

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Office of Fire and Aviation**



Operations Alert

No. 06-01

April 19, 2006

Subject: NARROW BAND RADIO PROGRAMMING

Area of Concern: FIRE AND AVIATION COMMUNICATIONS

Discussion: In preparation for the 2006 Fire Season please ensure that radios in ground and aerial resources are correctly programmed. In most instances Federal agencies are required to utilize narrowband. In multi-agency situations state and local co-operators may utilize frequencies in the wide band mode. Correct programming of radios is a critical component of pre-season preparedness for handheld and vehicle radios as well as aircraft pre-use inspections. Additionally when completing pre-use inspections verify that aircraft radios have the Guard Frequency correctly programmed in the narrow band mode with tone 110.9 on the transmit side. When programming adjustments are made assure they were done correctly by completing radio checks.

If you are supporting another agency, especially State or Local, validate what band they utilize. Aircraft and personnel have shifted back and fourth between the Texas/Oklahoma fires, as well as the Natural Disasters of the Southeast all fall and winter. This increases the possibility that some equipment may not be programmed correctly. It is suggested that adequate time be scheduled for suppression crews to verify their radios are programmed correctly. For aircraft pilots, managers and air crewmembers this session should be conducted as soon as possible after the aircraft start date.

It is strongly recommended that all Frequency Plans and lists identify transmit and receive frequencies with an N or a W.

To help personnel understand the Narrow Band issue and how it may impact their operations review USDI Safety Alert 05-04 <http://www.oas.gov/oassafety/alerts/Alert05-04.pdf> or online awareness training is available at <http://radios.nifc.gov>. The NIFC Wildland Communications web site also offers links on programming common aviation radios as well as links to programming portable and mobile radios.

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