



DATE: December 3, 2024

TIME: 10:00 – 11:39 am

LOCATION: 7201 Corporate Center Dr
Hanover, MD 21076

MD FIRST System Managers Committee

Quarterly Public Meeting

- **Members in Attendance**
 - Andrew Cummins (DNR)
 - Brad Russum (Kent County)
 - Brian Wood (MDEM)
 - Christine Hamrick (Queen Anne’s County)
 - Chris Pavon (ATCC)
 - Dave Christner (DNR)
 - David Larsen (MDOT)
 - Dave Tyler (Talbot County)
 - Gary Zamerski (MSP)
 - Gregory Lewis (Northampton VA)
 - Harold Taylor (Howard County)
 - James Hamilton (Worcester County)
 - John Butts (DNR)
 - Justin Orendorf (Garrett County)
 - Kim Vogts (MDH)
 - Matt Houck (Montgomery County)
 - Matt Meekins (Dorchester County)
 - Michael Baltrotsky (Montgomery County)
 - Mike Keiser (Ocean City)
 - Nate Ratnofsky (Montgomery County)
 - Murray Hunt (DNR)
 - Pat Weber (Johns Hopkins PD)
 - Phil Via (Allegany County)
 - Robert Crawford (DHS)
 - Randall Cunningham (Harford County)
 - Rich Berg (MIEMSS)

- Robert Hornbacher (MDE)
- Robert Larimer (Dorchester County)
- Rolando Delgado (DHS)
- Steve Smith (Garrett County)
- Tiffany Gamble-Sanchez (MD Judiciary)
- Tim Perry (Wicomico County)
- Tony Clare (Queen Anne’s County)
- Tony Maiese (DPSCS)
- Wayne Anderson (WSSC)

- **Board Support Staff**
 - Brandon Renehan (DoIT/Chairman)
 - Norm Farley (DoIT)
 - Cindy Cole (DoIT)
 - Pat King (DoIT)
 - Justin Ellingwood (DoIT)
 - Jennifer Zambito (DoIT)
 - Curt Andrich (DoIT)
 - Charley Bryson (DoIT)

Call to Order – 10:00 am

Review Minutes from 9/5/2024– Brandon Renehan

Proposed Motion: The System Managers Committee approves the minutes from the September 5, 2024, meeting.

Moved – Dave Larson (MDOT)

Second – Tony Clare (Queen Anne’s County)

The vote was taken, and the minutes were approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Proposed New Interop User

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuge Law Enforcement (DRLE) – Represented by Chad Coles

DRLE is a statewide and nationwide authority which works closely with MD NRP, MSP, Kent County Sheriff’s Office, and Dorchester County Sheriff’s Office. DRLE routinely conducts marine law enforcement patrols on MD’s bays and rivers. They are requesting interoperability for ~6 Federal Wildlife Officers (FWOs) stationed at: Cambridge, MD; Laurel, MD; Woodbridge, VA; Chincoteague, VA (2 FWOs); and Shepherdstown, WV. DRLE has APX8000 and 8500 radios that are TDMA capable.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to Interop only usage.

Proposed Motion: System Managers Committee suggests approval of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuge Law Enforcement (DRLE) application to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST.

Moved – Murray Hunt (DNR)

Second – Phil Via (Allegany County)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) – Represented by Mike Keefe

VDEM requests interoperability to communicate with MD sister agencies and other partners during cross-border or mutual aid events. VDEM is also an approved signatory of the NCR Inter-Jurisdictional MOU, the Virginia State police are an approved MD FiRST Interoperable user. VDEM has ~225 subscribers units in the Region 20/42 RID plan, they are all TDMA/OTAR/AES encryption ready, some of the radios have SmartConnect.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to Interop only usage.

Proposed Motion: System Managers Committee suggests approval of Virginia Department of Emergency Management application to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST.

Moved – Brian Wood (MDEM)

Second – Dave Christner (DNR)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Pennsylvania Game Commission - Represented by Michaele Watkins

The Game Commission is requesting interoperability with MD DNR Law Enforcement and other Law Enforcement agencies as needed. The Game Commission has ~120 TDMA capable radios used by officers in portions of PA that border MD.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to Interop only usage.

Proposed Motion: System Managers Committee suggests approval of Pennsylvania Game Commission application to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST.

Moved – Murry Hunt (DNR)

Second – Phil Via (Allegany County)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

New Jersey Statewide Interoperability Coordinator's (SWIC) Office – Represented by William Mosley

NJ SWIC is seeking interoperability for their continued support of the National Special Security Events (NSSE) in and around the NCR. NJ SWIC is part of the E of the PACE plan for the NCR. They plan to have MD FIRST included in ~100 TDMA capable cache radios (15 are INT radios with SmartConnect).

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to Interop only usage.

Proposed Motion: System Managers Committee suggests approval of New Jersey Statewide Interoperability Coordinator's Office's application to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST.

Moved – Tony Clare (Queen Anne's County)

Second – Pat Weber (John Hopkins PD)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) – Represented by Greg Hauser

NCEM is seeking interoperability for their continued support of the National Special Security Events (NSSE) in and around the NCR. NCEM is part of the E of the PACE plan for the NCR. NCEM will also provide support to the State of MD if needed. They plan to have MD FIRST included in ~200 TDMA capable subscriber radios.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to Interop only usage.

Proposed Motion: System Managers Committee suggests approval of North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM) application to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST.

Moved – Gary Zamerski (MSP)

Second – Brian Wood (MDEM)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management – Represented by James Hambright

The Office of Law Enforcement and Security manages the Douglas Point land management in Charles County (Nanjemoy). MD FiRST would help to ensure efficient inter-agency cooperation and communication in emergency situations with MD DNR, Charles County Sheriff's Office. This provides the ability to utilize MD FiRST during disaster management and emergency responses. They currently have 2 TDMA compatible radios.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to Interop only usage.

Proposed Motion: System Managers Committee suggests approval of U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management application to become a Communications Interoperability User on Maryland FiRST.

Moved – Dave Christner (DNR)

Second – Phil Via (Allegany County)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Proposed New Limited-Primary User

Montgomery County, MD – Represented by Nate Ratnofsky

They are requesting 12 talkgroups for all of Montgomery County as back-up communication in the event of a system failure of their primary system. They will also use MD FiRST during scheduled training events. Montgomery County plans to program the 12 talkgroups into ~4500 subscriber TDMA radios for Montgomery County Law Enforcement, Fire, & EMS.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal during day-to-day operations. Usage could be significant in the event of a Montgomery County system failure.

The System Managers' Committee recommends the Radio Control Board Montgomery County, MD's application to become a Limited-Primary User on MD FiRST.

Moved – Gary Zamerski (MSP)

Second – Tony Clare (Queen Anne's County)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) – Represented by Robert Crawford

FAMS secures the nation's transportation systems and critical transportation infrastructure including ports, transportation hubs, and pipelines. FAMS is currently an approved interoperable MD FiRST user. This request is for FAMS officers working with USCG, MD DNR, MDTA, MWAA, and Colonial Pipeline in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington D.C. FAMS has its own radio system for day-to-day operations. The 4 requested talkgroups (2 for the Baltimore Office, 2 for the Washington Office) would be used during events in which their existing system is inadequate. FAMS has ~100 TDMA capable radios.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal due to the small number of users and non-daily use.

The System Managers' Committee recommends the Radio Control Board U.S. Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) application to become a Limited-Primary User on MD FiRST.

Moved – Tony Massie (DPSCS)

Second – Dave Larson (MDOT)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Proposed New Primary User

St John's College Office of Public Safety – Represented by Captain Duane Gottschalk and Chief Michael Boston

St Johns is a small college campus close to the Annapolis State House complex and USNA. The Public Safety Department consists of Special Commissioned Police Officers appointed by the Governor of MD and operates 24/7/365, with approximately 12 officers. This department routinely works with DGS Capitol Police, Annapolis Police Department, and Annapolis Fire Department. They are requesting up to 2 talkgroups to support daily operations and inter-agency communication.

Expected capacity impact: Minimal with only 1-2 talkgroups and a small number of users

The System Managers' Committee recommends the Radio Control Board St John's College Office of Public Safety application to become a Limited-Primary User on MD FiRST.

Moved – Murry Hunt (DNR)

Second – Pat Weber (Johns Hopkins PD)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Project Status Update – Jen Zambito

Jen presented the Project Status portion of the brief. Jen and Brandon also discussed MD FiRST's plan to streamline the process to register BDAs intended to be used with MD FiRST, discussed development of website where BDA owners will register and receive approval from DoIT for BDA.

Technology Modernization Projects – Jen Zambito, Brandon Renehan

Jen and Brandon presented Technology Modernization ongoing Projects. The Phases 1-to-4 T1 to Ethernet/MPLS Project, Virtualized Prime Site Controller Project, SUA System Upgrade are scheduled for the summer of 2025.

Coverage, Capacity, Resiliency Improvements – Jen Zambito, Brandon Renehan

Jen Zambito presented the Project Status and Coverage Improvement update, Brandon addressed channel additions to Harford, Howard, and Anne Arundel cells to increase call capacity. Jen addressed additions of geo-redundant primes and new fiber builds to increase MD FiRST resiliency.

System Performance/Operations Status Update – Brandon Renehan

Brandon presented the System Performance and Operations Status update.

Motorola has recently made public nationwide end-of-support dates and platform replacements to several significant components that will affect the MD FiRST radio system.

These announcements include: (1) End-of-support date of 12/31/2030 for the MCC7500 radio dispatch consoles, with a platform replacement to the new AXS consoles (2) End-of-support date of 12/31/2032 for the GTR 8000 base station radios, with a platform replacement to the new D-Series base station radios. Over the next 8 years most of the State-owned subscriber radios will be at or near end-of-life, and during the 2030's some ~435 tower antennas will be 20-years-old or older. Lifecycle replacement plans are being developed for both the items.

DoIT is developing a draft recapitalization plan, with DoIT being responsible for the base station radios and tower antenna replacement. State agencies and Counties will be responsible for developing and funding their own lifecycle replacement plans for dispatch consoles and subscriber radios.

MD First and DoIT have been working to deploy Everbridge for emergency notifications. When deployed, MD FiRST will use Everbridge for system maintenance/outage notifications.

SOP Review – Brandon Renehan

The System Managers' Committee recommends the Radio Control Board approve the Subscriber Device Decommissioning Procedures, SOP 0.13

Motion to approve the

Moved – Murray Hunt (DNR)

Second – Dave Christner (DNR)

The vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Other SOP's being considered:

Commercial Aviation / Air-to-Ground HEMS and commercial aviation access MD FiRST. This would culminate from the HEMS Working Group.

Updates to SOP 0.05 to better define user types, who can be users of MD FiRST, and process to apply to become a MD FiRST User.

Open Discussion/Good of the Order

MD FiRST does bring in other vendors during many of the SMC meetings to help provide other radio equipment options and technology that work on the MD FiRST System. This is done to help the MD FiRST Users compare various equipment suppliers and costs for equipment.

DoIT's Motorola 2-way master communications contract will expire at the end of December 20204. A one-year extension is being worked on. DoIT is putting out a bid for other manufacturers and Motorola, which will be longer than the one-year extension.

It is expected that Delaware will be doing a cut-over for public safety to 700Mgh P25 in the 1st quarter of 2025.

Closing/Adjournment

Proposed Motion - I move that we adjourn and reconvene on March 6, 2025

Moved – Phil Via (Allegany County)

Second – Tony Clare (Queen Anne's County)

The vote was taken, passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 11:39 am.

Yea – All

Nay – 0

Abstain – 0

Chairman System Manager Committee APPROVAL:
(Signature & Date)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. A.', written over a horizontal line.

3/18/2025

Director of Board APPROVAL: *Norman Farley*
(Signature & Date)

03/19/2025