

Monthly Radio Check Procedures

Ham Radio, 800 MHz SAFD radios, and MSV Satellite Radio (SatCom)

Updated September 15, 2023

The STRAC and EHDG, using the HRSA BHPP bioterrorism funding, has purchased Ham radios, 800 MHz SAFD radios, and Mobile Satellite Ventures (MSV) SatCom units for each Hospital Command Center (HCC) for hospitals within Trauma Service Area – P (TSA-P).

A radio check of these devices will be performed monthly. This generally has occurred on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, starting at 1100am, but the date/time may change and will be announced on the EHDG email list if different.

Procedure:

1. Hospital should ensure the radios are on volumes are set appropriately. For the SatCom unit, either the microphone or the phone handset is active at any given time; the other device will say “sleep”. Moving the active status from one device to the other can be done by pressing the CLR button for 2 seconds.
2. All facilities have signed up for a time slot to be called in. To add or edit a time slot please contact your EHDG Rep or STRAC EP&R Hospital Preparedness contact.
3. MEDCOM will announce that the radio check is beginning and will start a roll call of the possible units that may be monitoring in each assigned 15min time slot. MEDCOM will test all radios devices that are assigned to the facility in that time slot (HAM, 800mhz, SatCom).
4. Clear text will be used at all times. 10-codes are not allowed.
5. The 800 radio checks are completed on the STRAC channel.
6. The HAM radio checks are done on the COSA EOC channel and can only be used by FCC Licensed operators of Technician or higher license. (If a licensed operator is not on site do not check the HAM radio.)
7. The MSV units in the HCCs are programmed with STRAC-2 SatCom channel. It is labeled “STRAC-2” in the display on the microphone. STRAC-2 is a dedicated channel for TSA-P hospitals.

Procedure (continued):

8. When calling another hospital or other radio unit on the various radios, the calling unit should utilize the “hey you, this is me” philosophy of radio etiquette.

For the radio check procedure, MEDCOM will call each facility and expect a reply.

MEDCOM: “Baptist Medical Center, this is MEDCOM”

BMC: “MEDCOM, Baptist Medical Center, loud and clear”

MEDCOM: “Christus Santa Rosa-downtown, this is MEDCOM”

CSR Childrens: “MEDCOM, Christus Santa Rosa, loud and clear”

9. If a unit misses the call, they can contact MEDCOM at the end of the radio check at 210-233-5815. MEDCOM will also call for late checks at the end of the radio checks.
10. Remember that you cannot talk on the SatCom unit until the 2-tone talk permit tones have beeped. This generally occurs .5 to 1 second after pressing the PTT key on the side of the microphone.
11. If you have problems with the test, or technical problems with the unit itself, please call MEDCOM at 210-233-5815
12. MEDCOM will monitor STRAC-2 SatCom and 800mhz channel at all times.

Thanks for your help with this process. Testing the equipment will make our hospital personnel more familiar with the equipment and ensure that it is in good working order when we need it.

For all radio traffic clear text is to be used. An example would be:

MEDCOM: “University Hospital, this is MEDCOM on STRAC-2”

UH HCC: “MEDCOM, this is University Hospital, go ahead”

MEDCOM: “University, please notify your ER personnel that we have reports of 80-100 victims enroute to your facility by private vehicle that may be contaminated from the incident”

UH HCC: “That’s clear”

In the above example, UH HCC uses the term “Clear” to indicate they understand what was said. This term “Clear” should be used in place of “10-4” or other terms.