



DATE: December 10th 2025

TIME: 1:00 – 2:00 pm

LOCATION: 100 Community Place
Annapolis, MD 21401

Maryland Statewide Interoperability

Radio Control Board

Quarterly Public Meeting

▪ **Voting Members in Attendance**

- Jennifer Zambito (DoIT) (Representing Chairwoman Secretary Savage)
- Chris Holland (MDOT)
- Dr Ted Delbridge (MIEMSS)
- Tawn Gregory (Representing Acting Superintendent Colonel Michael A. Jackson MSP)
- Scott Haas (Eastern Shore)
- Tony Rosano (NCR)

▪ **Board Support Staff**

- Brandon Renehan (presenting)
- Curt Andrich (presenting)
- Cesear Leon (minutes)
- Cindy Cole (minutes)

▪ **Not in Attendance**

- Secretary Savage (DoIT)
- Jack Markey (MDEM/SWIC)
- Clay Stamp (MACo)
- Charles Summers (WAGIN)
- Travis Nelson (GoHS)
- Acting Superintendent Colonel Michael A. Jackson (MSP)

Call to Order – 01:02 pm

Review Minutes from 09/17/2025– Jenifer Zambito

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the minutes from the September 17, 2025, meeting.

Moved – Chris Holland

Second – Dr Delbridge

The vote was taken, and the minutes were approved.

Yea – ALL

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

New Business – Brandon Renehan

Proposed New Users

Proposed New Limited Primary Users:

Carroll, MD – Represented by Brian Rickles (on behalf of Director Hawkins)

Request: Increase membership from interoperability to limited primary to provide failover communications if the County's primary radio system has a catastrophic failure.

Requested resources: Up to 12 dedicated talkgroups, used only during a system failure or periodic training exercises.

Participating agencies: Carroll County Fire and EMS; Carroll County Sheriff's Office; municipal police departments; campus security agencies.

Current footprint: Approximately 1,300 radios are activated on MD FiRST; participating radios are TDMA-capable.

Expected Capacity Impact: Low. The Carroll County cell and surrounding sites are low utilization; worst-case busy-hour utilization reviewed was approximately 9% (August).

Carroll County comments: Brian Rickles (on behalf of Director Hawkins) thanked the Board and noted the redundancy will help maintain communications, order, and control during an outage.

The Radio Control Board approves Carroll County, MD application to become a Limited Primary User on MD FiRST and authorizes the Chairwoman to conclude the appropriate MOU with Carroll County, MD.

Moved – Chris Holland

Second – Dr Delbridge

The vote was taken, and the motion passed.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Project Status Update – Curt Andrich and Brandon Renehan:

- **Project T1 to Ethernet Conversion**
 - Status: Complete; Motorola cleanup and removal of legacy microwave/mux equipment continues through March 31, 2026.
 - All sites are now operating on the MPLS backhaul network.
 - MD FiRST Phases 1–5 are complete; Phases 1–4 were upgraded to the MPLS backhaul as part of this effort.

- **Virtualized Site Controller Effect**
 - Motorola GCP-based site controllers are end-of-life and will not be supported after system release A2025.x.
 - PO issued; equipment received at the warehouse; installation planning underway.
 - User impact: Each simulcast cell will require a brief (several-minute) outage during cutover; some cutovers will be scheduled overnight.
 - Target completion: End of March 2026.

- **New RF Sites:**
 - Curt Andrich provided an update on the status of the new RF sites.

- **Bi-Directional Amplifier Projects**
 - Court of Appeals Building (Annapolis): Live and operational.
 - ICC Police Headquarters (MDTA, Prince George’s County): Existing BDA repaired/replaced and restored to service.
 - Kent County EOC: Existing BDA replaced and restored to service.
 - Dorchester County PSAP and Correctional Center: Awarded; installation in progress.
 - Maryland Port Administration (Cruise Maryland facility, Baltimore): TORFP planning in progress.
 - MDEM Headquarters (Hanover): Planning underway for BDA installation.

- **Redundancy & Resiliency Projects**
 - County Channel Capacity
 - POs in place to add two additional channels in the Anne Arundel, Howard, and Harford County cells to meet current and future capacity needs.
 - Motorola announced end-of-life of the GTR 8000 base radios after the POs were issued; change order underway to transition to D-series equipment (replace Howard County sites first and redeploy existing GTRs to Anne Arundel and Harford).
 - Frequency licensing: No issues; additional frequencies have been secured for future needs.

- **Geo Redundant Primes**
 - *Objective:* Establish a second prime site in selected cells so a backup prime is available if the primary prime fails.
 - *Initial deployments:* Baltimore County cell (busiest) and Anne Arundel County cell (second busiest); equipment received; installation planning underway.
 - *Future deployments planned:* Garrett County, Cecil County, Allegany cell, and Worcester/Somerset cell (selected due to limited adjacent-cell coverage).

- **Fiber Backhaul Projects**
 - FY25–FY26 fiber paths are funded or in engineering/implementation. Still Pond to Chestertown is in implementation; Ocean City to Berlin and Federalsburg are in implementation.
 - Additional paths in various phases include Summersville to Massey to Galena, Carroll Highlands, and Mount Savage.
 - FY26 planned: Smallwood to Douglas Point (Charles County) and a St. Mary’s County path (Lusby/Calvert to Leonardtown MSP).

System Performance Report – Brandon Renehan

- System use continues to increase year over year as more users are brought onto MD FiRST.
- Subscribers: Over 135,000 total subscribers (over 35,000 primary-user subscribers and approximately 100,000 interoperability subscribers).
- Push-to-talk volume is in a seasonal downswing during the fall and winter months; the system is not expected to exceed 4 million push-to-talks this year.
- Grade of service: Elevated busies in September were largely related to system upgrades that temporarily reduced channel availability at certain sites.
- October included 26 busies in the Anne Arundel cell due to unusually high traffic; overall busies remain well below the 1% degraded-service standard.

Operations Status Update – Brandon Renehan

- System upgrade and T1-to-Ethernet conversion are substantially complete; remaining cleanup items are in progress.
- Approximately 99.99% of the system has been cut over to the MPLS network; remaining circuits require additional coordination to avoid interrupting operations.
- ISSI (Inter-RF Subsystem Interface) connectivity with Prince George’s County was upgraded on December 9, 2025.
- A2024.1 UPGRADE / T1
 - Planning began in 2015 and required shifts in technology, manufacturers, and network design to deliver the best solution while minimizing user impact.
- Recent / Upcoming Maintenance Activities
 - RF site preventive maintenance (PM) began in Western Maryland on December 8, 2025; some work was postponed due to blizzard warnings.
 - Core Site UPS Replacements
 - Pikesville, Easton, and Elkton complete.
 - BWI UPS replacements pending permit review (applications submitted and under review).
 - Misc. Tower/Site Issues and Outages
 - October 7, 2025: Unplanned Zone Controller rollover for Zone 3 after an HVAC contractor flipped an incorrect breaker (labeled “AC Edge”); the system failed over from Easton to the Elkton DSR site with brief user impact.
 - October 31, 2025: Allegany simulcast cell outage due to an issue with a UPS controller board at the prime site; restoration actions completed and longer-term power system hardening is being evaluated.
 - Tower/Antenna Issues
 - Fair Hill (Cecil County): TX antenna alignment corrected
- **Coverage Research - Washington & Frederick Counties**
 - Reports received from multiple agencies (including DNR, SHA, and MSP); technicians have been asked to pay extra attention in these areas during PMs.
 - No system alarms or equipment failures have been identified to explain the reports; investigation is ongoing.
 - Users are asked to provide date/time, radio ID/model, talkgroup, location (e.g., milepost), and whether the issue was transmit or receive audio.
 - Motorola coverage tools and updated maps are being reviewed to compare coverage differences by radio/antenna type.
 - Potential variables include construction activity (e.g., I-70 corridor), external interference, new 5G infrastructure, and in-vehicle equipment (laptops/body cameras).
 - A technical review with Motorola engineering was scheduled for the week of December 15, 2025, and field troubleshooting (including BDAs and antenna checks) is continuing as data is collected.
- **Wi-Fi Device Programming in state buildings**

- MD FiRST and Network Maryland (NetworkMD) are piloting a dedicated MD FiRST Wi-Fi access point at Crownsville for radio “SmartConnect” use and over-the-air firmware/codeplug updates via the Radio Management Server, leveraging Statewide Government Intranet (SWGI) connectivity.
- **Genesis Provisioning Manger Interface Enhancement**
 - PO issued to Motorola to add the Provisioning Manager Interface (PMI) enhancement to the MD FiRST Genesis system.
 - PMI will allow authorized users to add/modify/delete radios remotely via the MD FiRST VPN without physically traveling to a Network Management Client.
 - Target availability for users is February–March 2026 after MD FiRST testing and security configuration.
- **MD First Contract Updates**
 - Original Motorola 700 MHz contract expired November 16, 2025; a no-cost extension remains in place for completion of existing open POs.
 - New Motorola maintenance and system upgrade contract approved by the Board of Public Works on November 19, 2025 (10-year, \$203M, includes four system upgrades; negotiated savings of approximately \$21M).
 - Radio Communication Master Contract (two-way): Currently under evaluation and expected to go before BPW in January 2026; will be used for subscriber radios, consoles, and competitively bid LMR equipment purchases.
 - Tower/site work: CATS+ is used today for tower construction; Agile (replacement contract) does not include tower components, so development of a separate tower/site maintenance contract (mirroring MDOT where possible) is being explored. Three contracts will be used going forward for system support.
- **MD FiRST Help Desk**
 - Help desk is live: agencies can email requests, which are tracked in ServiceNow and routed to the appropriate support staff. (Phone capability is being evaluated.)

System Managers Committee Status and System Users Committee Updates – Brandon Renehan

- Committees were merged for this cycle and provided recommendations to the RCB, including the Carroll County limited primary application.
- Reviewed system upgrade status, including remaining T1-to-Ethernet cutovers requiring coordination with affected agencies.
- Discussed coverage reports in Washington and Frederick Counties and the data needed to support troubleshooting and engineering review.
- Vice Chair election was not held; the committees discussed moving the election to the first RCB meeting of each year (planned next for March 18, 2026).

Old Business/Open Discussion -Jennifer Zambito

none

Proposed Motion - I move that we adjourn and reconvene on March 18, 2026.

Moved – Chris Holland

Second – Tony Rosano

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

The vote was taken, passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 02:00 pm.

Director of Board APPROVAL:

Signature: Jennifer Zambito -Dott-

Date: 04/10/2026