Maryland Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board

Quarterly Public Meeting

- **Voting Members in Attendance**
    - Mike Leahy (DoIT)
    - Colonel W. Pallozzi (MSP)
    - Tony Rose (Charles County)
    - Clay Stamp (Talbot County)
    - Charles Summers (WAGIN)
    - Bud Frank (SWIC, MSP)
    - David Balthis (Designee for Ted Delbridge - MIEMSS)
    - Sean Powell (Designee for Pete Rahn - MDOT)
    - Norman Farley (Designee for Mike Leahy – DoIT)

- **Board Support Staff**
    - Curt Andrich
    - Cindy Cole
    - Justin Ellingwood
    - Norman Farley
    - Maria Fisher
    - Brandon Renehan

- **Members Not Present**
    - Wayne Darrell (Kent Co.)
    - Ted Delbridge (MIEMSS)
    - Walter "Pete" Landon (GOHS)
    - Mayor Craig Moe (NCR)
    - Pete Rahn (MDOT)

Call to Order/Introductions– (Secretary Leahy)

- Secretary Leahy called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. He welcomed everyone and began introductions.

Approval of Previous Minutes, 3/20/2019 – (Norm Farley)

Secretary Leahy - Did everyone have a chance to review the minutes and are any questions?

D Balthis - I do have one, Ted Delbridge is the designee and our new Director. Pat Gainer is no longer acting Exec. Director.

The correction to the Minutes was accepted.

Proposed Motion - The Radio Control Board approves the minutes as corrected from the March 20, 2019 meeting.

Moved – Charles Summers

Second – Sean Powell

The motioned passed unanimously and the March 20, 2019 minutes were approved as corrected.

New Business - (Norm Farley)

Proposed New Primary Users:

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Dept. of Homeland Security

ICE requested to be a modified Primary User, as they requested 4 talkgroups for special ops with MD state agencies. MD FiRST will not be used as their primary day-to-day radio system. In the MOU, we will limit the number of talkgroups made available to ICE. ICE would also like to enter into Talkgroup Sharing Agreements with Federal, State and local law enforcement partners. ICE has about 600 TDMA portable/mobile radios in this region. This application was reviewed and supported by the Operations Committee.

A discussion ensued concerning system capacity/load issues and whether talkgroups are statewide or regionalized. After the discussion the following motion was made:

Proposed Motion - The Radio Control Board approves the application of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Dept. of Homeland Security to become a Primary User to Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairman to conclude the appropriate MOU with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Dept. of Homeland Security.

Moved – Bud Frank
Second – David Balthis

The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Administrative note: Chairman Leahy had to leave the meeting for another commitment. Norman Farley assumed the role as acting-Chairman and DoIT representative.

Customs and Border Protection (Port of Baltimore)

Customs and Border Protection requested to be a modified Primary User, as they requested 5 talkgroups, including one statewide talkgroup. MD FiRST will not be used as their primary day-to-day radio system. In the MOU, we will limit the number of talkgroups made available to Customs and Border Protection. They would also like to enter into Talkgroup Sharing Agreements with USCG, HIS, FBI, MdTA, DNR, TSA and Federal Air Marshals. Customs and Border Protection has about 100 TDMA portable/mobile radios in this region. This application was reviewed and supported by the Operations Committee.

A discussion ensued concerning system capacity/load issues, whether talkgroups are statewide or regionalized and that we are no longer approving anyone using FDMA radio on the system since they have the greatest impact on system capacity and causing system busies. After the discussion the following motion was made:

Proposed Motion - The Radio Control Board approves the application of Customs and Border Protection (Port of Baltimore) to become a Primary User to Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairman to conclude the appropriate MOU with Customs and Border Protection (Port of Baltimore).

Motion – Clay Stamp
Second – Bud Frank

The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Proposed New Interoperability Users:

United States Park Police

The USPP requested to be an Interoperable user on MD FiRST. They would like to enter into Talkgroup Sharing Agreements with MSP, MdTA and other state agencies that overlap jurisdictions. They have about 1,000 TDMA radios in the region. This application was reviewed and supported by the Operations Committee.

A discussion ensued concerning whether there had been coordination with and support from MSP. The response was "yes" to both. After the discussion the following motion was made:

Proposed Motion - The Radio Control Board approves the application of United States Park Police to become a Communications Interoperable User to Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairman to conclude the appropriate MOU with United States Park Police.

Motion – David Balthis
Second – Tony Rose

The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Chester County, PA – Dept. of Emergency Services

The Chester County, PA Dept. of Emergency Services requested to be an Interoperable user on MD FiRST. They would like to enter into Talkgroup Sharing Agreements with Cecil County. A representative of Cecil County, John Donohue, was present and supported the request. They have 204 portable and 68 mobile TDMA radios. This application was reviewed and supported by the Operations Committee.

A discussion ensued concerning capacity issues. The impact would be minimal, particularly since Cecil County added 2 channels (4 talk paths) to the Cecil cell. There were also questions concerning Delaware using FDMA radios on the system. Though this does have a capacity impact on the system, Delaware has changed their spec and any new radios purchase will be TDMA capable. They have a plan that will take several years to replace existing radios with TDMA. This is a step in a positive direction. There were also questions concerning whether there was a repository somewhere of who the users are on the system. A Talkgroup Sharing Agreement SOP has been drafted that will start keeping records of talkgroup sharing agreements. The SOP should be ready for RCB approval during the September 2019 meeting. After the discussion the following motion was made:

Proposed Motion - The Radio Control Board approves the application of Chester County, PA – Dept. of Emergency Services to become a Communications Interoperable User to Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairman to conclude the appropriate MOU with Chester County, PA – Dept. of Emergency Services.

Motion - Clay Stamp
Second - Bud Frank

The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Review of Annual Cost Estimation - FY20 Budget (Norm)

As required by the RCB legislation, Norm Farley presented the annual cost estimation. The approved FY 20 O&M budget is $10,658,280. The current estimate FY 21 O&M budget, not including any potential subscriber unit lifecycle replacement costs, is $13,043,257. The majority of the increase is due to more of the system coming out of warranty and falling under the Motorola maintenance contract. The final FY 21 O&M budget request will be provided to DBM later this summer.

Personnel – We successfully recruited and converted two MD FiRST contractors into state employees which significantly reduced the state's total cost for these two personnel. Currently, DoIT is looking at creating an additional state position to backup Mr. Brandon Renehan, since in his role as "System Manager" he is on 24/7/365 – an unrealistic situation, especially as the system continues to grow and the workload and time requirements increase.

Subscriber Unit Life Cycle Replacement – The state procured over $69M of subscriber units between FY 12 and FY 19. With the first of these state owned units reaching 10 years old in 2022, the state needs to look at how we are going to replace them. We created a workgroup which meets next week with state agencies to put together a proposal. The workgroup will make a proposal that determines which radios are going to be replaced, when they will be replaced and who needs to budget for the replacements.

Capital Budget – The Legislature approved $30,840,000 for FY20, including $8.1M for the T1 to Ethernet conversion and pre-approved another $8M in FY 21 for T1 to Ethernet conversion. In the out-year capital budget (FY 22 to FY 25), DoIT is requesting $23.1M total to construct/install 11 additional RF sites (at 3 sites per year) to fill coverage holes within the state that had been determined by a working group.

A discussion ensued concerning the T1 to Ethernet conversion. Within the past few days, Motorola had indicated that to complete the conversion, much of the microwave backhaul (primarily MEIMSS owned) and some fiber backhaul must be replaced. They provided no details, other than an unofficial cost increase of $8.8M above the original cost estimate of $16.1M provided the year before. Included in the $8.8M cost increase was $1.92M that Motorola had allocated to 7 primary user counties. Motorola states they won't be able to provide any details until July 1 which is the date DoIT has to submit its Capital Budget request to DBM. DoIT will have to submit its budget request based on what it knows at the time. The budget submission will include the estimated cost increase. Once Motorola provides the needed details, due diligence will be conducted, validating the need, cost and timing (which FY the funds are required). DoIT will then modify its capital budget submission as required to ensure sufficient funding is provided to complete the entire effort within the time required (before T1 support goes end-of-life).

System Performance reports – (Norm, Brandon, Curt)

Brandon Renehan provided a System Performance Report. Currently there are 19,712 primary users on the system and another 42,448 interoperable users. Though traffic volume has increased (in terms of PTTs and airtime), zero busies were reported in April and May. Dorchester County first responders have started using the system and Cecil County first responders will cut over on June 27, 2019. Justin Ellingwood reported a system milestone was achieved in April 2019 when the 100th million PTTs (push to talk)

was completed on the system. Overall, the system has been very busy on Eastern shore, we are monitoring usage and performance.

Interoperabiltiy PPT Trend – Call volume trend is going up which is expected. Adding Allegany, Garret, Dorchester, and Cecil Counties provides more interoperability and increase call volume.

Maintenance Cases – Many of the opened maintenance cases, most minor in nature, was due to the major system upgrade conducted earlier this year. Recently, there have been some maintenance cases opened due to storm/lightning damage.

Project Status Update (Curt)

700 MHZ Project Progress – Phases 1, 2 & 3 are complete. Phase 4 is operational, however, one ASR site (Table Rock) remains outstanding. The Table rock tower construction is in the procurement process and is scheduled to be operational by the end of 2019. Phase 5, Southern MD and NCRE region, the radio design and equipment staging are complete. In process of getting equipment deployed to the field. Stage 5 is going in as Ethernet. Working on shared fiber. Backhaul to be complete by end of 2019. Plan to bring counties on line by 2nd quarter 2020. Goal is for completion by the end of 2020. Simulcast by cells planned for the 5 counties. Working with Montgomery County of tower locations. Nice Bridge tower construction should start in a couple weeks.

Cherrytown Chicken ASR – MOU is signed, planned to install in late July.

Operations Status Update (Brandon)

Crisfield ASR Site – The radio equipment PO has been approved. Will be using a Somerset County tower that will be built later this summer, an MOU is in process.

CEN Upgrade – Replacing the network architecture so it is more efficient and reduces vulnerabilities. The PO for equipment and the first PO for labor has been approved. Per Motorola, effort needs to be completed prior to the major system upgrade (7.18) scheduled for March 2020.

Next Major System Upgrade to 7.18 – Major upgraded scheduled for March 2020. Real impact will be spread from March until June 1, 2020.

T1 to Ethernet design/migration/budget – This was discussed during the Capital budget section.

Cecil Cell move from Zone 1 to Zone 3 – Moved Simulcast cell from zone one to zone three, completed in April 2019.

Cecilton ASR Site – DoIT purchased RF site equipment, County provided the tower and paid for the antennas and installation costs. This will help coverage in the southeastern part Cecil County and some of the Kent County areas. Expect to go live on June 27, 2019.

Cecil County Migration – Will go live on June 27, 2019 with all County First Responders cutting over that day.

UPS Upgrades & Spares Replenishment – Adding UPS capacity to 18 targeted sites where we know we have frequent power issues or are very remote. PO has been approved.

Wind/Lightning Damage Repairs – Due to storm wind and lightning damage had to realign some microwave dishes in western MD and replace some UPS's.

Ocean City Antenna Relocation – Due to coverage issues, did testing with DNR, MSP and Ocean City and determined the antenna location on the tower in Ocean City is affecting coverage. Motorola will increase the antenna height of our transmit antenna. Tower mapping is scheduled for June 21. Working on regional coordination so raising the antenna can be relicensed.

Garrett County Migration – Talkgroups are live on system. Biggest issue for the county is funding. MSP and DNR have loaned consolettes to the county. These are partnerships of state agencies helping this county get on the system. McHenry Barracks – scheduled to transition to MD FiRST on August 7, 2019.

Purple Line 2 Channel Addition – MTA is adding channels to PG and Montgomery County cells for when Purple Line goes live.

TV Hill RF Site – MTA reported coverage issues at the Falls Road light rail station in central Baltimore County. To remedy the situation, MTA is funding a new RF site at TV Hill that will be part of the Baltimore simulcast cell. This will improve coverage within the entire area and is planned to be completed by late spring 2020.

Operations Committee Status Update
Nothing to report.

Old Business

PSAP/911 Center Talkgroup SOG – Tony Rose initiated a discussion concerning the status of the draft SOG. Within the community there are still some issues/questions that need to be resolved before the draft SOG can be considered for approval.

Other old business was tabled until Secretary Leahy is present.

Closing Proposed Motion:

I move that we adjourn and reconvene on September 18, 2019.

Motion – Charles Summers
Second – David Balthis

The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Director of Board:
(Signature & Date) _____ Norman J. Farley _____ 9/19/2019 _____

Chairman of Board:
(Signature & Date) _____ Michael G. Leahy _____ 19 SEPT 2019 _____