



National Interagency Fire Center
3838 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Area Command Team 4 Briefing Paper

Date: August 30, 2005

Action Item 4

Name: List of Narrowband Compatible Radios

Issue/Topic: Identification of Narrowband Compatible Radios

Indicators of Need for Action: Some radio users are confused concerning what radio brands or models are narrowband compatible.

Key Points:

- In discussions with the National Interagency Incident Communications Division (NIICD) it was evident that some wildland firefighters are arriving on incidents with radios that are not narrowband compatible.
- Some contractors are arriving with wideband radios that were recently purchased on the Internet.
- Other wildland firefighters believe their older wideband radios are more reliable than the newer narrowband radios and are reluctant to adapt. The use of these older model wideband radios on federal fires creates wideband/narrowband conflicts that significantly diminishes, or sometimes prevents, effective radio communications.

Proposed Action Description: NIICD posts a list of narrowband compatible fire radios on their webpage <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/niicd/documents.html>. Incident Management Team Communications Unit Leaders (COML) and field electronic technicians should repeatedly check this list. Electronic equipment that is not narrowband compatible should not be used on federal fires.

Federal agencies replace all radios and repeaters that are not narrowband compatible.

Cooperators and local emergency responders may not have radio equipment that is narrowband compatible for several years. In order to maintain communications with wideband radio cooperators and local emergency responders, federal narrowband radios can be programmed in the wideband mode. Prior to fire season, communication protocols should be outlined in Memorandums of Understanding or Cooperative Agreements.