Maryland Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board

Quarterly Public Meeting
March 23, 2016
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Richard Trainor Conference Room
MDOT Headquarters
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

<u>Minutes</u>

Attending:

    <u>Board members</u>: Rich Berg, Wayne Darrell, Bud Frank, Ken Hasenei, Pete Landon, Craig Moe, William Pallozzi, Tony Rose, Clay Stamp, Charlie Summers, Greg Urban

    <u>Staff to the Board</u>: Norm Farley and Betsy Jackson

    <u>Others</u>: Kriten Skogsberg, Gary Davis, Christina Sides, Brandon Renehan, Justin Ellingwood, Dave Christner

A. **Call to Order and Introductions –** Norm Farley
   1. Norm welcomed the group and around-the-room introductions were made.

B. **Review of Minutes from December 16, 2015 Meeting –** Norm
   1. Motion was made by Bud Frank to approve the minutes from December 16, 2015, without further review, and seconded by Pete Landon. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

C. **System Performance Report –** Brandon Renehan
   1. Call Volume, December – February 2016, highlights
      - No busy signals.
      - Up to almost 20,000 users.
      - MSP and MDOT top users.
      - Somerset and Worcester Counties are now being analyzed separately.
   2. MSP Call Volume highlights
      - North East and Bel Air are the latest additions.
   3. MDOT Call Volume highlights
      - MDTA biggest user.
   4. Level 6 Interoperability
      - Steadily increasing.
   5. Grade of Service
      - Zone 1 IV&D: Baltimore Co. always heaviest, Cecil next. Harford Co. spiked in February for the activity surrounding funerals for deputies.
      - Zone 1 TDMA Only (most like real life) Highest percent for a busy call is 18.8%, so still handling volume well.

D. Project Status Update – Ken Hasenei

1. Phase 3 (Central Maryland)
   - Anne Arundel County – testing activities have begun. Target live June 2016.
   - Howard County – target July 2016.
   - At the conclusion of Phase 3, 77+ radio sites will be on air and 83% of State's population will be covered.
2. Phase 4 (Western Maryland)
   - Design complete, implementation in progress.
   - Target to be operational in 2017 (phased in county by county).
   - Air to ground station – has been difficult to come up with technological solution, but have a solution now that seems to satisfy all.
3. Phase 5 (Southern Maryland)
   - Notice to Proceed was approved by Board of Public Works.
   - Design phase activities underway.

E. New Business

1. Proposed New Users - Brandon
   - Department of Juvenile Services
     - ➢ Initial use for transportation purposes. Also expressed interest in facility-centric operations down the road
     - ➢ About 525 users, mostly mobiles
     - ➢ 20-25 talk groups eventually
     - **Board approved by unanimous vote.**
   - Garrett County
     - ➢ Requesting to become a Primary User to contact law enforcement, fire/ems, and other public safety
     - ➢ About 300 users for daily operations
     - **Board approved by unanimous vote.**
   - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Baltimore Field Office
     - ➢ Interested in interoperability with current MD FiRST users
     - ➢ Requesting 1 talk group for coordination and use where no coverage exists on their current system
     - ➢ 125 users. Anticipate minimal call volume
     - **Board discussion voiced concerns about adding federal agencies without more thorough investigation of their impact on the system and what the concept of operations will be for their use of the system. Board voted unanimously for Radio System staff to investigate this request further, and bring back to the Board with a proposed MOU for a vote at a future date.**
   - Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)
     - ➢ Very large user. About 2700 subscribers, approximately 50 talk groups, and about 1 million PTTs per month
     - ➢ MTA is required by law to vacate current T-band freqs by Feb 2021. Have to build their own system, or come on MD FiRST
     - ➢ Some question about how much of MTA's use is truly for public safety vs. non-public safety talk.

> ➢ It was also pointed out that MTA was one of 3 agencies that helped MD FiRST get started with serious financial backing, so we should support them now.
> **Board tabled the request for further discussion when more investigation has happened.**

2. 700 MHz Nationwide Interoperability Channels – Charley Bryson
   - Four new 700 MHz nationwide interoperability channels for use by all first responders in designated areas of the State.
   - Stations will be controlled through the Maryland Joint Operations Center (MJOC), located at the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).
   - These channels will be available in the next few weeks.

3. Wind Farms – Ken Hasenei
   - Wind farms are presenting a problem for the Statewide Radio System. There is a magno electricity impact from the turbines – if the turbines are in the path of microwave signals, the magno electricity disrupts the waves.
   - There is the Miss Utility law in place, but companies don't make the call.
   - Would the Radio Control Board support some sort of legislation for next session stating that before turbines are built, the company has to look for microwave paths. Board discussed looking for sample legislation at the county level (for instance, Alleghany has a strong start, or work through MACO). It was suggested that a state-wide law would be stronger/better. The counterpoint was that counties sometimes resent state mandates.
   - Ken will gather more information about what's happening at the county/municipalities level to present at next meeting.

F. Continuing Business
1. Acceptable Use Policy – Norm
   - Reviewed proposed Acceptable Use Policy.
   - Reviewed MOU template to confirm that the document states the final consequence of termination to remedy ongoing unacceptable use (non-public safety) incidences.
   - Discussed the problem of there being no clear definition of public safety, and the impact of that when deciding if a use is a public safety use or a non-public safety use. Even the FCC has trouble defining public safety.
   - Board decided that there needs to be a reference in the policy to the Board's involvement in the review of unacceptable use incidents.
   - DoIT staff will rework the policy to include reference to the Board, and will bring back to the Board for approval.

2. Operations & Maintenance Funding Position Paper
   - Radio Control Board is required by law to make a recommendation to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding the funding mechanism for the ongoing operations and maintenance of Maryland's statewide public safety radio system.

- The position paper recommends that O & M be fully funded via appropriated dollars from the General Fund.
- Asking the Board to vote today on the position paper. If approved, it will be sent to the Governor and the General Assembly under Secretary Garcia's signature as Chairman of the Board, on Radio Control Board letterhead. Would be sent after the conclusion of the current legislative session.

Board voted unanimously to approve the O & M Funding Position Paper

G. Open Floor

1. A concern was voiced regarding the intention of the radio system. It was originally intended to be an interoperable statewide radio system that consolidated all the disparate state radio systems into one system. Such a system would include state agencies, as well as radio systems already in place in the counties. While a lack of clarity as to what is public safety use is problematic, we also don't want to become too prescriptive as to who may use the system. Balance is what we're looking for. As long as the Radio Control Board clearly documents, with transparency, the decisions made about entities joining the system, we will be able to justify our decisions to the federal government (FCC).

H. Meeting Adjourned – Next Meeting is June 22, 2016