

### 3.35 Central Minnesota Emergency Services Board Standards, Protocols, Procedures

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Procedure Title:	<b>National Weather Service Radio Operations</b>	
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**1. Purpose or Objective:**

To define the ARMER talkgroups and establish policy and procedures of radios to be used by the National Weather Service (NWS) including the offices in Chanhassen, Aberdeen and Grand Forks and establish a Warning Point Net during severe weather events.

**2. Technical Background**

**• Capabilities –**

To provide talkgroups that are readily available tools for the use by Chanhassen, Grand Forks and Aberdeen Weather Offices to communicate with numerous Warning Points (PSAP, Dispatch Center, EOC, Emergency Manager or other designated location) across the eighteen county central region and optionally other counties within the Chanhassen Weather County Warning Area, Grand Forks Weather County Warning Area and Aberdeen Weather County Warning Area, during severe weather events or other emergency incidents where the weather service’s aid may be requested. The Statewide Emergency Communications Board has authorized a dedicated talkgroup for Chanhassen Weather, named US-NWS CHN and Grand Forks Weather, named US-NWS GNF. This is the resource Chanhassen Weather and Grand Forks Weather will use to distribute weather event information. PSAPs or Emergency Operations Centers may choose to add the appropriate resource to their consoles or radio. Chanhassen and Grand Forks Weather are authorized to use the statewide resources of STAC1-12. The statewide talkgroup SEMTAC is also programmed in the radios for communications with State and Local Emergency Managers as directed by HSEM.

**• Constraints**

- 1) NWS Office in Chanhassen has been issued one hand held portable and two control station transceivers. These units will primarily be used to monitor selected talkgroups when invited to do so by a Warning Point or Emergency Manager as a result of severe weather or other emergency incident. This Standard does not limit the use of other ARMER resources and/or radios for other authorized purposes by Chanhassen Weather.
  
- 2) NWS Office in Grand Forks has been issued two portable radios. These units will primarily be used to monitor selected talkgroups when invited to do so by a Warning Point or Emergency Manager as a result of severe weather or other emergency incident. This Standard does not limit the use of other ARMER resources and/or radios for other authorized purposes by Chanhassen Weather.

- 3) NWS Office in Aberdeen, South Dakota is located eighty miles west of the Minnesota border and outside of ARMER's coverage area. In an agreement between the Aberdeen NWS office and the counties of Traverse and Big Stone, Traverse County utilizes a South Dakota public safety radio channel to communicate with the Aberdeen NWS office and Traverse County serves as a liaison between the Aberdeen NWS office and Big Stone County.

### **3. Operational Context**

For activations within the eighteen county central region, Chanhassen or Grand Forks NWS will normally contact the Minnesota State Patrol - Metro Communications Center in the event of a severe weather watch and/or warning. The Minnesota State Patrol will determine the appropriate resource for the event and will patch that resource to the US-NWS CHN or US-NWS GNF talkgroup. In the event of some other type of emergency incident that would require assistance from the NWS office, the agency requesting the assistance would contact their respective NWS office directly via a land line or via US-NWS CHN or US-NWS GNF and create the appropriate patch between resources to be used for the incident. (Please see section 4. Recommended Procedure for operations with Aberdeen NWS.)

### **4. Recommended Procedure**

- **Normal Activation – Minnesota State Patrol**

Chanhassen or Grand Forks Weather will normally initiate weather announcements, via NAWAS to the Minnesota State Patrol and MNJIS to notify of affected areas. The Minnesota State Patrol will determine to what resource US-NWS CHN or US-NWS GNF will be patched and will create the patch. The Minnesota State Patrol will hail the affected Local Warning Points using CM-CALL and ask them to move to STAC 12 (11, 10, 9, etc.) for weather information from the National Weather Service. The Minnesota State Patrol will follow up via a land line if an affected Local Warning Point does not reply over the radio system. The Minnesota State Patrol will take roll and read the announcement on STAC12 (11, 10, 9, etc.) and advise the Local Warning Points to remain on the talkgroup resource for continuing information from the National Weather Service. The Minnesota State Patrol will be responsible to update the use of STAC12 (11, 10, 9, etc.) on the status board. STAC12 (11, 10, 9, etc.) will be used for any information exchange between the affected centers and the National Weather Service; such as watches turning to warnings or sightings of tornados. This communication should be limited to updates to/from Warning Points **only**. This is not for individual field spotters. As the threat expires for each Warning Point's area, the center can choose to leave STAC12 (11, 10, 9, etc.) on their own. Any new weather threats that occur after existing threats have expired will be handled in the same manner described above. Once all-weather threats have passed, the Minnesota State Patrol will clear the associated resource from the status board.

Big Stone and Traverse counties have a unique circumstance in that the NWS office serving those counties is located in Aberdeen, South Dakota, eighty miles west of the Minnesota border and outside of ARMER's coverage area. In an agreement between the Aberdeen NWS office and the counties of Traverse and Big Stone, Traverse County utilizes a South Dakota public safety radio channel to

communicate with the Aberdeen NWS office and Traverse County serves as a liaison between the Aberdeen NWS office and Big Stone County.

- **Optional Procedure for Emergency Activation During Sudden Severe and/or Near-Severe Weather Incidents With or Without a National Weather Service Issued Warning**

In the event of a sudden onset or report of severe or near-severe weather incident occurring in the absence of a National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center issued watch, and when the Warning Point Net has not yet been activated, a Local Warning Point MAY elect to immediately activate the Warning Point Net on STAC12 (11, 10, 9, etc.). Upon such activation the Local Warning Point activating the net shall make an announcement on CM-CALL that the net has been activated and update the status board.

## **5. Management**

State Patrol Warning Points shall manage assignment and usage of talkgroups and conventional channel resources for normal Warning Point Net activations. Dispatch center managers and supervisors on the ARMER system shall ensure that this procedure for usage and assignment of STAC talkgroups be adhered to. HSEM shall manage use of SEMTAC for severe weather operations.