



MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR &
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: David Cruise

SUBJECT: P25 PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO
SYSTEM—STATUS REPORT

DATE: August 9, 2012

City Administrator

Date

Approval /s/ Deanna J. Santana

8/9/12

INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update about recent efforts made to identify and resolve recurring, intermittent issues with the City's P25 radio system. Since our last update on August 2, City staff and our vendor partners initiated an in-depth technical investigation of each of the radio system failures reported by Oakland police officers. This effort has involved data collection from a thorough review of the P25 system logs, design documents, hours of on-the-air recording tapes, and all documented trouble reports filed by the communications center, as well as speaking to users who have reported troubles. While this process is ongoing, this memo presents the current findings of this investigation.

City staff has concluded that numerous instances of officers reporting trouble with their radio were correlated to radio frequency (RF) interference received by the P25 radio system. We have conducted an extensive RF investigation that included collecting data from around the city at all times of day.

On August 7, City staff officially notified the Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) with its findings, and an enforcement investigation has begun. Due to the sensitive nature of this investigation, no further information is available at this time.

City staff is reviewing all of the submitted design documents for our P25 system and are conducting a detailed single point of failure analysis to ensure all potential causes for failure which may exist are immediately addressed.

In conjunction with this design review, City staff, including members of the Oakland Police Department, Oakland Fire Department, and Office of Emergency Services, are reviewing their existing standard operating procedures to ensure reliable communications are maintained in the event of a future communications disruption caused by equipment failure, radio interference, or natural disaster.

As part of the examination by the City of Oakland of the regional EBRCSA radio system, City staff has taken the next step to request and schedule technical-level meetings to review the EBRCSA system specifications in order to analyze and determine if the EBRCSA system could support our first responders. This technical review includes a detailed review of the system design, concept of operations, and operational impacts to our dispatchers as a result of the transition. City staff expects this review and assessment to be completed within 45-60 days.

Over the next week, focus will be in the following areas:

- Continue to fix problems as the sources of the problems are identified.
- Complete the installation of a back-up power generator at a second radio site.
- Review coverage maps to develop additional solutions to enhance radio coverage.
- Present a detailed plan to fully address the findings and recommendations of the RCC Consultants' independent radio system performance evaluation report.
- Continue to brief the City Administrator on a regular basis until all problems are identified and resolved.

Updates regarding progress made on resolving radio system issues will be forthcoming on a regular basis until the problems are resolved.

Frequently Asked Questions

Over the past few weeks, a number of questions have been raised about the radio system; the following responses clarify areas of misunderstanding and correct some inaccuracies.

Question:

Why did the City of Oakland Adopt the P25 System?

Answer:

The City of Oakland purchased a complete P25 upgrade to replace its older, out of date, analog radio system. This was done as a cost-effective solution for Oakland to meet the federal interoperability requirements of our region and ensure first responders had the ability to communicate with all neighboring jurisdictions. Oakland was the first city in the Bay Area to transition to a digital radio system that met the P25 interoperability specification as dictated by the Department of Homeland Security and the Bay Area Urban Area Strategic Initiative (UASI).

Question:

How much did the City spend on the new P25 radio communications system?

Answer:

Unlike other entities in the Bay Area, no local city funds have been used for this project, nor has the City incurred any debt obligation. The funding for this system was provided in the form of \$7.5M in grant funding, and \$10.5M in "rebanding" funding provided to the City of Oakland as part of our spectrum relocation from Sprint/Nextel.

Question:

Why doesn't the City of Oakland join the regional EBRCSA system now?

Answer:

The EBRCSA system is not fully constructed, and it is not 100% operational. The site that would cover the majority of the City of Oakland is still under construction. The EBRCSA staff has indicated that this site will not be operational or ready for its first users until late October.

At this time, there are very few users on the EBRCSA system, and no single department anywhere near as large as the Oakland Police Department has yet transitioned to their system. We are committed to ensuring reliable communications for our first responders today without delay. We are analyzing all options to achieve this, including closely examining what the operational impacts will be for us to achieve a successful transition of our dispatch communications centers as part of our full assessment of the EBRCSA option.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

DAVID CRUISE
Public Safety Systems Advisor
Office of the City Administrator