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Mutual Aid Box Alarm System Communications Committee

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN #2

August 25, 2004 – Statewide Radio License

The FCC recently granted the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System a radio station authorization, call sign WQAG579, with mobile coverage throughout the State of Illinois. Covered by the authorization are IFERN, IFERN2, and the RED, WHITE, BLUE, GOLD, BLACK & GRAY fireground channels. Also included is permission to establish temporary fixed base stations for IFERN & IFERN2 that can be utilized at scenes of major emergencies or disasters.

MABAS has granted permission to member fire departments to utilize this radio authorization for mutual aid and fireground operations under the following conditions:

- Frequency use is limited to emergency scene and official training activities.
- Member departments agree to abide by all applicable FCC rules and regulations.
- Member departments agree to abide by all relevant MABAS Communications Advocacy Statements.
- Transmit power on the RED, WHITE, BLUE, GOLD, BLACK & GRAY fireground frequencies is limited to a maximum of 10 watts.

MABAS Communications Committee Advocacy Statement #7 – Statewide Radio License, approved by the Executive Board on February 5, 2004, details completely the use of the MABAS radio authorization in Illinois. All MABAS Communications Advocacy Statements can be located on the web at www.mabasradio.org.

Fire Departments in Wisconsin may also enjoy the use of the same radio frequencies. Carl Guse, frequency specialist for the Wisconsin State Patrol, has obtained a similar radio license for the State of Wisconsin, call sign KO2099, which parallels the MABAS frequency plan for Illinois.

Ultimately, obtaining these statewide licenses can save many fire departments and MABAS Divisions the time and expense of coordinating and licensing these frequencies for their mobile operations. However, any fire department or MABAS Division that operates a fixed base station must still obtain a separate FCC authorization.

The MABAS Communications Committee stands ready to assist any fire department with frequency coordination and licensing needs. Please contact Committee Co-Chair Paul Maplethorpe at WCL2600@aol.com or 847-546-6001 for any questions or assistance.