Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System (ISICS)
Standards, Protocols, Procedures

ISICS Standard:	Standard #:	3.9.0
Configuration and Allocation	Date Adopted:	06/12/2018
	Date Reviewed:	
	Version:	

1. Purpose or Objective

The purpose of this procedure is to set forth requirements for multigroups or agency-groups that are directly shared among agencies and for talkgroups within the multigroups that are shared between agencies. This documentation will further provide the using agencies information on the intent, purpose, operation, and behavior of the individual multigroup.

Multigroup communications have a large impact on the talkgroups that are contained within the multigroup, especially if the affected talkgroups are shared among separate agencies.

2. Technical Background

- **Capabilities**

  A multigroup contains talkgroups within it. Its purpose is to provide a way to make announcements to a number of talkgroups at the same time; therefore, it is also referred to as an "Announcement Group."

  A multigroup looks and behaves, for the most part, like a talkgroup. It can be programmed into console positions or subscriber radios and is activated the same as a talkgroup, by selecting a multigroup and transmitting.

  After a multigroup call ends, there is a short period of "hang time" when a radio user can reply to the entire multigroup, even though the radio user has a single talkgroup selected within the multigroup.

- **Constraints**

  A talkgroup does not have to belong to a multigroup. If the talkgroup is in a multigroup, the talkgroup can only belong to **one** multigroup.

  If a subscriber selects the multigroup mode on the radio, the radio can monitor talkgroup activity for all of the talkgroups associated with the selected multigroup only if the monitored talkgroup has an affiliated member in the same zone as the monitoring subscriber.

  Talkgroups within a multigroup may be engaged in an active call at the time a multigroup call is initiated. The multigroups can be individually programmed to handle this in different ways:

  - The talkgroup calls can be interrupted, and then the multigroup call begins. This is called "Ruthless Preemption," and anyone whose "push-to-talk" (PTT) is still active for the talkgroup calls will be unaware their call has been interrupted.
  - The multigroup call can be set up to wait until all of the contained talkgroup calls are complete before the multigroup call is initiated; however, this may cause delays in initiating the multigroup call.

  Delays may also be caused by talkgroup calls initiated before the multigroup call is allowed to start.

3. Operational Context

The multigroup function is an available, user option feature of the system.

4. Recommended Protocol/Standard

If an agency does not "own" the talkgroup it wishes to place within a multigroup, the agency must first obtain the permission of the owning agency.

Agencies must share multigroup information while fleetmaps are being planned and programmed into the system and subscriber radios. In addition to operational planning, this information is necessary to ensure that users are aware of the multigroup resource.

If an agency shares the multigroup or the associated talkgroups contained within a multigroup with other agencies, the owning agency shall be responsible for informing the sharing agency of the operational properties and guidelines for use of the multigroup. In the event the central radio monitoring point is not the same agency as the radio user, an agreement on policy, monitoring, use, and response, must be in place among the agencies.

- Information must be shared about the purpose and guidelines for use of the multigroup and interrupt mode, if active talkgroup calls will be terminated (ruthless preemption), if the multigroup will wait until the talkgroup calls conclude, and any other operational information as needed.
- Multigroups may only be used for owned or shared talkgroups. Multigroups may not be used with regional interoperability resources (i.e., talkgroups/channels) as detailed in Section 3, "Interoperability Standards."

5. Recommended Procedure

Recommended procedures will be handled by the individual agencies as part of their fleetmap process.

6. Management

The System Administrators of the shared multigroup resource shall be responsible for managing their multigroups must be approved by the Subsystem Administrator.