

Appendix A – Nortex Regional Mutual Aid Agreement

OPERATING GUIDELINES NORTEX REGIONAL REPEATER SYSTEM (RRS) AND OTHER REGIONAL EQUIPMENT

10/20/2009

The Nortex Regional Repeater System (RRS) was purchased, and installed utilizing Department of Homeland Security Funding

Purpose of the RRS

To provide regional communications support for the command staff within the Nortex Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) area, and others as authorized by the Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) and contained in this document and in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), endorsed by each political sub-division that wishes to participate in the NRPC.

To provide interoperable communications capability for county and municipal officials within the region.

To provide interoperability with the adjacent counties outside the NRPC, bordering Oklahoma counties and those State and Federal Agencies as needed by the command staff and local officials.

Intent of the RSS

The intent of the system is to be in compliance with the state interoperable communications strategy so that all regions, counties, cities and other political jurisdictions can communicate together during emergencies and to provide interoperability and to aid local emergency services to better manage emergencies and disasters using regional assets. The RRS will be operated and maintained under guidelines set forth by the Department of Homeland Security and the State of Texas State Administrative Agency (SAA).

Implementation

Computer software installation and training for the interconnect computer programs will be completed by the Nortex HS staff at each interconnect point. The Nortex HS staff will also provide basic end user training at the time of the software installation. At this time, the staff will test the system software by making patches between repeaters and contacting field units to verify functionality. Personnel that attended the Raytheon training at the implementation of the RRS project will be the points of contact for local operational issues

and training of new users. All questions and/or issues should be directed to the Nortex HS staff for assistance. If problems or issues cannot be resolved, the jurisdiction with the issue will have to contact Raytheon technical support or an authorized Raytheon dealer for assistance **at their expense.**

All dispatchers and other personnel that may be involved in communications management during an emergency or disaster, must be trained on the proper use of the software and interconnect methods along with appropriate operational procedures.

A common software system password will be utilized by all dispatch offices when connecting users within the system.

The repeater located in each county will be monitored 24/7/365 by the hosting jurisdiction. If other jurisdictions wish, they may monitor the repeater closest to their dispatch center.

Authorized Users

See Attachment (A)

User Operating Guidelines

Any local use of the system will be closed to general traffic anytime there is a need for emergency use by the regional command Staff, along with county and municipal officials within the area of the emergency.

In the clear unit nomenclature will be utilized on the RRS at all times. (Example: Clay County Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) to Montague County Judge) No codes of any kind will be used. Plain English will be utilized for all traffic, both emergency and non-emergency.

Local use of the RRS is authorized during non-emergency times to provide temporary interoperability between contiguous jurisdictions within the region.

All authorized users within the region must program RRS frequencies into their radios to provide interoperability throughout the region.

Counties contiguous to the region will be considered authorized users for the purpose of interoperability to provide mutual aid during an emergency operation.

Common Radio Labels and Frequencies

All jurisdictions authorized to utilize the RRS will program all RRS repeater frequencies into their mobile radios with common labels.

Frequencies and Common Labels: (See Attachment B)

System Control

All dispatch offices **must** have the radio capability to transmit and receive the RRS frequencies which are located nearest to their dispatch center. Some jurisdictions that do not have a repeater located in their county must have the capability to change channels to the next closest repeater station where the emergency is taking place. To be effective, each dispatch office which is staffed 24/7 must monitor their nearest RRS equipment for traffic.

The dispatch office having a dedicated static internet provider (IP) address will be the controlling office for interconnect purposes for the repeater located within or near their city/county to interconnect with any other repeater in the RRS system using Wide Area Interoperability Solutions (WAIS) software. Any dispatch center not having the WAIS Software will use the Raytheon PCNXU software to manipulate the RRS and provide dispatching operations during an emergency using any common internet connection.

In the event of an emergency which would affect more than one jurisdiction, the jurisdiction that is in command of the event will have their dispatch center or Emergency Operations Center (EOC) control the RRS. When this occurs, no other jurisdictions should attempt to connect or disconnect any of the repeaters in the system. If the emergency evolves in a way which will change the incident scope, command structure, responsibility or location, (such as a large rapidly moving wildland fire) control of the RRS will also shift to the appropriate dispatch center where the emphasis of the emergency is moving to. The controlling jurisdiction will then contact the jurisdiction where the command structure is moving to and advise that jurisdiction that they will be in control of the RRS. If there are simultaneous events occurring in the region which requires the use of the RRS, the first jurisdiction activating the RRS will have control until such time as they release the system or no longer need the system and transfer it to the other event. If the simultaneous events are to use contiguous repeaters, then they can each utilize the system at the same time but without using the same repeater.

The dispatch centers in Baylor, Foard, Jack, Montague, Wilbarger, and Young Counties will utilize the WAIS software. This software will connect to the RRS through a local computer which will be maintained in the dispatch center. Wichita County and the City of Iowa Park will connect directly to the ACU1000 interconnect gateway. All other dispatch centers and/or EOC's whether a municipality or county located in the NRPC, including the Nortex HS Department, will utilize the WAIS software on their local computer to access the system.

Any **authorized** user may request a patch to another repeater in the region by merely contacting their dispatch office, and requesting that the patch be made. As soon as the patch is made, the dispatch operator must notify the requesting user that the patch has been made. Upon completion of the conversation, the user will request that their controlling dispatch office terminate the patch.

All dispatch offices will make at least one interconnect patch per week, per shift, for training purposes and physically test it between field units and other dispatch and/or Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) by conducting radio traffic from dispatch center to dispatch center and field units utilizing the PCNXU audio patch. Each jurisdiction will conduct the system tests as outlined above and will log the test results on the form in attachment "C". The test results will be submitted quarterly to the Homeland Security Advisory Committee Chairman who will brief the full committee on the results of the test(s). The test result sheets will be filed and maintained by the Nortex HS department staff for three years.

The overall Incident Commander (IC) will have ultimate control over interconnect patches as needed, as a part of the IC function. When unified command is initiated, the decision of who will be making operational RRS communications decisions will be determined at the incident command post. There will never be more than one commander or RRS operator making decisions at any one time. The overall Incident Commander of the jurisdiction where the emergency or disaster is taking place will make the final decision regarding how the system will be utilized.

System Maintenance and Associated Costs

Each county having a RRS repeater located in their county will be responsible, by MOU, for all maintenance and security associated with their repeater system, to include, radio equipment, antennas, transmission lines, computers, modems, routers and any other equipment associated with the RRS. Dispatch centers/EOC's may be temporarily disconnected from the system by the host location if proper operating procedures outlined in this document are not adhered to or equipment malfunctions are inhibiting the operation of the system.

All repeater license renewal, and any required license modifications, will be the responsibility of Nortex HS department for all repeaters.

Repeaters out of service will be reported, by phone, to the Nortex HS department immediately with estimated down time given. Nortex HS department will then immediately notify, by email or any other appropriate means, all other RRS control dispatch offices of the outages and anticipated down time. When the repeater service is restored, notifications will be made in the same manner.

Other Regional Equipment

Equipment assigned to a jurisdiction as a Regional Asset shall follow all guidelines set forth by the Department of Homeland Security and the SAA and our Regional Mutual Aid Agreement.

Including:

The jurisdictions in possession of the response equipment should:

1. Hold and safeguard the equipment and make it available for response.
2. Allow the equipment to be operated only by trained personnel who are (a) on official duty, (b) designated volunteer of the holding jurisdiction or (c) designated personnel who fall under an official mutual aid agreement.
3. Conduct appropriate and effective preventative maintenance and keep the equipment in good operating condition at all times and coordinate insurance, fuel, oil and other maintenance consumables, all major repairs and all reoccurring costs (leases).
4. Use and operate the equipment in compliance with state laws. In addition, the equipment will not be operated in a negligent or reckless manner.
5. Use an equipment log to track mileage/hours and usage.
6. All Regional Homeland Security assets over \$5,000 including all controlled equipment will be tagged and placed in the controlling jurisdictions inventory and entered into the Texas Regional Resources Network (TRRN) website.
7. All Regional Homeland Security grant funded equipment is subject to audit for three years past the close of the grant in which it was purchased.

(Attachment A)

REGIONAL REPEATER SYSTEM AUTHORIZED USERS

AUTHORIZED USERS FOR EACH COUNTY/CITY

County Judge
Mayor
Commissioners
Precinct Foreman
County EMC/Assistant
City EMC
County RACES Officers
Sheriff
Chief Deputy
Sheriff Captains
Sheriff Lt's
Police Chief
Assistant Police Chief
Fire Chief
Assistant Fire Chief
Battalion Chief
Fire Captains
City Manager or Administrator
Each Dispatch Center
Or others as specified by EMC

SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE

Command Post
Mobile Command Post
Fire Chief
Assistant Fire Chief
Security Forces Commander
Or other as specified by base commander

OTHERS

Nortex RPC Homeland Security Department Staff
Nortex Region Multi Agency Coordination Center
Nortex Regional Medical Operations Center

(Attachment B)

REGIONAL REPEATER SYSTEM **FREQUENCIES AND ALIASES**

<u>REPEATER NAME/LOCATION</u>	<u>DISPLAY ON RADIO AS (ALIAS)</u>	<u>RECEIVE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>TRANSMIT FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RX DPL</u>	<u>TX DPL</u>
Wichita County Area (Iowa Park)	REG1WC	155.3175	153.8375	632	632
Wilbarger County Area (Vernon)	REG2VER	155.3925	158.7525	632	632
Young County Area (Graham)	REG3GRA	155.3175	159.0225	632	632
Montague County Area (Montague)	REG4MONT	155.1075	159.3900	632	632
Baylor County Area (Seymour)	REG5SEY	155.6475	159.0750	632	632
Foard County Area (Crowell)	REG6CRO	154.1675	151.2200	632	632
Jack County Area (Jacksboro)	REG7JACK	154.9650	158.9850	632	632

Note:

The Aliases should be displayed in as many characters as possible. Depending on the number of spaces your radios will display, shorten the aliases as needed but maintain a format that will be easily understood by all end users. At the very least, the display should show the location of the repeaters in the RRS.

