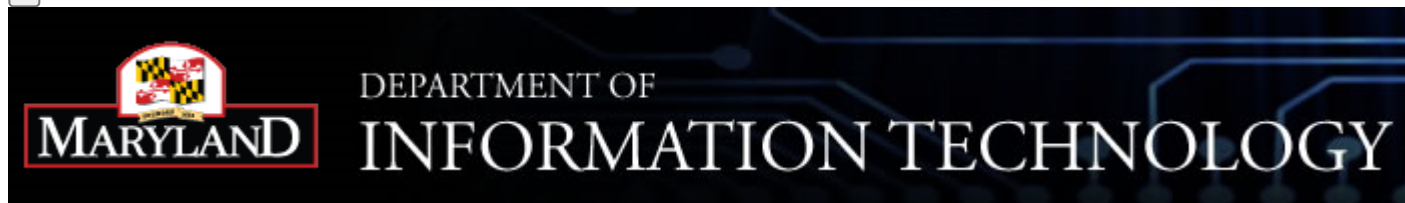


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## MD FiRST Newsletter

Maryland Department of Information Technology sent this bulletin at 12/21/2021 04:17 PM EST

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### MD FiRST Newsletter

December 21, 2021



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Dear Board Members, Partners and Stakeholders,

Although the pandemic continues to drag on, 2021 was another successful year for Maryland FiRST. For the first time since the start of this effort, all Maryland counties, Baltimore City, Annapolis and Ocean City are now either Primary, Limited Primary or Interoperable Users of Maryland FiRST. This is a significant accomplishment towards achieving interoperable communications throughout the state.

On the project side we pushed forward with Phase 5. The Phase 5 infrastructure buildout has been completed and coverage testing within all 5 counties was a success. Once the new Ethernet backhaul within Phase 5 is fully tested and operating at a public safety standard we will go live for operational users.

We continue to add new RF sites as part of our Coverage Improvement Program, creating a new simulcast cell in Carroll County and taking other actions to improve the overall resiliency of the network.

The Maryland FiRST staff and partner MD FiRST agency staff have done yeoman's work in building out and operating this Statewide public safety radio system. I am truly thankful for everyone's efforts, the collective teamwork, and continued collaboration of all Maryland FiRST partners and look forward to continued success in 2022.

I wish you and yours a happy and safe Holiday Season and a Happy New Year,  
Norm

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## 2021 Major Accomplishments

### MD FiRST Capital Project

*Phase 5 - Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, Montgomery County, St Mary's Counties*

- Equipment Installations completed in all 5 counties
- Coverage Testing completed in all 5 counties
- Testing, troubleshooting and burn-in of backhaul equipment in process; 2022 go-live for operational users

### MD FiRST Operations

- CEN Redesign Completed - Remaining punch list items will be completed as Phase 5 is stood up
- RF Site UPS Battery Refresh - Phases 2 & 3 completed
- NRX Logger Replacements/Upgrades Complete
- Site inventory audit program developed; audit activities have been initiated and are underway Statewide



Coverage Test Field Teams - Montgomery County CATP

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## System End-of-Year Statistics

Primary Users: 24,188 – 7.9% increase from 2020  
Interop Users: 50,724 – 14.9% increase from 2020  
Total Push-to-Talks (PTT): 32,284,178– 13.9% increase from 2020  
Total Interop PTTs: 542,120 – 3.8% decrease from 2020  
Total Airtime: 3,458,238 minutes – 38% increase from 2020

## Coverage Improvement Efforts

### **2021 Successes**

Crisfield (Somerset Co) - new ASR; DoIT/Somerset Co partnership

Table Rock (Garrett Co)- new ASR

TV Hill (Baltimore City) - new simulcast site adding to Baltimore Co Simulcast Cell; DoIT/MTA partnership

Safety Drive (Queen Anne's Co) - Antenna height move

Westminster (Carroll Co) - Conversion of existing ASR to Prime Site/Simulcast Cell

### **2022 Planned Activities**

Sykesville and Taylorsville (Carroll Co) - new RF subsites adding to new Carroll Co simulcast cell

Swallow Falls (Garrett Co) - new RF site adding to Garrett Co Simulcast Cell

Klej Grange (Worcester Co) - Raise TX antenna, swap from directionals to omnis

LaVale (Allegany Co) - new RF site adding to Alle-Gar Simulcast Cell

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## Radio Control Board

### ***New Primary/Limited Primary Users***

United States Capitol Police

Washington County

Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute

### ***New Interoperability Users***

Prince George's County

Arlington Co (VA)

Veterans Affairs MD Health Care System Police

NOAA (OLE) Office of Law Enforcement

### ***New SOPs, SOGs***

[SOP 11](#) - Governance of Radio Control Board Working Groups

## Deployable Trunking

DoIT's Public Safety Communications team was on-site providing support to the Deployable Trunking Trailer used at the 59th Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC on January 20, 2021.

The Deployable Trunking Trailer is a combined initiative of Motorola Solutions Inc., Prince George's County (MD) Department of Emergency Communications, Maryland Department of Information Technology, and the FCC Region 20 Regional Planning Committee. The trailer is a mobile standalone P25 trunked radio system which operates independently of any existing municipal or governmental fixed public safety radio system. The trailer provides at least three (3) main benefits;

1. The trailer can be inserted into an area where existing radio coverage is insufficient to conduct operations, either due to existing system limitations, or catastrophic damage to part or all of an existing system;
2. The trailer enhances interoperability between multiple disparate user groups, as a standardized trunking template is used, thereby allowing hundreds of agencies to access the radio system without specialized programming to a specific public safety radio system;
3. The Deployable Trunking system reduces loading to an existing home jurisdiction radio system during a large event requiring thousands of subscriber radios, as those users would roam onto the Deployable Trunking System in lieu of the home jurisdiction's primary system.

Successful usage of the trailer at the Inauguration provided many data points which will ultimately lead to future improvements and enhancements. Among these are the adoption of a common system key and zone template, which will be published in an upcoming revision of the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG). This emerging technology is likely to provide its greatest benefits during large scale events, or in the aftermath of catastrophic weather events. For more information contact: Brandon Renehan, Director, MD FiRST Operations, [brandon.renehan@maryland.gov](mailto:brandon.renehan@maryland.gov) (301) 758-4825, Patrick King, Assistant System Manager [wpatrick.king@maryland.gov](mailto:wpatrick.king@maryland.gov) (410) 697-9704



Deployable Trunking Utilized in 2021 Presidential Inauguration

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## SB235 – RSA Funds Support MD FiRST

DoIT proposed legislation in the Maryland 2021 Legislative Session designed to help fund future development of MD FiRST. SB235 amended law states that MITDP RSA (Resource Sharing Agreements) funds “shall” be used to support Network Maryland and MD FiRST. The first planned use of these funds is for tower remediation of MD FiRST T1 to Ethernet project towers. For more information contact Matt Dryer, Statewide RSA Program Manager, [matthew.dryer@maryland.gov](mailto:matthew.dryer@maryland.gov), (410) 697-9687.

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## 4.9GHz Update

The Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) recently released a Public Notice seeking comments on the future use of the 4.9 GHz frequency band currently allotted to public safety. State agencies in Maryland are major users of this band and DoIT developed a submission to the FCC to protect our State agencies and their use of the band. In our filing, we emphasized that states should be permitted to manage the use of the band for public safety. DoIT also advocated for an expansion of permitted users of the band to include critical infrastructure users; such as energy, water and wastewater, healthcare as well as public health, transportation, chemicals and biosciences. MSP, DNR, SHA, MIEMSS, as well as, the District of Columbia Interoperability Coordinator, the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board (ISICSB), the South Carolina Department of Administration and the state of Washington all agreed to be part of the DoIT Joint Filing. Separately and apart from the Joint Filing submitted by DoIT, the California Department of Transportation and California Office of Emergency Services also filed comments advocating for state management of the spectrum.

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## MD FiRST DoIT Team

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[RCB SOP Website](#)

[Coverage Improvement Reporting Tool](#)

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