

## RELATED TERMS

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# LESSON LEARNED

## Emergency Communications: Notifying Responders of Gateway Activation and Deactivation

### SUMMARY

Communication unit leaders (COML) should notify all responders of gateway patch activation and deactivation over the radio network.

### DESCRIPTION

On October 9, 2006, the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) staged the BallCom Full-Scale Exercise (FSE). The goal of the FSE was to evaluate the Greater Albuquerque Metro Planning Area's Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) by identifying areas for improvement. The FSE simulated the explosion of a propane storage tank and a large fire in Albuquerque's Balloon Fiesta Park.

Representatives from ten federal, state, and local agencies participated in the FSE. The COML tested his ability to implement and manage communication logistics in accordance with TICP guidelines.

**Gateways** interconnect radio channels that operate on different bands and modes to allow responders from different agencies to communicate with each other.

**TICP guidelines** mandate that the COML notify FSE participants of gateway patch activation and deactivation over the radio network.

During the FSE, the incident commander and the COML established three gateway radio patches to facilitate communication between responders. However, the COML did not consistently inform participating agencies over the network when the gateway patches were activated and deactivated. As a result, exercise participants were unsure which radio channels were available for communications. Following the FSE, the City of Albuquerque OEM recommended that emergency managers provide responders with continued training on TICP activation and deactivation procedures.

COMLs should notify all responders of gateway patch activation and deactivation over the radio network.

### CITATIONS

City of Albuquerque Office of Emergency Management. *BallCom Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan Full Scale Exercise After Action Report*. 2006.

[https://www.llis.dhs.gov/member/secure/detail.cfm?content\\_id=25896](https://www.llis.dhs.gov/member/secure/detail.cfm?content_id=25896)

Middle Rio Grande Planning Area (New Mexico). *Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan*. 2006.

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