



Interagency Aviation TECH BULLETIN



No. IATB 16-01

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SUBJECT: Garmin VHF-AM Radio Update

DISTRIBUTION: All Aviation Operations

BACKGROUND: Incident support aircraft must have the ability to monitor all required radios at all times. Transmit interlocks, or features that act similar to transmit interlocks, reduce receiver sensitivity when other radios are transmitting. This makes them unusable for operations which require monitoring and transmitting on multiple radios simultaneously. For this reason, transmit interlock functions are not acceptable on aircraft performing some incident support missions.

ISSUE: The Garmin VHF-AM radios listed below incorporate an automatic receiver gain feature that behaves similar to a transmit interlock. These radios contain circuitry that automatically adjusts the sensitivity (gain) of the radio's receiver in proportion to the strength of the RF signal received. This can cause this feature to impede reception of one radio when another on-board radio is transmitting. The Forest Service and Garmin have confirmed this function of the radios listed below which cannot currently be disabled.

DISCUSSION: Garmin is actively working on a solution and is aware of the possible impact of lost radio reception to our operations. Radios which incorporate a transmit interlock behavior do not meet contract or cooperator requirements for aircraft performing special missions.

Non-fire aircraft, single pilot helicopters which are not approved for passengers, and single engine air tankers may continue to operate with the affected radios.

Affected Radios:

Garmin GTN series with Mod 2 incorporated:

GTN-635, GTN-650, GTN-750

Garmin GTR-225: All current versions

Garmin GNC-255: All current versions

Update:

Revised the *Issue* and *Discussion* paragraphs and incorporated input from Garmin.

Clarified that GTN units that incorporate Mod 2 are affected.

The GTN-625 and GTN-725 were removed from the affected list.

Questions, please contact:

USFS: John Flemmer, USFS Aviation Safety Inspector (Avionics) jflemmer@fs.fed.us

DOI: Jeff McVey, DOI Aviation Safety Compliance Specialist (Avionics) jeffrey_mcvvey@ios.doi.gov

/s/ Jeff McVey

National Avionics Specialist
Office of Aviation Services
U.S. Department of the Interior

/s/ John Nelson

Branch Chief, Airworthiness
and Quality Assurance
U.S.D.A Forest Service