



# Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency

*Serving San Bernardino, Inyo, and Mono Counties*

*Virginia Hastings, Executive Director*  
*Reza Vaezazizi, M.D., Medical Director*

**DATE:** July 6, 2012

**TO:** EMS Providers - ALS, BLS, EMS Aircraft  
Base Hospitals

**FROM:** Denice Wicker-Stiles   
Acting Director

**SUBJECT:** STATE EMS NARROW BANDING TRANSITION

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The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has mandated that all radio equipment operating in the 150 MHz through 512 MHz land mobile radio spectrum must be converted from operating in wide-band mode to narrow band mode no later than January 1, 2013. The California EMS Authority (EMSA) has directed ICEMA to provide a report to EMSA on the status regarding narrow banding state controlled medical frequencies such as the Hospital Emergency Administrative Radio (HEAR) frequency in the VHF spectrum and the state controlled MED frequencies in the UHF spectrum (see attached EMSA memo, dated June 13, 2012).

In order to conform to EMSA's request, please complete the attached questionnaire and return to Paul Easterling, EMS Specialist, via e-mail at [peasterling@cao.sbcounty.gov](mailto:peasterling@cao.sbcounty.gov) no later than July 25, 2012.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Easterling, EMS Specialist, at (909) 388-5826.

DWS/PE/jlm

Attachments

c: File Copy



## EMSA NARROW BANDING QUESTIONNAIRE

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are all the radios in the department/agency compatible with the new narrow band rules?  
 Yes       No
2. Has your department/agency started narrow banding its VHF radios?  
 Yes       No
3. Does your department/agency have the state Hospital Emergency Administrative Radio (HEAR) frequency (155.340 MHz-Simplex) programmed in its VHF radios?  
 Yes       No
4. If your department/agency programs the HEAR frequency in its VHF radios, has it been narrow banded?  
 Yes       No
5. Does your department/agency have UHF radios?  
 Yes       No
6. If the department/agency has UHF radios, are the radios programmed to utilize the State UHF MED channels (MED 1-MED 102)?  
 Yes       No
7. If the department/agency programs the State UHF MED channels in its radios, are the radios narrow banded?  
 Yes       No

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY**

10901 GOLD CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 400  
RANCHO CORDOVA, CA 95670  
(916) 322-4336 FAX (916) 324-2875

JUN 19 2012



**DATE:** June 13, 2012

**TO:** Local EMS Administrators

**FROM:** Howard Backer, MD, MPH, FACEP, Director

**SUBJECT:** NARROW BANDING TRANSITION FOR HEAR (VHF) AND  
MED CHANNELS (UHF)

*Daniel R. Smiley*  
for

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated in Report & Order 92-235, (adopted in 1992), that all radio equipment operating in the 150 MHz through 512MHz land mobile radio spectrum must be converted from operating in wide-band mode to narrow band mode no later than January 1, 2013. State and local agencies that have not converted by this date must cease operation or face receiving violation notices and possible fines. There are only two exceptions: the two FCC allocated paging-only channels of 152.00750 and 157.4500 MHz. *This does not affect 470-512, 700, and 800 MHz systems.*

Each local EMS agency, EMS provider, and EMS contractor who is licensed to communicate on the MedNet channels listed on the attachment must conform to the following:

- provide transition progress of your local area to EMS Authority by August 6, 2012;
- provide a transition completion report to EMS Authority by October 30, 2012;
- immediately modify your licenses to add narrow-band emissions (see attachment for detailed instructions);
- determine if your current radios are compatible with the narrow band rules;
- reprogram radios to narrow band operation, if the radio is capable;
- replace any non-narrow band capable radios with new radios which are P25 compliant, see Government Code 8592.5; and
- develop a schedule and a project plan to replace and/or reprogram all your radio equipment prior to January 1, 2013.

Every EMS participant is potentially affected by narrow banding and must comply with its provisions by the indicated deadline. The narrow banding implementation may involve the replacement of portable, mobile, hospital and other radio infrastructure equipment.

The FCC has provided a process to obtain a waiver of these Rules. The process will involve retaining an attorney versed in communications law and preparation of a clear description of what you have done to prepare for compliance and the steps you intend to take to come into compliance. The waiver process can take a lengthy time (possibly a year) to be evaluated and could very well be denied. A simple statement such as "we can't afford to do this" will bring an immediate denial considering the NB requirement has been in place since 1992.

The Emergency Medical Services Authority, as the responsible agency within the State of California for the Emergency Medical Radio Service, has targeted **October 1, 2012** to complete the migration to narrow band for all medical channels, including the Hospital Emergency Administrative Radio (HEAR) channel. To ensure compliance, the EMS Authority has already modified its (state held) FCC licenses to narrow band for the HEAR channel and all MedNet channels.

The FCC states that licensees can operate in either analog or digital formats as long as they operate at 12.5 kHz efficiency. Below are questions and responses from the FCC FAQ site on narrow-banding that will assist your agency as it transitions.

**If I need to Narrowband, do I need to implement digital technology?**

No. Licensees can operate in either analog or digital formats as long as they operate at 12.5 kHz efficiency.

**Does Narrow-banding require me to change frequencies or obtain new channels?**

No. Narrow-banding does not require moving to another frequency band or different channels. Licensees stay on the same channel center(s), but reduce the bandwidth of the channel(s) currently used, from 25 kHz to 12.5 kHz and change the emission designator on the license. Alternatively, licensees may stay on the same 25 kHz channel but implement a 12.5 kHz equivalent technology on that channel.

**If I currently have a license for a 25 kHz channel, will I automatically be entitled to license two 12.5 kHz channels after I Narrowband?**

No. Your 12.5 kHz channel will remain on the same 25 kHz channel center. Your current 25 kHz channel will not be split into two 12.5 kHz channels. You will need to justify and apply for additional 12.5 kHz channels through a certified frequency coordinator.

**Would the FCC require a filing fee and frequency coordination for an application adding a narrowband emission designator to a license that currently has only a wideband emission designator?**

The FCC will not require coordination and fees for an application adding a narrowband emission designator to a license that currently has only a wideband emission designator. However, the new narrowband emission must be the same emission type as the current wideband emission on the license (for example, 20k0F3E to 11k0F3E but not 20k0F3E to 11k0F1E). A link has been provided on the attachment that will provide license modification instructions.

As you continue with the narrow-banding process, please feel free to contact our communications staff, Tonya Thomas or Benita Beaushaw, with your concerns. You may also want to review the FCC website at [FCC.gov](http://FCC.gov) to obtain additional information on narrow banding.

cc: Tom McGinnis, Division Chief, EMS Systems Division  
Tonya Thomas, Communications Coordinator, EMS Systems Division  
Lisa Schoenthal, Division Chief, Disaster Medical Services Division  
William Hartley, Manager, Response and Resource Unit, DMS Division  
Benita Beaushaw, SISA, Response and Resource Unit, DMS Division

Attachment

**MED Channel Frequencies**

As a result of the FCC issued ruling regarding narrowband applications; MED Channel numbers 1 through 103 (UHF) are prescribed by FCC Rules, as corresponding to the following radio transmit frequencies in MHz:

MED CHANNEL	Receive FREQUENCY <i>(Base &amp; Mobile)</i>	Transmit FREQUENCY <i>(Mobile Only)</i>	MED CHANNEL	Receive FREQUENCY <i>(Base &amp; Mobile)</i>	Transmit FREQUENCY <i>(Mobile Only)</i>
1	463.000	468.000	6	463.125	468.125
11	463.00625	468.00625	61	463.13125	468.13125
12	463.0125	468.0125	62	463.1375	468.1375
13	463.01875	468.01875	63	463.14375	468.14375
2	463.025	468.025	7	463.150	468.150
21	463.03125	468.03125	71	463.15625	468.15625
22	463.0375	468.0375	72	463.1625	468.1625
23	463.04375	468.04375	73	463.16875	468.16875
3	463.050	468.050	8	463.175	468.175
31	463.05625	468.05625	81	463.18125	468.18125
32	463.0625	468.0625	82	463.1875	468.1875
33	463.06875	468.06875	83	463.19375	468.19375
4	463.075	468.075	9	462.950	467.950
41	463.08125	468.08125	91	462.95625	467.95625
42	463.0875	468.0875	92	462.9625	467.9625
43	463.09375	468.09375	93	462.96875	467.96875
5	463.100	468.100	10	462.975	467.975
51	463.10625	468.10625	101	462.98125	467.98125
52	463.1125	468.1125	102	462.9875	467.9875
53	463.11875	468.11875	103	462.99375	467.99375

Hospital Emergency Administrative Radio (HEAR)

155.340 MHz (VHF) - Simplex

How to Modify your FCC License for Narrowband -

[http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SiteCollectionDocuments/OECNarrowbandingGuide\\_Final.pdf](http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SiteCollectionDocuments/OECNarrowbandingGuide_Final.pdf)