

Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response (ARMER) Standards, Protocols, Procedures

Document Section 1	Management of System	Status: Complete
State Standard Number	1.11.4	
Standard Title	Training ARMER End Users	
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1. Purpose or Objective

The purpose of this standard is to establish initial training requirements for anyone using the ARMER system or any type of radio equipment that allows for ARMER interoperable communications (i.e., control stations.) This standard will also establish the requirements for continued refresher training for ARMER System Users, which will provide for the most effective, efficient, safe and reliable shared statewide public safety communications system.

2. Technical Background

- Capabilities
- Constraints

3. Operational Context

System functionality and integrity will be realized only by ensuring that trained, competent personnel operate all the end user components that make up the ARMER System.

4. Recommended Protocol/ Standard

Each agency operating on the ARMER System in any capacity is responsible to train their personnel and remain compliant with State, Regional, and Local Operating Standards.

To meet this objective, each agency is highly encouraged to develop a training curriculum that is tailored to the “participation level” of the agency, as defined in State Standard 1.10.0, Requesting Participation and Participation Plan Changes.

For the purpose of this standard, there will be four tiers of users responsible for specific training listed in this section.

1. Daily, primary user of the ARMER system
2. Occasional user (interoperability)
3. Just-in-time user (rare event)
4. Emergency room departments with radios programmed with two or less talkgroups

NOTE: A failure to properly train in advance does not put an agency into the Just-in-time user category.

The Incident Commander or his/her designee will be responsible for providing “just-in-time” training appropriate for the role of each user. Just-in-time training would be conducted at the scene of an incident or event; i.e., distributing radios to a volunteer or non-ARMER user, and is not considered acceptable training for any other user level.

It is highly recommended that training for each tier is discipline and role specific, providing for initial, new employee, and refresher/on-going training.

It is also highly recommended that each agency require new employees to complete the four courses listed below during their initial training.

If an organization creates their own training program, the modules listed below are encouraged but not required, as long as the curriculum contains their content.

- Radio 101
- History of ARMER
- Interoperability 101
- Interoperability - How to Communicate Outside of Your Agency

These courses, created on behalf of the Statewide Emergency Communications Board (SECB) and reviewed and approved by subject matter experts, are hosted through the Alexandria Technical & Community College online website. They can be accessed from the Emergency Communication Networks (ECN) website under ARMER Standards.

A user name and password will be needed for these training modules, and instructions for obtaining these are posted on ECN’s website under ARMER Standards. While web-based training is supplemental, except for the Minimum Training requirements, all users must attend formal training for the ARMER system.

The following topics will be the minimum required training competencies for ARMER users who are daily or occasional users in the state of Minnesota, if applicable. The level of detail of each topic should be tailored to the audience. (NOTE: Just-in-time users only need to be trained on topics applicable to their duties and use duration. Emergency Department users only need to be trained on topics applicable to use of their one or two-talkgroup radios.)

Radio literacy:

1. Antenna
2. Battery and maintenance
3. Accessories (used by agency)
4. Digital radio/digital feedback
5. Simplex/Duplex audio
6. Radio affiliation
7. Radio ID

Radio operation:

1. Reading the display
 - a) Signal Strength
 - b) Out of range indicator
2. Navigating the radio
 - a) Channels
 - b) Zones
 - c) Button/switch configuration
3. Push-to-talk
 - a) Group Call/announcement
 - b) Private Call
 - c) Talk permit
 - d) Site busy
 - e) Talkgroup priority
 - f) Talkgroup busy
4. Encryption
5. Emergency Button
6. Dynamic regroup
7. Scanning
 - a) How to scan
 - b) System limitations
 - c) Scan program
 - d) Scanning SOA's
 - e) Impact of scanning statewide/regional interop talkgroups versus selecting talkgroups
 - f) Scanning multiple bands

Procedure and Policy:

1. Fleetmap/Talkgroups
2. Interoperability talkgroups/resources
 - a) Local/county/regional/state/national
 - b) How and when to use
3. Management of talkgroups
 - a) Talkgroup priority levels
 - b) Dispatcher's role in selection of talkgroups
 - c) Dispatcher's role in directing responders to talkgroups
4. Site trunking
 - a) How it impacts the user
 - b) What the user should do
5. Scene of Action/other conventional channels
 - a) What they are
 - b) How to use them
 - c) When to use them

6. Failsoft
 - a) What it is
 - b) Local procedures
7. NIMS ICS Training
 - a) Discipline-specific required training
8. Using ARMER radios when “not on system”
 - a) SOAs in state of MN
 - b) 8TAC/8CALL in MN or other states

Each agency is responsible to communicate policy changes as they occur to their radio end users.

Each agency shall be responsible for maintaining adequate records documenting compliance with the provisions of this standard. These records will include the following information:

- a) End user roster
- b) Training syllabus
- c) Online certification - optional

It is highly recommended that agencies keep accurate and complete records, which will be produced at the request of the local system administrator within a reasonable amount of time.

Refresher Training

Each agency is required to provide refresher training for their end users. This training shall take place every two years, at a minimum, or any time there is a significant change to procedure or equipment being used. Refresher training shall ensure competency of all skills taught in initial training and should specifically include skills that are infrequently used, such as changing zones.

5. Recommended Procedure

It is highly recommended that agencies follow the guidelines established in the discipline specific Best Practice Guides when developing their ARMER training curriculums or assessing training outlines submitted by contracted training vendors. Best Practice Guides can be found under the ARMER section on the ECN website.

6. Management

Each agency authorized to operate on the ARMER system at any tier listed above is responsible for the training of their personnel and remaining compliant to State, Regional, and local technical and operational standards.

Local system administrators or their direct employing authority shall bring reports of non-compliance to their Emergency Communications Board (ECB), or Emergency Services Board (ESB) if they are unable to resolve the issue at the agency level.

If the non-compliant issue is not able to be resolved at the regional level, it shall be brought before the Statewide Emergency Communications Board (SECB) Operations and Technical (OTC) Committee.