

Date: July 2011

Background

Station radios have the ability to send/receive up to 16 status messages. These can be used for a number of purposes but primarily they are used for turn out, priority and routine calling and monitoring of certain station parameters.

Refer to attached table for recommended allocations.

Issue

Although some allocations (such as station turn out) are standard, many are variously applied throughout the country. This non standardisation means that there is inconsistency both at the station and how they are handled at the Comcen.

There is little processing of many of the telemetry signals at the Comcen end with the majority of the signals being presented to the operator as a line of text in the “pending events screen”. Any processing is entirely dependent on the operator seeing this text and taking appropriate action. Under high workload it is easy to overlook this screen.

One important example is the “power fail” and “low battery”: indication, which if unattended could mean that within the next 8 hours the station could effectively die and we would have no means of turning it out. (In this instance, Flex paging would still work)

Also topical at the moment is the treatment of station security and fire alarms. Some stations are connecting fire and security alarms to the telemetry system. In some instances these alarms are also connected to local alerting such as station paging and sirens. (Although an understandable local approach, this has ramifications regarding public perception of PFA workarounds and personal safety if crew run into a burglary in process at a station).

Front of station call points for the public (street fire alarms – SFA's) are by no means standard and in some instances, although fitted do not work. Consistency of approach here would assist in some standardisation.

Options

Some telemetry should be considered mandatory and some optional. Regardless of whether it is mandatory or not, all telemetry should be implemented and processed in a standard manner nationally.

Operational communications/Turnout is of paramount importance at all times.

- Station fire and security alarm monitoring are not considered operational communications and could be managed through the same third party providers that any other business would use e.g. AFA..
- Station Call Points (SFA's) are able to be connected back to the Comcen via the LMR and are to create a STRU event at the station, and are also to initiate local turnout if applicable (siren or local paging)
- Development work to process the Pager acknowledgements so that it alerts the dispatcher by exception has been completed and implemented in ICAD. On this basis the pager ack should be reinstated for all stations as it provides the first automated response to a successful alert via paging.
- Until such time as automated alerting of “power fail” and “low battery” is available, the Comcen implement a standard response for these notifications.



Policy

The Fire Region Managers (meeting November 2010) have directed that Station Call Points be disconnected and that monitoring of both fire and security alarms be undertaken by the Communications Centres.

The following standards are to be applied during maintenance visits or during the digital radio installations at all stations.

- (a) Front of Station Call Point (AKA Street Fire Alarms) will be removed from all stations and disconnected from the Turn out Console (TOC) completely. For clarity – this includes local siren and paging which will no longer be activated by the call point.
- (b) Station fire alarm connections directly to the Comcen via the LMR will be removed and disconnected from the Turn Out Console (TOC) completely. Any monitoring of fire alarms from NZFS premises required under the act or requested by the brigade are to be connected through an approved automated fire alarm service provider.
- (c) Station security alarm connections directly to the Comcen via the LMR may be made provided it is fully understood that any response by the Comcen will be on a best endeavour basis. Any such response by the Comcen is to be standardised as much as possible across the three centres. These connections will provide a notification to the Comcen only and will not be connect to siren, pagers or lighting at the station.
- (d) On any stations where either remote unlocking of access doors or opening of appliance bays doors is used, the key cabinet must not be unlocked by the turn out system.
- (e) Where a Paging Data Terminal (PDT) or Satellite paging is at the station then the pager acknowledgement (pager ack) is to be connected to the TOC for telemetry back to the comcen.
- (f) All TOC power supplies are to have a “Mains Fail” and “Low Battery” alarms connected to the TOC for telemetry back to the Comcen. The Comcen must have an

agreed national SOP for responding to Mains Fail and Low Battery alarms. Note: The Comcen Managers have agreed that this will be a pager notification to a nominated pager for each region.

Comcen to Station Telemetry



Station to Comcen Telemetry

