



Greater Boston Police Council, Inc.

Radio Communications Interoperability: The Boston Area Police Emergency Radio Network (BAPERN)

GBPC has developed and maintained the Boston Area Police Emergency Radio Network (BAPERN) system since the early 1970's. This radio system was designed and built after a series of large scale incidents occurred in and around the Boston area, highlighting the inability of the interdepartmental police officers from communicating with each other on scene. These events led to a series of planning sessions and policy meetings in which it was determined that a new radio system was needed to improve interdepartmental police services.

Today, BAPERN is the only regional public safety inter-operational radio system in Eastern Massachusetts. It is a simulcast system that currently serves more than 120 member police departments, for use by the member department internally as a backup to its primary channel, as well as for system-wide or district-wide communications in the event of a major incident.

There are currently 119 full BAPERN member agencies in the Greater Boston Police Council, Inc. A full BAPERN member has access at all times to the BAPERN system. Agencies such as the Massachusetts Dept. of State Police, Boston Police Dept., FBI and US Marshall's office also support and/or monitor the BAPERN system. These agencies have their own non-BAPERN radio systems. However, they use Bapern 3 & 4 for general broadcasts and inter-agency police business. The many universities that participate as BAPERN members are certified as police departments under Massachusetts General Laws.

BAPERN members communicate through two wide area channels (BAPERN 3 & 4), and three District channels (North District, West District, Central District & South District). All of these channels utilize voting receivers that terminate at Boston Police Headquarters via leased telephone & microwave facilities.

The majority of equipment used by agencies on the BAPERN system is Motorola equipment. General Electric, Bendix King, and other manufacturer's equipment are used as well. One requirement of all radio equipment used on the BAPERN system is that it contains an identifier that automatically sends a unique numerical ID each time the radio transmits. This numerical ID is automatically logged along with voice transmissions to provide a permanent record of activity on the BAPERN channels.

An additional membership class, BAPERN Contributing Membership was established to allow a member agency to use BAPERN Channel 3 and 4 in the event of an emergency. This membership class would authorize an agency to communicate with 105 agencies including the Department of State Police and the Boston Police Department by radio. It is an ideal way to have limited, but very important use of the BAPERN Radio System. Presently, there are 23 BAPERN Contributing Members.