

11/22/2016 via email

Good Evening,

We'll be back on the phone tomorrow morning (usual 0900 Wed call times, like before DaneCom cutover) with stakeholders to make sure we're communicating and delivering results on priorities.

Here's what we think they are (and where we're at) right now:

- Paging
 - Audio levels for both voice and tones were updated this morning for the main fire/EMS console, with the three backups getting updated late this afternoon.
 - Some site/timing adjustments were made in the past couple days that could help the coverage.
- P25 Volume
 - As of this afternoon, our consoles doing/backing up dispatching (DA LAW 1 and fire/EMS) – are updated to new settings to make the dispatcher quieter.
- 800 MHz / City of Madison Interop
 - We have the ability to patch Madison traffic into DaneCom, and hope to soon also be able to bring DaneCom traffic into Madison.
 - We've heard some audio drop-outs with the former and are working to correct them.
- DANETAC
 - This "analog tactical" system mimics our legacy, conventional repeaters such as C-Charlie, and because it's narrow-banded has multiple transmitters in an attempt to have better "talk-out" coverage than C-Charlie did from its single, central location. The background electronics steer the transmit to the centrally-located tower (Mineral Point & Pleasant View Rds) if the dispatcher is initiating a call, or through whichever tower site recently (30 seconds) heard someone calling.
 - Using mobiles and portables, or persons talking from locations away from an incident scene can cause the steering to select a transmitter further from the incident, hurting coverage into the incident. As with other conventional repeaters, simplex or "talkaround" should be used to assure unit-to-unit communications at the incident scene, allowing an IC to communicate with dispatch via the repeater and still hear the on-scene traffic.
 - The P25 trunking system will in many locations work better than the tac channels, but each of these tools has its own trade-offs.
 - We certainly want to hear of any cases where this or any other subsystem might need checking to make sure there's no technical issue.

A special note for our EMS partners, inside and even more so outside Dane County: Madison and Sun Prairie hospitals can be called directly on DaneCom (VA is temporarily unable to receive these calls, but it's a relatively simple procurement issue that we hope is resolved soon). Agencies without DaneCom trunking capability are urged to consider a phone call to the ER, but we can still be reached on 155.340 MHz (CTCSS 167.9 Hz) which today is more generically known as "EMS-B" or formerly as "State EMS" and from there make a patch.

Here are some dos and don'ts related to VCALL10 (VHF calling Channel 10; 155.7525 MHz, CTCSS 156.7 Hz)

- Please do use VCALL10:

- If you're out of range of DaneCom trunking and can't try a better location or if the system would appear to be completely down (you can still communicate via trunking in "site trunking" or "failsoft").
- If you're inside or outside Dane County (up to nationwide) and must use a VHF radio to reach any listening public safety authorities.
- Long enough to hail and connect with someone you know is on VHF but don't know how else to find them – and then agree on a channel to move to for any conversation.
- To answer a unit calling for assistance if you're not hearing a dispatcher answer – you and the caller may be situated in such a way that only you can hear and relay an important call.
- Please don't use VCALL 10:
 - As the first option to report inside Dane County a traffic crash or other situation in place of dialing 9-1-1 or if out of cell phone range, calling on a cold call channel like DA LAW 1 or DA ADAM (again, these are much less preferred than a cell phone call).
 - When trying to make a hospital report, unless having exhausted all the options in the previous paragraph.
 - As a car to car or other chat channel.
 - As a response channel – if a conventional channel is indicated, our dispatchers should be assigning one (directly on a page or through another county if that's how we alert you) other than VCALL10.

The general idea is that the closer we're all listening, the better we can respond to someone calling. So once contact is established, follow-on traffic should be moved elsewhere as soon as safely possible.

Field reports have been very helpful from detecting, to troubleshooting and making sure the fixes are good – so please don't hesitate to keep letting us know (danecom@countyofdane.com for routine issues or 608-283-1444 for things we need to know about quickly). We'd rather have a report than someone assuming we already know about a problem.

Thank you for a very good two weeks and many more to come. We want to continuously improve and appreciate everyone's work toward that.

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