This Guide contains information on the use of Airwave for Interoperable Voice Communications, both Police to Police and Police with other Category 1 and 2 Responder Agencies plus the Military.

It is not protectively marked under the Government Protective Marking Scheme.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE GUIDE ON POLICE TO POLICE AND INTER-AGENCY AIRWAVE INTEROPERABILITY

This document has been produced by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). It will be updated according to legislative and policy changes and re-released as required.

The NPIA was established by the Police and Justice Act 2006. As part of its remit the NPIA is required to develop policing doctrine, including practice advice, in consultation with ACPO, the Home Office and the Police Service. Briefing Papers produced by the NPIA should be used by chief officers to shape police responses to ensure that the general public experience consistent levels of service. The implementation of all briefing papers will require operational choices to be made at local level in order to achieve the appropriate police response.

All other enquiries about this publication should also be addressed to the NPIA-led Multi-Agency Interoperability Programme:

Telephone: interoperability@npia.pnn.police.uk
Email: interoperability@npia.pnn.police.uk
Website: www.npia.police.uk/interoperability

Acknowledgements - ACPO and the NPIA would like to express their thanks to all those involved in the drafting of this document and to those who gave their advice. All of the responses during the consultation phase of this project were appreciated and contributed to the final document. In particular we would like to acknowledge the significant contributions made by Trevor Winterbottom and Geoff Lowe (NPIA airwave interoperability and fleetmapping managers) and Clive Campion (Civil Nuclear Constabulary).

© Association of Chief Police Officers 2010
© National Policing Improvement Agency 2010

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, modified, amended, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the National Policing Improvement Agency and the Association of Chief Police Officers or their duly authorised representative.

For copyright specific enquiries, please telephone the National Police Library on 01256 602650.
CONTENTS

FOREWORD ........................................................................................................................................ 3

INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................ 6

SECTION
1 General Principles of Airwave Interoperability ................................................................. 9
2 General Principles of Command Interoperability ............................................................. 15
3 Police Hailing Talkgroup ........................................................................................................ 18
4 Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroups ....................................................................................... 22
5 Air-to-Ground Talkgroup ......................................................................................................... 27
6 Police Interoperability Talkgroup 1 ...................................................................................... 31
7 Police Interoperability Talkgroups 2 and 3 ........................................................................ 35
8 Police Interoperability Talkgroup 4 ...................................................................................... 40
9 National Firearms Talkgroup .................................................................................................. 44
10 National Protection Talkgroup .............................................................................................. 49
11 Metropolitan Police National Protection Talkgroups ......................................................... 53
12 Multi-Agency Silver Incident Command Talkgroup .......................................................... 57
13 Emergency Services’ Multi Agency Bronze to Bronze Talkgroups ............................... 62
14 Government and Law Enforcement Talkgroup ................................................................... 68
15 Immigration Service Talkgroup ............................................................................................ 72
16 Police Force “Event” Talkgroups .......................................................................................... 76
17 National Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups: PMA 1–30 .......................................................... 80
18 Unmonitored National Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups: PMA 31–60 ................................. 85
19 National Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups for London: PMA 61–70 ..................................... 90
20 National Police Only Mutual Aid Talkgroups: PMA 71–75 ................................................. 94
21 National Police Only Mutual Aid Talkgroups: PMA 76–80 .......... 98
22 Police Interoperability Mutual Aid Talkgroups: PMA 81–90 ...... 102
23 Police Mutual Aid Travelling Talkgroup: PMA 91 .................. 107
24 Inter-Agency Talkgroup .................................................. 111
25 Multi-Agency Mutual Aid Talkgroups ................................. 116
26 Highways Agency Hailing Talkgroups ................................. 120
27 Highways Agency Incident Talkgroups ................................. 124
28 Interoperability with National Police Forces ......................... 128
29 Direct Mode Operation (DMO) .......................................... 133
30 Interim Bronze Interoperability Solution (IBIS) ...................... 139
31 Interoperability between Covert and Overt Users ................. 142
32 Emergency Button Activation on Interoperability Talkgroups .... 146
33 Interoperability in the London Underground ....................... 148
34 Tactical Options for Invoking Police to Inter-Agency Interoperable Voice Communication .................................................. 150
35 Interoperable Voice Communication Options ...................... 154
36 Content for Standard Operating Procedures, Plans and Training material ................................................................. 164

Appendix A GLOSSARY OF TERMS ........................................ 167
Appendix B LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ........ 174
Appendix C BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................. 177
FOREWORD

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Guide is designed to help the Police Service optimise its use of the full range of functionality available on Airwave to achieve Interoperable Voice Communication. The latter term is used to describe the capability provided by Airwave that enables people, when authorised, to exchange information on a common radio network regardless of either organisational or system boundaries.

The content of this SOP Guide has been researched widely and is presented as national good practice. For clarity, where a provision is deemed essential to successful interoperability, the word "must" is used to emphasise that a common standard is required.

It is strongly recommended that each police force adopts and implements this SOP Guide and uses it to compare with and improve any pre-existing local policies and practices on the use of Airwave. In doing so, the reviewer should consider whether, under independent scrutiny, current arrangements would give the same level of effective Interoperable Voice Communication as provided for in this SOP Guide. Where necessary, sections from the NPIA document can be used to help revise the force SOP and training material.

i To assist with interpretation and reduce additional text, the term "Responder Agency" is used throughout the document as the generic, collective name for the emergency and public safety services plus all the other organisations that make up the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 Category 1 and 2 Responder Agencies. In addition, albeit not included in them, the Military are implicitly within this group when providing aid to the Civil Authority or Civil Power. Other generic terms are explained in the Glossary of Terms (see Appendix A).

ii In addition, the following terms should be interpreted to mean:

"Control Centre": any facilities around which communications are focused, and so is a generic reference to Control Rooms and Communication Centres.

"User": anyone using a handheld or vehicle mounted Airwave terminal to communicate.

"Operator": an individual working in a control centre, aircraft, or mobile command unit using Airwave to communicate with users.
iii This SOP Guide recognises and respects the well-established policies, protocols, practices and procedures in each police force and emergency service on their individual use of Airwave. It complements these by providing guidance on how to use the functionality provided by Airwave to realise the full benefits of the communications capabilities provided. In particular, to use Airwave collaboratively for both Police to Police and Police to other Agency communications as a means to improve the exercise of command, control and coordination. Airwave should also be viewed as an essential decision support tool that enables the immediate sharing of information over a common radio network that is now available to over 600 Agencies nationally. This SOP Guide does not affect established doctrine on command and control; only the methods by which it can be communicated by radio. That point is also made clear in the NPIA (2009) Guidance on Multi-Agency Interoperability: www.npia.police.uk/en/13291.htm


v The purpose of Interoperable Voice Communication (over and above that of more regular radio communication between users) is to facilitate the flow of decision critical information between police forces, discrete parts of the same force and with other Agencies when it adds value for any of the following purposes:

- Minimising risk or harm;
- Increasing safety;
- Alerting people rapidly to an immediate hazard;
- Supporting decision making either at an individual level or as a collective group;
- Contributing to a common understanding and awareness of the situation;
- Improving coordination.

vi The operational requirement for this capability has already been made and is now enabled through the functionality provided by Airwave specifically for these purposes. It is critical to success that the talkgroups which provide Interoperable Voice Communication are configured correctly in accordance with the minimum technical standards agreed by ACPO for the configuration of terminals, Communications Control Interface (CCI) ports and control centres. Equally critical is for users and operators to be trained and exercised in their use.

vii This SOP Guide provides the basis for that training. To help build confidence in the use of Airwave for police to police and inter-agency communication, familiarity in all the available functionality
is essential. It is also important that the procedures used should be the same, just scalable, regardless of whether responding to a local emergency, cross-border pursuit or providing mutual aid.
Section 1
INTRODUCTION

This Standard Operating Practice (SOP) Guide describes the full range of functionality provided by Airwave for achieving Interoperable Voice Communication between police forces, discrete parts of the same force and with other Category 1 and 2 Responder Agencies. It provides police forces with a single guide from which to complement, update or create their own Standard Operating Procedures for control centre operators, users, commanders and planners. The objective is to ensure consistency in the use of Airwave nationally. The document should also be used as a basis for delivering improvements to current training to ensure optimal use of Airwave is demonstrated in operational practices and procedures.

This SOP Guide sets the national framework for achieving Interoperable Voice Communication and details what talkgroups are available for this purpose along with other functions, such as telephony, point-to-point, and Direct Mode Operation. This complements the minimum technical standards agreed by ACPO for the configuration of terminals, Communications Control Interface (CCI) ports and control centres.

It will be a matter for each force to consider what information needs to be included in their SOP and training material, and guidance on this is given in section 36. Nevertheless, to realise fully the operational benefits of Interoperable Voice Communication, forces must work towards promoting the use of Airwave for this purpose as business as usual. In addition, configuration of the Integrated Command and Control System (ICCS) needs to support it technically, so that the right talkgroups are available at the right locations to the right people. Control centre operators must be familiar with selecting each of the appropriate talkgroups and users must be familiar with their positions in the terminals available to them and the purposes for which they can be used.

Airwave provides communications interoperability between all police forces, discrete parts of the same force, the military, law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and many other public safety organisations. There are limitations, however, in terms of the number of talkgroups that can be loaded into terminals. Police forces are encouraged, therefore, to use the designated National Fleetmap Talkgroups for all pre-planned events and even spontaneous incidents that involve or are likely
to involve resources from other police forces and/or other Responder Agencies. The “Communications” section in all contingency plans should promote use of National Fleetmap Talkgroups over those only accessible to an individual force so that, should an incident escalate to require additional resources through mutual aid, Interoperable Voice Communication can be implemented immediately.

The following is provided by way of an explanation on the layout of the document.

Each section on talkgroups begins with its name plus “alpha tag” and a brief description of its purpose and other related information. Where an example alpha tag is used, e.g. PFFFF HG1, the FFFF component represents the individual force code, such as PWMER is Police West MERcia (HG1 will be explained in the appropriate section).

Activity
Describes its use and invocation.

Details

Fleetmapping: control centre availability
Describes how forces are expected to have the talkgroup configured.

Fleetmapping: terminal fill
Describes which police terminals have the talkgroup loaded.

Considerations
Includes broader comments about the option described together with advice about potential disadvantages.

Availability in the Interim Bronze Interoperability Solution (IBIS) terminals.
This includes “Cavern¹” and “Command Band²” and explains whether specific talkgroups are available in IBIS terminals.

Availability in the London Underground
This section advises users whether the talkgroup is available on the special network coverage in the London Underground.

Planning
Describes some of the planning required to ensure the described form of Interoperable Voice Communication is achieved.

Exit/Return to Normality
Describes how the activity should be concluded and highlights specific considerations.

¹ Term used by the emergency services in London for the protocol covering the use of IBIS.
² Term used in Scotland for IBIS.
The accompanying flow chart presents the same information by way of an illustration and aide-memoire. This can also be used by control centres, planning staff and Force Operations Airwave Tactical Advisors (FOATAs) as a template for training and guidance materials.
Section 1
GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF AIRWAVE INTEROPERABILITY

Contents

1.1 Sharers .................................................................................................................. 10
1.2 Exercises ................................................................................................................ 10
1.3 Airwave Cell .......................................................................................................... 10
1.4 Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisers (FOATAs) and in-force Airwave Teams ......................................................... 10
1.5 Planning ................................................................................................................ 11
1.6 Capacity of Control Centre Operators ................................................................. 11
1.7 Capacity of Airwave Users .................................................................................... 12
1.8 Airwave Network Capacity ................................................................................... 12
1.9 Patch and Regroup ............................................................................................... 13
1.10 Collaboration and Coordination ......................................................................... 13
1.11 AirwaveSpeak ..................................................................................................... 14
1.1 Sharers

It should be remembered that more than 600 Responder Agencies have access to Airwave. They are collectively known as “Sharers”. Each has undertaken implementation in accordance with their own operational requirements, and these can be quite different across the user community. Experience from recent inter-agency exercises, such as Glamis\(^3\), demonstrates the need for all Responder Agencies to understand how their own and one another’s use of Airwave (and some of its “capacity-hungry” functions) can impact adversely on each other. This can include communications across and between discreet parts of a single agency, e.g. specialist and non-specialist police units, as well as other agencies in attendance. This is particularly so where there is limited network coverage or capacity at a location.

1.2 Exercises

Inter-agency and same service exercises are a vital way to identify these operational differences, and to use the debriefing process to improve joint practices, procedures and systems to promote a unified approach to the use of Airwave. This needs to be put in place in advance of a live event challenging untested assumptions that “everything will work on the day”.

1.3 Airwave Cell

One proposal arising from the lessons of “Exercise Glamis” is that in potentially protracted multi-agency operations, the partners involved would benefit from creating a joint “Airwave Cell”. This brings together technical and operational experts familiar with Airwave from each agency to problem-solve and then negotiate with Airwave Solutions Limited (ASL). The objective is to establish the most appropriate, operational use of Airwave that meets the agreed tactical priorities for same service and inter-agency communications.

1.4 Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisers (FOATAs) and in-force Airwave Teams

Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisors (FOATAs) have been trained by the NPIA to provide each police force with operational and technical guidance on achieving the optimal use of Airwave. In-force Airwave Teams have a broader experience and knowledge of the specific coverage, configuration and capacity of their force. Other Responder Agencies may soon have similar in-house teams. The advice of an Airwave Team or FOATA should be

---

3 “Exercise Glamis” was a Multi-Agency tabletop communications exercise held in Strathclyde in 2009.
sought during the initial planning phase of any operation involving different specialist and non-specialist police units as well as those incorporating multiple partner agencies which use Airwave. There is equal merit in seeking their guidance early in response to a spontaneous incident. In both scenarios, they can apply their operational and technical knowledge of Airwave to develop a tactical communications plan to make sure optimal use is made of available talkgroups cognisant of coverage and capacity. Again, the objective is to meet the needs of all the policing units and partner Responder Agencies.

1.5 Planning

1.5.1 It is considered good practice to create a “Major Incident Profile” on control centre terminals for specific instances where this would provide operators with rapid and easy access to a set of appropriate talkgroups. A “Major Incident Profile” is a suite of talkgroups loaded in an Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) that can be selected automatically by the control centre operator to provide a “one-touch” solution. This would be relevant to both planned events and spontaneous incidents. Its creation involves identifying the range of talkgroups operational staff would require for communications within their own force, between forces and with other Responder Agencies. The benefit of this prior planning and configuration is that it provides operators with an instant, automated solution for selecting the appropriate interoperability talkgroup, removing the need to do so manually.

1.5.2 Contingency plans developed between partner Responder Agencies should contain a clear description of the tactical use to be made of Airwave in order to achieve effective inter-agency communications. In-force Airwave Teams and FOATAs should be involved in this planning and any post-incident debrief to ensure that any improvements identified are noted and then implemented.

1.5.3 Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups 1-90 (see sections 17 to 22) and Multi-Agency Mutual Aid (MAMA) Talkgroups 2-10 (see section 25) all require invocation through ASL.

*Note:* There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous support will be acted upon immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

1.6 Capacity of Control Centre Operators

Consideration must be given when planning an event or when responding to an incident to the capabilities of the technologies available and the capacity of operators to manage the number of users with whom they are likely to be required to communicate.
Similar consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate for them to control more than one terminal or talk-group. When operators from different services are working with each other, cultural differences in communication style can be exacerbated by unfamiliarity with the varying approaches to radio discipline, and thus it is essential that common standards are adopted, such as plain English, together with the use of readily understood call-signs.

1.7 Capacity of Airwave Users

During an event or incident, personnel receive aural and visual information from a number of sources, e.g. radio, mobile telephone, face-to-face, personal digital assistant, mobile data terminal, etc. When planning an operation or event, or responding to an incident, consideration must be given to the way in which individuals receive that information and their capacity to process it so as not to overwhelm them. Every effort should be made to reduce the amount of "raw" information that is communicated, and thus users and operators should conduct some analysis themselves to filter out details that are not relevant to operational decision-making.

1.8 Airwave Network Capacity

1.8.1 **Only users involved in an operation and authorised to do so should monitor the talkgroups allocated to it.** Scanning by other users will impact adversely on available network capacity.

1.8.2 Users **must** comply with instructions designed to reduce or minimise the impact of their use of Airwave on network capacity and its knock-on effect to other users. **This may mean directing that use of “capacity-hungry” telephony and point-to-point calls should be restricted.**

**Telephony**

Telephony provides a useful means for individuals to conduct a one-to-one conversation. However, its use is “capacity-hungry” and will impact adversely on what is available for communications to the wider user group on the allocated talkgroup(s). Consideration must be given to prohibiting telephony or restricting its use to essential business related calls at an incident site or large event.

**Point to point**

Similarly, point-to-point allows communication between two specific users. However, its use takes up the same capacity as one talkgroup call on a single aerial, which will impact significantly on other users.
1.9 **Patch and Regroup**

This function is available only in the control centre on the Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS). It allows an operator to bring together users on two different talkgroups without them having to change talkgroups themselves on their terminals. This can also reduce demands on capacity, as the impact of two talkgroups patched together is the same as if they were one.

**Note 1:** When using Patch and Regroup, operators should be mindful that for all the audio links to be available and activation of the emergency button apparent to them, both talkgroups must be selected by each operator position monitoring the event.

**Note 2:** There are sufficient talkgroups to render Patch and Regroup unnecessary under most circumstances. If, however, it is required operators must ensure they remove the facility once the requirement has ended.

1.10 **Collaboration and Coordination**

1.10.1 **Control over terminals and talkgroups**

It may be appropriate for one agency to allow another certain rights over their Airwave terminals during joint operations to help manage specific capacity issues, as detailed below.

**“Stun” or “Kill”**

Loss of a terminal by any user can compromise the integrity of an operation. Where this happens in a joint-agency environment, it would be expedient for partner agencies to have given prior consent allowing the host police force to “stun” or “kill” another agency’s Airwave terminal. This would allow the action necessary to disable the terminal to be put into effect immediately.

**Recording**

When two agencies are using the same talkgroup for Interoperable Voice Communication and it is possible and appropriate to do so, one control centre should take responsibility for audio recording that communication. It will be appropriate to highlight the availability of any such recording for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief.

1.10.2 **Standard codification of Talkgroup Alpha tags**

To ensure there is a common understanding of what functionality each talkgroup provides, it is essential that a standardised approach is taken to codifying its alpha tag. For example; PFFFF HG1, where the HG1 refers to the national standard for codifying the force Police Hailing Talkgroup. This also applies within each agency, so as to ensure that the alpha tag presented on the terminals used by control centre operators is identical to that presented on those held by users. This is particularly relevant to
those talkgroups that are not in regular use and, thus, unfamiliar to users.

### 1.11 AirwaveSpeak

1.11.1 Wherever possible, Airwave users are encouraged to use plain speech to avoid confusion when speaking on Airwave. This is particularly the case when communicating with other agencies that will not understand jargon that is specific to just one of those at an incident. “AirwaveSpeak” is a nationally recognised form of words to be used at all times by Airwave users from all police services, some ambulance services and some other Responder Agencies. The purpose is to provide more efficient, disciplined communications between radio users. It is a national standard for radio communications that promotes consistent and concise language. [http://www.npia.police.uk/en/15804.htm](http://www.npia.police.uk/en/15804.htm)

1.11.2 It was developed to improve standards of radio discipline and is based on the principles of the “Radio ABCD”:

- **Accuracy**;
- **Brevity**;
- **Clarity**;
- **Discipline**.
Section 2
GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COMMAND INTEROPERABILITY

Contents

2.1 Integrity of Command ......................................................... 16
2.2 Default Interoperability Talkgroup for the Initial Response .. 16
2.1 Integrity of Command

2.1.1 The principle of “Integrity of Command” is that each emergency service (and Responder Agency) at an incident retains command and control of its own personnel; with each developing tactical plans within the agreed strategy that involves common aims and objectives. This will apply always unless an agreement exists between the Ambulance, Fire and Rescue, and Police Services whereby, under pre-determined circumstances, one will take command and control of personnel from another. This may include the response to a Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) incident, or deployment of Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams.

2.1.2 Whatever inter-service communication is used, the integrity of same-service command still applies and each service will retain responsibility for the duty of care to its own personnel.

2.2 Default Interoperability Talkgroup for the Initial Response

2.2.1 Responder Agencies may wish to consider the benefits of designating a talkgroup or set of talkgroups as the default position for immediate use during the initial stages of the response. Options for this include use of Emergency Service 1 (ES1) as a single talkgroup, or ES1-3 as a set that provides more flexibility (see section 13). It will be for each agency to assess the merits of this approach, in collaboration with their partners. Where adopted, local SOPs need to include a clear policy to determine which Responder Agency will take responsibility for coordinating implementation through their control centre.

2.2.2 Using a default interoperability talkgroup has both benefits and constraints, some of which are listed below.

**Benefits:**

- The default interoperability talkgroup will enable a quicker response to invoking Interoperable Voice Communication;
- This simple process is one that can be understood easily and thus trained more readily than perhaps others, so responders become familiar with its use and are more likely to invoke it instinctively as the first option in times of crisis;
- Its adoption for everyday incidents will help embed the principles of interoperability around the value of exchanging decision-critical and mission-critical information between agencies and building the Common Operating Picture⁴;
- Such use will be scalable, allowing for a larger communications structure to be built upon the initial

---

⁴ See the Glossary of Terms for an explanation of the term “common operating picture”.

Standard Operating Procedure Guide on Police to Police and Inter-Agency Airwave Interoperability
© ACPO NPIA 2010
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
foundation to help meet demands as the incident escalates to involve an increase in resources;

- Its use will ensure that, when Interoperable Voice Communication is an urgent imperative, users are not delayed waiting for a direction on which talkgroup to select.

**Constraints:**

- Responder Agencies whose boundaries are not coterminous may have a variety of options for the default interoperability talkgroup which, without careful planning, could cause confusion as to which is the most appropriate in a particular geographic area. An example would be where the boundaries of the Ambulance and/or Fire and Rescue Services are not aligned with a single police force;

- Responder Agencies with sufficient users should plan for instances when the default interoperability talkgroup will already be in use. In such cases, the coordinating control centre\(^5\) will need to provide operators to monitor all the talkgroups needed for Interoperable Voice Communication. It may also need to oversee allocation of the most appropriate and available talkgroup rather than allow responders to make the selection.

\(^5\) See the Glossary for an explanation of the term “coordinating control centre”.
Section 3
POLICE HAILING TALKGROUP: “PFFFF HG1”

Contents

3.1 Activity ........................................................................................................... 19
3.2 Details ............................................................................................................. 19
3.3 Exit/Return to Normality ............................................................................... 20
There is one Police Hailing Talkgroup for each force to enable police users from other forces when travelling to or through that force to communicate spontaneously with its control centre.

### 3.1 Activity

3.1.1 In the event that, whilst travelling to or through a police area other than their own, a police user requires immediate contact with the local force, they should begin with an initial call to the local control centre on the Police Hailing Talkgroup. Users from a non-police Responder Agency should use the relevant “Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup” configured in their terminals (see section 4).

3.1.2 Where time permits prior to departure, a travelling user should make arrangements with their counterparts in the force(s) to be visited to agree which working talkgroup(s) can be used for operational communications. This would be a practical alternative to using the Police Hailing Talkgroup.

3.1.3 HG1 is intended for immediate, unplanned contact with the host force. If necessary, the control centre operator will then direct the visiting user to a more appropriate (and available) talkgroup. This will release the Police Hailing Talkgroup for other immediate calls. It is not meant for prolonged communications.

3.1.4 All communication should be in plain speech using descriptors rather than call signs, e.g. “Thames Valley Police control, Thames Valley Police control, from Hampshire Police Traffic Unit Bravo Mike Zero Eight, over” rather than “Bravo Mike Zero Eight to control”. Once contact has been made, the unit and the control centre can agree an appropriate call-sign that does not contradict the local convention.

3.1.5 Where users from different forces communicate frequently in this fashion, it would be appropriate to establish a pre-agreed call-sign protocol.

3.1.6 Invocation

No additional invocation procedure other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.

### 3.2 Details

3.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Sufficient positions are required to ensure Police Hailing Talkgroups are audio monitored 24-hours a day and calls answered in a timely manner.
3.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The Police Hailing Talkgroup for every force is available in all police Airwave terminals. When planning to travel to another force area, users should familiarise themselves with the location of the Police Hailing Talkgroup in their terminals for the forces through which they will be travelling.

3.2.3 Considerations

Where the Police Hailing Talkgroup is among a number of talkgroups that need to be monitored simultaneously in a control centre, there is a risk that hailing calls may not be heard. Care should be taken to ensure operators are able to hear and respond to communications on all the talkgroups being monitored.

Note: reference should be made to the Police Mutual Aid Travelling Talkgroup in section 23.

3.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

These talkgroups are not available in IBIS terminals.

3.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

Metropolitan Police (MPS), British Transport Police (BTP) and City of London Police (CoLP) HG1 talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground. Users travelling in the Underground who do not need immediate contact should select BTP HG1 before entering a station and then switch off their terminals. When they then need to communicate, they should switch on their terminals and contact the BTP control centre using the Police Hailing Talkgroup. This procedure will reduce impact on network capacity whilst travelling.

3.2.6 Planning

- There is a requirement for control centres for neighbouring forces to agree how the Police Hailing Talkgroup can be used to maintain contact between them.
- An explanation is required for operators on how to select an appropriate talkgroup for users to be passed on to, and the process for doing it.

3.3 Exit/Return to Normality

The user ends the call and switches either to a working talkgroup agreed with the host force or back to their usual working talkgroup. There is no action for the control centre other than the ongoing requirement to audio monitor the talkgroup.
Police Hailing Talkgroup
PFFFF HG1

**Key**
- Standard talkgroup
- Hailing talkgroup

**Operational user explains in plain speech who they are and their callsign. Force B will allocate new callsign if required.**

**Force A**  
Operational user on standard talkgroup

**User enters a neighbouring force area**

**Force A**  
Operational user informs Force A control centre via standard talkgroup that they are switching to Force B hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1)

**Force A**  
Operational user contacts Force B control centre using Force B hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1)

**Force B**  
Control centre logs and acknowledges the call

**Force A**  
Operational user completes task and leaves Force B area

**Force A**  
Operational user contacts Force B control centre via either Force B hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1) or the allocated interoperability talkgroup and informs them that they are now leaving the area

**Key**
- Standard talkgroup
- Hailing talkgroup

**Force A**  
Operational user switches back to Force A standard talkgroup and logs back on with Force A control centre

**Force A**  
Operational user on standard talkgroup
Section 4

POLICE SHARERS HAILING TALKGROUPS: “PFFFF SHG1”

Contents

4.1 Activity........................................................................................................ 23
4.2 Details .......................................................................................................... 24
4.3 Exit/Return to Normality............................................................................... 25
There is one Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup for each force to enable approved non-police users from specific Responder Agencies to initiate contact with the local police force within whose area they are operating. These talkgroups are available in terminals held by named Responder Agencies as well as the Police, Ambulance and Fire and Rescue Services. Consequently, this talkgroup offers a means for those Responder Agencies to initiate Interoperable Voice Communication.

These talkgroups are shared with specific Responder Agencies that use Airwave on an “as required” basis. Consequently, access is not given to all Airwave users. There must be a specific requirement to do so. Approved users include:

- Partner Responder Agencies, e.g. the Fire and Rescue, and Ambulance Services, plus Strategic Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, and Air Ambulances;
- Traffic Officers working for the Highways Agency, Traffic Wales and Transport Scotland;
- British Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force plus the Royal Military Police the Royal Navy Provost, and individual regiments such as the Royal Signals;
- Investigative and enforcement agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, UK Border Agency, and HM Revenue and Customs;
- Others that have a proven reason, which would include the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), certain blood donor transport companies, and specific council warden schemes;
- Voluntary organisations, such as search and rescue units, British Red Cross (but not, currently, St John Ambulance);
- Environment Agency and Health Protection Agency.

The Emergency Services Sharers Advisory Group (ESSAG) and National Interoperability and Interworking Group (NIIG) authorise allocation of the Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroups.

**4.1 Activity**

4.1.1 In the event that immediate contact is required, the user should make an initial call to the control centre of the relevant force on the relevant Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup.

4.1.2 Where time permits prior to departure, users should make arrangements with their counterparts in the force(s) to be visited to agree which working talkgroup(s) can be used for operational communications. This would be a practical alternative to using the Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup.
4.1.3 The talkgroup may then be used for a brief exchange of information, or the sharer can be directed to another operational talkgroup for more prolonged communication.

4.1.4 Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroups are designed as an initial means of contact only but, in the event of an operational imperative, they can be used for more protracted communication.

4.1.5 Police users may be directed by their control centre to switch to a Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup for communication with other Responder Agencies. They must, therefore, be familiar with the location of the talkgroup on their terminal and the process for both access and exit.

4.1.6 Any communication should be in plain speech using descriptors rather than call signs, e.g. “Thames Valley Police control, Thames Valley Police control, from Prison Service Unit X-Ray Zero Eight, over”. Once contact has been made, the unit and the control centre can agree an appropriate call-sign that does not conflict with local conventions.

4.1.7 Where Responder Agencies communicate frequently in this fashion, it would be appropriate to establish a pre-agreed call-sign protocol.

4.1.8 Invocation

No additional invocation procedure other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.

4.2 Details

4.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Sufficient positions are required in each control centre to ensure that the Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup is audio monitored 24-hours a day and calls answered in a timely manner.

4.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

This talkgroup must be configured in each terminal held by police users, and there is merit in making it available to neighbouring forces too.

4.2.3 Considerations

- Where the Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup is among a number of talkgroups that need to be monitored simultaneously in a control centre, there is a risk that hailing calls may not be heard. Care should be taken to ensure operators are able to hear and respond to communications on all the talkgroups being monitored.
- Police operators and users need to be aware that sharers have an approved operational need for using the Police
Sharers Hailing Talkgroup and should be responded to professionally, positively and promptly.

4.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

These talkgroups are available in IBIS terminals.

4.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

MPS, BTP and CoLP SHG1 talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground.

4.2.6 Planning

- An explanation is required for operators on how to select an appropriate talkgroup for users to be passed on to, and the process for doing that.
- Police forces may find it beneficial to work with their sharers to create a joint understanding of how they will use all the talkgroups available to them.

4.3 Exit/Return to Normality

The user ends the call and switches either to a multi-agency working talkgroup agreed with the host force or back to their usual working talkgroup. There is no action for the control centre other than the ongoing requirement to audio monitor the talkgroup.
Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup
PFFFF SHG1

Sharer
Sharer on standard working talkgroup

Sharer
Informs their control centre or colleagues that they are changing talkgroup to hail the local constabulary

Sharer
Switches to local constabulary sharers hailing talkgroup (PFFFF SHG1) and initiates a call

When calling, the sharer should identify themselves using plain speech, not just call-signs

Local Constabulary
Receives the call and, if necessary, allocates a new callsign.
Caller may be directed to a sharers operational talkgroup depending upon circumstances (IC1, ES1-3, PMA, MAMA)

Sharer
Completes contact with local constabulary and informs them that they are now switching back to their own working talkgroup

Local Constabulary
Acknowledges and logs the call

Sharer
Contacts their own control centre and logs back on to their own working talkgroup

Key
Sharers working talkgroup
Sharers hailing talkgroup
Section 5
AIR-TO-GROUND TALKGROUP: “PFFFF A2G1”

Contents

5.1 Activity ........................................................................................................... 28
5.2 Details ............................................................................................................ 28
5.3 Exit/Return to Normality ................................................................................ 29
The Air-to-Ground Talkgroup is specific to each force and available nationally. It provides communication between the Air Support Unit (ASU) and users (and operators) on the ground. It is for use when an ASU does not have access to the local working talkgroups at the incident ground.

**Note:** Users on the ground and in aircraft from the same force will operate on the working talkgroup allocated to the incident and not A2G1.

### 5.1 Activity

5.1.1 When an aircraft is deployed from another force and does not have access to the local working talkgroup, the operator on the aircraft should use the Police Hailing Talkgroup (PFFFF HG1) to call the host force control centre to announce its presence. The control centre should then direct the operator to switch to the host force A2G1 talkgroup. The control centre will then patch that into the working talkgroup. If a nationally available talkgroup, such as a PMA (see sections 17 to 22), is being used the aircraft will have direct access with no need to patch.

5.1.2 A2G1 is also available as a means for other users and control rooms to contact the aircraft. While it has not been designated as an “aircraft hailing talkgroup”, 24 of the 31 Police Air Support Units use it in this way.

5.1.3 Invocation

No additional invocation procedure other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.

### 5.2 Details

5.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Ideally, all control centre operator positions should be configured with the force A2G1 talkgroup.

5.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

All police terminals (including those in Air Support Units) are configured with the A2G1 talkgroups for every force.

5.2.3 Considerations

No additional considerations beyond those identified in 3.1 above.

5.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

This talkgroup is not available in IBIS terminals.
5.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

This talkgroup is **not** loaded in the London Underground.

5.2.6 Planning

- It would be appropriate to include a description of when and how to use the A2G1 talkgroup in contingency plans. These should reflect that it might be more appropriate to use a talkgroup available nationally, such as one from the Police Mutual Aid (PMA) group, at an incident that is likely to involve an Air Support Unit from outside the force area. This would enable the ASU to join immediately.

- At major incidents involving the deployment of several Air Support Units, including those operated by the Military and Maritime and Coastguard Agency, consideration should be given to establishing a “Combined Silver Air Cell”. The force control centre should seek guidance on invoking this through their own Air Support Unit.

- **Note:** When aircraft from different Responder Agencies are being coordinated through a “Combined Silver Air Cell”, then they should all use PFFFF ES3 as their working talkgroup (which is available to them already for this purpose).

5.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the conclusion of any incident, users should revert to their regular working talkgroup. Operators should cease audio monitoring and release any “patch and regroup” still in place.
Air To Ground Talkgroup
PFFFF A2G1

Force A
Operational users on scene of an incident using standard local talkgroup require air support

Force A
Helicopter available

Force A
Control centre acknowledges call and tasks Force A helicopter using telephone or Force A air to ground talkgroup (PFFFF A2G1)

Force A
Control centre contacts Force B control room using telephone or Force B hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1) and requests air support

Force B
Control centre acknowledges, logs the call and contacts Force B helicopter using telephone or the normal talkgroup for contacting Force B helicopter

Force B
Helicopter arrives on scene and advises Force A control centre via Force A hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1) that it is available for deployment

Force B
Helicopter nears scene and advises Force B control centre that it is now switching to Force A hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1)

Force A
Helicopter arrives on scene and advises Force A control centre that it is switching from air to ground talkgroup (PFFFF A2G1) to local standard talkgroup

Force A
Control centre acknowledges, logs the call and advises the helicopter that it will link Force A air to ground talkgroup (PFFFF A2G1) with Force A local standard talkgroup

Force B
Helicopter acknowledges the call and switches to Force A air to ground talkgroup (PFFFF A2G1)

Key
- Standard talkgroup
- Force A Hailing talkgroup
- Force B Hailing talkgroup
- Force A Air To Ground talkgroup
- Force B Air To Ground talkgroup

All operational users dealing with incident with helicopter support using local standard talkgroup
Section 6
POLICE INTEROPERABILITY
TALKGROUP 1:
“PFFFF INTOP1”

Contents

6.1 Activity ........................................................................................................... 32
6.2 Details .............................................................................................................. 32
6.3 Exit/Return to Normality ................................................................. 33
Each force has four INTOP Talkgroups to enable working with officers from other forces. INTOP1 has been adopted for vehicle pursuits with the potential to cross force boundaries (cross-border). The guidance on its use in police pursuits is given more fully in the *NPIA (2009) Police Pursuits Communication Policy*.

The INTOP1 Talkgroup is for police use only. However, a number of national law enforcement agencies also have access to it for use when they require the local police to stop a vehicle (see section 31).

### 6.1 Activity

6.1.1 When a pursuit starts in one force area it is recommended that the officer initiating it remains on their working talkgroup. If however, they are with another user who can take charge of radio communications and switch to INTOP1, they should do so when directed by the control centre.

6.1.2 As soon as practicable, the control centre should direct all users engaged in the pursuit to switch to INTOP1. Where the local working talkgroup is still being used for the pursuit, the control centre will “patch and regroup” it to INTOP1. Once a vehicle operating on INTOP1 has the lead, the control centre should release the “patch and regroup”.

6.1.3 As the pursuit approaches the border with the neighbouring force, the control centre for the *receiving* force will “patch and regroup” it with its own INTOP1 Talkgroup. To do this the initiating force must first release any “patch and regroup” it had established. The control centre in the receiving force should direct its users to switch to their INTOP1 Talkgroup in advance.

6.1.4 In addition, users from other law enforcement agencies who require a vehicle to be stopped should first come up on the Police Hailing Talkgroup and then be directed by the control centre to the INTOP1 Talkgroup.

6.1.5 In the event that PFFFF INTOP1 is already in use, PFFFF INTOP2 should be used in the same manner.

6.1.6 Invocation

As directed by the control centre. No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key. The talkgroup is *not* monitored routinely in control centres.

### 6.2 Details

6.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Standard Operating Procedure Guide on Police to Police and Inter-Agency Airwave Interoperability
© ACPO NPIA 2010
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
This talkgroup is required in appropriate operator positions and in neighbouring force control centres.

### 6.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

Available nationally in all police terminals.

### 6.2.3 Considerations

- The INTOP1 Talkgroup is approved for pursuit management and must, therefore, be available for a “patch and regroup” to all relevant working talkgroups.
- Operators should be mindful that for all the audio links to be available, and activation of the emergency button apparent, the two talkgroups in the “patch and regroup” must be selected by each operator position monitoring the event.
- Operators should also be mindful that, while emergency button activations will be apparent to them, they might not be so to users on the ground, and they will need to relay the information.

### 6.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

The INTOP1 Talkgroup is **not** available in IBIS terminals.

### 6.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

MPS, BTP and CoLP INTOP1 Talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground.

### 6.2.6 Planning

Control centre configuration should support the “patch and regroup” of all operational talkgroups to INTOP1.

### 6.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the conclusion of any incident, users should revert to their regular working talkgroup. Operators should cease audio monitoring and release any “patch and regroup” still in place. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief.
Police Vehicle Pursuits on Police Interoperability Talkgroup 1
PFFFF INTOP1

When appropriate the link between standard talkgroup and INTOP1 can be removed

Force A
Operational user on standard working talkgroup initiates a vehicle pursuit

Force A
As soon as is practicable, all users involved in the pursuit switch to INTOP1 talkgroup (PFFFF INTOP1)

Force A
Operational user informs Force A control centre that they are approaching Force B area

Force A
Control centre contacts Force B control centre and advises that user [callsign] on Force A INTOP1 (PFFFF INTOP1) is approaching the force boundary.

Force A
Control centre links Force A INTOP1 to Force B INTOP1. Force B users involved are instructed to change talkgroup to Force B INTOP1 to join the pursuit.

Force B and Force A
Control centres agree primacy changeover. Force A reverts to monitoring the pursuit. Force B takes over control.

Force A
Operational user switches back to standard talkgroup and resumes normal duties

Force A
At a convenient point, user from Force A disengages from the pursuit and returns to Force A area

At the point where there are no longer any Force A officers involved in the pursuit the link between the two INTOP1 talkgroups can be removed.

Force A
Operational user on standard talkgroup

Force B
Pursuit users remain on Force B INTOP1 (PFFFF INTOP1)

Key
Standard talkgroup
Force A INTOP1 talkgroup
Force B INTOP1 talkgroup
Section 7

POLICE INTEROPERABILITY TALKGROUPS 2 AND 3: “PFFFFF INTOP 2 and 3”

Contents

7.1 Activity ................................................................. 36
7.2 Details .................................................................. 36
7.3 Exit/Return to Normality ......................................... 37
Each force has four INTOP Talkgroups to enable working with officers from other forces. As with INTOP1, INTOP2 and INTOP3 are for police use only and complement the PMA Talkgroups (see section 17 to 22). They provide interoperability with neighbouring forces for cross-border incidents and INTOP2 provides a fallback for pursuits when INTOP1 is in use.

By default they have been used primarily for an immediate response, and reserved for that purpose. There are alternative talkgroups for pre-planned events and operations, principally national PMA and force-specific Event (see section 16) Talkgroups. However, that does not preclude INTOP2 and 3 being used in this way, but it will reduce capabilities for managing a spontaneous incident where there is a need quickly to interoperate without going through the process of invoking a talkgroup with ASL.

When being used for police vehicle pursuits, the same procedures for INTOP1 should be adhered to when using INTOP2

**Note:** For INTOP2 to be available as a fallback for INTOP1, it must be available in the control centres of the neighbouring forces.

### 7.1 Activity

#### 7.1.1 For static events:
- Once contact has been initiated between visiting officers and the host force, potentially, using the Police Ha1ing Talkgroup, the control centre for the host force can direct users to INTOP2 or 3 and so provide the means quickly to achieve interoperable voice communication.
- When two force control centres monitor deployment of their combined resources on a single INTOP talkgroup, a decision must be made on overall command and control.

#### 7.1.2 For pursuits:

As for INTOP1 (see section 6).

#### 7.1.3 Invocation

As directed by the control centre. No additional procedures other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key. The talkgroup is not monitored routinely.

### 7.2 Details

#### 7.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

As for INTOP1.
7.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

As for INTOP1.

7.2.3 Considerations

As for INTOP1.

7.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

The INTOP2 and INTOP3 Talkgroups are not available in IBIS terminals.

7.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

MPS, BTP and CoLP INTOP2 and 3 Talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground.

7.2.6 Planning

- Control centre configuration should support all operational talkgroups being patched to INTOP2 when used as an alternative to INTOP1.
- Static incidents: INTOP2 and INTOP3 should be considered at incidents where officers from other forces are involved, such as football matches and incidents that cross force boundaries.
- Consideration can be given to including these talkgroups in a "Major Incident Profile" to make them available easily to a control centre operator.

7.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the conclusion of any incident, users should revert to their regular working talkgroup. Operators should cease audio monitoring and release any "patch and regroup" still in place. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief.
Cross Border Incidents
Police Interoperability Talkgroups 2 and 3
PFFFF INTOP2 and 3

Planned Event

Planned event that requires two or more forces to pool resources

Force A
Control centre assumes primacy for the event.
Force A INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup (PFFFF INTOP2 or 3) will be the main talkgroup in use

Force B
Control centre may monitor the event

Force A
Operational users dealing with the event operate on Force A INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup (PFFFF INTOP2 or 3)

Force B
Operational users dealing with the event operate on Force A INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup (PFFFF INTOP2 or 3)

Force A and Force B
Users interoperate together controlled by Force A control centre

Key
Force A INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup
Cross Border Incidents
Police Interoperability Talkgroups 2 and 3
PFFFI INTOP2 and 3
Spontaneous Event

Force A
Operational user on patrol on standard talkgroup is involved in a cross border incident

Force A
When possible operational users involved switch to Force A INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup (PFFFI INTOP2 or 3)

When possible the link between standard talkgroup and INTOP2 or 3 can be removed

Force A
Operational user informs Force A control centre that they are approaching Force B area

Force A
Control centre contacts Force B control centre and advises them that operational user [callsign] on talkgroup Force A INTOP2 or 3 (PFFFI INTOP2 or 3) is approaching the force boundary.

Force B & Force A
Control centres agree primacy changeover. Force A reverts to monitoring the incident. Force B takes over control.

At the point where there are no longer any Force A operational users involved in the incident, the link between the two INTOP talkgroups can be removed.

Force B
Operational users dealing with the incident remain on Force B INTOP2 or 3 (PFFFI INTOP2 or 3)

Force A
Operational user on standard talkgroup

Standard talkgroup
Force A INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup
Force B INTOP2 or 3 talkgroup
Section 8
POLICE INTEROPERABILITY
TALKGROUP 4:
“PFFFF INTOP 4”

Contents

8.1 Activity................................................................. 41
8.2 Details ................................................................. 41
8.3 Exit/Return to Normality........................................... 42
Each force has four INTOP Talkgroups to enable working with officers from other forces. The INTOP Talkgroup is for police use only and complements the Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups (see section 17 to 22). As with the other INTOP Talkgroups, it provides local interoperability with neighbouring forces during cross-border incidents. Unless directed otherwise, initial contact with the host force should first be established on the Police Hailing Talkgroup (see section 3).

**Note:** The INTOP Talkgroup is **not** mandated to be available in control centres and, therefore, it should **not** be assumed that it can be audio monitored or recorded.

### 8.1 Activity

8.1.1 The INTOP4 Talkgroup is intended for informal interoperability between users on the ground where the policing of an area involves frequent interaction between officers from neighbouring forces.

8.1.2 When used for this purpose or during mutual aid, users should be aware that INTOP4 is **not** mandated to be available to control centres for audio monitoring or recording purposes.

8.1.3 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or a supervisor.
- Following a request to the control centre and checking that it is not already in use.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is **not** monitored routinely, and may not be capable of being monitored by the control centre.

### 8.2 Details

8.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

There is no requirement for this talkgroup to be available at any operator positions.

8.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

Available nationally in all police terminals.

8.2.3 Considerations

The INTOP Talkgroup is designed for “informal use”, which means it is **not** monitored routinely in a control centre and the latter may in fact not be able to do so or audio record it. This will be subject to local policies on configuration. Nevertheless, authority to use this talkgroup needs to be given by the control
centre. In view of these constraints, forces should have a clear policy on its use.

8.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

The INTOP4 Talkgroup is not available in IBIS terminals.

8.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

MPS, BTP and CoLP INTOP4 Talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground.

8.2.6 Planning

The particular constraints outlined above should be considered before using it for a more structured operation, such as a pre-planned event.

8.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the conclusion of any incident, users should revert to their regular working talkgroup.
Unmonitored Cross Border Interoperability
Police Interoperability Talkgroup 4
PFFFF INTO4

Important Note
When using an unmonitored talkgroup it must be remembered that, if an emergency button is depressed, the emergency call may not be received in a control centre

Key
- Unmonitored Cross Border INTO4 talkgroup
- Force B Standard talkgroup
- Force A Standard talkgroup
- Force B Hailing talkgroup
Section 9
NATIONAL FIREARMS TALKGROUP: “PFFFF FA1

Contents

9.1 Activity.................................................. 45
9.2 Details ..................................................................... 46
9.3 Exit/Return to Normality.......................................... 47
Each force has one National Firearms Talkgroup. Its purpose is to enable firearms officers from different forces to communicate with each other and with each other’s control centres. Terminals issued to firearms officers should be configured with the National Firearms Talkgroup for every force.

- Forces have been advised to restrict access to these talkgroups to terminals used by authorised firearms officers, their commanders, and other users as directed in local force policy who require access as part of their specific role.


9.1 Activity

9.1.1 Where firearms officers from separate forces work together, the National Firearms Talkgroup provides the firearms silver (tactical) commander with an option for interoperable voice communication between all the users involved. This talkgroup is available in force control centres and it can be both monitored and audio recorded. Depending on local configuration, users not authorised to have access can be excluded.

9.1.2 Use of the talkgroup must be initiated by a control centre at the request of the silver (tactical) commander. Firearms officers engaged in the operation should then be directed to use it.

9.1.3 Firearms officers travelling out of their force area to provide an immediate response to an operation or incident should select the National Firearms Talkgroup for the host force at the earliest opportunity to ensure they have as full a picture of the incident as quickly as possible.

9.1.4 Force policy will dictate the procedures for when this talkgroup should be audio monitored and recorded.

9.1.5 Where firearms officers respond to an incident in another force area and a local working talkgroup is being used for command and control, the local control centre can “patch and regroup” it to the relevant National Firearms Talkgroup.

9.1.6 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or commander.
- Following a request to the control centre and checking that it is not already in use.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.

**Note:** The talkgroup is **not** monitored routinely.
9.2 Details

9.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability
Specific operator positions must be designated to support firearms incidents and operations in accordance with local force policy.

9.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill
- The standard is that the National Firearms Talkgroup is only configured in terminals issued to users identified by their force as having a specific need for it.
- Some forces have programmed this talkgroup as a “hot key” selection for their users to facilitate rapid activation.

9.2.3 Considerations
- Forces across the country have different working practices for using talkgroups to monitor local firearms incidents and operations. Some do so on divisional or BCU talkgroups, others on force operational talkgroups, and others on their force National Firearms Talkgroup.
- If there is a requirement to work with firearms officers from another force, the host force National Firearms Talkgroup allows authorised users to work together while excluding others with no operational requirement to do so.
- Used FA1 as the default talkgroup for all firearms incidents within a force will help users and operators become familiar with the procedures for both local and cross-border operations.

9.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals
This talkgroup is not available in IBIS terminals.

9.2.5 Availability in the London Underground
MPS, BTP and CoLP National Firearms Talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground.

9.2.6 Planning
- Configuration of this talkgroup in the control centre needs to support the procedures and protocols set out in the *ACPO (2009) Manual of Guidance on the Management, Command and Deployment of Armed Officers*.
- Contingency plans that include a firearms element should include reference to the possibility of mutual aid requiring this talkgroup.
- Consideration may be given to including this talkgroup in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to a control centre operator.
9.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the conclusion of an operation, users should revert to their regular working talkgroup. Operators should cease audio monitoring and release any “patch and regroup” still in place. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief.
National Firearms Talkgroup
PFFFF FA1

Force A
Officers involved in a firearms incident operating on Force A standard talkgroup

Force A
Commander or control centre decide to request additional resources from other forces. Control centre contacts Force B and Force C using agreed method to request assistance

Force B
Control centre agrees to the request and tasks an ARV to assist

Force C
Control centre agrees to the request and tasks an ARV to assist

Force B
ARV contacted via Force B standard talkgroup and directed to scene. Officers immediately switch to Force A National Firearms talkgroup (PFFFF FA1) to monitor the situation en route.

Force C
ARV contacted via Force C standard talkgroup and directed to scene. Officers immediately switch to Force A national firearms talkgroup (PFFFF FA1) to monitor the situation en route.

Forces A, B & C
All officers now interoperating using Force A national firearms talkgroup (PFFFF FA1)

Incident Finishes

Force A
Officers switch back to Force A standard talkgroup and log back in with Force A control centre

Force B
Officers switch back to Force A standard talkgroup and log back in with Force B control centre

Force C
Officers switch back to Force A standard talkgroup and log back in with Force C control centre

Key
- Force A National Firearms talkgroup
- Force A Standard talkgroup
- Force B Standard talkgroup
- Force C Standard talkgroup

Standard Operating Procedure Guide on Police to Police and Inter-Agency Airwave Interoperability
© ACPO NPIA 2010

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
Section 10
NATIONAL PROTECTION TALKGROUP: “PFFFF PROT1”

Contents

10.1 Activity ................................................................. 50
10.2 Details ................................................................. 50
10.3 Exit/Return to Normality ......................................... 51
Each force has one National Protection Talkgroup. Its purpose is to enable protection officers from different forces to communicate with each other and with each other’s control centres.

- Forces have been advised to restrict access to these talkgroups to terminals used by protection officers, their commanders, and other users as directed in local force policy who require access as part of their specific role.
- The guidance given here is intended to complement that provided in the *ACPO (2009) Manual of Guidance on the Management, Command and Deployment of Armed Officers*.

### 10.1 Activity

10.1.1 Unless prior agreement has been given for visiting protection officers to use the local PROT1 Talkgroup once within the force area, they should use the Police Hailing Talkgroup first to make contact and get permission to do so.

10.1.2 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or supervisor.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.

*Note:* The talkgroup is not monitored routinely.

### 10.2 Details

10.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Sufficient operator positions must be designated to support protection operations as directed by force policy. There is no requirement to audio or event monitor this talkgroup other than by prior arrangement.

10.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

It has been agreed by ACPO/ACPOS that the PROT1 Talkgroups are programmed only into terminals held by users employed on protection duties and others who work alongside them regularly.

10.2.3 Availability in IBIS terminals

This talkgroup is not available in IBIS terminals.

10.2.4 Availability in the London Underground

This talkgroup is available in the London Underground.
10.2.5 Planning

- Configuration of this talkgroup in the control centre needs to support the procedures and protocols set out in the *ACPO (2009) Manual of Guidance on the Management, Command and Deployment of Armed Officers*.

- Plans for the response to protected addresses should highlight PROT1 as an additional talkgroup for visiting protection officers to use.

- It is recommended that arrangements are in place for PROT1 to be monitored (and audio recorded) when needed.

10.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup.
National Protection Talkgroup
PFFFF PROT1

Planned Event ↔ Spontaneous Event

Protection officers
Working in Force A area
during a pre planned
operation on Force A
protection talkgroup
(PFFFF PROT1)

Force A
Officers involved in the
operation switch to
Force A protection
talkgroup (PFFFF PROT1)

Protection officers
approach Force A area.
Officers make initial
contact with Force A
using Force A hailing
talkgroup (PFFFF HG1)

Force A
Control centre
acknowledges the call and
diverts resources to
protection duties.
All officers on protection
duties operate on Force A
protection talkgroup
(PFFFF PROT1)

Protection officers
& Force A officers
Interoperate
together on Force A
protection talkgroup
(PFFFF PROT1)

Protection duties finish

Protection officers
Leave Force A area
and log off with Force A
control centre

Force A
Officers switch back to
Force A standard
talkgroup

Key
Force A Protection talkgroup  
Force A Hailing talkgroup
Section 11

METROPOLITAN POLICE NATIONAL PROTECTION TALKGROUPS: “MPS PROT #”

Contents

11.1 Activity ........................................................................................................ 54
11.2 Details ........................................................................................................ 54
11.3 Exit/Return to Normality ........................................................................... 55
These talkgroups allow protection officers from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to interoperate with protection officers from other forces. The MPS has issued two MPS PROT talkgroups to each force. A third is available on a regional basis, which is determined by the Airwave Switch and not the ACPO Region. These can be used to supplement the local PROT Talkgroup (see section 10).

Note: The symbol # has been used here in place of the actual number allocated locally and regionally to each talkgroup.

- Forces have been advised to restrict access to these talkgroups to terminals used by protection officers, their commanders, and other users as directed in local force policy who require access as part of their specific role.

### 11.1 Activity

11.1.1 Unless prior agreement has been given for visiting MPS protection officers to use the local or regional MPS PROT Talkgroup once within the force area, they should use the Police Hailing Talkgroup first to make contact and get permission to do so.

11.1.2 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or supervisor.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is not monitored routinely.

### 11.2 Details

11.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

These talkgroups are not for control centre configuration except by prior arrangement. There is no need to audio or event monitor these talkgroups except when required.

11.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The MPS PROT # Talkgroups are loaded only in terminals issued to protection and firearms officers and other users who regularly work alongside them.

11.2.3 Considerations

Some forces run protection events on the local command unit dispatch desks; others use designated positions and controllers.
As a consequence, these talkgroups may be presented differently from one control centre to another.

11.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

These talkgroups are not available in IBIS terminals.

11.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

These talkgroups are not available in the London Underground.

11.2.6 Planning

- Local procedures and protocols made in conjunction with the MPS will direct how these talkgroups are loaded in control centres and on sufficient operator terminals to support agreed operational practices.
- Consideration can be given to include these talkgroups in a “Major Incident Profile” that can be accessed easily by operators, particularly if their use forms part of a contingency plan.

11.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup.
Metropolitan Police National Protection Talkgroup
MPS PROT #

Planned Event

MPS protection officers Working in Force A area during a planned operation

Force A
Officers involved in the operation switch to Metropolitan protection talkgroup (MPS PROT #)

If circumstances demand, the forces own protection talkgroup (PFFFF PROT1) may be used as well

Spontaneous Event

MPS protection officers approach Force A area.

Officers make initial contact with Force A using Force A hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1)

Force A
Control centre acknowledges the call and diverts resources to protection duties. All officers on protection duties operate on Metropolitan protection talkgroup (MPS PROT #)

If circumstances demand, the forces own protection talkgroup (PFFFF PROT1) may be used as well

MPS protection officers & Force A officers interoperate together on Metropolitan protection talkgroup (MPS PROT #)

Protection duties finish

MPS protection officers
Leave Force A area and log off with Force A control centre

Force A
Officers switch back to Force A standard talkgroup

Key
Metropolitan Police Protection Talkgroup
Force A Hailing Talkgroup
Section 12
MULTI-AGENCY SILVER (TACTICAL) INCIDENT COMMAND TALKGROUP: “PFFFF IC1”

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>Exit/Return to Normality</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each force has one Multi-Agency Incident Command (IC1) Talkgroup to provide Interoperable Voice Communication at silver (tactical) command level between police and other agencies. It can be used for both pre-planned and spontaneous incidents as a means to enhance the collaborative exercise of command, control and inter-agency coordination.

**Note 1:** Consideration should always be given to using IC1 as a single silver (tactical) command talkgroup whenever this would add value for any of the purposes set out in paragraph iv in the Foreword.

**Note 2:** Forces will find it beneficial to exercise this as a common talkgroup available to all who perform the role of silver (tactical) commander for their agency in the context of a multi-agency response to an incident or event.

The IC1 Talkgroup will only be exchanged with approved Responder Agencies authorised by the Emergency Services Sharers Advisory Group (ESSAG) or National Interoperability and Interworking Group (NIIG). The following are authorised currently:

- Police forces: including the British Transport Police (BTP), the Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Service (MDP) and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC);
- Emergency services: including the Fire and Rescue, and Ambulance Services, and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency;
- Highways Agency, Traffic Wales and Traffic Scotland;
- British armed forces when providing Military Aid to the Civil Power or Civil Authority and on other occasions when they need Airwave to communicate with partner agencies;
- Government agencies: UK Border Agency, HM Revenue and Customs, and Department for Work and Pensions;
- HM Prison Service and Category A prison escort services; and
- Local Authority Emergency Responders from the Emergency Planning Teams.

### 12.1 Activity

12.1.1 The decision to use this talkgroup should come from the police silver (tactical) commander, on the recommendation of the police control centre supervisor. It can also be requested by one of the other Responder Agencies listed above. Such use would be on the basis that Interoperable Voice Communication is essential, because it adds value to the way in which commanders from different agencies can coordinate their collective response to an incident or event.
12.1.2 It is strongly recommended that this talkgroup is audio monitored by at least one of the agencies using it. Usually, this will be the police control centre. Users and operators in each of the Responder Agencies must be advised when the talkgroup is in use.

12.1.3 It is not always necessary for the police to be involved. However, as control of the talkgroup rests with the police, permission to use IC1 must be obtained from the police control centre. The latter can advise on its availability.

12.1.4 Use of IC1 (or any interoperability talkgroup) must not alter the command structure for any of the agencies present. If, for example, command and control of the resources from one agency have been handed over to another, such as can happen in search and rescue operations, the talkgroup may support the activity, but the use of the talkgroup does not drive any change in existing command. Each will ordinarily retain control over its own resources, and continue to maintain a duty of care for them.

12.1.5 Invocation

- As directed by the police control centre.
- Following a request to the control centre, which will check availability.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is not monitored routinely.

12.2 Details

12.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Operator positions are to be designated to support silver (tactical) commanders at major incidents as directed in the local force policy.

12.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

As a minimum, the IC1 Talkgroup of the home and neighbouring forces must be loaded into all terminals.

12.2.3 Considerations

Silver (tactical) commanders

- Must be aware of the availability and benefits of the IC1 Talkgroup, how it can be accessed, and its availability to other Responder Agencies.
- Consult a Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisor (FOATA) or Airwave Team to get advice about capacity within the geographic area.
The capacity of commanders to process inputs from numerous talkgroups (and other sources of information), and the benefits, therefore, of using one talkgroup for inter-agency coordination.

- The sensitive content of transmissions likely to be made on the talkgroup and whether it is appropriate for this to be shared with all the agencies using the talkgroup.
- Other talkgroups would be more appropriate if the incident involves just police users.

12.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

The IC1 Talkgroup of all forces is loaded in IBIS terminals.

12.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

MPS, BTP and CoLP Inter-Service Command Talkgroups are loaded in the London Underground.

12.2.6 Planning

- Local procedures and protocols need to be developed between the Responder Agencies so that each understands the availability and benefits of the IC1 Talkgroup and how it can be used. It would be appropriate to involve the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) or equivalent in this process.
- Consideration can be given to including the IC1 Talkgroup in a "Major Incident Profile" that is available readily to control centre operators, particularly if its use forms part of a contingency plan.

12.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to those involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief. If use has been instigated by an agency other than police, they must notify the force that the talkgroup is no longer in use.
Multi-Agency Silver on
Inter Service Command PFFFF IC1

Force A

Incident occurs that necessitates silver commanders from all sharer agencies to work together
Force A decide to make use of the multi agency silver on inter service command talkgroup (PFFFF IC1)
Use of this talkgroup can only be authorised by a commander or control centre supervisor if it is to be used to communicate between a group of commanders.

Force A & PUG Authorised Sharers

All silver commanders communicating together allowing a common operating picture from a single all informed talkgroup (PFFFF IC1)

End of incident

Force A

End monitoring the multi-agency silver on inter service command talkgroup (PFFFF IC1) and revert to their normal working talkgroups

PUG Authorised Sharers

End using the multi-agency silver on inter service command talkgroups (PFFFF IC1) and revert to their normal working talkgroups

KEY

Multi Agency Silver on Inter Service Command Talkgroup
Section 13

EMERGENCY SERVICES’ MULTI-AGENCY BRONZE TO BRONZE (OPERATIONAL) COMMAND TALKGROUPS: “PFFFF ES1–3”

Contents

13.1 Activity ........................................................................................................... 64
13.2 Details .............................................................................................................. 64
13.3 Exit/Return to Normality .................................................................................. 65
Each force has a set of Emergency Service Talkgroups (ES1-3) to provide Interoperable Voice Communication at bronze (operational) command level between police and other agencies. It can be used for both pre-planned and spontaneous incidents as a means to enhance the collaborative exercise of command, control and inter-agency coordination.

**Note 1:** It is recommended that these talkgroups also be used as the default interoperability solution for **all users regardless of role** at an incident involving multiple agencies when this would add value for any of the purposes set out in paragraph iv in the Foreword.

**Note 2:** When an ES Talkgroup is used as the default interoperability solution, authority to do so must be given by the police control centre, which should then take responsibility for its management, monitoring and audio recording.

**Note 3:** Such use as an immediate solution to a challenging communications environment will give commanders and operators time to then develop and implement a more long-term talkgroup solution as required.

**Note 4:** Forces will find it beneficial to exercise this as a common talkgroup available to all who perform the role of bronze (operational) commander for their agency in the context of a multi-agency response to an incident or event.

The ES1-3 Talkgroups will only be exchanged with approved Responder Agencies authorised by the Emergency Services Sharers Advisory Group (ESSAG) or National Interoperability and Interworking Group (NIIG) that are defined, currently, as:

- Police forces: including the British Transport Police (BTP), the Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Service (MDP) and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC);
- Emergency services: including the Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services, and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency;
- British armed forces when providing Military Aid to the Civil Power or Civil Authority and on other occasions when their personnel need to communicate by radio with partner agencies;
- Government agencies: UK Border Agency, HM Revenue and Customs, and Department for Work and Pensions;
- HM Prison Service and Category A prison escort services; and
- Local Authority Emergency Responders from the Emergency Planning Teams.
Note: The MPS has five Emergency Service Talkgroups.

13.1 Activity

13.1.1 The decision to use this talkgroup should come from the police silver (tactical) commander, potentially, on the recommendation of the police control centre supervisor. It can also be requested by one of the other Responder Agencies listed above. Such use would be on the basis that Interoperable Voice Communication is essential, because it adds value to the way in which commanders from different agencies can coordinate their collective response to an incident or event.

13.1.2 It is strongly recommended that this talkgroup is audio monitored by at least one of the agencies using it. Usually, this will be the police control centre. Users and operators in each of the Responder Agencies must be advised when the talkgroup is in use.

13.1.3 It is not always necessary for the police to be involved. However, as control of the talkgroups rests with the police, permission to use ES1 to 3 must be obtained from the police control centre. The latter can advise on its availability.

13.1.4 Unless command and control of the resources from one agency have been handed over to another, such as can happen in search and rescue operations, use of ES1 to 3 must not undermine the integrity of command for any of the agencies present. Each will ordinarily retain control over its own resources, and continue to maintain a duty of care for them.

13.1.5 Invocation

- As directed by the police control centre.
- Following a request to the control centre, which will check availability.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is not monitored routinely.

13.2 Details

13.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

All operator positions.

13.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

As a minimum, the ES1 to 3 Talkgroups of the home and neighbouring forces must be loaded into all terminals.
13.2.3 Availability in IBIS terminals

The ES1–3 Talkgroups are loaded in IBIS terminals. In London, the MPS has loaded all five of its ES Talkgroups.

13.2.4 Availability in London Underground

MPS, BTP and CoLP ES1–3(5) Talkgroups are loaded in London Underground.

13.2.5 Planning

- Local procedures and protocols need to be developed between the Responder Agencies so that each understands the availability of the ES1-3 Talkgroups and how they can be used, including as a single, multi-agency talkgroup. It would be appropriate to involve the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) or equivalent in this process.

- Forces may wish to consider using the ES1–3 Talkgroups routinely to facilitate local-level interoperability, e.g. at a road traffic collision. Such a decision will require agreement with the partner agencies and an instruction to users and control centres about when and how to use and monitor the talkgroups.

- It may also be appropriate to develop and implement working practices that make one or more of the ES Talkgroups a "default interoperability talkgroup" (see section 2.2).

- Consideration may be given to including the ES Talkgroups in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to control centre operators; particularly if their use forms part of a contingency plan.

13.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief. If use of the talkgroup has been instigated by an agency other than the police, they must notify the force that the talkgroup is no longer in use.
Emergency Service Talkgroup
PFFFF ES1–3
Planned Operation

**Force A**
Decide to make use of the multi-agency bronze talkgroup (PFFFF ES1-3)
Use of this talkgroup can only be authorised by a commander or control centre supervisor if it is to be used to communicate between a group of commanders.

**OR**

**PUG Authorised Organisations**
Decide to make use of the multi agency bronze talkgroup (PFFFF ES1-3)
Use of this talkgroup can only be authorised by a supervisor of a PUG authorised organisation if it is to be used to communicate between a group of commanders.

**All supervisors agree to make use of the ES1-3 talkgroups for a particular incident**

**Force A and PUG Authorised Organisations**
All bronze and (if required) silver commanders communicating together allowing a common operating picture from a single all informed talkgroup (PFFFF ES1 - 3)

**End of incident**

**Before using the talkgroups, checks are to be made to ensure it is not already being used**

**Force A**
End monitoring the multi agency bronze talkgroup (PFFFF ES1 - 3) and revert to their normal working talkgroups

**PUG Authorised Organisations**
End using the multi agency bronze talkgroup (PFFFF ES1 - 3) and revert to their normal working talkgroups

**KEY**
Multi-Agency Bronze talkgroup
Emergency Service Talkgroup
PFFFF ES1 – 3

Spontaneous Operation

**Force A**
Force user decides to make use of the emergency service talkgroup (PFFFF ES1 - 3) in order to deal with a multi-agency incident

**PUG Authorised Organisation**
User decides to make use of the multi-agency bronze talkgroup (PFFFF ES1 - 3) in order to deal with a multi-agency incident

OR

**Force A**
Control centre agrees to the request & checks that a talkgroup is free in the PFFFF ES1-3 range. Control room monitors the talkgroup

**PUG Authorised Organisation**
User contacts the host force via force sharers' hailing talkgroup (PFFFF SHG1) and requests interoperability with Force A user on the emergency service talkgroup (PFFFF ES1-3)

**Force A & PUG Authorised Organisation**
Users communicating together dealing with an incident using talkgroup (PFFFF ES1 - 3)

End of incident

**Force A**
Airwave user switches back to standard working talkgroup

**PUG Authorised Organisations**
User switches back to authorised organisation standard working talkgroup

**Key**
- Force A Sharers Hailing talkgroup
- Multi Agency Bronze talkgroup
- Force A Standard talkgroup
Section 14
GOVERNMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT TALKGROUP: “PFFFF GOV1”

Contents

14.1 Activity ............................................................................................................. 69
14.2 Details ............................................................................................................... 69
14.3 Exit/Return to Normality .................................................................................. 70
Each force has a Government and Law Enforcement Talkgroup to provide interoperable voice communication between police and other government enforcement agencies. It is available to:

- HM Revenue and Customs;
- Department for Work and Pensions;
- Gangmasters Licensing Authority;
- UK Border Agency;
- Environment Agency;
- Health Protection Agency.

Awaiting approval:
- HM Prison Service.

### 14.1 Activity

14.1.1 Communications on the PFFFF GOV1 Talkgroup will either be pre-arranged for a planned operation or follow a spontaneous call on the PFFFF HG1 or PFFFF SHG1.

**Note:** The PFFFF GOV1 Talkgroup is **not** routinely monitored and should not be used as a police or sharers hailing talkgroup.

14.1.2 For planned events, contact must be made with the relevant control centre in a timely fashion to ensure consideration is given to audio monitoring the talkgroup.

14.1.3 In spontaneous circumstances, the control operator will start to audio monitor/record the talkgroup once invoked.

14.1.4 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or supervisor.
- Following a request to the control centre and checking that it is not already in use.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and then use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is **not** monitored routinely.

### 14.2 Details

14.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Operator positions are to be designated to support use of this talkgroup as dictated by force policy.
14.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The GOV1 Talkgroup of the home force and neighbouring forces must be loaded into all terminals. Those for other forces may also be loaded.

14.2.3 Considerations

If the other agencies have local police officers embedded in the teams, then calls for assistance may come via that route on the working talkgroups.

14.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

This talkgroup is **not** loaded in IBIS terminals.

14.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

This talkgroup is **not** loaded in the London Underground.

14.2.6 Planning

- Local procedures and protocols need to be developed between the police and government users so that each understands the availability of the GOV1 Talkgroup and how it will be used.
- Consideration may be given to including the GOV1 Talkgroup in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to control centre operators; particularly if use of this talkgroup forms part of a contingency plan.

14.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief. If use of the talkgroup has been instigated by an agency other than the host force, they must notify the force that the talkgroup is no longer in use.
Government and Law Enforcement Talkgroup
PFFFFF GOV1

Authorized Users
May request the opening of the government and law enforcement talkgroup because of a pre planned operation or via the force hailing talkgroup (PFFFF HG1) or the sharers hailing talkgroup (PFFFF SHG1)

Force A
Request received via either force hailing talkgroup, sharers hailing talkgroup or as part of a planned operation. Control centre operators start monitoring the government and law enforcement talkgroup (PFFFF GOV1)

Authorized Users & Force A
May now interoperare with each other

End of incident

Authorized Users
End using the government and law enforcement talkgroup (PFFFF GOV1) and revert to their normal working talkgroups

Force A
End monitoring the government and law enforcement talkgroup (PFFFF GOV1) and revert to their normal working talkgroups

KEY
- Government And Law Enforcement talkgroup
- Force A Hailing talkgroup
- Force A sharers Hailing talkgroup
Section 15
IMMIGRATION SERVICE TALKGROUP: “PFFFC IS1”

Contents

15.1 Activity........................................................................................................... 73
15.2 Details ............................................................................................................. 73
15.3 Exit/Return to Normality.................................................................................. 74
Each force has an Immigration Service Talkgroup providing interoperable voice communication between police forces and the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA).

**Note:** The name and use of this talkgroup is likely to evolve to encompass other agencies involved in the protection of United Kingdom borders, e.g.:

- Maritime and Coastguard Agency;
- HM Revenue and Customs;
- Ports Police;
- Port Authorities;
- Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

### 15.1 Activity

15.1.1 Communications on the PFFFF IS1 Talkgroup will either be pre-arranged for a planned operation or follow a spontaneous call on the PFFFF HG1 or PFFFF SHG1.

**Note:** The PFFFF IS1 Talkgroup is not monitored routinely and should not be used as a hailing talkgroup.

15.1.2 In pre-planned events, contact must be made with the relevant control centre in a timely fashion to ensure consideration is given to audio monitoring the talkgroup.

15.1.3 In spontaneous circumstances, the control operator will start to audio monitor/record the IS1 Talkgroup once invoked.

15.1.4 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or supervisor.
- Following a request to the control centre and checking that it is not already in use.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and then use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is not monitored routinely.

### 15.2 Details

15.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Operator positions should be designated to support use of the talkgroup as directed by force policy.

15.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The IS1 Talkgroup of the home force and neighbouring forces must be loaded into all terminals. Consideration should be given to the benefits of loading those for other forces.
15.2.3 Considerations

If the UKBA has local police officers embedded in the teams, then calls for assistance may come via that route on the force working talkgroups.

15.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

This talkgroup is not loaded in IBIS terminals.

15.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

This talkgroup is not loaded in the London Underground.

15.2.6 Planning

- Local procedures and protocols need to be developed between the police and the UKBA so that each understands the availability of the IS1 Talkgroup and how it will be used.
- Consideration may be given to including the IS1 Talkgroup in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to control centre operators; particularly if use of this talkgroup forms part of a contingency plan.

15.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief. If use of the talkgroup has been instigated by an agency other than the host force, they must notify the force that the talkgroup is no longer in use.
Immigration Service Talkgroup
PFFFF IS1

Immigration Service
May request the opening of the immigration
service talkgroup because of a planned
operation or via the force hailing talkgroup
(PFFFF HG1) or sharers hailing talkgroup
(PFFFF SHG1)

Force A
Request received via either force hailing talkgroup
(PFFFF HG1) or sharers hailing talkgroup
or as part of a planned operation
Control centre operators start monitoring the
immigration service talkgroup
(PFFFF IS1)

Immigration Service and Force A
May now interoperate with each other

End of incident

Immigration Service
End using the immigration service
talkgroup (PFFFF IS1) and revert to their
normal working talkgroups

Force A
End monitoring the immigration service
talkgroup (PFFFF IS1) and revert to their
normal working talkgroups

Key
Immigration Service Talkgroup
Force A Hailing Talkgroup
Force A sharers Hailing Talkgroup
Section 16

POLICE FORCE “EVENT” TALKGROUPS: ALPHATAG DEPENDENT ON INDIVIDUAL FORCE PROTOCOL

Contents

16.1 Activity ........................................................................................................ 77
16.2 Details ........................................................................................................... 77
16.3 Exit/Return to Normality ............................................................................... 78
Each police force has created a set of talkgroups which have been shared nationally with others for use in cross-border events and mutual aid. The alphatag is force specific, and so they have not necessarily been named in a consistent fashion. Hence, it is not possible to present a generic one here.

**Note:** These talkgroups are awaiting load as and when forces update their terminals. They will all be available by the end of 2010.

### 16.1 Activity

16.1.1 These talkgroups are available for use by forces managing an event requiring resources from outside the force area, such as police accompanying away supporters to a football ground.

16.1.2 The talkgroups are only available in the host force control centres, though are present in all police hand held and mobile terminals nationally. As such, they are not likely to be suitable for incidents where two police forces both wish to monitor their users, for example across a mutual border. The INTOP talkgroups would be more appropriate under these circumstances.

16.1.3 Principally, these talkgroups will be used either for a planned operation or in response to an escalating incident that prompts the silver (tactical) commander to request invocation. The Event Talkgroups belong to individual forces, so they do not need ASL to invoke them. Their use does require notification to a control centre operator to start audio monitoring and recording. Users will need to be directed on to the talkgroup appropriate to their role and/or geographic location.

16.1.4 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre.
- Following a request to the control centre and checking that it is not already in use.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and then use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroups are **not** monitored routinely.

### 16.2 Details

16.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

As a minimum, all operator positions used for controlling incidents outside “business as usual”.

16.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

All police terminals nationally by the end of 2010.
16.2.3 Considerations

- Silver (tactical) commanders must be aware of the availability and benefits of the Force Event Talkgroup; how it can be accessed, and its availability to other Responder Agencies.
- The Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisor (FOATA) or Airwave Team should be consulted for advice on network capacity on the ground.
- The capacity of commanders to manage numerous talkgroups, and the benefits, therefore, of using just one talkgroup for inter-force coordination.

16.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

These talkgroups are not loaded in IBIS terminals.

16.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

PBTPF WEV01–10 and PCITY EVENT1 are loaded in the London Underground.

16.2.6 Planning

- Operational plans should describe the purposes to which these talkgroups can be used.
- Consideration should be given to including additional “Event” Talkgroups in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to a control centre operator, particularly if their use forms part of a contingency plan.
- Operational planners must check that these talkgroups have been loaded in the terminals of users attending an event.

16.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief.
Additional Event Talkgroups
(PFFFE # # #)

- **Force A**
  - Operational user dealing with a local incident on event talkgroup
  - Control centre request mutual aid from neighbouring forces via an agreed method
  - Control room monitoring event talkgroup

- **Force B**
  - Operational user on route to Force A incident on Force B standard talkgroup

- **Force C**
  - Operational user on route to Force A incident on Force C standard talkgroup

- **Force B**
  - As operational user approaches Force A area they switch to Force A event talkgroup

- **Force C**
  - As operational user approaches Force A area they switch to Force A event talkgroup

- **Force A, B & C**
  - Operational user dealing with incident on Force A event talkgroup

- **Force B & Force C**
  - All operational users now on Force A event talkgroup and report their deployment availability to Force A control centre

- **Incident resolved**

- **Force A**
  - Operational users switch back to Force A standard working talkgroup and log back in with Force A control centre

- **Force B**
  - Operational users book off with Force A control centre and switch back to Force B standard working talkgroup.

- **Force C**
  - Operational users book off with Force A control centre and switch back to Force C standard working talkgroup.

**Key**
- Force A Event talkgroup
- Force B standard talkgroup
- Force C standard talkgroup
Section 17
NATIONAL POLICE MUTUAL AID TALKGROUPS: “PMA 1–30”

Contents

17.1 Activity ................................................................. 81
17.2 Details ........................................................................ 82
17.3 Exit/Return to Normality .............................................. 83
National Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups are not force specific but available to all police forces whenever circumstances demand. PMA Talkgroups are otherwise dormant and can only be “switched on” or “enabled” by Airwave Solutions Limited (ASL) when required.

The first three talkgroups from each block of ten have been allocated as “command” talkgroups; the remaining seven in each block have been allocated as “working” talkgroups.

**Note:** There may be competing demands for the use of PMA talkgroups.

### 17.1 Activity

17.1.1 The PMA Talkgroups are available via Airwave in the event that a force requires significant mutual aid that exceeds the capacity of its own Event Talkgroups.

17.1.2 Subsets of the thirty talkgroups (ten per force) are available in control centres in all forces and all thirty are loaded in all police terminals nationally. This means that the talkgroups can be used where an incident straddles one or more force boundary and requires more than one force control centre to audio monitor. Consequently, it is important the same set is used by each control centre.

17.1.3 Principally, these talkgroups will be used either for a pre-planned operation/contingency or in response to an escalating incident that prompts the silver (tactical) commander to request their invocation. The PMA Talkgroups 1–30 do not belong to individual forces, so they need to be invoked through ASL. Their use also requires notification to a control centre operator to start audio monitoring and recording. Users will need to be directed on to the talkgroup appropriate to their role and/or geographic location.

17.1.4 ASL should be notified if the requirement ends early so the company can reallocate them (if required). Similarly, ASL should be advised as soon as possible if the event continues beyond the anticipated end time.

17.1.5 Only users involved in the event for which the talkgroup has been allocated should use it. Any scanning for non-operational reasons will impact on network capacity.

17.1.6 Only the control centre(s) monitoring the event should respond to an emergency activation on the PMA Talkgroup.

### 17.1.7 Invocation

- PMA 1-30 Talkgroups require invocation by ASL, which will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.
- If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL needs to be advised as soon as possible.
Note: There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

17.2 Details

17.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Each force has been allocated a designated subset of ten (of the thirty PMA Talkgroups) on a geographical basis, which are also shared with other forces. Ideally, these should be loaded in all operator positions.

17.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

All thirty PMA Talkgroups are loaded into all police terminals.

17.2.3 Considerations

- Police commanders must be aware of the availability of the PMA Talkgroups and how they can be accessed.
- The Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisor (FOATA) or Airwave Team should be consulted for advice on network capacity on the ground.
- The capacity of commanders to manage numerous talkgroups, and the benefits, therefore, of using just one talkgroup for inter-force coordination.
- If the incident involves Responder Agencies beyond the police, alternative talkgroups may be more appropriate.
- There may be competing demand for PMA Talkgroups.

17.2.4 Availability in IBIS terminals

PMA Talkgroups 1–30 are not loaded in IBIS terminals.

17.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

PMA Talkgroups 21–30 are loaded in the London Underground but will be amended to 61–70 as this range is adopted by the London forces in 2010.

17.2.6 Planning

- Operational plans should describe the purposes for which this set of PMA Talkgroups can be used.
- Consideration should be given to including PMA 1-30 in a “Major Incident Profile” easily available to a control centre operator, particularly if use of these talkgroups forms part of a contingency plan.
• When using these talkgroups is proposed, they should be booked through ASL as early as possible.

17.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Police Mutual Aid 1-30 Talkgroups
PMA 1-30

Force A
Identifies a situation which requires additional talkgroup availability.
Airwave solutions Ltd are contacted to switch on a number of talkgroups in the PMA 1-30 range.

Force A
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 1-30)

Force B
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 1-30)

Force C
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 1-30)

Force D
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 1-30)

All Users
Have the ability to communicate on the same talkgroup

All Users
Event finishes. All operational users switch back to their own forces standard talkgroup

Force A
Contacts Airwave Solutions Ltd and advises them that the requested police mutual aid talkgroups can now be switched off.

Key
Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups 1-30
Administration route
Section 18
UNMONITORED NATIONAL POLICE MUTUAL AID TALKGROUPS: “PMA 31–60”

Contents

18.1 Activity .......................................................... 86
18.2 Details ............................................................. 87
18.3 Exit/Return to Normality ...................................... 88
National Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups are not force specific but available to all forces whenever circumstances demand. They are otherwise dormant and will only be “switched on” or “enabled” when required.

This block of thirty PMA Talkgroups has been created for additional operational and administrative functions where there is no requirement for control centre involvement in the talkgroup. Examples include motorcycle outriders on convoy duties and multiple forces working together, such as regional public order training. Their availability also caters for future expansion.

To allow forces to incorporate the availability of PMA Talkgroups 31–60 into their plans and to facilitate better management of potential demand, the talkgroups are nominally subdivided into groups of ten, which is in accord with the original PMA1-30; (PMA 31-40, 41-50 and 51-60). There is no reason why PMA Talkgroups 31–60 cannot be loaded into control centres, if required, to reduce pressure on the primary sets of PMA Talkgroups available to a force.

18.1 Activity

18.1.1 When a force requires mutual aid that exceeds the capacity or capability of its own talkgroups, the PMA Talkgroups 31–60 are available, on invocation, from ASL.

18.1.2 The talkgroups are in all police terminals nationally. As such, they are suitable for incidents where two or more forces are working across boundaries up to the national level. However, the talkgroups have not been mandated for loading into control centres. Consequently, their utility must be considered if a force cannot audio monitor and record communications on these talkgroups.

18.1.3 Principally, the talkgroups will be used to deal with very specific issues involving pre-planned events. They do not belong to an individual force and need to be invoked by ASL. Where the capabilities exist to audio monitor and record these talkgroups in a control centre, the latter needs to be notified to commence those activities. Users will need to be directed on to a talkgroup appropriate to their role or geographic location.

18.1.4 Only users involved in the event for which the talkgroup has been allocated should operate on it. Any non-operational scanning will result impact on network capacity.

18.1.5 Invocation

- PMA 31-60 Talkgroups require invocation by ASL, which will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.
• If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL need to be advised as soon as possible.

**Note:** There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

### 18.2 Details

#### 18.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

While each force has a designated subset of ten (of the thirty) PMA Talkgroups, which are shared with other force; there has been no mandate for these to be loaded in operator positions.

#### 18.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

All thirty of these PMA Talkgroups are loaded into all police terminals.

#### 18.2.3 Considerations

• Police commanders should involve a Force Operational Airwave Tactical Adviser (FOATA) or their Airwave Team to review the technical implications and operational benefits of using these talkgroup during major incidents.

• If the incident involves Responder Agencies beyond the police, alternative PMA Talkgroups may be more appropriate.

#### 18.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

These talkgroups are **not** loaded in IBIS terminals.

#### 18.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

These talkgroups are **not** available in the London Underground.

#### 18.2.6 Planning

• Operational plans should describe the purposes for which this set of PMA Talkgroups can be used.

• Once use of these talkgroups is proposed, they should be booked with ASL as early as possible.

• It is recommended that the NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Team be contacted when such use is contemplated.

• If the event for which their use is being considered does not span force boundaries, other talkgroups may be more appropriate.
Consideration should be given to including PMA talkgroups in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to a control centre operator (if loaded), particularly if use of these talkgroups forms part of a contingency plan.

18.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Unmonitored National Police Mutual Aid 31-60 Talk
PMA 31-60

Important Note
Presently these talkgroups are unmonitored. When using an unmonitored talkgroup it must be remembered that, if an emergency button is depressed, the emergency call may not be received in a control centre.

These talkgroups have been created for use where there is no requirement for control centre involvement. At present the uses for these talkgroups include training and convoy duties because they are available in all Airwave terminals.

Force A
Identifies a situation which requires additional talkgroup availability.

Airwave Solutions Ltd are contacted to switch on a number of talkgroups in the PMA 31-60 range.

Force A
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 31-60)

Force B
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 31-60)

Force C
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 31-60)

Force D
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup (PMA 31-60)

All Users
Have the ability to communicate on the same talkgroup

All Users
Event finishes. All operational users switch back to their own forces standard talkgroup

Force A
Contacts Airwave Solutions Ltd and advises them that the requested Police Mutual Aid talkgroups can now be switched off.

Key
Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups 31 to 60
Administration route
Section 19
NATIONAL POLICE MUTUAL
AID TALKGROUPS FOR
LONDON: “PMA 61–70”

Contents

19.1 Activity ................................................................. 91
19.2 Details ............................................................... 91
19.3 Exit/Return to Normality ......................................... 92
National Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups for London are designated for use by forces that contribute to policing the Capital. These talkgroups are otherwise dormant and will only be “switched on” or “enabled” when required. Their functionality reflects that of PMA 01–30.

19.1 Activity

19.1.1 When a force policing London requires mutual aid which exceeds the capacity or capability of its own talkgroups, PMA Talkgroups 61–70 are available, on invocation, from ASL.

19.1.2 The talkgroups are in all police terminals nationally. As such, they are suitable for incidents where two or more police forces are operating within the London area.

19.1.3 Principally, the talkgroups will be used to deal with very specific issues involving pre-planned events. They do not belong to an individual force and need to be invoked by ASL, but will be available to be monitored within the Metropolitan Police control centre.

19.1.4 Only users involved in the event for which the talkgroup has been allocated should operate on it. Any non-operational scanning will result in impact on network capacity.

19.1.5 Only the control centre supervising the event should respond to an emergency button activation on the PMA 61-70 Talkgroups.

19.1.6 Invocation

- PMA 61-70 Talkgroups require invocation by ASL, which will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.
- If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL need to be advised as soon as possible.

Note: There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

19.2 Details

19.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

These talkgroups will be available to be monitored on the MPS Police ICCS.
19.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

PMA Talkgroups 61–70 are loaded into all police terminals.

19.2.3 Considerations

- Police commanders should consult a Force Operational Airwave Tactical Adviser (FOATA) or in-force Airwave Team to review the technical implications and operational benefits of using these talkgroups during major incidents.
- If the incident involves other Responder Agencies beyond the police, alternative PMA Talkgroups may be more appropriate.
- There may be competing demands for these talkgroups, although this is less likely as they serve on the London area.

19.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

PMA Talkgroups 61–70 are not loaded in IBIS terminals.

19.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

PMA Talkgroups 61–70 are loaded in the London Underground.

19.2.6 Planning

- Operational plans should describe the purposes for which this set of PMA Talkgroups can be used.
- Once use of these talkgroups is proposed, they should be booked with ASL as early as possible.
- If the event for which their use is being considered does not require more than one London police force, other talkgroups may be more appropriate.
- Consideration should be given to including PMA 61–70 in a “Major Incident Profile” within forces serving London that is easily available to a control centre operator (if loaded), particularly if use of these talkgroups forms part of a contingency plan.

19.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Unmonitored Police Mutual Aid
61-70 Talkgroups for London
PMA 61-70

Force Policing London
Identify a situation which requires additional talkgroup availability.
Airwave Solutions Ltd is contacted to invoke a number of talkgroups in the PMA 61-70 range.

Force A
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup(s) (PMA 61-70)

Force B
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup(s) (PMA 61-70)

Force C
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup(s) (PMA 61-70)

Force D
Operational users switch to the required Police Mutual Aid talkgroup(s) (PMA 61-70)

All Users
Have the ability to communicate on the same talkgroup

All Users
Event finishes. All operational users switch back to their own forces' standard working talkgroup
When users have to travel back via other force areas, use of the travelling talkgroup (PMA 91) should be considered.

Force Policing London
Contacts Airwave Solutions Ltd and advises them that the requested Police Mutual Aid talkgroups can now be switched off.

KEY
Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups 61 to 70
Administration Route

Standard Operating Procedure Guide on Police to Police and Inter-Agency Airwave Interoperability © ACPO NPIA 2010
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
Section 20
NATIONAL POLICE ONLY
MUTUAL AID TALKGROUPS: “PMA 71–75”

Contents

20.1 Activity................................................................. 95
20.2 Details ........................................................................ 96
20.3 Exit/Return to Normality........................................... 96
- National Police only Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups 71-75 are not force specific but available to all police forces whenever operational needs require them.

- This block of five PMA Talkgroups has been created for use by any force that requires the capability to manage communications for a single event across the length of the country and speak directly with all the force control centres involved. An example of how they are used is the "Round England Cycle Race", which, while it travels across numerous forces and boundaries, has been controlled centrally by West Yorkshire Police.

- These talkgroups may also be used for spontaneous communications between national and territorial forces in England, Wales and Scotland. (See also section 28.)

### 20.1 Activity

20.1.1 These five talkgroups are available in all force control centres and all police terminals nationally. This means they can be used where an incident or event straddles one or more force boundaries and requires more than one force control centre to monitor.

20.1.2 Principally, these talkgroups will be used either for a pre-planned operation/contingency or in response to an escalating incident that prompts the silver (tactical) commander to request their invocation. The PMA Talkgroups 71–75 do not belong to individual forces, so they need to be invoked through ASL. Their use also requires notification to a control centre operator to start audio monitoring and recording. Users will need to be directed on to the talkgroup appropriate to their role and/or geographic location.

20.1.3 ASL should be notified when the requirement for these talkgroups ends early so they can be reallocated if required. Similarly, ASL should be advised as soon as possible if the event continues beyond the anticipated end time.

20.1.4 Only the control centre monitoring the event should respond to an emergency button activation on these PMA Talkgroups.

### 20.1.5 Invocation

- PMA 71–75 Talkgroups require invocation by ASL, which will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.

- If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL need to be advised as soon as possible.

**Note:** There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and
Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

20.2 Details

20.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Mandated to be loaded in all control centres.

20.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

PMA Talkgroups 71–75 are loaded into all police terminals.

20.2.3 Considerations

- Police commanders should consult a Force Operational Airwave Tactical Adviser (FOATA) or in-force Airwave Team to review the technical implications and operational benefits of using these talkgroups during major incidents.
- There may be competing demands from other forces for these talkgroups.

20.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

PMA Talkgroups 71–75 are not loaded in IBIS terminals.

20.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

PMA Talkgroups 71–75 are not loaded in the London Underground.

20.2.6 Planning

- Operational plans should describe the purposes for which this set of PMA Talkgroups can be used.
- Once use of these talkgroups is proposed, they should be booked with ASL as early as possible.
- It is recommended that the NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Team be contacted when such use is contemplated.
- If the event for which their use is being considered does not span force boundaries, other talkgroups may be more appropriate.

20.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Police Only National Mutual Aid 71-75 Talkgroups
PMA 71-75

Force A
Identifies a situation which requires talkgroup availability that is available nationally in both Airwave terminals and control centres. Airwave Solutions Ltd are contacted to switch on a number of talkgroups in the PMA 71-75 range. Force A retains primacy (subject to agreement) for the whole event.

Event moves to Force B area

Force B
Control centre may monitor the event by switching to the required talkgroup in the police mutual aid range 71-75 (PMA 71-75). Any officers from Force B that are required to give aid can join the talkgroup and contact Force A.

Event moves to Force C area

Force C
Control centre may monitor the event by switching to the required talkgroup in the police mutual aid range 71-75 (PMA 71-75). Any officers from Force C that are required to give aid can join the talkgroup and contact Force A.

Event moves to Force D area

Force D
Control centre may monitor the event by switching to the required talkgroup in the police mutual aid range 71-75 (PMA 71-75). Any officers from Force D that are required to give aid can join the talkgroup and contact Force A.

Event moves to Force E area

Force E
Control centre may monitor the event by switching to the required talkgroup in the police mutual aid range 71-75 (PMA 71-75). Any officers from Force E that are required to give aid can join the talkgroup and contact Force A.

Force A
Contacts Airwave Solutions Ltd and advises them that the requested Police Mutual Aid talkgroups can now be switched off.

All Officers
Event finishes. All officers switch back to their own forces' standard working talkgroup.

**KEY**
- Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups 61-70
- Administration Route
Section 21
NATIONAL POLICE ONLY
MUTUAL AID TALKGROUPS:
“PMA 76–80”

Contents

21.1 Activity................................................................. 99
21.2 Details ................................................................. 100
21.3 Exit/Return to Normality............................................. 100
The National Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups 76-80 are intended to supplement PFFFF FA1, PFFFF PROT1 and MPS PROT #. They are in addition to any bilateral agreements forces might have concerning the use of other talkgroups for cross-border firearms operations and protection duties. **Forces will only programme these five talkgroups into terminals used by:**

- Officers engaged in covert/crime in action/surveillance duties;
- Firearms officers and those who provide a command role or support function in firearms operations;
- Officers engaged on Counter Terrorism duties; and
- Protection officers.

These talkgroups have not been mandated for availability in control centres. The expectation is that they cannot be audio monitored unless the force protocol directs them to be.

### 21.1 Activity

21.1.1 Where an incident requires specialist users (as described above) from one force to work with another, or where two or more of these specialist units need to communicate with each other by radio, one of the PMA 76-80 Talkgroups will provide them with a secure capability to do so. The benefits is all other (unauthorised) users are excluded from being able to select and monitor these talkgroups. They can, though, be audio monitored, as required, by a control centre.

21.1.2 Use of these talkgroups must be initiated by an operational commander for one of the units involved.

21.1.3 Unless other protocols apply involving alternative talkgroups, users providing aid to those already using one of these talkgroups must be directed to use it too.

### 21.1.4 Invocation

- PMA 76-80 Talkgroups require invocation by ASL, which will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.
- If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL should be advised as soon as possible.

**Note:** There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.
21.2 Details

21.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

The PMA 76-80 set of talkgroups are not mandated for loading in control centres.

21.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

PMA Talkgroups 76-80 are loaded nationally into terminals available to users whose role authorises them to have access.

21.2.3 Considerations

- Police commanders should consult a Force Operational Airwave Tactical Adviser (FOATA) or in-force Airwave Team to review the technical implications and operational benefits of using these talkgroups during operations.
- There may be competing demands from other forces or specialist units for these talkgroups.

21.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

PMA Talkgroups 76–80 are not loaded in IBIS terminals.

21.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

PMA Talkgroups 76–80 are not loaded in the London Underground.

21.2.6 Planning

- Operational plans should describe the purposes for which this set of PMA Talkgroups can be used.
- Once use of these talkgroups is proposed, they should be booked with ASL as early as possible.
- It is recommended that the NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Team is contacted when such use is contemplated.
- If the event for which their use is being considered does not span force boundaries, other talkgroups may be more appropriate.

21.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Police Only National
Mutual Aid 76 - 80 Talkgroups
PMA 76 - 80

Important Note
Presently these talkgroups are unmonitored. When using an unmonitored talkgroup it must be remembered that, if an emergency button is depressed, the emergency call may not be received in a control centre.

Force A
Specialist officers involved in an incident on Force A standard talkgroup require mutual aid from other specialist officers from both their own and a neighbouring force. This event may be either planned or a spontaneous incident.

Force A
Control centre acknowledges the request. Force A commander authorises the use of police mutual aid talkgroup (PMA 76-80) Airwave Solutions Ltd contacted to switch on a number of talkgroups in the PMA 76-80 range.

Force B
Control centre receives the request and forwards the information to its specialist officers.

Force A
Control centre contacts the requested specialist officers and instructs them to switch to the required talkgroup in the PMA 76-80 range.

Force B
Officers receive the call and switch to the required talkgroup in the PMA 76-80 range.

All Specialist Officers
Now working on the same talkgroup in the range PMA 76 - 80

Incident completed

Force A
Control centre contacts Airwave Solutions Ltd and advises them that they may now switch off the requested PMA talkgroups in the range 76 - 80.

Force A
Officers switch back to Force A standard working.

Force B
Officers return to Force B area and switch back on to Force B standard working talkgroup.

Key
Police Mutual Aid Talk groups 76 to 80
Force B Standard Talkgroup
Force A Standard Talkgroup
Other Form Of Communication

Standard Operating Procedure Guide on Police to Police and Inter-Agency Airwave Interoperability
© ACPO NPIA 2010
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

101
Section 22
POLICE INTEROPERABILITY
MUTUAL AID TALKGROUPS: “PMA 81–90”

Contents

22.1 Activity................................................................. 103
22.2 Details ................................................................. 104
22.3 Exit/Return to Normality............................................. 105
These are termed “closed” talkgroups for joint-agency operations when a control centre operator is not usually required to monitor usage, as this can be done by users and their supervisors on the ground. The decision to use them should take into account any apparent risks of not having a control centre monitoring or audio recording communications. Therefore, it remains a matter for each force to consider whether or not to include these talkgroups on its Communications Control Interface (CCI).

Examples of their use include:

- For “at incident” management, in addition to the mandated Emergency Service (ES) and Incident Command (IC) Talkgroups;
- Inter-agency convoy communications, e.g. police can use these for communicating with the Category ‘A’ prisoner escort services;
- For multi-agency exercises as part of the National Exercise Programme.

The following are defined as belonging to the extended community of public safety, enforcement and investigative agencies approved to use of these talkgroups:

- Emergency services: including the Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services, and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency;
- British armed forces when providing Military Aid to the Civil Power or Civil Authority, and on other occasions when needed to communicate with other agencies;
- Government agencies: UK Border Agency, HM Revenue and Customs, and Department for Work and Pensions; and
- HM Prison Service and Category A prison escort services.

### 22.1 Activity

22.1.1 The decision to use these talkgroups must be made either by a police commander or police control centre supervisor, and it should be based on a clearly defined need for users to communicate on these as opposed to any others available. All users in each of the agencies involved must be advised that the talkgroup is in use.

**Note:** Use of these talkgroups must not undermine the integrity of command for any of the agencies present. Each will retain control over its own personnel and continue to maintain a duty of care for them.
22.1.2 Invocation

- PMA 81–90 Talkgroups are available to the Police Service for booking purposes only and require invocation by ASL, which will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.
- If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL needs to be advised as soon as possible.

**Note:** There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

22.2 Details

22.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Whilst a control centre operator is not usually required to manage communications on these talkgroups, where forces have space to do so, it is considered prudent to load subsets of them on to control centre positions to supplement others used for interoperability.

22.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The range PMA 81-90 is loaded in all Airwave terminals.

22.2.3 Considerations

PMA 81–90 may be used to supplement local ES and IC talkgroups, but there is no standard requiring them to be loaded in control centres.

22.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

These talkgroups should be loaded in IBIS terminals.

22.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

These talkgroups are available in the London Underground. However, this is under review currently.

22.2.6 Planning

- Operational plans should describe the purposes for which this set of PMA Talkgroups can be used.
- When such use is proposed, they should be booked with ASL as early as possible.
- Where loaded in a Communications Control Interface CCI, consideration should be given to including these talkgroups in a “Major Incident Profile” that is easily available to a control
centre operator, especially if their use forms part of a contingency plan.

22.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Police Interoperability
Mutual Aid 81-90 Talkgroups
PMA 81-90

Important Note
Presently these talkgroups are unmonitored. When using an unmonitored talkgroup it must be remembered that, if an emergency button is depressed, the emergency call may not be received in a control centre.

Force A
A situation has occurred (either planned or spontaneous) that necessitates Force A interoperating with a number of other “blue light” organisations.
Force A commander authorises the use of the talkgroup range PMA 81-90
Contact is made with Airwave Solutions Ltd to get the required talkgroups activated

Force A
Operational users involved in the event switch to the required talkgroup in the range PMA 81-90

Other Blue Light Organisations
Involved in the event switch to the required talkgroup in the range PMA 81-90

Force A and Other Blue Light Organisations
Interoperate together dealing with the same event

Event finishes

Force A
Switch back to their standard talkgroup
Control centre contacts Airwave solutions Ltd and advises them that they may now switch off the requested talkgroups in the range PMA 81-90

Other Blue Light Organisations
Return to their own standard working talkgroup

Key
Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups 81 to 90
Other Blue Light Standard Talkgroup
Force A Standard Talkgroup
Section 23

POLICE MUTUAL AID
TRAVELLING TALKGROUP:
“PMA 91”

Contents

23.1 Activity ............................................................................................................. 108
23.2 Details............................................................................................................... 108
23.3 Exit/Return to Normality ............................................................................... 109
This is intended as a ‘quiet’ talkgroup that all police users must select when travelling for mutual aid. Its use will enable them to affiliate to Airwave network without impacting adversely on network capacity in the forces through which they travel. Complete compliance is expected by travelling Police Support Units.

Users can only make or receive point-to-point or telephony calls, which will allow communications with their home force without ‘dragging’ group traffic across the country.

**Note 1:** ACPO Public Order regard use of this talkgroup as one of the essential tools for ensuring capacity is not overloaded by officers travelling between forces to provide mutual aid.

**Note 2:** Users must restrict themselves to this talkgroup while travelling and must not use or monitor their own force talkgroups either en route or during the mutual aid event. Supervisors are accountable for ensuring complete compliance.

**Note 3:** This talkgroup cannot be used for ‘group’ calls, as that functionality has been disabled.

### 23.1 Activity

23.1.1 On departing the home force, users must be directed to switch off their personal issue terminals. The vehicle mounted terminal must then be switched to PMA 91.

23.1.2 A DMO talkgroup can also be used allowing a number of users to communicate between each other whilst travelling together.

23.1.3 Invocation

No additional invocation procedure other than to select the talkgroup and then use the Push To Talk key.

### 23.2 Details

#### 23.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Not available. This is a ‘closed’ talkgroup and will **not** be programmed into any Communication Control Interface (CCI) ports. It has the ‘group’ functionality disabled and cannot, therefore, be audio monitored in a control centre.

#### 23.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

PMA 91 is loaded in all police Airwave terminals.

#### 23.2.3 Considerations

When planning for a mutual aid event, the “Communications” section of the operational order **must include a reminder** to all
travelling users about this talkgroup; its benefits, and the need for complete compliance with the instructions about its use.

23.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

PMA 91 is not loaded in IBIS terminals.

23.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

PMA 91 is not loaded in the London Underground.

23.2.6 Planning

Plans involving mutual aid must describe use of the Travelling Talkgroup. There is no requirement to pre-book it through ASL.

23.3 Exit/Return to Normality

On arrival at their destination, users should switch to the talkgroup directed in the operational orders. Once dismissed from the event, they should then revert to PMA 91.
Police Travelling Talkgroup
PMA 91

Important Note
This talkgroup is unmonitored. When using an unmonitored talkgroup it must be remembered that, if an emergency button is depressed, the emergency call may not be received in a control centre.

- **Vehicle Terminals**
  - Switched to travelling talkgroup (PMA 91)

- **Force A**
  - A large number of operational users travelling from Force A through a series of other force areas

- **Hand Terminals**
  - To be turned off when leaving the force area

  - Whilst on the travelling talkgroup only point to point or telephony can be used. HOWEVER users should be aware of the hailing talkgroups (PFFFFHG1) of all forces they are travelling through.

  - **Vehicle Terminals**
    - Switched to required talkgroup as directed by operational orders

  - **Hand Terminals**
    - May now be turned on and set to the required talkgroup as directed by operational orders

  - **Force A**
    - Operational users arrive at the required destination

**Key**
Travelling Talkgroup PMA 91
Section 24
INTER-AGENCY TALKGROUP: “XFFFFF IAT 1”

Contents

24.1 Activity ................................................................. 112
24.2 Details ................................................................. 113
24.3 Exit/Return to Normality ........................................ 113
The Inter-Agency Talkgroup forms part of the nationally mandated set for each police force to provide Interoperable Voice Communication between all Airwave users. These can include some not necessarily considered by all as falling into the categories of a Responder Agency, such as members of a Street Warden Scheme. The “X” element of the alphatag signifies that it is owned by ASL, and made available to all Responder Agencies.

It can be used as a single command talkgroup where doing so would:

- Reduce impact on network capacity; and
- Allow a Common Operating Picture to be developed and shared simultaneously across multiple agencies.

**Note 1:** Users should bear in mind the broad community with access to this talkgroup and consider alternative means of communicating information of a sensitive nature.

**Note 2:** Its use must not undermine the integrity of command for any of the agencies present. Each will retain control over its own staff and continue to maintain a duty of care for them.

### 24.1 Activity

24.1.1 The Inter-Agency Talkgroup may be used by two or more agencies to manage small, local incidents. Consideration should be given to audio monitoring its use by at least one control centre. This should be pre-arranged by local agreement and set out in an operational protocol.

24.1.2 Whenever police consider its use appropriate, authority to do so needs to be given either by the relevant police commander for the event or by a police control centre supervisor. Their decision should be based on a clearly defined need for Interoperable Voice Communications between the agencies involved. It should also include a direction as to whether the talkgroup is to be audio monitored and recorded in accordance with any local protocol. All users affected must be advised that the talkgroup is in use.

24.1.3 The use of IAT 1 is managed and administered by the local police control centre. Therefore, they must be consulted by any other Responder Agency that considers its use appropriate in order to ensure that the talkgroup is not already in use or booked for an imminent event. This applies even when the police are not to be involved in its use.

24.1.4 Invocation

- As directed by the control centre or commander.
- Following a request to the control centre and checking that it is not already in use.
- No additional procedures for users other than to select the talkgroup and then use the Push To Talk key.
- The talkgroup is **not** monitored routinely.

### 24.2 Details

#### 24.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Appropriate operator positions.

#### 24.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

Each force’s XFFFF IAT 1 is loaded in all Airwave terminals.

#### 24.2.3 Considerations

Other talkgroups or channels of communication may be more appropriate for exchanging sensitive information.

#### 24.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

The IAT 1 Talkgroup is loaded in all IBIS terminals.

#### 24.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

The IAT 1 Talkgroups are **not** loaded in the London Underground.

#### 24.2.6 Planning

- When determining whether to use IAT1, the MAMA1-10 range or one of the Police Mutual Aid (PMA) Talkgroups consideration should be given to the advantage IAT1 has over the MAMAs and PMAs, as it can be invoked immediately without referral to ASL and can be accessed by a broader range of agencies (there is also the fact that MAMAs and PMA 81-90 aren’t mandated to be available in control centres). Thus IAT1 would be more suitable for a spontaneous incident involving multiple agencies (with access to this talkgroup), whereas the PMA 81-90 range would be better for planned events that will be coordinated by the police involving the named Responder Agencies.
- IAT 1 can be used as one of a number of talkgroups for a single event.
- Contingency plans should include a description of the use of this talkgroup.
- Where loaded in a CCI, consideration should be given to including this talkgroup in a “Major Incident Profile”, so that it is available immediately to a control centre operator.

### 24.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. If use of the talkgroup has been activated by
an agency other than the police, the former must notify the force once the talkgroup is no longer required.
Inter-Agency Talkgroup

XFFFF IAT1

**Force A**
A situation has occurred (either planned or spontaneous) that necessitates Force A interoperating with a number of other “Airwave users”.

Force A commander or communications supervisor authorises the use of the talkgroup Force A XFFFF IAT1

**Force A**
Officers involved in the event switch to Force A XFFFF IAT1

**Airwave Users**
Involved in the event switch to Force A XFFFF IAT1

**Force A and Airwave Users**
Interoperate together dealing with the same event

**Event finishes**

**Force A**
Officers switch back to their standard talkgroup

**Airwave Users**
Return to their own standard working talkgroup

**Key**
- Inter Agency Talkgroup XFFFF IAT1
- Airwave Users standard working talkgroup
- Force A standard working talkgroup
Section 25
MULTI-AGENCY MUTUAL AID TALKGROUPS: "XMAMA 01-10"

Contents

25.1 Activity.......................................................... 117
25.2 Details ........................................................... 118
25.3 Exit/Return to Normality...................................... 118
Multi-Agency Mutual Aid (MAMA) Talkgroups are similar to the Police Mutual Aid (PMA) ones described in earlier sections (see sections 17 to 22) and available to all Airwave users. They provide Interoperable Voice Communication across a broad community of Responder Agencies for use at a large-scale event or incident. The "X" element of the alphatag signifies that it is owned by ASL, who also has responsibility for invocation. By way of example, successful use is made of these talkgroups by neighbouring Local Authorities during the Notting Hill Carnival.

Any agency can decide to use them at a particular event or incident. Coordination is essential and this is facilitated by ASL via its Network Management Centre (NMC), which helps to ensure proper control over use of this resource.

As with IAT 1, the XMAMA Talkgroups provide Interoperable Voice Communication between all Airwave users. Consequently, users should bear in mind the broad community with access to them prior to communicating information of a sensitive nature.

These talkgroups are of benefit when users outside the emergency services need to be able to communicate over Airwave and do not have access to other interoperability talkgroups.

**Note:** Their use must not undermine the integrity of command for any of the agencies present. Each will retain control over its own staff and continue to maintain a duty of care for them.

### 25.1 Activity

#### 25.1.1

The XMAMA Talkgroups may be used by two or more agencies to manage events and allow support to join them from sister and partner agencies. Consideration should be given to audio monitoring its use by at least one control centre. This should be pre-arranged by local agreement and set out in an operational protocol.

#### 25.1.2

Whenever police consider its use appropriate, authority to do so needs to be given either by the relevant police commander for the event or by a police control centre supervisor. Their decision should be based on a clearly defined need for Interoperable Voice Communications between the agencies involved. It should also include a direction as to whether the talkgroup is to be audio monitored and recorded in accordance with any local protocol. All users affected must be advised that the talkgroup is in use.

### 25.1.3 Invocation

XMAMA 01 is always live and may be used in spontaneous response to an incident. However, as this talkgroup is also available nationally, ASL should be consulted beforehand to check it is not in use already. XMAMA 02–10 require specific invocation by ASL.
25.2 Details

25.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Not required to be programmed and few forces have elected to do so.

25.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

XMAMA 01–10 are loaded in all Airwave terminals.

25.2.3 Considerations

The XMAMA talkgroup range is the broadest form of Airwave interoperability and enables all categories of Airwave user to communicate. Other talkgroups or channels of communication may be more appropriate for exchanging sensitive information.

25.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

MAMA 01–10 are loaded in all IBIS terminals.

25.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

Available currently, but under review.

25.2.6 Planning

- When planning joint-agency operations, consideration should be given to the benefits of these talkgroups over any others available as the most appropriate means to achieve Interoperable Voice Communications.
- XMAMA 1 can be used as one of a number of talkgroups for a single event.
- Contingency plans should include a description of the use of this talkgroup.

25.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. It would be appropriate to highlight the availability of any recording to officers involved for use in the post-incident procedures and debrief. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a XMAMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Multi Agency Mutual Aid Talkgroup
XMAMA 01-10

An Organisation That Uses Airwave
Is involved in an event that necessitates other
Airwave users to provide mutual aid.
The organisation contacts Airwave solutions Ltd
and requests that the required talkgroup(s) in the
range XMAMA 02-10 are activated (XMAMA 01 is
already activated)

An Organisation That Uses Airwave
Invites their users to switch to the required
range in talkgroup
XMAMA 01-10

Airwave Users
Switch back to the required range
in talkgroup
XMAMA 01-10

Airwave Users and Force A
Interoperate together dealing with the
same event

Event finishes

Airwave Users
Switch back to their
standard talkgroup

Force A
Return to their own
standard working
talkgroup

Key
Multi Agency Mutual Aid Talkgroup XMAMA 01 - 10
Airwave Users Standard Talkgroup
Force A Standard Talkgroup

Important Note
Presently these talkgroups may be
unmonitored. When using an unmonitored
talkgroup it must be remembered that, if an
emergency button is depressed, the
emergency call will not be received in a
control room
Section 26
HIGHWAYS AGENCY HAILING TALKGROUP (ENGLAND): “THAX HG1”

Contents

26.1 Activity................................................................. 121
26.2 Details ........................................................................ 121
26.3 Exit/Return to Normality........................................... 122
Each police force in England has been allocated a Highways Agency Hailing Talkgroup to enable police users to contact the relevant regional control centre (of which there are seven).

The alphetag provided has been codified whereby T indicates Transport, HA is Highways Agency, X is a Regional Control Centre, HG is the Hailing Group, and a number between 1-7 is for the individual control centre.

These talkgroups are available in police control centres with a specific responsibility for either policing the motorways or an operational requirement to communicate with the Highways Agency.

### 26.1 Activity

26.1.1 An initial call should be made by the police user to the control centre of the Highways Agency on the relevant hailing talkgroup.

26.1.2 This talkgroup is designed as the means of initial contact only. However, it may be used for brief operational exchanges when there is an imperative to do so.

26.1.3 Users who patrol the motorways regularly will have call signs that will be recognised and understood by operators in the Highways Agency control centres. Other users that need to contact the control centre less frequently because, for example, they see a hazard on the motorway whilst travelling, should be careful to communicate in plain speech to describe themselves, especially if their call sign does not provide an immediate understanding of their identity and purpose. It may be necessary in such instances for the user to adopt a simple call sign, agreed with the Highways Agency, for the purposes of continuing communications.

26.1.4 Invocation

No additional procedure for users other than to select the talkgroup and press the Push To Talk key. It is good practice for users to notify their own control centre before leaving the normal working talkgroup.

### 26.2 Details

#### 26.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Each force in England has been allocated one of the seven Highways Agency Hailing Talkgroups. These should be available to operators in control centres that monitor motorway policing. The talkgroup can also be used by police operators to contact the Highways Agency direct rather than by telephone.
26.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The talkgroups have not been mandated nationally, and so it is optional as to whether a force includes them in the terminal fill for all users. As a minimum, users that either police the motorway network or have some other operational need to communicate with the Highways Agency on a regular basis should have the relevant regional control centre Hailing Talkgroup loaded in their terminals.

26.2.3 Availability in the IBIS terminals

THAX HG1 is not loaded in IBIS terminals.

26.2.4 Availability in the London Underground

THAX HG1 is not loaded in the London Underground.

26.2.5 Planning

Operational plans that relate to working in partnership with the Highways Agency should mention use of this talkgroup.

26.3 Exit/Return to Normality

Once initial contact has been made with the Highways Agency on the Hailing Talkgroup, users should either switch to one more appropriate for prolonged communication or revert to their regular working talkgroup.
Section 27
HIGHWAYS AGENCY INCIDENT TALKGROUP (ENGLAND): “THAX-INC-#”

Contents

27.1 Activity ................................................................. 125
27.2 Details ................................................................. 126
27.3 Exit/Return to Normality ......................................... 126
Each police force in England has been allocated a Highways Agency Incident Talkgroup to enable police users to communicate with Highways Agency Traffic Officers. These are not Hailing talkgroups as described at section 26, but working talkgroups for Interoperable Voice Communications.

The alphatag provided has been codified whereby T indicates Transport, HA is Highways Agency, X will be a number between 1 and 7 for the individual Regional Control Centre, INC identifies it as the Incident Talkgroup, and a letter between A and E to identify the Highways Agency region of England (of which there are five). As an example, “THA6 INC A” would enable Avon and Somerset Constabulary to contact the Highways Agency in their South West Region.

These talkgroups are available in police control centres with a specific responsibility for either policing the motorways or an operational requirement to communicate with the Highways Agency.

27.1 Activity

27.1.1 The call to initiate communication with the relevant Highways Agency control centre should be made by the user on the appropriate Hailing Talkgroup (see section 26).

27.1.2 The Highways Agency control centre should then direct the user to the Highways Agency Incident Talkgroup appropriate to their force area.

27.1.3 Users who police the motorways regularly may also be asked to switch to this talkgroup either by their own control centre or the Highways Agency. They must be familiar, therefore, with the position of the talkgroup on their terminal and the procedure for using it.

27.1.4 Users who patrol the motorways regularly will have call signs that will be recognised and understood by operators in the Highways Agency control centres. Other users that need to contact the control centre less frequently because, for example, they see a hazard on the motorway whilst travelling, should be careful to communicate in plain speech to describe themselves, especially if their call sign does not provide an immediate understanding of their identity and purpose. It may be necessary in such instances for the user to adopt a simple call sign, agreed with the Highways Agency, for the purposes of continuing communications.

27.2.1 Invocation

No additional procedure for users other than to select the talkgroup and press the Push To Talk key. It is good practice for users to notify their own control centre before leaving the normal working talkgroup.
27.2  Details

27.2.1  Fleetmapping: control centre availability

Each force in England has been allocated one of the Highways Agency Incident Talkgroups. These should be available to operators in control centres that monitor motorway policing. The talkgroup can also be used by police operators to contact the Highways Agency direct rather than by telephone.

27.2.2  Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The talkgroups have not been mandated nationally, and so it is optional as to whether a force includes them in the terminal fill for all users. As a minimum, users that either police the motorway network or have some other operational need to communicate with the Highways Agency on a regular basis should have the relevant regional control centre Incident Talkgroup loaded in their terminals.

27.2.3  Availability in the IBIS terminals

THAX-INC-# talkgroups are not loaded in IBIS terminals.

27.2.4  Availability in the London Underground

THAX-INC-# talkgroups are not loaded in the London Underground.

27.2.5  Planning

Operational plans that relate to working in partnership with the Highways Agency should mention use of this talkgroup.

27.3  Exit/Return to Normality

Once communication ends with the Highways Agency, users should revert to their regular working talkgroup.
Highways Agency Incident Talkgroup
THAX-INC-#

Force A
Operational user on standard talkgroup

Operational user requires contact with Highways Agency

Force A
Operational user informs Force A control room via standard working talkgroup that they are switching talkgroup to THAX HG1

Force A
Operational user / control room contacts Highways Agency control room using THAX HG1

Operational user explains in plain speech who they are and their callsign. This talkgroup is for initial contact or brief operational issues

Highways Agency
Control room logs and acknowledges the call
If appropriate the user is directed to the appropriate THAX-INC-# talkgroup

Force A user / Highways Agency user
Work together on the incident

Force A
Operational user completes task and leaves THAX-INC-# talkgroup

Highways Agency
Control room logs and acknowledges the call

Force A
Operational user switches back to Force A standard working talkgroup and logs back on with Force A control room

Force A
Operational user on Standard working talkgroup

Key
Standard working talkgroup
THAX Hailing talkgroup
THAX Incident talkgroup
Section 28
INTEROPERABILITY WITH NATIONAL POLICE FORCES: “PMA 71–75”

Contents

28.1 Activity................................................................. 129
28.2 Details ................................................................. 130
28.3 Exit/Return to Normality.............................................. 131
The term “national police force” in this context refers to:

- British Transport Police (BTP);
- Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC); and
- Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency (MDP).

**Note:** For simplification and clarity, the term “national user” in this section relates to an Airwave user from one of these forces. Similarly, “local force” is used here as the term to differentiate between the national and the territorial (local) forces in England, Wales and Scotland.

The PMA 71-75 are available in all user and control centre terminals for both the national and local forces. They provide a working talkgroup for national users to be directed to once initial contact with a local force has been established. This can be done via an appropriate talkgroup, such as the force Police Hailing Talkgroup, or one as directed in an operational order.

The national forces conform to the configuration standards for using Airwave talkgroups and, as such, they each have access to the full range of National Fleetmap Police Talkgroups. However, what is configured in the terminal of an individual user is dependent on their role.

When a national force takes the lead at a spontaneous incident or planned event that also involves one or more local forces, such as at a military or nuclear installation, then all users can be directed to communicate on a talkgroup within the PMA 71-75 range. When a local force has the lead, all users can alternatively be directed to use one of the local force National Fleetmap Talkgroups, such as ES1-3.

PMA 71-75 also allows the control centres for both the national and local forces to monitor communications by their individual users.

### 28.1 Activity

28.1.1 An appropriate talkgroup from the PMA 71-75 range should be allocated for planned events involving national and local forces, and so avoid using those from the broader PMA group that may be required elsewhere operationally. The Police Hailing Talkgroup for one force can be used by the other to initiate contact. This will normally apply unless an alternative talkgroup has been agreed previously between the national and neighbouring local force.

28.1.2 There are two options available to users and operators to initiate use of these talkgroups.

1. Users and operators can select the appropriate talkgroup on their terminals, or
2. Operators can patch and regroup a force working talkgroup to the PMA one allocated.

The latter can be considered when the operational demands on users from one force to continue communicating on their force-specific working talkgroup prevent them switching over themselves. Such instances could include while driving or engaged in a confrontation during a public order event.

28.1.3 Invocation

- PMA 71–75 Talkgroups require invocation by ASL, and this will be facilitated by the in-force Airwave Team.
- If the event or operation continues beyond the anticipated end time, ASL needs to be advised as soon as possible.

**Note:** There may be competing demands to use these talkgroups and although, ideally, ASL requires six weeks prior notification, requests for spontaneous invocation will be responded to immediately. Early booking does not guarantee priority in the event of multiple applications. The NPIA Fleetmapping and Interoperability Managers can help arbitrate any conflicting applications.

28.2 Details

28.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

All police control centres have access to the PMA 71–75 Talkgroups.

28.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

Available nationally in all police terminals.

28.2.3 Considerations

- National forces have made arrangements with the local forces within whose boundaries they have sites and installations to share the talkgroups they use for day to day communications. Similarly, local forces have shared with national forces the talkgroups used by the neighbouring Basic Command Units. This enables users from either force to establish quickly Interoperable Voice Communication when required.

- The set of PMA 71–75 talkgroups can also be used for incidents where users from both national and local forces travel across force boundaries to provide mutual aid, such as policing protests at installations around the country. However, for a number of reasons involving capacity (affecting the network, control centres and terminal fill), use of the Police National Fleetmap Talkgroups might present a better option.

- When local and national forces operate together, a decision needs to be made during the planning phase as to whether their combined resources will be brigaded under one
command structure or remain separate. The outcome of that decision will then determine the number of talkgroups needed by each for operational working, command and interoperability.

28.2.4 Availability in the IBIS terminals

This range of talkgroups is not loaded in IBIS terminals.

28.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

These talkgroups are not available in the London Underground.

28.2.6 Planning

- Control centres for both the local and national forces should be configured so that their force specific operational talkgroups can be patched and regrouped with PMA 71-75.
- Whilst the minimum technical standards agreed by ACPO (for configuring control centre and hand-held terminals and CCI ports) does not require national forces to load the Police National Fleetmap Talkgroups (used by local forces), plans to upgrade the equipment should consider the benefits of doing so. Similarly, there is clear benefit in local forces including the national talkgroups belonging to national forces in any future plans for reconfiguration.
- Consideration should be given to including the PMA 71-75 talkgroups in a ‘Major Incident’ profile that is easily available to an operator, particularly those for the national forces).

28.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the event, all users will revert to their regular working talkgroup. Operators should cease audio monitoring and release any “patch and regroup” still in place. ASL should be notified as soon as the need for a PMA talkgroup ceases so they can reallocate it as required.
Interoperability with National Forces
Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups PMA 71-75

National Force
Identifies a situation which requires interoperability with a Home Office force. Initial call is made to Airwave Solutions Ltd requesting invocation of one of the PMA71-75 talkgroups.

National Force
Initial call to Home Office force is made via either telephone or force hailing talkgroup PFFFFH$G1$ and requests that a mutual aid talkgroup in the range PMA$71-75$ is used for contact.

Home Office Force
Receives the hail/telephone call and starts to monitor PMA71-75. Home Office force officers are directed to the incident from their standard working talkgroup.

National Force Officers
Either switch to the mutual aid PMA71-75 or are conferenced/patched from their own standard working talkgroup to enable communication with the Home Office force.

Home Office Force Officers
Providing mutual aid to the national force switch to mutual aid talkgroup PMA71-75.

National Force Officers and Host Force Officers
Work together to deal with the situation.

KEY
- National Force Standard Talkgroup
- Host Force Standard Talkgroup
- Police Mutual Aid Talkgroups 71-75
- Force Hail
- Telephone

Standard Operating Procedure Guide on Police to Police and Inter-Agency Airwave Interoperability
© ACPO NPIA 2010
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED
Section 29
DIRECT MODE OPERATION (DMO)

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>Exit/Return to Normality</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Direct Mode Operation (DMO) is the equivalent of “back-to-back” communications on an analogue radio system and relies on line of sight for best results. It enables users to communicate directly with each other over a limited range independent from the Airwave infrastructure. DMO can be used in areas of poor or non-existent coverage, including in-building that other Airwave talkgroups cannot penetrate in Trunked Mode Operation (TMO).

The power output of the terminal plus the geography and topography of the location will determine the effective range. If vehicles are equipped with terminals with a repeater function, they can be deployed at a location to extend coverage and range.

The table below identifies the police only and multi-agency DMO Talkgroups available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talkgroup alphatag</th>
<th>Intended use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PDM OPS1 (E) to PDM OPS 8 (E)</td>
<td>General police duties, in conjunction with in-force overt Trunked Mode Operation (TMO) Talkgroups, nationally mandated overt policing interoperability talkgroups, e.g. forces’ INTOP talkgroups and six nominated ‘Event’ talkgroups and PMA talkgroups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM SHARE (E)</td>
<td>Interoperability with approved non-police sharers as designated by NIIG and ESSAG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM A2G1</td>
<td>Overt air support of general policing duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM A2G SHARE (E)</td>
<td>Overt air support of interoperability with approved non-police sharers as designated by NIIG and ESSAG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XDM ES1 (E)</td>
<td>Shared with other blue light agencies for inter-agency use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XDM ES2 (E)</td>
<td>Shared with other blue light agencies for inter-agency use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XDM ES3 (E)</td>
<td>Shared with other blue light agencies for inter-agency use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XDM ES4 (E)</td>
<td>Shared with other blue light agencies for inter-agency use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM RPT 1 (E)</td>
<td>Use with DMO repeaters in support of general police duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talkgroup alphatag</td>
<td>Intended use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM RPT 2 (E)</td>
<td>Use with DMO repeaters in support of general police duties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM FA RPT (E)</td>
<td>Use with DMO repeaters in support of specialist duties, primarily firearms users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM FA1 (E)</td>
<td>Overt firearms users and those who regularly work with them in conjunction with in-house TMO Firearms Talkgroups and force's PFFFF FA1 Talkgroup.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM FA2 (E)</td>
<td>Where DMO interoperability is required with covert users: the talkgroup will carry the Common Static Cipher Key only. Operational needs must be balanced with small risk of unauthorised monitoring. May be used with end-to-end encryption if the facility is available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The table lists the nationally mandated load. Forces may have additional DMO Talkgroups. All of those listed above should be available in all police terminals nationally.

### 29.1 Activity

29.1.1 When DMO is required, a police supervisor at the incident ground must select an appropriate DMO Talkgroup for responders to use. They should ensure all users from each agency involved are advised of that fact. Where vehicle coverage is available, Gateway functionality can extend handheld coverage by linking a TMO talkgroup to a DMO one. Where no coverage is available a Repeater can provide a local DMO network for handheld terminals. Users should also be alerted to the presence of the Repeaters and Gateway. In the case of the Gateway, this will involve giving details of the TMO Talkgroup and control terminal location.

**Note:** It is recommended that in the first instance the ES1 Talkgroup (as the default interoperability talkgroup solution) should be the primary choice for the TMO gateway talkgroup when working with other agencies.

29.1.2 When DMO is selected, unless terminals are connected to the infrastructure and on to a talkgroup via a Gateway within the standard TMO coverage, terminals are not able to communicate on the Airwave network. Consequently, there is no access to a control centre and no ability for the latter to monitor activity.
29.1.3 Invocation

- DMO is always available, but should be used by mutual agreement between the police units and agencies involved.
- Whenever possible, users switching to DMO should always notify a control centre or supervisor before doing so.
- Care should be taken to agree protocols for when users should return to TMO so as to ensure they are not “lost” from the network for long periods.

29.2 Details

29.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

DMO Talkgroups are not available in control centres.

29.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

As set out in the table above.

29.2.3 Considerations

- An emergency button activation will normally notify only terminals within range that are operating on the same DMO Talkgroup. How this operates is dependent on the terminal and how it has been configured by each police force.
- It is possible to configure a hand-held terminal so that when it is switched to DMO it will relay back to a specific vehicle mounted terminal that provides the Gateway to a TMO talkgroup. Where this has been set up, it should be remembered that an emergency activation will normally result in all users in range on the DMO Talkgroup being notified. Those operating in TMO, only the ISSI of the gateway terminal is displayed back to the control centre terminal and all terminals monitoring that TMO Talkgroup.
- DMO has a role in incident support and for fallback, particularly when used with DMO/TMO gateways, but its limitations must be clearly understood. Range is restricted, none of the advanced features of TETRA that require the support of a network are present, and use of DMO can drain battery power faster than TMO.
- Police commanders and supervisors should be aware that DMO offers potential solutions to:
  - Loss of infrastructure
  - Areas of poor coverage, including inside buildings
  - Low capacity.

Advice is available from their in-force Airwave Team and/or Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisor (FOATA).
29.2.4 Availability in the IBIS Terminals

Four DMO Talkgroups for interoperability with other agencies should be available in IBIS terminals: XDM ES1 to XDM ES4.

29.2.5 Availability in the London Underground

DMO is available in the London Underground as well any other sub-surface environment, but subject to the limitations of range and obstructions to line of sight. In the event of loss of or damage to the Airwave infrastructure in the London Underground, users should be able to relay messages on a DMO Talkgroup from one user to another along the tunnels.

29.2.6 Planning

- When planning for any event or writing guidance on emergency procedures, DMO Talkgroups should be considered in view of the benefits they provide as a contingency for the loss of Airwave infrastructure, as well as an option in areas where there is limited TMO Talkgroup coverage.
- Consideration may also be given to their use by discrete units within a larger operation where capacity issues present barriers to using numerous TMO Talkgroups.
- This latter requires a careful tactical and operational consideration of the implications for users working in this way and advice should be sought from the in-force Airwave Team and/or FOATAs.

29.3 Exit/Return to Normality

On resuming to TMO, users should notify their respective control centre that they have returned to a talkgroup. Supervisors at the incident should ensure that no members of staff are isolated by remaining in DMO.
Direct Mode Operation

1. **Force A**
   - Operational users identify a requirement to switch to DMO
   - Message passed to control room

2. **Force A**
   - Control room acknowledges the request.
   - Supervisor allocates a suitable talkgroup for use and advises all users

3. **Force A**
   - Operational users switch to the advised DMO talkgroup and continue operations

4. **Requirement for DMO finishes**

5. **Force A**
   - Operational users switch back to Force A standard working talkgroup and inform the control room that the use of DMO has now finished

6. **Force A**
   - Control room acknowledges

7. **Key**
   - Force A Standard Talkgroup
   - DMO Talkgroup

**NOTE**
- Whilst in DMO mode, only terminals in the same DMO talkgroup and within range will receive any emergency button activations
Section 30
INTERIM BRONZE INTEROPERABILITY SOLUTION (IBIS) (CAVERN AND COMMAND BAND)

Contents

30.1 Activity ................................................................. 140
30.2 Details ................................................................. 140
30.3 Exit/Return to Normality ........................................... 141
The Interim Bronze Interoperability Solution (IBIS), known in London as “Cavern” and in Scotland as “Command Band”, are the additional Airwave terminals supplied to every police force in 2006. Their initial purpose was to make them available to the local Ambulance and Fire and Rescue Services at incidents where their use was vital to safety, or for any of the other reasons given in section v in the Foreword. In time, however, use has extended to other agencies or groups of volunteers, such as Mountain Rescue Teams, that do not have access to Airwave and need a resilient means of communication to stay in contact with the primary Responder Agencies.

30.1 Activity

30.1.1 In March 2009, the NPIA produced a national template for a local protocol that could be adopted by local Ambulance, Police, and Fire and Rescue Services (if one had not been created previously). Users should follow whichever protocol is in place that covers the use of IBIS its invocation procedure.

30.2 Details

30.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

The following force-specific talkgroups are mandated to be available in control centres.

PFFFF ES1-3
PFFFF IC1
PFFFF IAT1
PFFFF SHG1

The following talkgroups are not mandated to be available, but may be in some control centres.

XMAMA 01-10
PMA 81-90

30.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The following national talkgroups are loaded in all IBIS terminals.

XMAMA 01-10
PMA 81-90

The following force-specific talkgroups are loaded in all IBIS terminals.

PFFFF ES1-3
PFFFF IC1
### 30.2.3 Availability in the London Underground

The XMAMA Talkgroups, PMA 81–90, and all of the IC1, ES1–3 and SHG1 Talkgroups for the London forces are available in the London Underground.

### 30.2.4 Planning

- **IBIS** provides a significant opportunity to provide Interoperable Voice Communications to organisations that would not otherwise have access to Airwave. An example of where this has proved useful was during the 2007 floods in Gloucestershire, when staff from a private security company protecting a vital electricity sub-station were provided with IBIS terminals, as it provided the only means of communication with other Responder Agencies.

- Completion of the rollout of Airwave to the Ambulance and Fire and Rescue Services in early 2010 will necessitate a local review of how IBIS should be used. In determining its continuing utility and distribution, every police force and its Local Resilience Forum (LRF) (or equivalent) should consider whether retention is important to enable Interoperable Voice Communication with those organisations and volunteer groups that provide valuable support in times of crisis but would not otherwise have access to suitable Airwave terminals. Guidance on this may need to be sought on the broader issues, such as licensing, and on the commercial implications from the perspective of Airwave Solutions Limited (ASL).

### 30.3 Exit/Return to Normality

Local protocols should explain the procedure for collecting the terminals and their batteries to be re-charged.
Section 31
INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN COVERT AND OVERT USERS

Contents

31.1 Activity................................................................. 143
31.2 Details .......................................................................... 143
31.3 Exit/Return to Normality........................................... 145
The National Covert Airwave Fleetmap contains a sub-set of talkgroups for covert operations. It has been mandated that every force adopt these. The benefit of such an approach is that it provides a common standard for immediate interoperability between covert and overt users.

The protocol set out here has been recommended by the National Airwave Covert User Group (NACUG) for adoption by all its user groups, which includes the Police Service and specific law enforcement, intelligence and investigative agencies, such as SOCA, SCDEA and HMRC Criminal Investigation.

31.1 Activity

31.1.1 Spontaneous communication between covert and overt users is unlikely to be required except in urgent circumstances. It is critical, therefore that users and operators are already familiar with the procedures.

31.1.2 It is assumed that it might not be possible to pre-arrange use of an overt talkgroup by way of telephone contact to the control centre. In which case, covert users should use the force Police Hailing Group as a first point of contact. Control centre operators must be trained to anticipate such use and be ready to implement the agreed response.

31.1.3 Covert users have been briefed to announce themselves initially in plain language, and request to be supported either on the Hailing Group or be directed to an appropriate and available talkgroup. By way of an example, use of the local INTOP1 to arrange a vehicle to be stopped.

31.1.4 Operators should note that the nature of covert users is such that they may not be in a position to reveal their identity on the talkgroup, or indeed become involved visibly in the response to the incident for which they require overt assistance.

31.1.5 Intrusive supervision and even retrospective analysis of Call Data Records should prevent unauthorised users monitoring talkgroups to which the covert users are directed.

31.2 Details

31.2.1 Fleetmapping: control centre availability

See the relevant section of this document for how these talkgroups are loaded in control centres.

31.2.2 Fleetmapping: terminal fill

The following provides the list of nationally mandated talk groups adopted by the covert community for communications with overt
users. Reference should be made to the relevant section in this SOP Guide for advice on how each talkgroup should be used.

- **PFFFF HG1**: Hailing Group for first contact and short term operations where changing to another talkgroup is not practical.
- **PFFFF INTOP1**: Adopted by forces for vehicle pursuits and mobile incidents and, hence, it is recommended to the covert community to arrange for an overt unit to stop a vehicle.
- **PFFFF INTOP2**: Alternative to INTOP 1 but also available for static incidents, and patching to other operational or specialist talk groups.
- **PFFFFI NTOP4**: Generally, this talkgroup is not monitored routinely if at all in control centres but is available to the covert community.
- **PFFFF A2G**: Provides communication with the force Air Support Unit.
- **PFFFF FA1**: Enables communication with the force firearms units, but is not available to HMRC.
- **PFFFF GOV**: HMRC only as their alternative to FA1.
- **PMA 76 to 80**: Interoperability with specialist overt users.
- **PDM OPS 1 (Pre SC3 upgrade)**: General purpose DMO.
- **PDM OPS 1 E (Post SC3 upgrade)**: General purpose DMO.
- **PDM OPS 2 (Pre SC3 upgrade)**: General purpose DMO.
- **PDM OPS 2 E (Post SC3 upgrade)**: General purpose DMO.
- **PDM FA1 (Pre SC3 upgrade)**: Dedicated Firearms DMO. (Not HMRC.)
- **PDM FA2 (Post SC3 upgrade)**: Dedicated Firearms DMO. (Not HMRC.)

“SC3” is a security update on the Airwave system that should be fully available to all police users by the end of 2010. The above list highlights different configurations will be available to different organisations for a short period of time. Specific guidance on this and DMO can be given by Airwave Teams.

### 31.2.3 Guidance on handheld and vehicle mounted terminals:

Description of the action to select the relevant talkgroup.

### 31.2.4 Considerations

When covert users are directed to interoperate on a talkgroup to which other overt users also have access, consideration should be given by the control centre supervisor to the advantages of monitoring that talkgroup to ensure that no unauthorised users are present on it.
31.2.5 Availability in the IBIS terminals.

These talkgroups are **not** available in the IBIS radios.

31.2.6 Availability in the London Underground

See the entry for each talkgroup for their availability within the London Underground.

31.2.7 Planning

Operational plans should describe the purposes for which each of these talkgroups can be used for interoperability with covert users.

31.3 Exit/Return to Normality

At the end of the incident or event, all users will revert to their regular working covert or overt talkgroup.
Section 32
EMERGENCY BUTTON ACTIVATION ON INTEROPERABILITY TALKGROUPS
32.1 Agencies should agree protocols in advance of joint operations that use interoperability talkgroups to include a specific provision on their individual and collective response to an Emergency Button activation. This will allow users to be trained and exercised in the procedures, so they are familiar with them ahead of an activation in a live operation.

32.2 It is recommended that a default position should be agreed for spontaneous incidents, which should be that the police control centre will take responsibility for coordinating the response to an activation on the interoperability talkgroup.

32.3 If the police are not the lead agency at an event, then the coordinating control centre should call the user making the activation. Should they not respond, an operator from that control centre must ensure supervisors from the parent agency are alerted immediately. The operator may also offer support to establish the safety and welfare of the user along with the type of response required.
Section 33
INTEROPERABILITY IN THE LONDON UNDERGROUND
33.1 Through a special coverage scheme, Airwave has been extended into the 125 deep London Underground stations, termed “Section 12 Stations”. Coverage is guaranteed to all public areas of the stations plus some staff-only centres where British Transport Police deem this to be a requirement. It also extends to all areas of a station where the London Underground’s own “Connect” radio system provides service.

33.2 Airwave terminals will also work along the full length of most running tunnels between stations and on board the trains as they travel along them.

33.3 Where a surface-level station is adjacent to another that is sub-surface, Airwave coverage is guaranteed to a point approximately half way along the connecting tunnel. This is a contractual demarcation point rather than a technical one. In reality, coverage is not expected to end at the mid-way point and should extend to the very end of the tunnel.

33.4 Throughout this guide, information has been identified clearly in a specific sub-section on the specific talkgroups available to users that provide Interoperable Voice Communication in the London Underground.

Note: Whilst a great many talkgroups for each of the Responder Agencies operating in the Capital have been configured for use in the London Underground, actual capacity for concurrent use is limited very significantly. At a small number of sub-surface stations there is capacity for seven talkgroups to be in use simultaneously. In the majority, this is no more than three. Special procedures are being developed to optimise use of that capacity. All users who have an operational need to communicate on Airwave in the London Underground, must be trained in the current rules as set out in the London Underground Operational Benefits Realisation Interim Operational Procedures (NPIA 2009) and in the guidance on Operation Cavern (MPS 2009). Strict compliance is critical to user safety.
Section 34
INVOKING POLICE AND MULTI-AGENCY INTEROPERABLE VOICE COMMUNICATION

Contents

34.1 Invocation Flow Chart .............................................. 151
34.1 Invocation Flow Chart

34.1.1 Shown on page 153 is a flow chart that provides the template for a generic approach to invoking Interoperable Voice Communication between police and other Responder Agencies. It is suitable for use by either the Responder Agency initiating the action, or any other one alerted to join the interoperability talkgroup. To ensure consistency in the response to regional or national events, the principles set out in this overarching Guide must be reflected in the complementary SOP and event specific communications plan created by each Responder Agency.

34.1.2 This flow chart identifies the actions to be followed by both responders and their control centre for either initiating Interoperable Voice Communication or responding to a request to do so. These are illustrated in sequences along parallel paths.

**Note 1:** Authority to invoke Interoperable Voice Communication will be given by an incident supervisor/commander in agreement with their counterparts in one or more of the other Responder Agencies. This can also be made by a responder in a supervisory role ahead of a formal inter-agency command structure being established. Alternatively, control centre personnel or a (police) FOATA can recommend this to their silver (tactical) incident commander. For the Fire and Rescue Services, only the silver (tactical) incident commander will invoke this function.

**Note 2:** Where an interoperability talkgroup is in use, no Responder Agency should start to use or monitor it without authority from the coordinating Agency. Each control centre will, on behalf of their incident supervisor/commander, direct relevant personnel to use the interoperability talkgroup and no individual should join unless so directed by their control centre.

The only exception is:

- when there is an immediate requirement to pass an urgent safety message to all the responders working on the talkgroup and
- the individual is able to rapidly change to the interoperability talkgroup and
- it is the fastest way to ensure that the information reaches those who need it.

Under normal circumstances messages will be passed via the control centres so as to be logged and recorded appropriately.

**Note 3:** To achieve optimal benefit, careful consideration must be given to which tactical option for Interoperable Voice Communication best suits the circumstances. Four options are presented in this section and are set out below with explanatory diagrams. Each Responder Agency must develop the capability to
deploy all of them. The first three involve either silver (tactical) and/or operational (bronze) commanders. The fourth is an exception to the standard rule that would normally restrict Interoperable Voice Communication to just the command and management roles. This recognises there may be circumstances where the exception should be applied so as to enable all Airwave users at the scene to benefit from operating on the same interoperability talkgroup regardless of role.

**Note 4:** Implementation should be flexible to allow for a combination of the four options described at Section 35 where this would best suit the circumstances of the incident or planned event.
Generic Template to Invoke Multi-Agency Interoperable Voice Communication

**Responder Pathway**

- Responders identify need for interoperable voice communication
  - Yes
    - Continue to respond to incident on normal agency talkgroup and procedures. Regularly reassess the need for interoperable voice communication. Remember it is better to invoke the procedure at an early stage than risk delay
  - No
    - Silver commander decides to accept offer from their control centre or peer
  - Yes
    - Two or more silver commanders decide to invoke interoperable voice communication
    - Yes
      - Inform control centre of decision and request invocation
      - Select interoperable voice communication option and record decision
      - Prepare for interoperable voice communication — consider access to second radio or staff officer to monitor talkgroup
      - Change to interoperable talkgroup as advised by your control centre
    - No
      - Normal talkgroup
      - Ready

**Control Centre Pathway**

- Control centre managers identify need for interoperable voice communication
  - Yes
    - Normal talkgroup
    - Silver/tactical commander
    - Prepare to activate interoperable talkgroup — consider talkgroup selection and which agency will coordinate talkgroup
    - Activate interoperable voice communication on appropriate talkgroup and commence monitoring
    - Inform all partner agencies of talkgroup selected and nominate agency to coordinate talkgroup
    - Advise appropriate responders of selected talkgroup by radio, SDS pager etc. — send response Call sign/SSI list to coordinating control centre
    - Common process
    - Responder process
    - Control Centre process
    - Decide
    - Prepare
    - Action

**Legend**

- Normal talkgroup
- Normal talkgroup and all other available methods

Use the interoperable voice communication talkgroup to pass all urgent safety messages and mission critical information across the incident site following the principles of accuracy, brevity, clarity and radio discipline with call signs messages in ‘plain speak’ until informed otherwise. Normal procedures for the silver/tactical coordinating group meetings must be observed. Use of the interoperable talkgroup must not bypass an agency’s chain of command with all decisions and transmitted messages logged following normal procedures.
Section 35
MULTI-AGENCY INTEROPERABLE VOICE COMMUNICATION OPTIONS
The table below provides a quick reference guide to the four tactical options (described in detail in the following section) to help select the most appropriate interoperability talkgroup.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Recommended Talkgroup</th>
<th>Suggested Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Silver (tactical) commanders only</td>
<td>IC1</td>
<td>Cross-Agency coordination at silver (tactical) incident commander level for any scale of incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Silver (tactical) commanders, and selected bronze (operational) commanders when required</td>
<td>IC1</td>
<td>Cross-Agency coordination when the silver (tactical) commanders need to include specific Bronze (operational) commanders in the information exchange for any scale of incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Bronze to Bronze (operational) commanders</td>
<td>ES 1 to 3 (5)</td>
<td>Cross-Agency coordination for specific joint taskings and passage of mission critical information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>All Airwave users at scene</td>
<td>IAT1, XMAMA 01, or ES 1 to 3 (5) as the “default interoperability talkgroup(s)”</td>
<td>Immediate need for coordination across all levels in every or just specific Responder Agencies for small-scale or escalating incidents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any combination of the above may be used where it meets the requirements for using Airwave to share information to support decision making, reduce risk and increase safety.

35.1 The following four diagrams illustrate the explanations given for each of the tactical options available for achieving Interoperable Voice Communication. The vertical lines show only the communication structure and are not supposed to identify the means of communication. The interoperability talkgroups are superimposed on to normal, single-agency working practices. Each Responder Agency may choose to prepare a brief introduction for their partners to include in the local SOP for all agencies within the LRF to explain its own operational protocols on the use of Airwave. This would help others to understand the
general availability of all communications equipment and its usage for normal business. An example would be that Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) use UHF "Fireground" terminals to support their internal communication needs at the incident ground. Airwave is also available to them but used, predominantly, for communications dealing with mobilisation. These terminals should have been loaded with the talkgroups commonly used locally and nationally for multi-agency interoperability. However, not all FRSs are equipped with hand-held Airwave terminals and this should be considered when developing local protocols for Interoperable Voice Communications.

Option 1: (Diagram 1) Two or more silver (tactical) commanders at the incident use an interoperability talkgroup.

The objective is to exchange mission critical or safety information to help test and share tactical decisions and update the Common Operating Picture. This option does not replace the normal arrangements for the Silver/Tactical Coordinating Group meetings or any other involving each Responder Agency's approach to command and control. This option provides a useful means of conducting meetings remotely, in effect by using the interoperability talkgroup as a group conference call facility, when circumstances would otherwise prevent a face-to-face exchange. If this option is deployed, then it would be appropriate to select an Incident Command (IC) alphatag talkgroup. This has the added benefit of giving such group calls a high priority status over others on the system. The IC alphatag talkgroup will ensure critical command messages take precedence in the event of call queuing on to the Airwave network.
Diagram 1

Interoperable Voice Communication - Option 1

In Option 1, all silver/tactical commanders dealing with the incident, irrespective of agency, have access to an interoperability talkgroup to exchange mission critical or safety information and update the Common Operating Picture continually as well as share and test tactical decisions. This interoperability option does not replace the normal arrangements for silver/tactical coordination group meetings or bypass an agency’s own command and control arrangements. There must be a single control centre nominated to coordinate, log, and audio record activity on this talkgroup and share the Common Operating Picture. In this example, that role is performed by the Police Force.

Key:
- Ambulance Comms
- Fire Comms
- Police Comms
- Other Responder Comms
- Interoperable talkgroup comms
- Monitoring Interoperable Talkgroup
Option 2: (Diagram 2) **All silver (tactical) and appropriate bronze (operational) commanders (as authorised by their silver/tactical commander) use an interoperability talkgroup.**

The objective is to exchange mission critical or safety information to help test and share tactical decisions and update the Common Operating Picture. As with Option 1, this tactic does not replace existing conventions involving face-to-face exchanges between commanders in the various Responder Agencies, as well as their own same-service briefings. Instead, it provides an option to use Airwave to conduct them remotely by radio. Again, choosing an IC alpha tag talkgroup would be appropriate for this option too, as this will ensure critical command messages take precedence in the event of call queuing on to the Airwave network.
In Option 2, all silver/tactical commanders and selected bronze/operational commanders dealing with the incident have access to an interoperability talkgroup to exchange mission critical or safety information continually to update the Common Operating Picture. This option does not replace the normal arrangements for Silver / Tactical Coordinating Group meetings or bypass a Responder Agency’s own command and control arrangements. There must be a single control centre nominated to coordinate, log, and audio record activity on this talkgroup and share the Common Operating Picture. In this example, that role is performed by the Ambulance Service.
**Option 3:** (Diagram 3) *Silver (tactical) commanders select appropriate bronze (operational) commanders to use an interoperability talkgroup.*

The objective is to coordinate a specific task involving multiple agencies. The same considerations apply as with the previous two options. To maintain the integrity of the command, bronze (operational) commanders will need to be given a clear instruction on the limits of their authority. An Emergency Service (ES) alpha tag talkgroup would be appropriate for Option 3.

**Note:** Currently, control centres for the Fire and Rescue Services do not have the capability to record interoperability talkgroups. This may become available in the future.
In option 3, appropriate bronze/operational commanders using Airwave to deal with the incident, with linked roles, to have access to an interoperable talkgroup to pass mission critical or safety information rapidly across the incident site. This interoperability option does not replace the normal arrangements for a Responding Agency's own command and control regime. Bronze/operational commanders require a clear briefing to maintain the integrity of command and to define their specific levels of authority or autonomy. There must be a single nominated control centre to coordinate, log and audio record activity on this talkgroup and share the Common Operating Picture. To illustrate this, the coordinating role is performed by the Fire and Rescue Service in this example.
Option 4: (Diagram 4) **All responders using Airwave operate on a single interoperability talkgroup for at incident communications.**

The objective is to enable all responders at an incident, regardless of role, to be kept aware of events by focusing all communications on to a single, all-informed talkgroup. One control centre should be nominated to coordinate this activity. Each Responder Agency maintains its own command structure but communicates on the single talkgroup. This option is suitable for establishing quickly Interoperable Voice Communication at local incidents and events, or to assist with coordinating deployments during the critical early stages of what appears to be an escalating incident. This can be achieved by using a MAMA, PMA or IAT talkgroup. Similarly, one of the ES talkgroups can be used where it has been agreed these can be employed as the “Default Interoperability Talkgroup” (see section 2.2).

If handheld terminals are not available to any one of the agencies involved, and there is a clear need to use them, then consideration should be given to deploying the IBIS terminals held by each Police Force (if still available, or borrowed from another that has retained the capability).
In Option 4, all responders using Airwave to deal with the incident, irrespective of agency and role, would use a single interoperability talkgroup for at-incident communications, which is coordinated by the single control centre nominated to do so. Each agency will maintain its own command and control structure but its users will operate on the allocated single, all-informed talkgroup. This option is suitable for rapid deployment at local incidents and events or to assist with coordination in the early stages of an escalating incident. In this example, the coordinating role is performed by an agency other than Police, Fire and Ambulance, such as the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in a sea rescue.
Section 36
CONTENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES, PLANS AND TRAINING MATERIAL
36.1 It will be a matter for each force to consider what specific information needs to be included in their Standard Operating Procedures, communications plans and training material. Nevertheless, to realise fully the operational benefits, forces must work towards promoting Airwave interoperability as standard practice. The following points are presented here for consideration as topics for inclusion in force policy and planning documents.

36.1.1 Advice

The availability of operational and technical advice about talkgroups, coverage and capacity from the in-force Airwave Team and Force Operational Airwave Tactical Advisors (FOATAs), and how to get in contact with these valuable resources.

36.1.2 Available Talkgroups

- Details of the force-specific interoperability talkgroups that are loaded on the ICCS and also available to users in their terminals, and the purposes and uses of each.
- The position of each talkgroup on the equipment available and how to navigate to it, and the procedure to initiate its use.
- Details of which force-specific interoperability talkgroups are also pre-configured for availability nationally.
- Details of the particular talkgroups to which access is restricted to authorised users only, e.g. FA1, PROT, MPS PROT#, and PMA 76-80.
- The fact that other sharers may request use of some talkgroups with or without police involvement, e.g. ES, IAT, IC, GOV1, IS1 and PMA 81-90.
- The procedure for invoking use of the PMA talkgroups through ASL, and that another Responder Agency may have a more pressing need to use them.
- The procedure for using the DMO Talkgroups and how to optimise coverage and capacity through the use of gateways and repeaters.
- The requirement that police users switch to PMA 91 when travelling, and the use by control centre operators of Point-to-Point or telephony to contact travelling resources on this talkgroup.
- The policy on monitoring and/or audio recording specific talkgroups, and the procedure for making a copy of such recordings available for post incident procedures and debriefing.
36.1.3 Police Hailing Talkgroup and Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup

- Ensuring these talkgroups are monitored at all times with guidance on the standard response to a hailing call.
- The differences between the purpose and use of these two talkgroups.
- That Sharers have a recognised operational need for using the Police Sharers Hailing Talkgroup and calls from them need to be responded to professionally, positively and promptly.
- The procedure for selecting an appropriate talkgroup to pass users on to for extended communication, e.g. local force INTOP 2 or 3, local Event, Police Mutual Aid (PMA), Multi-Agency Mutual Aid (MAMA), or Emergency Service (ES).

36.1.4 Patch and Regroup

An explanation of its use and benefits, together with the procedures for invocation and cancellation.

36.1.5 Major Incident Profiles

The benefits of pre-configuring control centre terminals with specific talkgroups that enables an operator to automate invocation of the best option for Airwave communications at an incident or event.

36.1.6 IBIS

The benefits of issuing the IBIS terminals to users from those partner response organisations that do not have access to suitable Airwave equipment or other means of resilient communication with the Responder Agencies, and the protocols for doing so.

36.1.7 Covert Users

An explanation that the nature of some covert user groups is such that they may not be in a position to reveal their identity on an overt talkgroup, or indeed become involved visibly in an incident when they need a uniformed response.

36.1.8 Reference to other guidance

Appendix A
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Glossary of Terms

Airwave Cell
This is an informal group of technical and operational experts familiar with Airwave from each agency coming together to problem-solve and then negotiate with Airwave Solutions Limited (ASL). The objective is to establish the most appropriate, operational environment that meets the agreed tactical priorities for same service and inter-agency communications over Airwave amongst all the Responder Agencies operating jointly at an incident or event.

Airwave Team
The group of individuals from each Responder Agency who manage Airwave communications and the relationship between their organisation and ASL.

Alpha Tag
A usable unique alphanumeric character set identifier to describe a talkgroup in a structure common to all Airwave users.

Ambulance Clinician
A member of staff from an ambulance trust who performs frontline duties. Ambulance clinicians have varying clinical skill levels dependent on their role in their Ambulance Trust.

Bronze
The level of command and control within a single agency below gold (strategic) and silver (tactical) at which the management of ‘hands-on’ work is undertaken at the incident ground and associated areas. This level is also known as the “operational” level.
Bronze Commander (Operational Commander in Scotland)

The Bronze Commander is responsible for the command of a group of resources and carrying out functional or geographical responsibilities related to the tactical plan.

Common Operating Picture

Single display of information collected from and shared by more than one agency or organisation that contributes to a common understanding of a situation and its associated hazards and risks, along with the position of resources and other overlays of information that support individual and collective decision making.

Control Centre

The operations centre responsible for the management and coordination of communications for their agency and its response and resource deployment to incidents and events.

Coordinating Control Centre

For the purposes of this SOP Guide the coordinating control centre takes on the administration of the interoperability talkgroup selected. This control room does not command resources from other Responder Agencies but does take a lead in collating information, recording talkgroup activity and sharing information with partners.

Dynamic Group Number Assignment (DGNA)

DGNA provides a capability for an agency to share its talkgroups over the air when rapid real-time access to that talkgroup is required.

Direct Mode Operation (DMO)

DMO provides voice communication between two or more handheld or mobile terminals without use of the Airwave infrastructure. This is equivalent to “back-to-back” on an analogue radio system.

Emergency

An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom (UK), the environment of a place in the UK, or war or terrorism which threatens serious damage to the security of the UK.

ES Talkgroup

The ES alphatag or Emergency Service Talkgroups are held by the police for multi-agency Interoperable Voice Communication. These talkgroups are police force specific with each having three available. The Metropolitan Police Service, though, holds 5 in total.

First or Initial Responder(s)

This generic term is used to describe the ambulance clinicians, firefighters, fire officers, police officers, police community support officers, special constables or police staff, of whatever rank or grade, who
are the first individuals to attend the scene of a sudden impact incident or emergency.

**FOATA**² (Force Operational Airwave Tactical Adviser)

Personnel trained by the National Policing Improvement Agency to perform the role Airwave tactical advisers. All police forces in Great Britain have access to this course, and other agencies are also looking to develop a similar capability.

**Forward Command Post**⁴ (FCP) (Forward Control Point in Scotland)

The command and control facility nearest the scene of the incident responsible for immediate direction, deployment and security. Depending on the circumstances, this might be either a bronze (operational) or a silver (tactical) facility.

**Fully Integrated Command and Control System (FICCS)**⁵

This is the system that links the command and control computer systems used by the emergency services with telephony, radio and other digital information means of communications. It incorporates all aspects of communications required by an agency to support command, control and coordination.

**Group Short Subscriber Identity**² (GSSI)

Group Short Subscriber Identity or Group identity number is a unique seven-digit number used by the Airwave network to identify a talkgroup.

**Gold**⁴

The strategic level of command and control above silver (tactical) and bronze (operational) at which policy, strategy and the overall response framework are established and managed for individual responder agencies. Due to the multi-agency nature of the document, reference should be made to the guidance material created in each agency for a definition.

**Note:** The Strategic Coordinating Group, which is the multi-agency strategic coordinating body, may colloquially be referred to as the Gold Group; not simply as Gold.

**Gold Commander** (Strategic Commander in Scotland)⁴

The Gold Commander is ultimately responsible for determining the strategy and any tactical parameters that silver or bronze commanders should follow. Gold Commanders retain strategic oversight and overall command of the incident or operation.

**Handheld Terminal**²

Portable voice communications equipment carried by an individual and not restricted for use only in a vehicle.
IAT Talkgroup

IAT alpha tag or inter-agency talkgroup are held by the police for multi-agency Interoperable Voice Communication. These are police force specific with each having one IAT available.

Interoperability Talkgroup

Any one of the Airwave talkgroups available for inter-agency communication, and configured in terminals for that purpose.

Interoperable Voice Communication

Use of an Airwave talkgroup for voice communication between responders from more than one agency.

Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS)

This links telephony, radio and other digital technologies used by an agency with their command and control computer systems. An ICCS incorporates only those systems used for communications that support the command and control function. By contrast, a Fully Integrated Command and Control System (FICCS) can be extended to include every communications system available to an agency.

Individual Short Subscriber Identity (ISSI)

This is the unique number allocated to each Airwave terminal that identifies it to the network when a call is made or the emergency button activated. It can also be dialled by another user to set up a Point to Point call.

Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

The LRF (and its equivalents) provides a collaborative partnership of Responder Agencies in England and Wales that work together to plan for emergency preparedness and response. Each is aligned with a single police force area.

MAMA Talkgroup

MAMA alphatag or Multi-Agency Mutual Aid talkgroups are available to all Airwave Sharers on their handheld terminals. There are ten such talkgroups, which are owned by ASL and require their staff to invoke them for use by the Responder Agencies.

Mobile Terminal

Vehicle mounted voice communications equipment hard-wired for use in a vehicle.

Monitoring Control Centre

For the purposes of this SOP Guide, when not coordinating an interoperability talkgroup, all other Responder Agencies should be Monitoring control centres. This will allow each Responder Agency to maintain an awareness of relevant communications involving command decisions and contribute to the Common Operating Picture.
**National Fleetmap Police Talkgroups**

These are the set of talkgroups mandated by ACPO to be loaded in terminals to provide interoperability nationally. These should be available to all users and control centre operators. The term allows a reader to differentiate between these talkgroups and those configured for communications that are specific to the requirements of an individual force.

**National Travelling Talkgroup**

This Police Mutual Aid Talkgroup (PMA91) allows users travelling through or to other police areas to select this one and so reduce their impact on capacity caused by them “dragging” other talkgroups from their home force on to the local network. The PMA91 talkgroup facilitates communication to the travelling user as required.

**Operator**

Any individual working in a control centre or mobile command unit using Airwave to communicate with users.

**Point to Point**

A call made on Airwave that allows two users to communicate directly with each other instead of using a talkgroup to broadcast to a wider audience. The caller dials the ISSI for the terminal held by the recipient.

**Profile (Major Incident)**

A “Major Incident Profile” is a suite of talkgroups loaded in an Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) that can be selected automatically by the control centre operator to provide a “one-touch” solution. This would be relevant to both planned events and spontaneous incidents. Its creation involves identifying the range of talkgroups operational staff would require for communications within their own force, between forces and with other Responder Agencies. The benefit of this prior planning and configuration is that it provides operators with an instant, automated solution for selecting the appropriate interoperability talkgroup, removing the need to do so manually.

**Regional Resilience Forum**

The Forum established by each Government Office to develop civil protection from the regional perspective and to liaise between local and central government on resilience.

**Responders**

Personnel described by the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) as personnel from the Category 1 and 2 Responder Agencies who attend the scene of an incident.

**Short Data Service (SDS)**

The capability to send short data messages using the Airwave infrastructure. Note: not all services are using this capability.
**Silver**

The tactical tier of command and control within a single agency (below Gold level and above bronze level) at which the response to an emergency is managed.

**Note:** Multi-agency coordination at the tactical level is undertaken by the tactical coordinating group. Due to the multi-agency nature of the document, reference should be made to the guidance material created in each agency for a definition.

**Silver Commander** (known as a **Tactical** Commander in Scotland)

The Silver Commander commands and coordinates the overall tactical response in compliance with the strategy.

**Silver Coordinating Group**

An alternative name for a Tactical Coordinating Group.

**Silver Control** (also known as **Tactical Control**)

This is a location where the functions can be based to direct and control the tactical operations within the span of command of the silver commander. A silver (tactical) control is normally located away from the scene of a major event, an emergency or major incident. A silver (tactical) control may be located at a suitable police station. A police silver (tactical) commander may be located at the silver (tactical) control, with silver (tactical) liaison officers deployed there from the Ambulance and Fire and Rescue Services. The silver (tactical) control is normally where meetings are held for the Silver/Tactical Coordinating Group.

**Strategic Coordinating Group**

Multiagency body responsible for coordinating the joint response to an emergency at the local strategic level in England and Wales.

In Scotland Strategic Coordinating Groups are the principal local forum for multiagency cooperation in civil protection. The group has a role in both preparation and response to emergencies. As such, SCGs in Scotland effectively combine the role in England of Local Resilience Forums in preparing for emergencies and of (English and Welsh) Strategic Coordinating Groups in responding to emergencies.

**Stun and Kill**

ASL provide a capability to temporarily disable a missing terminal using a stun facility. Similarly, if recovery of a lost terminal is highly unlikely then ASL can permanently disable a terminal to protect the integrity of the network, using the Kill facility.

**Surge Capacity** (Airwave network)

This is the 20% capacity over and above normal radio traffic (as measured during the ‘busy hour’). This is part of the Airwave contractual arrangement with an agency that allows for surges in user activity during an incident or emergency.
User
Anyone using a handheld or vehicle mounted Airwave terminal to communicate.

**Tactical Coordinating Group**
A multi-agency group of silver (tactical) commanders that meets to determine, coordinate, plan and deliver the tactical response to an incident or emergency.

**Talkgroup**
A talkgroup can be described as a radio channel that permits all users monitoring it to exchange voice communications.

**Trunked Mode Operation (TMO)**
This is the dynamic and automated process that shares talkgroups between Airwave users.

---

1. None of the definitions listed in this SOP Guide supersedes those detailed in the reference material provided by your own Agency.
2. Taken from the ARP/DH Talkgroup Workshop Outcome Report – see Bibliography.
3. Developed by MAIP.
4. Taken from CCS Civil Protection Lexicon – see Bibliography.
5. Taken from the Guidance on Multi-Agency Interoperability – see the Bibliography.
Appendix B
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviations and Acronyms

**ABCD** ............ Accuracy, Brevity, Clarity and Discipline (for radio)
**ACPO** ............ Association of Chief Police Officers
**AMB** ............. Ambulance Service
**ASL** .............. Airwave Solutions Limited
**BTP** ............. British Transport Police
**CBRN** .......... Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear
**CCA** ............. Civil Contingencies Act (2004)
**CCS** ............. Civil Contingencies Secretariat
**CNC** ............. Civil Nuclear Constabulary
**CoLP** ........... City of London Police
**CONTEST** ...... Counter-Terrorism Strategy
**DGNA** ........... Dynamic Group Number Assignment
**DMO** ........... Direct Mode Operation
**ERV** .......... Emergency Response Vehicle (Airwave)
**ES** ............... Emergency Service (talkgroup)
**FCP** ............. Forward Command Post
**FICCS** .......... Fully Integrated Command and Control System
**FOATA** ........ Force Operational Airwave Tactical Adviser
**FRS** ............. Fire and Rescue Service
**GSSI** ............ Group Short Subscriber Identity
IAT ...............Inter-Agency Talkgroup
IBIS ...............Interim Bronze Interoperability Solution
IC ...................Incident Command (talkgroup)
ICCS ...............Integrated Communications Control System
ISSI ...............Individual Single Subscriber Identity
IVC ...............Interoperable Voice Communication
LRF ...............Local Resilience Forum
MAIP ...............Multi-Agency Interoperability Programme
MAMA ...............Multi-Agency Mutual Aid (talkgroup)
MBS ...............Mobile Base Station
MDP ...............Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Service
MoPI ...............Management of Police Information
MoU ...............Memorandum of Understanding
MPS ...............Metropolitan Police Service
NPIA ...............National Policing Improvement Agency
NSID (PSR) ...National Security, International Relations Development (Sub-committee on Protective Security and Resilience)
PMA ...............Police Mutual Aid
POL ...............Police Service
PTT ...............Press To Talk (button)
RRF ...............Regional Resilience Forum
RTS ...............Request to Speak
SCG ...............Strategic Coordinating Group (NB the function of these differs in Scotland from England and Wales – see Glossary Appendix B)
SCDEA ............Scottish Crime and Drugs Enforcement Agency
SDS ...............Short Data Service
SOCA .............Serious Organised Crime Agency
SOP ...............Standard Operating Procedure
TeTRa ............Terrestrial Trunked Radio
TG ...............Talkgroup
TMO ...............Trunked Mode Operation
UHF ..............Ultra High Frequency
UK ............... United Kingdom
USAR ............... Urban Search and Rescue
Appendix C

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography


**Ambulance Radio Programme**, Dept of Health Talkgroup Workshop; Mike Sprague, Crown © 2009

**Central Governments Arrangements for Responding to an Emergency – Concept of Operations**, Cabinet Office (CCS) © 2009 (accessed April 2009)
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/132685/conops.pdf

**Civil Protection Lexicon V1**, Cabinet Office (CCS) © 2009
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/230446/lexicon.pdf

**Collaboration between police forces on 'Protective Services’**
http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/protective-services1/?version=2

**CONTEST** – UK Counter Terrorism Strategy (accessed June 2009)

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/132709/dataprotection.pdf

**Guidance on Responding to Emergencies in Scotland.** This document is part of Section 5 of "Preparing Scotland: Scottish Guidance on Preparing for Emergencies", Scottish Government © 2008 (accessed July 2009)
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/11/05142600/0
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience/preparedness/ccact/eppdfs.aspx

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ukresilience/preparedness/ccact/errpdfs.aspx


Fire and Rescue Service FiReControl project and the National Coordination Centre (accessed July 2009)  
http://www.communities.gov.uk/fire/resilienceresponse/firecontrol/

Guidance on Command and Control, ACPO © 2009

Guidance on Management of Police Information (MoPI), ACPO © 2006

Guidance on Multi-Agency Interoperability, NPIA © 2009  


Inter-Agency Joint Emergency Response Arrangements V1, West Mercia LRF © 2007

Investigation into the King’s Cross Underground Fire; Sir Desmond Fennell QC, Crown © 1988 (Accessed June 2008)  


http://archive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/pittreview/thepittreview.htm


Major Incident Plan, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust © 2007

Major Incident Plan, West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust © 2008

http://www.leslp.gov.uk/

National Ambulance Mutual Aid MoU (2008) - Formal plan under development
National Resilience Planning Assumptions - (accessed July 2009)

National Risk Register, Crown © 2008 (accessed July 2009)

OFCOM approved Airwave sharers list 2009,
http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radiocomms/ifi/licensing/classes/business_radio/emergency


Recommendations on the Emergency Preparedness for, Response to and Recovery from Incidents, Buncefield Major Incident Investigation © 2007
http://www.buncefieldinvestigation.gov.uk/reports/preparedness.pdf

http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports/general.jsp

Wales Resilience - website, (accessed July 2009)
http://wales.gov.uk/resilience/home/wales-resilience/?lang=en

http://www.fcc.gov/pshs/docs/clearinghouse/Writing-SOPs.pdf