SCANNERS

THE URBAN DX'ER

SHORTWAVE

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FIERY PLANE CRASH KILLS 4

A few issue ago I detailed a scanning strategy for being prepared in case a local disaster were to occur. Last week you probably saw the report of the plane crash in Newark. It's obvious that I didn't totally practice what I suggested. I found myself fumbling through Scanner Master looking for likely frequencies. That afternoon I spent several hours programming many of the unused banks with associated frequencies for the various county, state, and federal agencies. It paid off!



On the evening of December 9 I was driving down Rt 46 in Lodi when I smelled a faint odor of something burning. Passing Main St I noticed some fire apparatus heading South. I reached over and turned on Spen 1 as initial reports of an explosion were being dispatched. Arriving home I soon discovered that the explosion was actually a plane crash in nearby Hasbrouck Heights. Reaching to the radios it was a simple matter to bring up Bergen County, Lodi, Hasbrouck Heights, Wallington, and one of the local disaster monitoring groups. What I heard in those first few minutes brought chills down my back. A member of one of the response teams described it as a "war zone". Via his open mic I could hear the aircraft exploding and the screams of those

HASBROUCK HEIGHTS - THE ACTION CONTINUES!

Just two days after the plane crash a multiple-alarm fire raged at Borough Hall and the adjacent police station early today, knocking out police Established 1984

communications and taxing an already-weary Fire Department.

Firefighters still were battling the blaze after 12:30 a.m. An eyewitness said damage to the buildings appeared to be extensive and included a collapsed roof. The Bergen County Police were handling emergency calls for the borough.

The second floor of the building where the fire was raging housed offices of the borough clerk and borough administrator as well as the municipal courtroom, the council caucus room, and an exempt firemen's meeting room. The blaze at Borough Hall, at 248 Hamilton Ave., occurred less than 24 hours after firefighters cleared the scene of a plane crash, fire, and explosion between several houses in a residential neighborhood.



Firefighters from towns including Hackensack, Wood-Ridge, Moonachie, Lyndhurst, Rutherford, Teaneck, Wallington, and Carlstadt responded to the call. Hundreds of people watched from the parking lot of a senior citizen complex across the street. Investigators were to begin trying to determine a cause of the fire as soon as the blaze was out.

PRO-92 REVIEW

By now you are probably aware that Radio Shack released their new PRO-92 multi-trunking scanner. Impatience got the best of me so I went out and purchased one during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. My initial comments and impressions seem to mimic the comments that have been populating USENET discussion groups. I thought I would share my experiences with our readers, hopefully to spare them some disappointment.

A brief review of the manual made it clear that it left out a lot of information that a beginner to the scanner hobby would not have. For example, in the section that explained how trunking systems could be monitored it referenced locations on the Internet for additional information. What do the people do who don't have Internet access?

Regular scanning and programming was similar in operation to most scanners, though the method for manually selecting an individual channel was cumbersome at best. Channels are arranged in banks of 50, with 10 banks for a total of 500 hundred channels. The PRO-92 requires you to input the bank number followed by the channel number. Features such as PL and DPL decoding are enabled and disabled at the bank level, not by individual frequencies. This means that if you wanted to temporarily disable tone receive on one frequency, you are forced to disable the entire bank of 50 channels. Strike1 - not a great design!

And while it would have been much easier to say that you can enable and disable this feature, Radio Shack describes this as "open" and "closed" mode. While this is a minor issue, neophytes will be confused.

In open mode the PRO-92 is quick to decode and display the PL or DPL tone being transmitted, provided that either PL or DPL mode is programmed as part of that channel. In open mode, while the PRO-92 detected the tone, you will hear every transmission on a frequency, regardless of the tone being transmitted. Switching to "closed" mode will enable what we generally think of as tone receive, excluding any transmission not using the designated tone. My biggest complaint is that "tone receive" only operates in "SCAN" mode. Manually selecting a frequency disables tone receive. That's a big mistake - Strike 2!

After programming in about 50 frequencies and both the NJSP Type I and Type II systems I replaced the alkaline batteries (6) with a set of freshly charged Panasonic 1200 mah "AA" cells. The PRO-92 was left to scan both trunked and conventional channels, with the squelch set just beyond "open" and the volume set a comfortable level at a distance of 4-6 feet - about midway on the knob settings. As it was late, so activity was not particularly busy. The batteries were dead after about 3.5 hours of use, quite poor considering 4 of the same cells power my AR-8000 for 6-8 hours.

Using my original Uniden trunk tracker for comparison I proceeded to the basement to see how well the PRO-92 stacked up for sensitivity. Here again, the PRO-92 was not able to provide "arm chair" copy, and the call group display would intermittently toggle between Type I and Type II ID's. Strike 3, I've had enough!

EDACS monitoring was a bit more difficult since the manual as well as feedback from users suggested that a strong signal is a must in EDACS mode. One other quirk is that scanning EDACS systems requires you to program those channels in a separate bank by themselves. Since most EDACS sytems use 4-5 frequencies, it's a waste of about 45 channels! Like several other readers I decided that I had better ways to spend \$350 so I packed the PRO-92 up and sent it back to Radio Shack. The store manager asked if I was returning it because of a problems and I explained that I was disappointed with its operation. He commented that he had heard of similar complaints from another store. I explained that the PRO-92 was an "advanced" scanner and those who would be buying it were seasoned scanner hobbyist. They are going to be rather demanding given the selling price. He agreed and refunded my money with a smile.

In defense of the PRO-92, Receiver selectivity was typical GRE quality! Even when connected to my discone antenna intermod and front end overload was minimal, and at no time caused any problems. Using the PRO-92 in Garden State Plaza quickly allowed me to identify all the DPL tones their systems used - previously unknown. I will miss this feature and admit that I had some reservations returning the radio. Realizing the novelty of a new toy and the weaknesses I discovered I believe my decision was in my wallets best interest.

13TH ANNUAL WINTER SWL FESTIVAL

http://www.trsc.com/winterfest.html March 10-11, 2000 Lansdale-Kulpsville, Pennsylvania 1750 Sumneytown Pike Kulpsville, PA 19443, USA Tele +1 215 368 3800 Fax +1 215 368 7824

PRO-92 CHEAT SHEET

For those who decided to keep the PRO-92, you've discovered that the manual lacks a condensed list of the key sequences used to switch the various modes on and off. These are organized by what mode the scanner is in when performing the key sequence.

MANUAL Mode

FUNC 2 Switch Open/Closed Mode FUNC DELAY Toggle delay mode FUNC UP/DN Jumps to next bank FUNC PRI Set priority channel Adjust Contrast FUNC 9 Keypad lock FUNC LIT FUNC L/OUT Review locked out channels - repeat for each channel FUNC TUNE Set current frequency to TUNE frequency FUNC SEARCH Search programming mode FUNC TRUNK Same as PGM TRUNK ?

SCAN mode (when stopped on a frequency)

FUNC 2 Switch Open/Closed Mode FUNC TUNE Set current frequency to TUNE frequency FUNC DELAY Toggle delay mode FUNC PRI Set priority channel FUNC LIT Keypad lock FUNC STEP Pause/unpause scanning FUNC SEARCH Search programming mode

SEARCH Mode

FUNC ENTER Store current freq to ch.9xx FUNC STEP Pause/Resume search FUNC SEARCH Access 10 current search ranges FUNC 5 Pick from all 60 search ranges FUNC TUNE set current freq. to TUNE freq. FUNC L/OUT View locked out freqs (up/dn to scroll) FUNC UP Jump to next bank in lockout review mode FUNC 4 Clears all locked out freqs in current bank FUNC DELAY Toggle delay mode

PROGRAM mode(s)

FUNC 6 Text tag for current bank FUNC UP/DN Jump to next bank FUNC 3 Clears all stored IDs in bank FUNC TUNE Store TUNE freq in current ch. FUNC CL Clear stored freq in current ch. FUNC PRI Make current channel priority ch. FUNC STEP Scroll down through PL/DPL tones Scroll through all locked out FUNC L/OUT channels FUNC 2 Open/Closed bank mode FUNC DELAY Toggle delay mode TRUNK FUNC 8 Set block size mode (Motorola only) **TRUNK FUNC CL Clear current ID**

TUNE mode

FUNC UP/DNJump in 1 MHz stepsFUNC ENTERStore current freq. to ch. 9xx

WX mode

FUNC WX WX standby mode (for SAME or 1050 Hz tone) Thanks to Brett - N7OLQ for this list!

MORRIS COUNTY RADIO IDENTIFIERS

Montvale appears to be doing what is common practice in Morris County. Many Morrris County departments also use the numbers from their radio call sign to designate their stations, or dispatch centers.

For those who monitor Morris County - For your listening enjoyment, here is a listing of some of the identifiers that I am familiar with:

- ID Department/Frequency & PL
- 200 Denville Police * (45.980/127.3)
- 282 Randolph Police (45.100/110.9)
- 291 Dover Police (46.020/173.8)
- 300 Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Center *
- (46.020/173.8)
- 345 Rockaway Boro Police Station (46.020/173.8)
- 368 Mine Hill Police Station (46.020/173.8)
- 392 Mt Olive Police (39.400/173.8)
- 403 Denville FD/EMS (46.240/82.5)
- 420 Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Ctr (45.600/CSQ)
- 435 Roxbury Police (39.160/173.8)
- 452 Rockaway Twp Fire ** (154.220/192.8)
- 468 Mendham Boro Police Station (39.020/173.8)
- 480 Parsippany Police *** (866.375/151.4)
- 484 Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Ctr (39.360/173.8)
- 485 Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Ctr (45.940/173.8)
- 621 Rockaway Twp Police (154.785/114.8)
- 700 Jefferson Twp Police * (45.800/173.8)
- 702 Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Ctr (45.900/173.8)
- 778 Parsippany Fire (46.480/173.8)

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804 - Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Ctr (39.620/173.8)

- 849 Roxbury Fire/EMS (45.600/CSQ)
- 851 Randolph Fire/EMS (46.360/110.9)
- 877 Morris Co Sheriffs Comm Ctr (39.020/173.8)
- 957 Mt Olive Police (39.400/173.8)

NOTES:

* = Not derived from the current call sign.

** = Old call sign from old low band system. They now have a new VHF

channel, but still use the old identifier for their dispatcher.

*** = Old call sign from old low band system (which is still current EMS Channel). There is a new call sign for the police channel, but they still use the old identifier.

Happy Holidays to all -Erik

NEW WEB PAGE FOR BERGEN COUNTY

http://www.hili.com/~4runner/berg.html

I am please to announce an addition to my web pages that provides a complete public service listing of all municipalities in Bergen County. Where available, links to each towns pages are provided. I wish to thank Warren Silverman who was kind enough to give me the Bergen County section of Scanner Master in electronic form. Several corrections are in the works to reflect the changes that have taken place over the past 6 months.

BERGEN COUNTY CHANGES CHANNEL ASSIGNMENTS

John, KB2SGJ passed this on to me following last weeks net. I have verified that BCPD is using 477.5125 for the majority of theit dispatching.

F-1: 477.1625R Main dispatch channel. May change to 477.5125 in very near future

F-2: 477.1625S

F-3: 477.1875R BCPD "alert" intersystem between local PD's BC Sheriff uses this channel because their own channel 472.6375 does not have good countywide coverage.

F-4: 477.2125R Tactical

F-5: 477.1875S BCPD/Prosecutor units

F-6: 477.2125S Tactical BCPD / narcotics / detectives / Prosecutor

joint ops

F-7: 477.5125R Dispatch channel, independent of F-1 sometimes used to simulcast F-1

F-8: 477.5125S Joint ops BCPD/Prosecutor

F-9: 477.2875R Can be used as main disp channel if F-1 busy or out of service

F-10: 477.2875S SWAT / K-9 or other special units (esp training)

F-11: 477.5375R BCPD OEM units, seldom used. Low power portable repeater for SWAT (moving to F-15).

F-12: 477.5375S

F-13: 478.5875S Presently used as simplex for BCPD narcotics/surveilance/Prosecutor. Future use for DIGITAL repeater (Motorola Astro)

F-14: Will be simplex of F-13 when it is a repeater

F-15: 472.6375R Future DIGITAL repeater BCPD / SWAT/Prosecutor

F-16: 472.6375S

NASA REAL TIME DATA

http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/realdata/index.html

Looking to find the latest info on tracking the current space shuttle mission? Easy - just visit the link above and virtually anything you could ever want to know is a click away!

OUR READERS TOP 5 FREQUENCIES!

Following one of our weekly nets someone suggested putting together a list of the "top 5" frequencies people listen to. I received several replies and instead of trying to compile one list the choices were so good that I decided to list everyone's choice. Here goes!!

John, KB2SGJ

#1 (by far) 452.175 (PL 114.8) Metro Fire channel 1. if you want quiet listening and only for the big stuff, this is it.

#2 154.68 (PL 131.8) SPEN1

#3 477.1625 and now or soon to be 477.5125 (PL 156.7) BCPD F-1. for anything big happening in Bergen Cty.

#4 155.13 (PL 71.9) local PD, Hillsdale etc. likely to be changed to **155.19 (PL 71.9) ** in future **#5** 158.76 (PL 100.0) local FD dispatch.

<u>"Ken" soyboy@inx.net</u>

My top 5 frequencies would be.. 470.8375 NYPD SOD 450.8125 Metrotraffic 476.5625 NYPD Div 1 470.8625 Street Crime Units 160.905 NYPD Transit Manhattan

"Walter" deltasc@aol.com

here is my top five 1. 476.6125 div 32 108 &114 pct 2. 470.8375 SOD 3. 154.400 QUEENS FIRE 4. 476.5875 DIV 4 17 MS MN PCTS 5. 154.250 MANTATTAN FIRE These are my main frequencies beacuse of were I work and live.

Mike W2MAC

Bronx Fire- 154.19MHz My Repeater 145.495MHZ Westchester 60 Control Fire 46.26MHZ Pelham Police 155.25MHZ Local 440 Rpt 445.675 MHZ

Eddie - KC1AYC

477.2125 Nassau County PD CH 6- 4th & 5th Pct
46.100 Nassau County FireCom
166.325 US Park Police
470.8375 NYPD HWY-SOD
461.700 (PL 141.3) News 12 Helicopter
Favorite HF Freq: 11.175 (I think this is Giant Killer.
You hear a lot of overseas military flights as well as the hurricane hunters.

WA2JC

ok the family radio service here they go 462.7125 462.5625 462.6875 462.6625 467.5625 happy holiday to all

Warren N2RAH - Mr "ScannerMaster"

My Fab five are:470.8375RNYPD SOD Citywide478.0125RFDNY EMS Citywide478.7125RNassau County PD Detective

- 155.685R Suffolk County PD Countywide
- METRO 21 NYSP 800 MHz Ericcson trunked radio system

Don - N2QAY

- 123.10 NYPD air freq (if anything's happening in New York there's probably action on this freq.
- 156.80 Coast Guard Distress freq.
- 118.3 Newark Airport (I guess I just like to hear the pilots)
- 119.5 Teterboro Airport (same as above)
- 155.19 Clifton PD freq #1

Rod Barton

Here are the top 5 for me, although as most would prob say, 5 is a hardnumber to narrow down to.

1 The 4 metro fire radio channels. (keeps you from having to scan an entire bunch of police/fire freqs)... 2 Citywide radio NY (fire buff/photo group) They put out all "worthwhile" NY stuff.

3 Local Fire for my area (154.160)

4 Spen 1

5 Would have to be Northstar/Southstar and some "intresting" state police ID's (I use a 245 dedicated for this monitoring. And a Uniden SC200 for the other stuff. Merry Xmas! Rod Barton Hasbrouck Heights NJ (almost afraid to say that!)

Roland Stiner NK2U

I only listen to North Arlington specific frequencies: 155.250 Police F1 154.085 Police F2 and Fire F1 155.280 Police F3 (I have confirmed this.) 153.785 Police F4 (I have confirmed this too.) 154.680 SPEN 1

Joe Walc, KC2EEC

Here's my list. Of course I live and work in NYC. Queens, FDNY: 154.4000, pl 186.2 City Wide, FDNY: 154.4300, pl 186.2 Manhattan, FDNY: 154.2500, pl 186.2

SOD, HW, PDNY, 470.8375, pl. 136.5 461.6500 City Wide Notification (Fire/Police/EMS etc.) , pl 167

Bill W2ZH

JFK tower 119.1 living close to the airport.
 75 Meters 3885

3.3898 4.3865 5. NPR Radio 93.9 FM

Dave, WI2Q

- 1: 162.40 wx for my area
 2: (SEVERAL FREQS OF NJSP TRUNK SYSTEM)
 3: 476.7375 NYPD CITY WIDE 1
 4: 453.0 SHADOW TFC
- 5: 39.02 Mount Arlington PD

FREQUENCY UPDATE

Moonachie First Aid is now using 154.310 Joe N2OAD

FREE RADIO DATABASE FROM ILG RADIO

http://www.ilgradio.com/ilgradio.htm

The new software of ILGRadio database is now available and there are now 32 data fields available and the database structure is improved now. All complete frequency schedules of this current winter 1999/2000 season can be found in this ILGRadio database.

ILGRadio is the most up-to-date database and is available on a nearly weekly basis ! No other publisher in the world is able to make such an perfect server for money (ILGRadio is FREE) !!! The short wave data file for example covers all stations between 2300 - 30000 kHz with all details of the transmitter sites such as longitude, latitude, power, azimuth . . . The times are also given in a graphical field were you can identify the languages. These "times by lines" will display the exact occupation of each frequency at a glance.

A browser software is included to run index or filter functions. So you can filter out and display transmissions of 1 ... 6 hours at any time of the day. This option will make the handing of more than 13800 data sets as easy as possible. You can also import the database in a standard database software like MS Access, MS Excel and some others.

ILGRadio database is now available in the dBASE, TEXT and EXCEL format, so you can use other software than ILGRadio to display the data on your PC.

There are also separate language databases available with broadcasts of all Broadcasts in English, French, German, Arabic, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian or Nordic. For other languages you can set the filter function

AM and FM stations of the world are also included with all the details as given in the short wave database. A new AF / FM file will be available due in December 1999.

There are now more than 10000 regular users of this guide and the ILGRadio web server has more than 400 000 page hits in a months !

Free download after ordering your personal password: <u>http://www.ilgradio.com/ilgradio.htm</u>

Best regards, Bernd Friedewald (DK9FI)

Y2K LISTENING

From the recent news regarding possible terrorist activity in the US during the New Years celebration in New York, all would be well advised to program you scanners with all NYPD frequencies associated with Manhattan. This includes the NY City Subway System, NYPD Paramedics, and all known federal agencies. Sources tell us that the FBI will have at least 350 agents in the Times Square area. Security is going to be very tight! For up to date frequency listings visit...

http://www.n2nov.net/

The Urban DX'er would like to thank all those who contributed to this months issue! Charlie - N2NOV, "R", N7OLQ, N2OAD, Justin Mattes, "Erik", and to all those mentioned that shared their "top 5" frequencies!

Charlie N2NOV and myself would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers a happy holiday season and a healthy and prosperous New Year. Happy Y2K !!