Radio Use Protocol in a Critical Incident

The following are some helpful tips on radio use in a critical incident and best practices:

- Respond to a critical incident according to your standard operating procedures.
- If you are off-duty and not responding to the incident, do **not turn on your radio**.
- If you are on-duty and not responding to the incident, do **not change channel position** on your radio unless necessary for your immediate responsibilities.
- If you are actively using your radio for response elsewhere in the County, **limit radio activity to critical traffic only**.
- If you wish to monitor radio traffic but are not involved in the incident response, **consider using a radio scanner application**. Popular models include Scanner Radio Deluxe, 5-0 Radio Police Scanner, Police Scanner, Police Scanner Radio Chat Live or Police Radio.
- **Perform preventive maintenance on your radio** according to standards. Use the correct antenna and make sure your batteries have a proper charge. Ensure that your antenna and batteries are properly secured, and do not use zip ties or cable ties on remote speaker microphone cables.

**LISTEN TO YOUR RADIO**

If you attempt to access your radio and you receive one of these alerts or messages, take recommended actions:

**“NO COMMS” on screen and/or alert “bonk” tone**
- **Means**: Unable to communicate to the system
- **Action**: Avoid any unnecessary radio use (i.e. turning radio off/on or switching talkgroups) until “NO COMMS” clears.

**“OUT OF RANGE” on screen and/or alert “bonk” tone**
- **Means**: Low or no signal strength. Signal strength can be affected by many factors (e.g. bad antennas or dense building construction.)
- **Action**: Be mindful of your surroundings. Move to a location with better signal strength.

**“BUSY” noted by 3 short tones.**
- **Means**: System has run out of available talkpaths. The initial Push to Talk (PTT) has placed the user in a busy queue - the system will automatically assign a channel to the user when one becomes available.
- **Action**: Release PTT and wait for the system to assign channel. *Additional PTT will move user to the bottom of the queue.*

**“LOW BATTERY” noted by 2 short tones**
- **Means**: Battery requires charging
- **Action**: Charge battery or replace with one that is fully charged.
Broward County appreciates the dedication and sacrifice of all our first responders. We have committed to providing you with the best possible communication systems to support your commitment to the residents of and visitors to Broward County.

**NEW P25 RADIO SYSTEM UPDATE - Coming Q4 2019**

**CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

*Now over $82 million*

- Next Generation CAD
- Fire Station Alerting System
- Viper 911 Phone System Upgrade
- Text to 911 (December 2018)
- Regional Automatic Call Distribution

**BROWARD COUNTY’S NEW RADIO SYSTEM**

- Dedicated Public Safety Public Radio System – 2,000 local government users will come off the system in Q1 2019; an additional 2,500 school district users will not migrate to the new P25 system
- Optimized system controller with an estimated 300% improvement in processing of incoming affiliations
- Increased number of talkpaths, from 27 to 36
- Each agency has a designated main channel; outside support agencies will use countywide mutual aid channels
- Seven additional towers to enhance radio reception
- Increased security to prevent duplicate radio IDs and unauthorized users
- Required and ongoing radio user training and exercises – starting Summer 2018
- Enhanced portable and mobile radio maintenance
- Adoption of a Regional Standard Fleetmap and SOPs – created with input from Police and Fire Chiefs Associations