



DATE: September 20, 2023

TIME: 1:00 – 2:49 pm

LOCATION: 100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032

Maryland Statewide Interoperability Radio Control Board

Quarterly Public Meeting

▪ Voting Members in Attendance

- Secretary Savage (DoIT)
- Chris Holland (MDOT)
- Rich Berg (MIEMSS)
- Bud Frank (GoHS)
- Scott Haas (Eastern Shore)
- Clay Stamp (MACo)
- Mayor Craig Moe (NCR)
- Charles Summers (WAGIN)
- Tony Rose (Southern MD)

▪ Board Support Staff

- Norman Farley
- Jen Zambito
- Brandon Renehan
- Cindy Cole
- Justin Ellingwood
- Pat King

▪ Not Attended

- Colonel Roland Butler Jr (MSP)
- Dr Ted Delbridge (Represented by Rich Berg)

Call to Order – 1:00 pm

Secretary Savage remarks – Secretary Savage opened the meeting and welcomed Scott Haas, appointed by Governor Moore as the Eastern Shore representative. Scott is the Director of Queen Annes County Department of Emergency Services with over 29 years of experience.

Review Minutes from 6/21/2023– Norman Farley

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the minutes from the June 21, 2023, meeting.

Moved – Bud Frank

Second – Charles Summers

The vote was taken, and the minutes were approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Budget update – Norm Farley

The FY 25 Capital Budget of \$17.9M was submitted on July 1, 2023, to DBM. The Operating Budget of \$17.6M for FY 25 is in internal review and will be submitted to DBM on October 6, 2023.

New Business – Norman Farley, Brandon Renehan

Proposed New Primary Users:

MD Judiciary – Represented by Jerry Calabrese

This agency was approved as an Interop User in June 2022, they provide security to Supreme Court of Maryland, judges, visitors, employees, and the public visiting Judiciary buildings. Responsibilities include security at Courts of Appeal Building and other assigned Annapolis Complex posts. They plan to issue a radio to each Special Police Officer; they currently have a radio deployed at each post. This includes 21 Special Police Officers and 27 TDMA radios. They are already interoperable with Anne Arundel County and Annapolis Police. MD Judiciary has requested the creation of 2 talkgroups.

MD FiRST Capacity Impact: Minor – with few users and 2 talkgroups.

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the application of MD Judiciary to become a Communications Primary User on Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairwoman to conclude the appropriate MOU with MD Judiciary.

Motion – Bud Frank

Second – Clay Stamp

The vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

Proposed New Limited Primary Users:

Worcester County, MD – Represented by James Hamilton

Worcester was approved as an Interop User in 2019. The request is for no more than 8 talkgroups to be part of Worcester County's communications PACE planning for use as an alternate system in the event of the County-Owned system being rendered unavailable. In-kind, Worcester County also offers use of its system as well as the creation of talkgroups for MD FiRST primary agencies with an area of operation within Worcester County for the purposes of alternate communications.

MD FiRST Capacity Impact: Minor – Talkgroups will be inactive unless the Worcester system is rendered unavailable.

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the application of Worcester County, MD to become a Communications Limited Primary User on Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairwoman to conclude the appropriate MOU with Worcester County, MD.

Motion – Clay Stamp
Second – Chris Holland

The vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

Garrett College – Represented by Christopher Painter

Garrett college is requesting 1 talkgroup as part of their developing communications plan for campus security to be interoperable with local first responders. They currently have no radios and are in the process of procuring ~6 TDMA radios, with the possibility of more in the future. The 1 talkgroup will be used for daily operations primarily with campus security. They plan to create interop agreements with Garrett County Public Safety agencies.

MD FiRST Capacity Impact: Minor – Just on talkgroup with a small number of users. The Garrett Cell currently has plenty of capacity.

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the application of Garrett College to become a Communications Limited Primary User on Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairwoman to conclude the appropriate MOU with Garrett College.

Motion – Bud Frank
Second – Scott Haas

The vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

Proposed New Interoperable Users:

Morgan County, WV – Represented by Eric Currence

Morgan County WV borders Allegany and Washington Counties and would like interoperability with both counties as well as the National Park Service. They currently have ~30 TDMA capable radios and plan a slow expansion of radios. They are currently in the process of signing an MOU with Allegany County.

MD FiRST Capacity Impact: Negligible – the Interoperability will only be on existing talkgroups

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the application of Morgan County, WV to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairwoman to conclude the appropriate MOU with Morgan County, WV.

Motion – Charle Summers
Second – Chris Holland

The vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

US Postal Inspection Service – Represented by Keith Nusbaum

This is the Law enforcement branch of the US Postal Service which supports and protects the US Postal Service, employees, infrastructure, and customers by enforcing laws that defend the nation's mail system. They are requesting interoperability to provide mutual aid for partner agencies and increase communications and coordination with state and local law enforcement agencies. They have an MOU with MWCOG and anticipate adding agreements with other law enforcement agencies. Currently they have ~70 users/radios, all are TDMA capable.
MD FiRST Capacity Impact: Negligible – Interoperable use only on existing talkgroups.

Proposed Motion: The Radio Control Board approves the application of U.S. Postal Inspection Service to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST and authorizes the Chairwoman to conclude the appropriate MOU with U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Motion – Chris Holland

Second – Bud Frank

The vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain - 0

Sponsored Interoperable Users:

MD Department of Health (MDH) to sponsor Maryland Hospital Association (MHA) – Represented by Paul Duray/MDDH, Megan Roderick/MHA

For informational purposes, the Radio Control Board was informed that MDH will sponsor MHA.

Innovation Efforts – Brandon Renehan

Smart Connect Pilot Program – the ATP (Acceptance Test Procedure) was successfully completed 3/28/2023, with the final acceptance 7/17/2023.

Critical Connect Pilot Program – The final acceptance was completed on 8/29/2023.

MD FiRST/DoIT intends to enable the base subscription so that end users can take advantage of these systems. User agencies will be responsible for the costs associated with their use. Several agencies have trials in the works. Discussion ensued about the operation of various 3rd party applications that offer similar functionality, but in a less controlled environment. Concerns were noted by board members about the lack of control, also capacity and security concerns regarding these 3rd party applications that have not been reviewed/approved for use on the system. As a result, the Director of the Board will issue an interim policy that does not allow third-party communications interconnection technology systems, except for the current Smart Connect/Critical pilots, to be connected to, or otherwise configured to operate with MD FiRST. DoIT will work with the MD FiRST System Managers Committee in drafting a proposed permanent policy for the use of third-party communications Interconnection technologies, for the Board's consideration.

ACTION: Issue an Interim Policy for use of Third-Party Communications Interconnection Technologies. Draft a proposed permanent policy for the Board's consideration.

System Performance Report – Brandon Renehan

Brandon presented an update on System Performance, there were no action items based on his brief.

Project Status, Coverage Improvement – Jen Zambito

Jen presented an update on the project status and the coverage improvement program. The MWCOG grant for the Washington DC RF site was approved.

Operations Status Update – Brandon Renehan

Brandon presented an update on the Operations Status. MD FIRST is making a presentation to the FCC National Regional Planning Council (NRPC) on 9/20/2023 to brief them on cellular interference with cellular vendors. This brief will be to inform the FCC that this is an issue for first responders using 700 MHz nationwide.

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

Brandon presented an update on the System Users Committee, there were no action items based on his brief.

Old Business/Open Discussion - Norman Farley

Clay Stamp opened a discussion concerning past capacity issues due to Delaware first responders' use of FDMA radios. Since Delaware has started purchasing TDMA radios the system busies and capacity issues have been greatly reduced.

Tony Rose initiated a discussion concerning backup communications for Primary Users. With so many Primary Users dependent on MD FIRST, it would be good to plan to have backup communications plans in case of an operational outage of MD FIRST.

ACTION: The Director of the Board will issue a communication to the Primary Users recommending that they have a plan for backup communications in the event MD FIRST is temporarily not available to them. The SMC chair will update the RCB on this topic at future meetings.

Several Board members expressed a concern that sensitive topics may be inadvertently discussed during open sessions and were recommending that more closed sessions be established.

ACTION: DoIT will review the Maryland Open Meeting Act for consideration regarding topics that may belong in open or closed meeting sessions.

Clay Stamp spoke as a representative and on behalf of MACo, stating MD FIRST is a win as a State and local partnership. It has taken a lot of hard work and many years to get to this point. These Radio Control Board meetings are important. MACo is very happy with the relationship.

Proposed Motion - I move that we adjourn and reconvene on December 13, 2023.

Moved – Tony Rose

Second – Bud Frank

Yes – All

Nay - 0

Abstain - 0

The vote was taken, passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 2:49 pm.

Director of Board APPROVAL:

(Signature & Date)

Korinn J. Harley

11/30/2024

Chairwoman of Board APPROVAL:

(Signature & Date)

Katie Savage

02/01/2024