



National
Operational
Learning

Action note

Action note - 20171207-001

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NFCC
Fire Central
Programme Office

Developed and maintained by the NFCC



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Overview of event

Whilst testing potential changes to the national fireground radio channel plan, benchmarking tests revealed a risk of interference between two adjacent channels.

A preliminary survey carried out across the UK, identified that several services routinely use Channel 6 for breathing apparatus communications, creating a risk of the failure of breathing apparatus communications during an incident.

Summary of learning

During the review of national fireground radio channels, benchmarking tests revealed a risk of interference between Channels 4 and 6.

There is a potential risk that radio messages transmitted by a breathing apparatus team may not be received at Entry Control, if there was a radio broadcasting on Channel 4, in close proximity to the radio receiving a message on channel 6.

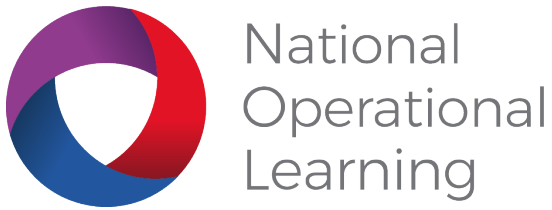
Services using these channels may not be aware of this risk and could attribute any loss of communications, to either equipment failure or user error without considering interference.

Services can test the risk to their own equipment, by transmitting a test message from a breathing apparatus radio on Channel 6 (some distance away from the breathing apparatus entry control operative (BAECO), to simulate a breathing apparatus deployment), whilst simultaneously transmitting a message on Channel 4 (close to the BAECO). Depending on the relative signal strengths the message may be blocked.

NOLUG Recommendations

It is recommended that all fire and rescue services adopt the nationally agreed channel plan found in National Operational Guidance - [Fireground Radios Guidance](#):

Contact information



NOL would be keen to hear of any further associated learning identified by fire and rescue services as a result of this Action Note. Please contact: NOLmail@ukfrs.com