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Ohio DAS

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MARCS 3.5 Radio customer

RE : Migration of Current MARCS Platform to MARCS*IP*

Dear Agency Head :

As you may know, our current MARCS 800 MHz trunked, digital radio platform (which we refer to as MARCS 3.5) is migrating to the new, P-25 700/800 MHz platform, MARCS*IP*.

The benefits of MARCS*IP* are many – P-25 Phase 1 compliant; P-25 Phase 2 compatible; IP-based; significantly increased coverage and capacity; 20 + year life cycle; and the freedom for you as an end-user to select from several vendors and price-points for radios are some of the most obvious improvements.

From a strategic standpoint, the state-wide upgrade, scheduled to be completed by early in the calendar year 2015, allows us as a state to forward the #1 goal of our Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (Ohio's SCIP) - by providing the statewide backbone allowing for a true system of systems for our public safety forces. MARCS*IP* will allow any and all first responders to share an integrated 21st century mission critical radio system, which will save taxpayers' dollars by reducing duplicative systems, maximize interoperability, and ultimately, save lives.

For you as a current MARCS 3.5 customer, you will need to be involved in the transition to MARCS*IP*. We currently project the turn-off of the current platform to occur in late March of 2015. This means your current radios will quit working unless you take steps to migrate to MARCS*IP*.

Our MARCS staff is totally dedicated to ensuring a smooth transition of your radios to MARCS*IP*. You may contact us at any time to request assistance in your transition.

Here is a list of items for you to be considering now:

1.) Some of your radios may not work on MARCS*IP*. If you have Motorola XTS-3000 handheld radios, or Motorola Astro Spectra in-vehicle (mobile) radios, they will need to be replaced with new or newer radios. Fortunately, you have many options in getting these radios replaced. You can contact your local vendor, and/or contact us to find replacement sources.

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2.) Some of your radios may need "flash upgrades" to work on MARCS*IP*. Again, you may contact us or your local radio vendor to determine if a flash upgrade is needed.

3.) All of your radios will need to be programmed on the MARCSIP platform if you have not already completed this task. Again, programming may be performed by your local radio vendor or by our MARCS programming staff.

4.) Other considerations?? – Please provide suggestions!!

We have established the e-mail account DAS-MARCS.admin@das.ohio.gov for you to utilize to make inquiries concerning the migration. Feel free to utilize it!

We will be establishing a web-site you can visit to get weekly updates on the MARCS*IP* upgrade. We will widely advertise the address when it is operational.

Currently, we plan to have the MARCS*IP* upgrade completed at almost all of our 240+ tower sites statewide by July 1, 2014. This will allow you to transition to MARCS*IP* as soon as you see fit! We encourage you to do so due to the additional coverage and capacity.

As a point of clarity, the MARCS*IP* upgrade and migration is a totally separate initiative and un-related to the current "800 MHz rebanding" project.

If you have any further questions (which I suspect you will!!!), please feel free to call or e-mail me at the contact points provided below.

Best Regards,

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