

Police Test New Radio Setup

Eight Stations to Blanket City

BY GEORGE SCHREIBER

Final tests of two of eight police emergency transmitters, which eventually will blanket the city in a newly devised zone system, were completed yesterday.

Sgt. Al Sholl, commander of police communications, said the transmitters will be placed in service within two weeks. The zones to be served by the new units will be in the southeast and the northwest sections of the city. Both zones have had so-called "dead spots" for police radio transmissions, officials said.

Present Setup Antiquated

The new transmitters and the other six are part of a plan of Police Supt. O. W. Wilson to modernize the police system of broadcasting. The system being replaced has been criticized by radio men as "antiquated."

Often in busy periods, it was pointed out, the old system has bogged down completely. Some of the calls have been delayed from 30 minutes to an hour because of the message backlog.

"When the new system is completed—probably in September—we hope to put in a po-

lice vehicle within 30 to 60 seconds of a major crime or accident," Sholl explained.

The two newly created zones will include five police precincts each.

Public Can't Hear

In the southeast zone will be the Woodlawn, South Chicago, [recently combined with the East Side district], Grand Crossing, Kensington, and Morgan Park precincts. The southeast transmitter, KA% 997, has its antenna at 90th street and Cottage Grove avenue. It will service 47 police vehicles assigned to specific beats.

The transmitter antenna of the northwest zone is at 4905 Grand av. It will dispatch 36 cars assigned to beats in the Austin, Racine avenue, West North avenue, Cragin and the Shakespeare avenue districts. It has the call letters KBA 200.

Under the new plan, operators of the eight transmitters will talk from police headquarters at 1121 S. State st., to the vehicles on the ultra high frequencies, [UHF, 450-470 megacycles]. The vehicles will reply on the very high frequencies, [VHF, 150-160 megacycles]. These frequencies are not readily received on radio receivers sold in supply houses. The re-

ceivers must be constructed for the job.

A Big Staff Planned

Under the revitalized plans the police communications unit will include three lieutenants, eight sergeants and 190 patrolmen assigned to either radio dispatching or duties answering Police 5-1313—the police telephone number. Thirty-one women are assigned to the telephones or teletype duties.

"The quickest way for a citizen to obtain emergency help is to phone Police 5-1313," Sgt. Sholl said. "When a call on an emergency matter is made direct to the precinct station, the call must be relayed to us for broadcasting to a roving vehicle."

End Continued Din

When the zone system is completed policemen assigned to automobiles no longer will be bothered by the continual din of messages in which they have no part. They will hear calls only to their own particular zone.

Provision is made, however, in the case of a city-wide emergency, for the vehicles to be notified by the zone dispatcher to switch their receivers to a common frequency. When the emergency is over, the vehicles will be notified to revert to the zone channel.