

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

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Procedure Title:	<b>Criteria for the Installation of Base Stations and General Operations on MINSEF</b>	
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### **1. Purpose or Objective:**

The intent of these rules is to establish an orderly, workable radio network for the common use by all law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Minnesota. All regulations, operations, and procedures of the Minnesota Statewide Radio Board (SRB) and the operation of this emergency communications system are subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Public Safety for the state of Minnesota.

### **2. Technical Background:**

#### **▪ Capabilities**

A base station transmitter and receiver network made up of Minnesota State Patrol, County Sheriff, and municipal police agencies will provide field mobile, and to some extent, portable unit access to statewide fixed station dispatching assistance and information. These fixed stations shall be approved using the following criteria, which relate to the specific needs of field radio units:

- **24 Hour Dispatching:** Applicant that desires a base station on MINSEF must have 24 hour dispatching in a bona fide public safety dispatching facility. These dispatch points must monitor MINSEF at all times. The monitor must have a reception range comparable to that of the agency's own mobile to base receiver.
- **Training:** The applicant department must train dispatchers and other users of MINSEF to be fully knowledgeable about the MINSEF operating policies and procedures contained in this or any other relevant documents.
- **Terminal and Recording Equipment:** The applicant department must automatically create audio recordings of all MINSEF traffic in which they participate and must retain that recording for a minimum of 30 days. Such recordings must be made available to the Minnesota Statewide Radio Board and/or the Commissioner of Public Safety or his/her designee for the purposes of monitoring, investigating, or enforcing these policies and procedures.

- Rules: The applicant department must agree to abide by the established rules governing MINSEF.

**Message Categories:** Four Categories of message types are authorized on MINSEF. In order of priority, they are:

- MINSEF Emergency Messages: Used to provide communications in situations where life and/or property are in jeopardy.
- MINSEF Itinerant Messages: Used to provide communications for units, which are out of the range of their home radio system.
- MINSEF Test: Used when testing equipment operating on MINSEF.
- MINSEF Exercise/Drill: Using procedures established by the Minnesota SRB and/or the Commissioner of Public Safety, MINSEF may be used for communications during drills or exercises where the communications function is also being exercised. Before the start of such drill or exercise, the coordinating agency must:
  - Contact the Radio Communications Supervisor (RCS) of the State Patrol District in which the exercise is taking place. The RCS will act as "clearing house" for exercise use.
  - Send a CJIS message to the CJIS lettered region(s) within a 100-mile radius of the site of the drill or exercise advising of the forthcoming use of MINSEF for such purpose. MINSEF will be immediately surrendered if needed for actual need of a higher priority.

#### ▪ **Constraints**

The APCO Frequency Coordinator shall use the following technical limitations and requirements as a guide to his or her actions relating to authorization requests and license applications:

- All applicable FCC rules and regulations
- Power, antenna gain, antenna height and directional characteristics will be considered by the APCO Frequency Coordinator so that signal is minimized beyond jurisdictional boundaries.
- Any control tones used to tone control base station shall be inaudible.
- Base stations shall have an automatic time-out timer.
- Base stations shall not be equipped with an automatic plain voice or CWID station identifier.

- No radios of any type operating on MINSEF shall be CTCSS tone protected on receive; there are not “PL or “CG” tones on MINSEF.
- Agencies who operate a MINSEF base station shall make there best effort to minimize harmful interference with distant MINSEF base or field units.

### **3. Operational Context:**

- **Authority:** MINSEF is operated on a federally assigned radio frequency in the FCC's police service which is designated as *State Police Use Only*. It is operated with the provision that a state police agency may sub authorize usage on this frequency to any other law enforcement agency in that state pursuant to rules developed by that State Police Agency. These rules enact procedures for sub-granting that authority from Minnesota's only State Police Agency through the Minnesota SRB and the office of the Commissioner of Public Safety for Minnesota.
- **Eligibility:** Any public safety dispatching facility appropriately designated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety to be a PRIMARY 9-1-1 PSAP under Minnesota State Statutes (Chapter 403 and the Minnesota Code of Administrative Regulations (MCAR) shall be eligible to apply to the Minnesota SRB and the Commissioner of Public Safety for permission to apply for and acquire a license from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to operate a base station transmitter on the National Law Enforcement Emergency Channel (NLEEC) (155.475 MHz), known in Minnesota as M1NSEF or VLAW31. Bona fide Minnesota law enforcement agencies using two-way police mobile and portable radios operated by authorized personnel of that agency are eligible, without additional State permission being required, to operate those radios in a manner consistent with MINSEF and FCC guidelines and regulations.
- **Other Public Safety Agencies As Defined In M.S.S. 403.02 Desiring MINSEF:** Other Public Safety Agencies as defined in M.S.S. 403.02 shall be eligible to use MINSEF as specified in M.S.S. 299C.37 Subd 3.
- **Other Applications:** The Statewide Radio Board will consider properly submitted authorization requests which do not meet the requirements listed above on a case by case basis and make the appropriate recommendations to the Commissioner regarding what action he or she should take in those matters. NO OTHER MINSEF LICENSED AGENCY MAY GRANT OR SUB GRANT PERMISSION TO OTHER AGENCIES OR UNITS TO OPERATE ON MINSEF

### **5. Recommended Procedure:**

Before transmitting on MINSEF, any users must monitor (listen to) the channel first to ensure that their radio traffic will not be covering or interfering with that of another user.

When requesting emergency assistance on MINSEF the following information and protocol requirements MUST BE FOLLOWED and included in the initial transmission until contact is established:

1. The term **MINSEF EMERGENCY**
2. The user agency name and complete radio call number
3. The nature of the emergency situation.
4. The location of the unit requesting assistance and the direction of travel, if applicable. Example: "MINSEF Emergency, Aitkin County 321 is in pursuit of a robbery suspect southbound on Highway 65 sought from McGregor."

A secondary use of MINSEF is to provide communications for itinerant units. The term "MINSEF Itinerant" should be used when using MINSEF for this purpose. (Example: "MINSEF Itinerant, Fergus Falls PD Car 2202 to Ramsey County Dispatch for Information.")

The third type of message is used to test equipment. The term "MINSEF Test" should be used when using MINSEF for this purpose. (Example: "MINSEF Test, State Patrol radio service to Golden Valley State Patrol, how do you copy?")

The fourth type of message traffic is used to test and exercise communications equipment and procedures during a drill or exercise. Since MINSEF would likely be used in a real emergency, it is logical to have access to it when a drill or exercise is being conducted. The requirements of MINSEF use in these situations are as follows:

- The primary agency that is coordinating the drill or exercise must request permission in advance. Permission must be requested using the procedure established by the Minnesota Statewide Radio Board and/or the Commissioner of Public Safety.
- The requesting agency must then notify surrounding agencies that might monitor the upcoming drill related MINSEF radio traffic by sending a CJIS switch message to the appropriate CJIS lettered regions (A through F) within a 100 miles radius of the drill or exercise site.
- The controlling base station for the drill or exercise must at regular intervals, broadcast on MINSEF, "THIS IS A MINSEF DRILL" to prevent those who might happen to monitor the drill related traffic from reacting to the traffic as if it were an actual emergency event.
- All MINSEF procedures will apply and be complied with during this type of usage.

- All users during a drill must agree, and the controlling base station must ensure that MINSEF usage will be relinquished or suspended in favor of any usage of a higher priority that requires MINSEF access.
- **Type Of "TALK" On MINSEF:** To avoid confusion, PLAIN LANGUAGE MUST ALWAYS BE USED ON MINSEF, with the exception of the universally recognized "10-4" code for acknowledgement of message receipt.
- **Application Procedure:** Application forms for the authorization to apply for an FCC License for MINSEF shall be prepared by the agency seeking said authorization and be directed to:

Minnesota Commissioner of Public Safety  
445 Minnesota Street, Suite 1000  
St. Paul, MN 55101

To expedite processing of these authorization requests, a copy of the request shall also be sent to:

APCO Frequency Coordinator  
c/o MnDOT Electronic Communications  
Waters Edge  
1500 County Road B2  
Roseville, MN 55113

Submitted authorization requests will be referred by the Commissioner to the Statewide Radio Board who will then make recommendations and provide professional advice to the Commissioner regarding his or her decision in the matter of the request.

## **6. Management:**

Violations of the established rules for the operation and usage of MINSEF shall be reported to the Statewide Radio Board by the agency that monitors such violations. Repeated infractions will be reviewed by the Statewide Radio Board for the purpose of making recommendations to the Commissioner of Public Safety for action. Warning letters will be sent by the chair of the Statewide Radio Board to agencies who have allegedly violated these rules. Said letters will require a reply from the alleged violator agency to the Chair of the Statewide Radio Board within 10 days of receipt. The letter must include:

1. a detailed explanation of circumstances surrounding the alleged violation
2. what, if any, actions will be taken to prevent reoccurrence of the alleged violation.

If an agency repeatedly violates these rules, the Statewide Radio Board shall recommend that the Commissioner cancel their Commissioner's Authorization to operate a MINSEF base station and notify the FCC of this cancellation of authorization

**Termination of Authority:** Any agency desiring to withdraw from participation in the MINSEF network via either base station or mobile/portable access shall notify the Statewide Radio Board of such withdrawal. The Chair of the Statewide Radio Board will make appropriate notification to the rest of the Network.

**Command and Control:** Compliance with the rules for the operation of MINSEF shall be the responsibility of the local MINSEF dispatcher having jurisdiction where the situation is taking place.

SUNSET 1-1-2013 REFER TO STANDARD 3.16.4