

**INTEROPERABLE  
COMMUNICATIONS  
BETWEEN  
SCHOOLS  
AND  
PUBLIC SAFETY**



**Presented to  
Irvine Unified School District**

**August 25, 2014**

## Public Safety Interoperability with School Personnel

It is the goal of the Orange County public safety community to achieve radio interoperability with the schools of Orange County. The radio systems are in place and the operational protocols have been adopted by the Orange County Chiefs of Police & Sheriff's Association and the Orange County Fire Chief's Association.

Irvine Unified School District has added an Orange County radio channel to specific radios owned by the district to achieve the goal of interoperability. The purpose of this handout is to provide school radio users with an overview of this radio channel.

**Communications Interoperability:** This is a phrase that has been adopted by the public safety community and is defined as: "The ability of public safety emergency responders to communicate with whom they need to, when they need to, as authorized."

### Other School Districts That Have An Orange County Channel

It is the goal to have an interoperable radio channel in every "K-12" school radio countywide. We have the support and approval of both the Orange County Chiefs of Police & Sheriff's Association as well as the Orange County Fire Chief's Association. Currently, the following School Districts have radios with an Orange County Channel:

- Anaheim City School District (K-6)
- Capistrano Unified School District (K-12)
- Cypress School District (K-6)
- Fullerton School District (K-8)
- Garden Grove Unified School District (K-12)
- Irvine Unified School District (K-12)
- Mariners Christian School, Costa Mesa (K-8)
- Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (K-12)
- St. Pius V Catholic School (K-8)
- Santa Ana Unified School District (K-12)
- Servite High School, Anaheim (9-12)
- Tustin Unified School District (K-12)

We continue to work with and encourage all of the other districts in Orange County to implement interoperable communications between the District and Public Safety. It is our goal to achieve 100% participation.

**Did You Know?** You may wonder why the Orange County Sheriff's Department is involved with this project. The Sheriff's Communications & Technology Division provides the various radio systems used by all law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, lifeguards, public works and local government agencies of the County and its 34 cities. The Communications & Technology Division has a long history of providing public safety communications dating back to 1934 when the first public safety radio was placed into operation here in Orange County.

## **The "OC ACCESS" Channel**

This is a VHF radio channel that is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to the County of Orange and is used to facilitate interoperable communications. It is not part of the school radio system but the channel is included in specific school radios as authorized by the Irvine Unified School District for the purpose of communications interoperability with Orange County public safety.

Here are some guidelines regarding the OC Access Channel:

- This channel is in designated school radios as determined by the district
- This channel is known as the "OC Access Channel" and is monitored 24/7 by the Countywide Coordinated Communications Center (known as "Control One")
- This channel is to be used for emergency purposes only
- This channel may be used to request law or fire assistance when the use of 9-1-1 or other normal contact methods are unavailable
- With the approval of a law or fire agency this channel may be "patched" to an Orange County law or fire channel during extraordinary emergency situations to allow for direct communication between school personnel and first responders
- This channel is shared with other City, County, State and Federal agencies and School personnel may need to "share" the channel with these agencies when using the OC Access Channel

### **For Additional Information**

For additional information about interoperable communications please contact:  
Robert Stoffel, Orange County Sheriff's Department, Communications & Technology  
Division, (714) 704-7919  
[Robert.Stoffel@comm.ocgov.com](mailto:Robert.Stoffel@comm.ocgov.com)

Our Point of Contact with Irvine Unified School District regarding interoperable  
communications is:  
Risk Management Director Stephen R. Bayne, Ed.D., (949) 936-5021  
[StephenBayne@iusd.org](mailto:StephenBayne@iusd.org)

## How To Use The OC Access Channel

### Operational Concept – Message Relay – Only When There Is No Other Way!

Contact “Orange County Control One” on the OC Access Channel.

**School Radio User:** “Control One, Irvine High School on O.C. Access Channel”

**Control One:** Acknowledges Calling Party

**School Radio User:** Transmit the message. For example, “This is the Principal at Irvine High School, 4321 Walnut Avenue in Irvine. We need paramedics for an adult who is having a heart attack. The adult is on the playing field.”

**Control One:** Will acknowledge and then relay message to appropriate dispatch center(s).

Remain on the OC Access Channel until first responders arrive on scene, in case Control One needs to contact you while first responders are en route.

### Operational Concept – Patch to Orange County 800 MHz Radio System

Contact “Orange County Control One” on the OC Access Channel or via phone at (714) 628-7000.

**School Radio User:** “Control One, Irvine High School on O.C. Access Channel”

**Control One:** Acknowledges Calling Party

**School Radio User:** Provide information indicating nature of activity, and patch request. For example, “This is the Principal at Irvine High School, 4321 Walnut Avenue in Irvine. We have the Irvine police department responding for an active shooter on our campus. Please patch me to the police department so I can talk with them directly.”

**Control One:** Acknowledges Calling Party, contacts the requested agency and receives approval to initiate the patch. If approved, completes the patch and then notifies the school radio user that the patch is in place.

Notify Control One when patch is no longer needed.

# OC Access Channel

## For Emergency Use Only

**Step #1:** With the radio on locate the “P1” button on the keypad and push it


**Step #2:** “Irvine USD” and “OC Access” will appear on the display

**Step #3:** Use the down arrow  on the keypad to select “OC Access”

**Step #4:** After selecting “OC Access” push “OK” button on the keypad

**Step #5:** You are now on the Orange County Sheriff's Department channel

**Step #6:** Use plain English. No codes.

**Step #7:** To switch back to “Irvine USD” channels go through steps #1 - #2. Use the up arrow  to select “Irvine USD” and push the “OK” button. You are now back on Irvine USD channels.

