

# San Mateo County Fire Service POLICIES AND STANDARDS MANUAL

Title: Frequency Assignment & Usage

Policy No. 1998-05

Adopted 12/28/00

Revised 02/05/07

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard procedure for the use of radio frequencies.

**Policy:** It is the policy of the San Mateo County Fire Chiefs that all fire companies follow the procedures for radio frequency usage outlined in this policy.

**Background:**

**Procedures:**

San Mateo County has numerous channels available for both operations and tactical assignments. These channels including their definitions, uses, zones and areas are defined below.

Control 1a	primary	repeated	South zone	Bayside
Control 1b	primary	repeated	South zone	Half Moon Bay
Control 1c	primary	repeated	South zone	Point Montara
Control 1d	primary	repeated	South zone	La Honda
Control 1e	primary	repeated	South zone	Pigeon Point
Control 2	secondary	repeated	South Zone	Bayside
Control 3	secondary	repeated	South Zone	Central Coast
	tactical	repeated	South Zone	Central Coast
Control 5	tactical	simplex	South Zone	Bayside
Control 12	primary	repeated	Central Zone	
Control 13	secondary	simplex	Central Zone	
Control 14	tactical	simplex	Central Zone	
Control 21	primary	repeated	North Zone	
Control 22	secondary	repeated	North Zone	Bayside
Control 23	tactical	simplex	North Zone	Bayside
Control 24	secondary	simplex	North Zone	Pacifica
	tactical	simplex	North Zone	Pacifica
White 1	command	simplex	Statewide	Multi-Agency only
	tactical	simplex	Statewide	Multi-Agency only
		base, mobile and portable use.		
White 2	tactical	simplex	Statewide	Multi-Agency only
		Restricted to mobile and portable use		

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White 3	tactical	simplex	Statewide	Multi-Agency only
		mobile and portable use only		
Control 31	data	simplex	Countywide	
Control 32	tactical	simplex	Nationwide	Multi-Agency only
		Restricted to mobile and portable use		

## **Channel Usage:**

### Primary Channels

Used for assigning and tracking apparatus and communicating with IC's

### Secondary Channels

Used for multi-apparatus responses other than full assignments, special/extended incidents and administrative radio traffic.

### Tactical Channels

Used for full assignments and above (Battalion Chief included). PSC's reception coverage is limited due to the restriction of mobile/portable use only.

### Channel Assignments

The most appropriate Secondary or Tactical channel is automatically assigned upon dispatch. Wildland assignments utilize White 2 or 3 to facilitate potential communications with non-San Mateo County apparatus.

The Incident Commander should consider requesting additional Tactical Channels as the scale of event increases. The IC should ensure that sufficient command personnel are present, and that each Section Chief, Division Leader and/or Group Supervisor has an adequate supply of radios to support a change to the communications plan.

### Verbiage

Clear text shall be used when operating on Fire Channels. Allowable exceptions are:

10-4, Code 2, Code 3, Priority 1, Priority 3

Field units calling Public Safety Communications will state the channel they are on followed by their identifier. Example:

"Control 1, Engine 7"

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OR

"Control 21, Engine 95"

Field units are operating on White 1 or other shared channels will refer to Public Safety Communications as "San Mateo County Fire Control", or "San Mateo County" then state the channel they are on. Example:

"San Mateo County Fire Control, Engine 2 on White 1"

OR

"San Mateo County, Engine 13 on White 1"

Personnel requiring contact with a specific person in a Company shall call the assignment that the individual occupies. Example:

"Operator 23, Engine 23"

OR

"Rider 23, Operator 23"

Valid call signs include:

Engine	(for Captain)
Operator	(for Operator / Engineer)
Rider	(jump seat rider)
Tiller	(tiller operator)

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PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT OR APPARATUS TYPE	ON AIR IDENTIFIER	CAD IDENTIFIER (San Bruno as the example)
Battalion Chief / Duty	Battalion	BC16
Battalion Chief / EMS	Med	MED16
Battalion Chief / Extra staffing (not recommendable)	Battalion	BC16A BC16B BC16C
Battalion Chief / Extra staffing (recommendable)	Battalion	BC116
Battalion Chief / Special Ops	Special Ops	SO16
Beach Rescue	Beach Rescue	BR16
Breathing Support	Breathing Support	BS16
Chief	Chief	CH16
Chief / Assistant or Deputy	Chief	CH16A
Communications / IDT	Comm	COM16
Hazmat	Hazmat	HM16
Mechanic	Repair	REP16
Fire Marshal	Prevention	PR16
Deputy Fire Marshal Assistant Fire Marshal Fire Inspectors	Prevention	PR16A PR16B PR16C PR16D
Quint	Quint	Q16
Rescue	Rescue	R16
Training	Training	TO16
Truck	Truck	T16
Type 1 Engine	Engine	E16
Type 3 Engine	Engine	E316
Type 4 Engine	Patrol	P16

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Utility	Utility	U16
Water Tender	Water Tender	WT16