

Official to Official Communications (O2O) Use Guidelines

Maryland Board of Football Officials

First and foremost, the O2Os are not a substitute for normal mechanics. They are meant as a tool to supplement and enhance the efficiency of the game. Do not allow the O2Os to make us lazy. We must follow our established mechanics.

Second, the O2O works on the assumption that the person on the other end heard what you said. When reporting fouls, use it with caution. For line of scrimmage fouls, it is still necessary to come in to the Referee with a signal and information. You can use the O2O to communicate with other officials to pass information. Deep officials can use the O2Os to report fouls far away from the play. Be deliberate, specific, and slow.

Third, the use of the O2O is best AFTER all our primary jobs are completed. Let the calling official do his/her job first (finish officiating, control the clock, blow the whistle, report to the Referee / Umpire), then you can get info out to the rest of the crew as we are enforcing the penalty. If you don't have any information to add, don't speak on the O2O. Ask coaches to be patient while we are working and we will get the pertinent info to him as soon as possible.

Helpful Tips:

- Speak slowly and clearly when using the O2Os
- Wait a beat after pressing the push-to-talk button before speaking
- Do not talk over each other
- Do not scream or yell into the microphone; talk in a normal voice
- Assume your communications can be heard by everyone. These are not encrypted channels
- Only use the O2Os for necessary information. Do not use it for superfluous chatter

Proper uses for O2O:

- Communicating clock status with officials on the field and adjusting the game clock
- Obtaining decisions from coaches regarding options for penalty enforcement
- Passing information or warnings to other officials
 - Be as specific as possible. Say "tell 79 right tackle to move up on the line" then let the closest officials handle
 - If you issue a warning to a player on the team on the opposite sideline, you can communicate the warning to the official on that side who can inform the coach.
- Communicate penalty information to the crew so it can be relayed to coaches and sideline personnel
 - You can say "coach wants to know what you had on that DPI"
 - Be clear and stick to the customary descriptions by rule without added commentary: Grab and Restrict; Cut Off; Early Contact; etc. Helping to describe the foul will give the crew credibility
- Communication amongst the crew to get someone's attention to alert them of anything unusual
- Informing the crew about an improper enforcement, egregious clock errors, incorrect down, etc.
 - Clock operators can provide helpful information from the booth **only** to avoid an egregious error by the crew

Improper uses of the O2Os:

- Any communication during a live ball or while the Referee is making an announcement
- Reporting penalties to the Referee except for delay of game and fouls from deep officials
- Discussion of catch/no catch
- Disagreements between officials
- Complaints by coaches
- Non-football related communication
- Listening in to a game that you are not officiating
- Profanity, sarcasm, insults, racial slurs, or similar derogatory comments that would embarrass the crew or the MBFO
- Speculation not facts