radios for our monitoring pleasure. Scanners have come a long way.



A top-of-the-line scanner radio can run cost well over the \$400 mark. The hobby can still be costly. Many of us who live or work in larger metro areas are forced to purchase models that are full-featured due to the nature of the complex radio systems used by many cities and their adjoining suburban communities.



There are only a limited number of hobbyists that can still take advantage of a basic analog scanner in the \$100-175 price range. Bottom line is that it can be pretty expensive

to keep up on the latest radio scanner technology that's on the market today.



Some alternatives to owning the equipment outright is to use your computer and link to a site that has your favorite police or fire dispatch available as a "stream". That's right logging on directly to a site that is a source for audio streaming of your favorite agencies right from the comfort of your home. Internet connection is the back bone of such streaming content and those fortunate to subscribe to a high-speed internet via cable or fiber optic transmission line can enjoy "stream" monitor with minimal interruption.



RadioReference has one of the most comprehensive audio feed links providing thousands of feeds, all available for the enthusiasts. You can search throughout their site and listening to much more than police, fire and EMS comms. Here's a direct link to their LIVE AUDIO page.
<http://www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/>



Since I personally own a an Android-device and a iPhone it made much more of a logistic sense to search for apps that would enable me to monitor my favorite agency without the need for an expensive scanner radio or the infrastructure (antenna, coax, tower, mast, etc) required to monitor my favorite fire department.

The numbers are increasing at such a rate that the pressing question is, "Do you really need a scanner to monitor your local agency?" Well, not really!

I took the liberty to do a little research and found some information that supports the growing numbers of Smartphones now owned by Americans today.

One-third of all adults in the United States own smartphones, according to new research released Monday from the Pew Internet Project.

The Pew survey found that 33 percent of respondents with cell phones said they owned a smartphone, with 39 percent reporting their phone ran on an operating system such as Android, iOS or BlackBerry.

Android accounted for 35 percent of all smartphone owners, while iPhone and BlackBerry tied at 24 percent each. Another 4 percent of smartphone owners reported they owned a Windows phone, and 6 percent described their phone as a Palm device.

In terms of demographics, Android phones were more commonly used by young adults and African-Americans, while iPhones and BlackBerry devices are most prevalent among college graduates and affluent adults.

The survey also found a growing dependence on smartphones to as the main way of getting online. One-quarter of smartphone owners surveyed said they used their device as the primary means of accessing the Internet, despite having other means of online access at home. Of those who mostly used their smartphones to get online, roughly one-third lacked a high-speed broadband connection at home.

Smartphone ownership was found to skew heavily toward urban populations, with just 5 percent of rural cell phone owners reporting they owned an iPhone, compared to 10 percent of suburban smartphone owners and 12 percent of urban smartphone owners.

Based on the following information I've personally noticed a big increase in the use of apps to perform public safety monitoring. Many apps are available in both Android and iPhone format. The number of apps is growing rapidly. Many apps are free and some of the free apps offer a paid version too that includes some extra features.

ANDROID APPS



Scanner Radio
[Gordon Edwards](#)

Police Scanner Radio PRO
[BEROBO \(Police Scanner Radio\)](#)

Police Radio
[MoMojo](#)

Listen In (Lite)
[Tekno Logic Appz](#)

Police Scanner (FREE)
[Critical Hit Software](#)

TuneIn Radio
[TuneIn Inc](#)

iScanner
[Fusion Mobile Solutions, Inc](#)

Scanner Radio
[Intersect World LLC](#)

Police Scanner Radio & Fire
[Man In The Box](#)

Police Scanner
[Juicy Development LLC](#)

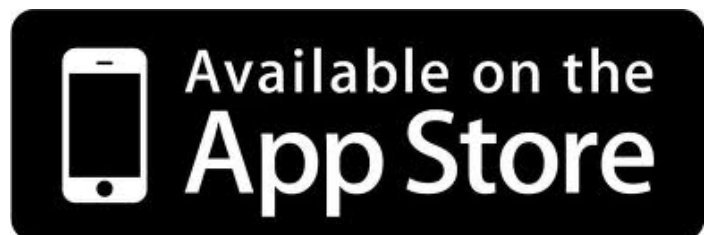
New York Police Scanner Radio
[Man In The Box](#)

Chicago Police Scanner Radio
[Man In The Box](#)

Houston Texas Police Scanner
[Man In The Box](#)

Philadelphia Police Scanner
[Man In The Box](#)

iPHONE APPS



[5-0 Radio Police Scanner \(Lite\)](#)

Police Radio Scanner - Police, Fire & EMS
[By Christopher Coudriet](#)

Scanner911: live Police, Fire, EMS radio
[By Fullscreen, LLC](#)

Emergency Radio (Police Scanner)
[By EdgeRift, Inc.](#)

**MontCo Emergency &
Lancaster Co. Emergency Radio**
[By Brian Adams](#)

Fire Radio Scanner
[By Christopher Coudriet](#)

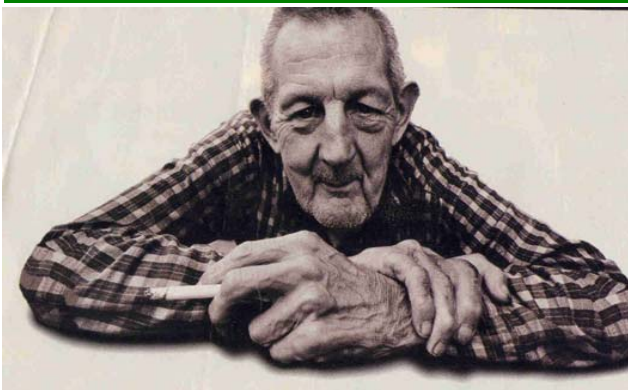
This is just a very small sample as to what's available to hear on both the Android Market and through the iTunes Store. Hundreds of new apps are being added every month.

This provides the avid scanner listener an unique opportunity to "listen in" to their favorite agency. Keep in mind this is not limited to the public safety agencies as feeds are being set up for amateur radio, aircraft, marine, weather radio, etc., too!

A new "niche" of the hobby has been born. Obviously I'm only scratching the surface here. A new frontier is begging to be explored. Enjoy!

Alan Cohen, KB3QLE

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ScannerDigest Newsletter

Welcome to the Scanner Digest Newsletter! We're currently publishing quarterly e-magazine containing information for the scanner hobbyist. If it can be monitored on a scanner, we'll attempt to cover it from 30 to 1300 MHz and beyond!

Our purpose is to produce a newsletter to facilitate the exchange of information pertaining to the various services covered by a typical scanner radio. Dedicated regional column editors make up the heart of this publication.

The Scanner Digest Newsletter is not responsible for the accuracy or consequences incurred regarding the use of information listed in this publication. Since the purpose of this newsletter is to provide a platform for the submission and exchange of radio communication information, it thus becomes impossible to deem all contents as accurate. The very nature of radio licensing and usage makes it difficult to verify the accuracy of the information contained within. Generally information listed within the pages of the newsletter are derived from multiply sources including current FCC files, hobbyists and those directly involved with various public safety agencies.

Scanner Digest's policy has been not to limit or edit the individual columns submitted, unless we deem the information sensitive in nature which may jeopardize the safety of the parties involved.

*Only in this case will we edit out this type of input.
(Example: We will not publish the frequencies used by a law enforcement surveillance team.)*

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