



FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION OF BROWARD COUNTY

Mutual Aid & Communications Committee

Uniform CERT Radio Communications Policy DRAFT

Purpose:

The purpose is to improve overall communications and provide interoperability between CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) teams throughout Broward County, Florida.

Overview:

The rapid growth of CERT teams in Broward County and the numerous activities that they have participated in outside of emergency situations has shown that there is a need for common communications between the teams. The likelihood of one team assisting another during training and special events is commonplace.

Therefore, the following procedures have been established to unify CERT teams in Broward County with common communications.

Procedures:

- The Fire Chief's Association of Broward County (FCABC) shall maintain licensure of dedicated UHF frequencies for use by area CERTs.
- The CERT Committee Chair shall be responsible for maintaining control of FCABC's CERT frequencies.
- All FCABC frequencies are for itinerant use and not meant for permanent daily operations.
- Any participating CERT organization shall be responsible for purchasing, programming and maintaining any radio equipment programmed with FCABC CERT frequencies.
- All FCABC CERT channels are for temporary use and on a first-come, first-served basis.
- FCABC CERT frequencies shall be used exclusively for CERT operations and are not to be used for any other purpose.

- All radio communications on the CERT system shall consist of common English language.
- Channel one shall be the common call channel for Broward CERT communications. Any CERT member may use channel one to call another member and then switch to a separate channel to communicate.
- Any member initiating communication on channel one shall preface the transmission with their city of affiliation.
- Unit, and/or member identifiers shall be left up to each organization. However, slang or “handles” similar to Citizen Band jargon shall not be used.
- Channels 1-6 are non-repeated, tactical channels for mobile to mobile use. Channels 7-10 are repeated channels for events that require greater coverage and range.
- Any CERT team using channels 7-10 are responsible for providing their own portable repeater with no more than 35 watts of power.
- If a tactical channel is needed for an event, a CERT member shall first switch to channel two and check to see if it is in use. For instance, “Margate CERT on channel two checking for availability”. There should be several attempts to make contact before using the channel. If there is someone using the channel, switch to channel three and repeat procedure up to channel 6 until a clear channel is located.
- If a repeated channel is needed for an event, start previous procedure on channel 7.
- If all channels are busy, a CERT member shall monitor channel one until a clear channel becomes available.
- When a channel is no longer needed, a CERT member should announce on channel one that the channel they were using is clear in case there is someone waiting for an available channel.