

Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System

presented by

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Contents

Current State of the Radio Service.....	3
Current Oversight Design	3
Issues	4
Objectives.....	5
Methodology	5
Discussion	6
Recommendations.....	12
Conclusions.....	15

Current State of the Radio Service

The Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) service (hereinafter referred to as “the Service,” unless otherwise required by the present naming convention) became operational statewide in April 2004, and the migration to a single system was completed in June 2006. The present operating platform of the Service, EDACS EA¹, is a proprietary system. The Service provides mobile communications to more than 7,500 law enforcement officers across 24 state agencies and 27 federal and local jurisdictions with over 18,000 radios in patrol cars, boats, all terrain vehicles, motorcycles and aircraft throughout the State. The Service, comprised of 202 towers, covers 98% of Florida’s 58,560 square miles plus an estimated 20,000 square miles of off-shore coverage when using a mobile² radio. Portable³ radios provide 98% outdoor coverage in selected portable coverage areas, and reduced portable coverage is provided in other areas of the state. The Service infrastructure is presently owned and operated by the Harris Corporation and is required to provide 99% radio channel uptime throughout the Service. The contract⁴ between the State of Florida and the Harris Corporation expires in 2021. The contract neither allows the ability to look at downtime of the Service or any type of problems that might arise with coverage nor does it define any refresh of technology (e.g., P-25).

Current Oversight Design

Section 282.709, Florida Statutes designates the Florida Department of Management Services (DMS) as the agency tasked with the administration and management of the Service. DMS may acquire and administer a statewide radio communications system to serve law enforcement units of state agencies and to serve local law enforcement agencies through Mutual Aid channels. The department (DMS) shall, in conjunction with the Department of Law Enforcement and the Division of Emergency Management, establish policies, procedures, and standards to be incorporated into a comprehensive management plan for the use and operation of the statewide radio communications system.

The Joint Task Force (JTF) Board (comprised of specified SLERS member-agencies), created in Section 282.709(2)(a), Florida Statutes, provides a venue in which member-agencies advise DMS of agency needs relating to the planning, designing, and establishing [of] a statewide communications system.

¹ Extended Digital Access Communications System Extended Address

² A radio mounted in a first responder’s vehicle

³ A radio worn or carried by a first responder

⁴ Florida Contract 725-001-01-1

Pursuant to statute, the JTF Board currently consists of representatives of the following state agencies: Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Department of Law Enforcement, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Corrections, Department of Financial Services Division of State Fire Marshal, and the Department of Transportation. Effective July 1, 2012, the functions and responsibilities of the Division of Law Enforcement within the Department of Environmental Protection were transferred to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, pursuant to House Bill 1383. The Department of Environmental Protection is no longer responsible for law enforcement functions but is still named as a member of the JTF Board. Similar action was not taken to alter the JTF Board's membership when the Department of Transportation Office of Motor Carrier Compliance merged with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles in 2011 pursuant to Senate Bill 2160.

Pursuant to Rule 60FF-4.003, Florida Administrative Code, prospective SLERS Partners⁵ may apply to use the system.

Issues

There exists a consensus of opinion among the majority of the SLERS member-agencies represented on the JTF Board that the administrative placement and responsibility of planning for the Service should be assessed in order to optimize efficiencies in its technological design and ensure effective handling of its current state and future development. To that end and in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Chapter 2011-66, Laws of Florida establishing the Law Enforcement Consolidation Task Force, the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System Workgroup (Workgroup) was formed to conduct a review of the Service.

During the Workgroup's meetings, it was mutually agreed that the Law Enforcement Consolidation Task Force desired that the Workgroup consider the following topics as they relate to the operation, management, and development of the Service:

1. The optimal design and administrative assignment of the Service, including the operational administration, governance, and future development of the system.

⁵ A SLERS Partner is a first responder or other public safety user of a federal, state, or local government agency that has applied for and received authorization from DMS and the JTF Board to join the Service.

2. The potential modification of Section 282.709, Florida Statutes, to define the JTF Board for the SLERS as a governing body as opposed to merely an advisory group, including providing the JTF Board with authority to modify its membership without statutory revision.
3. The function and technological enhancement needs of the Service, including migration to Project 25⁶ (P-25) as soon as practicable by means of leveraging existing expenditures as law enforcement communications evolve toward broadband technology.
4. The need for attentive legislative advocacy as a fundamental responsibility for the agency overseeing the daily operation and administration of the Service.
5. Creation of a new name for the Service as requested by the Executive Office of the Governor.

Key points of concern expressed by the Workgroup representatives of the JTF member-agencies were the amount of staff turnover at the DMS and perceptions that DMS management has insufficient ability to resolve matters relating to the Service.

Objectives

The Workgroup endeavored to provide recommendations on the following topics:

1. Determine if management of the Service should be moved to a law enforcement agency.
2. Determine how the Service should be managed to provide for future system upgrades and viability.
3. Identify possible naming conventions for better identification of the Service.

Methodology

After presenting the consensus opinion of the JTF Board to the Law Enforcement Consolidation Task Force at its meeting on March 30, 2012, Lt. Colonel Greg Gibson, as the JTF Board Chair, was assigned the task of selecting members for a workgroup to consider the present and future needs of the Service. Lt. Colonel Gibson, having direct knowledge of the technical experts assigned to support the JTF Board as members of the JTF Technical Committee, solicited involvement of the Technical

⁶ Project 25 is a cooperative effort of the federal government, Association of Public Safety Communications Officers, and the National Association of State Technology Directors to develop standards through the Telecommunications Industry Association for public safety radio to improve spectrum efficiency, interoperability, and increase competition in the public safety land mobile radio market.

Committee representatives of the three largest user agencies: Major Steve Williams of the Florida Highway Patrol, Major Brett Norton of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Inspector Tal Whiddon of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

Lt. Colonel Gibson requested that DMS Division of Telecommunications Director Christopher Campbell select appropriate representation for DMS. Director Campbell assigned Bill Price to represent DMS in these discussions, and the interim Chief of the Bureau of Public Safety, John Ford, was named as the alternate.

Given the intended role of the Service in relation to local first responder agencies, participation of subject matter experts at both the municipal and county levels was sought. The Florida Police Chiefs Association selected Tallahassee Police Department Major Chris Connell as its representative, and the Florida Sheriffs Association selected Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Major Clyde Eisenberg as its representative. A final member representing the local emergency management community was gained by the inclusion of Greg Holcomb of the Lake County Public Safety Department.

The Workgroup met on April 12, April 25, May 10, and May 21, 2012 for the purpose of drafting its team charter, identifying key concepts for discussion, developing and deliberating draft report language, and approving the final report to be submitted to FWC Colonel Jim Brown.

Discussion

Objective 1: Determine if management of the Service should be moved to a law enforcement agency

The Workgroup explored the merits of the present model employed in the management of the Service in which DMS holds primary responsibility. DMS Workgroup representatives contended that the function of supporting the Service should not be removed from co-location with other elements of communications technology supported by the DMS Division of Telecommunications Bureau of Public Safety which includes SLERS, SUNCOM, E911, the Florida Interoperability Network⁷ (FIN), Mutual Aid Build-out⁸ (MAB), Emergency Medical Services⁹ (EMS) Communications Coordinator, and a unit identified as "the Local Section." The substance of this argument was that all technologies are trending to an eventual point of convergence at which one technological platform would support all of these

⁷ FIN – Enables first responders and emergency services personnel using dissimilar radio systems and frequencies to communicate directly with each other.

⁸ MAB – 328 new Mutual Aid channels were added throughout the state that enabled responders to communicate from outside the state of Florida.

⁹ EMS Communications Coordinator as defined in Section 401.018, Florida Statutes

elements at some time in the unspecified future, and to remove the Service from this interconnected position would cause support for the Service to deteriorate. A DMS Workgroup representative asserted that the Division of Telecommunications, in its entirety, could be removed from DMS and placed into another, more appropriate managing agency so that the assigned engineering staff could continue to collaborate as this confluence of emerging technology occurs.

A point of concern then presents itself in the assignment of such support functions like SUNCOM and E911 to an entity not necessarily appropriate for the management of services beyond the provision of law enforcement radio communications and other closely associated functions. Following this line of thought, it would, therefore, stand to reason that the management of the Service is optimally situated and should not be removed from DMS. The Workgroup was unable to reach consensus on this assertion and sought to identify and explore another alternative.

A second model was explored which would require the separation of the Service and all radio support functions, along with the elements of FIN, MAB, EMS Communications Coordinator, and the Local Section from the other responsibilities borne by the DMS Division of Telecommunications. The general opinion of the JTF member-agency Workgroup representatives was that the confluence of technology scenario asserted by DMS, as noted above, is several years away from fruition, and support of the Service is not adequately handled at present. It was determined that, if a separation of the functions associated with the Service were to occur, the program, along with its assigned personnel, should be reassigned to a law enforcement agency whose users could become the principal determiners of needed system upgrades and coverage enhancements. It would be most prudent to assign the support of the Service and its associated elements to a state law enforcement agency having sufficient investment in a technological support infrastructure and a large cadre of individual users sufficient to reflect the overall needs of other user agencies.

It was noted that a coverage workshop was held by the JTF Board in April 2010, and the conclusion from that workshop was that portable coverage improvement was functionally limited to new radio sites for the system being built, a situation not satisfactory to the JTF member-agency Workgroup representatives (Attachment A). Given that there have been and continue to be known coverage deficiencies for state law enforcement officers as well as SLERS partners since the inception of the Service without satisfactory improvement over time, the JTF member-agency Workgroup representatives asserted that a law enforcement agency would likely be more inclined to act in resolving these deficiencies for the safety of first responders. Since the Service's principal users are uniformed law enforcement patrol officers, it stands to reason that placing management of the Service

in the state's largest uniformed law enforcement patrol agency would serve to quickly identify coverage deficiencies and allow for the prioritized resolution of these deficiencies based upon the risks posed to officer and public safety. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Division of Florida Highway Patrol is the state's largest uniformed law enforcement patrol agency.

Taking these points into account, it became apparent that the crux of the Workgroup's task was to determine how best to meet the interests of the JTF member-agencies while providing for adequate oversight and support of the Service and closely associated components. DMS Workgroup representatives presented a case for maintaining the present structure of the Division of Telecommunications, inclusive of all constituent programs, based upon the premise that Radio Frequency (RF) engineers might not be effectively managed separate from engineers in other, unrelated programs, and to attempt to do so would cause them to lose familiarity with technological developments in other disciplines that might have a future impact on law enforcement radio communications.

In considering this question, some members of the Workgroup suggested a comparison with the fact that, presently, most JTF member-agencies independently manage radio technicians who service and support programming needs for user units within their respective agencies. These radio technicians routinely work for law enforcement supervisors who have no technical backgrounds of their own beyond experiential qualifications, yet these arrangements appear to function successfully without loss of contact or familiarity with emerging technological trends. This is largely due to the fact that, in many cases, the radio technicians from the various agencies routinely interact, meet, network with one another, participate in common professional associations and workgroups, and subscribe to similar professional publications, thereby staying abreast of technological trends. Given the present success of this model, it appears that the concern about the separation and potential isolation of RF engineers or other support staff presently assigned to the DMS Division of Telecommunications that might occur as a result of departmental reassignment is a scenario having little likelihood of occurrence.

It was suggested and discussed that Section 282.709, Florida Statutes, could be modified to provide the JTF Board with enhanced operational authority, but the fact remained that not every situation could wait for the JTF Board to convene and make decisions requisite to the day-to-day management of the Service. It was concluded that a modification of the JTF Board's statutory authority is desirable but alone would not represent a solution that would direct system enhancements and associated expenditures in such a fashion as to provide the maximal involvement of the Service's users in determining priorities for those enhancements.

The need for legislative advocacy was made apparent during the 2012 Regular Session of the Florida Legislature, when the sunset of revenue sources funding the SLERS Trust Fund was narrowly averted by the attentive and swift intervention of Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) and other SLERS member-agencies to include their continuation as part of DHSMV's legislative initiatives.

A persistent problem in handling matters of such a critical nature exists in that DMS must attend to myriad other responsibilities that detract from its abilities to manage more routine functions. Without a lead agency assigned clear responsibility for addressing these issues, it is evident that future oversights such as this are not only possible but likely and would result in catastrophic consequences to the future viability of the Service, regardless of its operating platform.

Objective 2: Determine how the Service should be managed to provide for future system upgrades and viability

The JTF member-agency and DMS Workgroup representatives concurred that P-25 represents the next evolutionary step in the migration of public safety communications system technology. P-25 is a cooperative effort of the federal government, Association of Public Safety Communications Officers, and the National Association of State Technology Directors to develop standards through the Telecommunications Industry Association for public safety radio to improve spectrum efficiency, interoperability, and increase competition in the public safety land mobile radio market. The Workgroup agreed that the adoption of P-25 in future enhancements using current funding is a necessity, given the service provider's indication in a 2010 letter to DMS that the EDACS EA system has or will soon reach "end-of-life," thereby becoming obsolete and unsupported. A complete transition from EDACS EA to P-25 would, however, require the investment of significant capital for which present funding sources are inadequate. (Attachment A)

The Workgroup considered the developing technologies of Long Term Evolution (LTE) as well as the opening of the “D-Block”¹⁰ spectrum and their potential future impacts on public safety communications. All Workgroup members agreed that these technologies are in the early stages of development remaining years from public safety critical-voice viability, and, therefore, do not represent an alternative technological option that might soon obsolete P-25 technology.

In order to fully fund the transition to P-25, the legislature would have to consider and authorize either additional funding sources or increase the amounts generated by the SLERS Trust Fund¹¹.

During the 2012 Regular Session of the Florida Legislature, the legislature allocated \$2 million to support FIN and \$3 million to support Mutual Aid Build-out from the SLERS Trust Fund. These programs are related to communications interoperability and not directly to the Service. Such funding scenarios are not advisable for the future use of the SLERS Trust Fund, and sustainable funding for these projects should be identified. Due to the additional spending authority granted for FIN and the Mutual Aid Build-out, it will take some time to recover from this depletion thereby forestalling further funding of necessary system enhancements for a considerable period from this source at present levels. The legislature took note of this drawdown of the SLERS Trust Fund in House Bill 5001er, requiring that DMS conduct a long-term solvency study of the SLERS Trust Fund with a report to be rendered to the governor and legislature by November 1, 2012.

Functional and technological enhancements are needed, including the migration to the P-25 communications standard as soon as possible. This step would allow the state system to interoperate with current and future P-25 systems and prepare the foundation for future migration to broadband technologies. It would also enable state and local agencies to share infrastructure. A portion of the Service utilized by aircraft is already a P-25 system and was funded through a domestic security grant with a 20% match from state funds drawn from the SLERS Trust Fund.

¹⁰ The D-block is a 10 MHz segment of spectrum in the upper 700 MHz spectral band. It sits adjacent to the spectrum currently licensed to public safety. Congress controls what happens with the D Block. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has interpreted its congressional directive as a mandate to auction the D Block spectrum to commercial services only.

¹¹SLERS Trust Fund revenue sources: (1) \$1.00 fee: A fee paid pursuant to Section 320.0802, Florida Statutes, for each vehicle and vessel registration or renewals. This fee is remitted to the Department of Revenue and deposited quarterly into the SLERS Trust Fund. This generates approximately \$16 million annually. (2) \$3.00 fee: A fee paid for criminal offenses listed in Section 318.18, Florida Statutes and for all noncriminal moving traffic violations under Chapter 316. This fee is remitted to the Department of Revenue and deposited quarterly into the SLERS Trust Fund. This generates approximately \$5 million annually.

Participating in P-25 would make state and local entities eligible for federal grant funds to support the system. Moving to a P-25 system would allow for greater frequency availability and result in better coverage.

Based upon engineering maps from the vendor, the Service has coverage gaps of approximately 11,250 square miles for portable radios and 1,160 square miles for mobile radios. The Workgroup agreed that the Service meets the contracted requirement of 98% mobile radio coverage, although it does not meet the needs of state law enforcement agencies when officers leave their vehicles.

This presents an officer safety issue as well as an increased risk to the public. No matter the number of features added to the radios, deficiencies in coverage still exist.

The SLERS member-agencies' portable and mobile radio equipment has reached or surpassed the recommended end-of-life replacement cycle (eight years for mobiles, six years for portables per the 2009 Law Enforcement Communications Plan). All current mobile radios were identified in a December 2010 letter from the Harris Corporation to DMS as reaching end of support by the manufacturer (i.e., becoming obsolete) by December 2014. (Attachment B) The vendor withdrew the December 2010 letter in April 2011, advising that the Service contract would be honored through its scheduled expiration in 2021 (Attachment C), but its intent to ultimately abandon the EDACS EA platform had been made clear.

Enhanced funding is necessary to keep pace with emerging technologies and coverage needs. To date, it has been difficult to obtain sufficient spending authority necessary to accomplish needed coverage enhancements from existing funding sources and levels.

The current process to attract additional agencies as SLERS Partners is difficult. The main deterrent for local agencies exploring the possibility of joining the Service as Partners is that local users expect their jurisdictions to have saturated radio coverage everywhere, including in-building coverage. SLERS member-agency users need this coverage as well.

Objective 3: Identify possible naming conventions for better identification of the Service

The Executive Office of the Governor requested that the name of the Service be modified.

Recommendations

Objective 1: Determine if management of the Service should be moved to a Law Enforcement agency

1. Among JTF Board members, there exists a general dissatisfaction with the customer service historically provided by the Department of Management Services. Staffing in support of the Service is insufficient for the workload that would develop in the case that a choice to migrate to P-25 technology is made and is questionable in its adequacy to meet present support demands. Overall changes are recommended to the management and administration of the Service to effect progress. The consensus of the Workgroup is that the Service and associated FTEs should be moved to a state law enforcement agency that is familiar with the management of statewide law enforcement/public safety communications. The Workgroup recommends moving SLERS, FIN, Mutual Aid Build-out, the EMS Communications Coordinator, and the Local Section, via Type II Transfer, to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles as the most appropriate agency for the management of these programs, as DHSMV has a sufficient technological support infrastructure, an awareness of individual user coverage needs, the largest group of individual users within its organization, and a ready ability to serve as lead advocate for the Service. This transfer should include DMS positions assigned 50% or more of their work duties to the support of SLERS, FIN, Mutual Aid Build-out, EMS Communications Coordinator, and the Local Section, especially RF and network engineers. This recommendation does not include moving other sections within the DMS Division of Telecommunications such as SUNCOM or E911 and their associated FTEs.
2. Revise Section 282.709, Florida Statutes, to enhance the authority of the JTF Board, which would facilitate the following improvements in the oversight of the Service:
 - a. The JTF Board, at minimum, should provide direction as a governing board to DHSMV on matters relating to the Service.
 - b. The Board should have the authority to add or delete members without seeking statutory modifications and should take action to include the following:

- i. Add the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement as a member to the JTF Board.
 - ii. Add the Division of Emergency Management Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) as a member to the JTF Board.
 - iii. Add members from the Florida Police Chiefs Association, the Florida Sheriffs Association, and the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association to represent the interests of partner agencies joining the Service.
 - iv. Create a user group comprised of SLERS member-agencies and local users which would meet on a quarterly basis and serve as an advisory group to the JTF Board's Technical Committee. This user group, as well as the Technical Committee, should provide reports to the JTF Board on a quarterly basis.
 - v. The JTF Board should conduct meetings based upon need to provide the level of oversight desired by its members and the DHSMV. Currently, the JTF Board meets on a quarterly basis.
 - vi. A report to the JTF Board on the status of the SLERS Trust Fund should be an annual requirement. This would include any spending that is funded by the SLERS Trust Fund for the FIN or Mutual Aid Build-out.
3. Rule 60FF-4.003 of the Florida Administrative Code should be modified to provide for an efficient and effective process by which other public safety entities might join the Service. This would include the use of Memoranda of Understanding that could be modified for specific requirements without having to further modify Florida Administrative Code(s).
 4. The Workgroup recommends working to determine if the current contract could be leveraged to migrate to more current technology such as P-25. If such leveraging cannot be accomplished, the possibility of renegotiating the contract to include a migration strategy should be explored.

Objective 2: Determine how the Service should be managed to provide for future system upgrades and viability

1. Move to a P-25 communications system as soon as possible. Moving to this platform would provide the state with more radio channels for critical operations. It would also allow responders from outside Florida with P-25 radios to come directly onto the state's system, even with radios from other manufacturers.

- a. The current State of Florida radio platform, EDACS EA, is a proprietary system.
 - b. The vendor has already made a corporate decision to abandon the current Service's EDACS EA technology platform in favor of the P-25 standard; although the vendor has said it will support the EDACS EA system through the end of the contract. With an obsolete platform, the vendor will likely place a low priority on future software improvements.
 - c. The migration to a P-25 system will put the Service into the mainstream of future standards-based P-25 development or system enhancements.
 - d. While the D-block and Long Term Evolution (LTE) technologies represent more distant technological and programmatic developments that will improve public safety communications, the Workgroup concurs that such advances are several years from viability.
2. The service coverage model needs to be enhanced from 98% mobile and limited statewide portable coverage to 95% statewide portable coverage with the radio worn at the officer's hip and in-building coverage in selected in-building coverage areas. This would increase officer safety and service delivery to the public.
 3. There are currently two funding sources used to maintain the Service: (1) \$1.00 fee: A fee paid pursuant to Section 320.0802, Florida Statutes, for each vehicle and vessel registration or renewals. This fee is remitted to the Department of Revenue and deposited quarterly into the SLERS Trust Fund. This generates approximately \$16 million annually. (2) \$3.00 fee: A fee paid for criminal offenses listed in Section 318.18, Florida Statutes and for all noncriminal moving traffic violations under Chapter 316. This fee is remitted to the Department of Revenue and deposited quarterly into the SLERS Trust Fund. This generates approximately \$5 million annually. The Workgroup recommends that the legislature consider increasing these amounts or identify other funding sources to fund a new P-25 system and all replacement radios, sustain and improve the Service, fund continual user equipment upgrades, and allow for frequent refreshes of current technologies.
 4. The Workgroup recommends that any increase in funding should be sought by the agency responsible for the management and administration of the Service and should entail additional support from the member-agencies.

5. The Workgroup recommends that a recurring funding source, independent of the SLERS Trust Fund, should be placed in the DHSMV budget separately for FIN and another for MAB. These funding sources would be utilized to provide for ongoing maintenance and upgrades of the FIN and MAB services.

Objective 3: Identify possible naming conventions for better identification of the Service

1. Several possible naming alternatives for the Service were identified as follows: Statewide Interoperable Radio Service (SIRS); Florida Statewide Radio Service (FSRS); Florida Interoperable Radio Service (FIRS); Florida Interoperable Communications Service (FLICS); Florida Interoperable Radio Service Technology (FIRST); Florida Secure Communications Access Network (F-SCAN); State Unified Radio, Florida (SURF); or Governmental Secure Communications Access Network (G-SCAN).
2. The Workgroup recommends renaming the JTF Board to be consistent with the new naming convention selected for the Service.

Conclusions

Objective 1: Determine if management of the Service should be moved to a law enforcement agency

The assets assigned to the support of the Service and its associated programs identified herein would be best supported for the benefit of its users and the public safety community by transferring them to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles which could provide routine oversight, direct future system migration, and serve as the principal legislative advocate on behalf of the Service and its future funding needs and mechanisms.

The JTF Board does not presently have sufficient authority to influence the management and future development of the Service for the benefit of its users. By implementing the recommendations detailed in this report, the JTF Board would be able to direct the course in which the Service is built out, decide which user agencies sit on the governing board, and provide focus and clarity for the Service and its management.

Objective 2: Determine how the Service should be managed to provide for future system upgrades and viability

Funding is needed for enhancements to accomplish a move to P-25 technology as the next evolution of public safety communications and the building of new sites to enhance coverage, regardless of the operating platform or the acquisition of new agency radios.

Objective 3: Identify possible naming conventions for better identification of the Service

A new naming convention for the Service should be selected from the list of identified alternatives.

Joint Task Force (JTF) on State Agency Law Enforcement Communications

Report on the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS)

**Enhancements Needed for SLERS to
Improve Law Enforcement Communications and Safety**

4/8/2011

Addendum to the Planning Report to the Legislature dated 12/1/2009

Joint Task Force Board Report – Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS)

Enhancements Needed for SLERS to Improve Law Enforcement Communications and Safety

The procurement of the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) was a significant improvement to statewide law enforcement communications; however, the need remains to provide additional communications improvements. There is a critical need for additional funding of SLERS to further improve the communications and safety of our statewide law enforcement officers. A greater level of officer and public safety can be achieved through enhancement of the portable (walkie talkie) radio coverage and technology refresh with newer mainstream equipment.

SLERS Background

The status of the Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) implementation was summarized in the Florida Department of Management Services (DMS) Planning Report to the Legislature dated December 1, 2009. The report provided a strategic view and future issues for SLERS planning.

The current SLERS system was contracted in 2000 and was fully operational statewide in June 2006. SLERS provides mobile communications to law enforcement officers across federal, state, and local jurisdictions with more than 17,600 mobile radios in patrol cars, boats, motorcycles, aircraft, and portable radios carried by the officers. The service covers 98% of Florida's 58,560 square miles,¹ plus an estimated 20,000 square miles of off-shore coverage. The system is comprised of 166 tower sites used for radio coverage and is managed by the vendor to provide 99% radio channel uptime throughout the system. Both DMS staff and Joint Task Force (JTF) agency representatives are in agreement that the state received the coverage it paid for in the unique public-private partnership via a competitive procurement. However, there are areas of poor to non-existent coverage which could endanger the safety of both law enforcement officers and the general public.

Although the SLERS system meets the contracted 98% of mobile radio coverage, SLERS does not meet our state law enforcement agency's needs when officers leave their vehicles. Portable radio coverage is only provided in limited areas defined by contract. In particular, there are many areas of the state where officers who leave their law enforcement vehicles have no portable radio communications. The typical 35 watt mobile radio unit installed in a vehicle has a less than a 15 mile range; however, the typical 3 watt portable radio is limited to less than 10 miles. The range of coverage is heavily impacted by environmental factors such as foliage, terrain and weather conditions. When considering the limited range of portable radios and the inadequate number of tower sites, the state has an expansive 11,250 square miles that have no reliable portable coverage for officers who leave their vehicles.²

Public safety radio system infrastructures are unique and are built to much higher survivability standards than cellular systems during and after adverse conditions. The SLERS system standards were instrumental in guaranteeing the uninterrupted performance of the state law enforcement radio communications infrastructure during disasters such as Hurricanes Charley, Jean, Frances, Ivan, Wilma, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, wildfires and other natural disasters.

¹ Florida DOS website, <http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/kids/facts.cfm>, May 24, 2010

² Harris Portable Coverage Analysis, November 2009

Joint Task Force Board Report – Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS)

Enhancements Needed for SLERS to Improve Law Enforcement Communications and Safety

Current Funding

The existing SLERS Enhancement Fund (\$3 fee on traffic violations) currently accumulates approximately \$5M per year and is being used to improve coverage. To achieve the targeted coverage required by our law enforcement agencies it will require the building of at least 30 additional tower sites. However, there are two issues impacting our ability to make the needed enhancements in a timely manner. First, with the approximate \$5M accumulated yearly, SLERS can only enhance coverage by four tower sites per year. Second, we need to have increased legislative spending authority to match the levels of funding available in the Enhancement Fund.

Governor Charlie Crist vetoed House Bill 5611, which would have extended the SLERS Enhancement Fund to 2017; with the veto of this bill, the fund now sunsets June 30, 2012. Current funding is woefully insufficient to replace the subscriber equipment (mobile and portable radios) that are at the end of their life cycle, migrate the SLERS system to the federally accepted P-25 technology platform based on open standards and fill in the coverage gaps. The P-25 standard is explored in more detail later in this document.

SLERS Partners

SLERS partners are classified as first responders or other public safety users of federal, state, and local government agencies. Partners can reap the financial savings of not having to build their own radio system infrastructure if SLERS can fill their operational needs. All users benefit with additional SLERS partners by virtue of strengthening the ability to communicate among the various participants during disasters, search and rescues or special events.

Challenge: Coverage Gaps

Due to poor portable coverage there is less interest for potential SLERS partners to come onto the system. County, city and other municipal sworn users expect their jurisdictions to have saturated radio coverage everywhere, including in-building coverage. The SLERS state law enforcement users need this coverage as well. The state realized early on that the requirement of statewide portable coverage would entail prohibitive initial costs and elected to implement a system with limited coverage.

Currently, the SLERS radio coverage still has coverage gaps of approximately 1,160 square miles without mobile radio coverage and 11,250 square miles without portable radio coverage. Most state and local law enforcement officers have their principal contact with the public outside of their patrol vehicles. The areas without radio coverage are a serious concern for officer safety and their ability to serve the public. Use of their portable radios outside of their vehicles is the lifeline to the dispatch center and other officers.

All of the SLERS law enforcement officers frequently respond to incidents or interact with potentially dangerous suspects while outside of their patrol vehicle in areas of poor to non-existent portable radio coverage. The coverage map in the appendices illustrates the need for additional coverage enhancements to the SLERS system.

Joint Task Force Board Report – Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) Enhancements Needed for SLERS to Improve Law Enforcement Communications and Safety

The JTF Board held a coverage workshop on April 6, 2010 to investigate methods to improve portable coverage outside of patrol vehicles. DMS presented alternative methods; however all available options required newer technologies and additional equipment. The Board agreed that the only way to improve coverage, for the existing system, is limited to additional tower sites.

Challenge: Replacement of Aging Mobile and Portable Radios

Unlike cell phones or computer systems, the law enforcement radio replacement cycle is typically longer; usually eight years for mobiles and six years for portables as outlined in the State's Law Enforcement Communications Plan guidelines.³ The current mobile radios used in our system have been identified for end of support and will become obsolete by December 2014.⁴ This technology must be replaced with newer mainstream equipment that is capable of operating on the federally supported P-25 platform. The cost of replacing all mobile and portable radios for our state agencies is estimated at \$85M.

Challenge: Technology Refresh

Since the award of our contract and following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the federal government has made significant efforts to develop interoperable standards for public safety radios under a program called Project 25 (P-25).⁵ This standard is currently in existence and the federal government is providing grant funding to support P-25 standards based systems. New technologies, such as Long Term Evolution (LTE), are developing rapidly. We are continuously looking to the future for mature proven platforms. At this time, there none are available on the market for public safety communications.

Migration to a P-25 platform will give the state more radio channels for critical operations. It will also allow the responders from outside of the state with P-25 radios to come directly onto the state's system, even with radios from other manufacturers.

The current radio system platform is a proprietary system installed in 2000. The vendor has already made a corporate decision to abandon the current SLERS technology platform in favor of the P-25 standard.

Another consequence of the federal initiatives to support P-25 systems is that our proprietary system will become outdated. With an obsolete platform, the vendor will place a low priority on any future software improvements. The migration to a P-25 system will put SLERS into the mainstream of future standards based P-25 development. The cost to migrate the SLERS backbone infrastructure to a P-25 system is estimated to cost \$35M.

³ Law Enforcement Communications Plan, 2009 – specifies the replacement cycle for law enforcement communications equipment.

⁴ Tyco Electronics end of life notice for Jaguar 725M mobile, SFM 19, April 27, 2007 and Tyco Electronics end of life notice for M7100 mobile, SFM 06A, March 5, 2009.

⁵ Project-25 is a cooperative effort of the federal government, Association of Public Safety Communications Officers and the National Association of State Technology Directors to develop standards through the Telecommunications Industry Association for public safety radio to improve spectrum efficiency, interoperability, and increase competition in the public safety land mobile radio market.

Joint Task Force Board Report – Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS)

Enhancements Needed for SLERS to Improve Law Enforcement Communications and Safety

Planning Scenarios

The term of the current contract expires in 2021. The JTF Board seeks additional funding to increase both officer and public safety by:

1. Replacing the state's mobile and portable radios (\$85M)
 - a. Replacing SLERS partners' radios (\$11M)
2. Migrating the system platform to P-25 standards (\$35M)
3. Improving coverage by adding 30 additional 800 MHz RF sites (\$40M)

Total enhancement cost is estimated at \$171M.

Most SLERS partners' mobile and portable radios will require replacement when SLERS is migrated to a P-25 platform, which will require additional funds. SLERS now provides these partners emergency backup radio communications with all radio system users as they travel anywhere throughout the state. They have emergency access to the dispatchers at the state's Regional Communication Centers as well. This provides a lifeline link to law enforcement services and backup. Before SLERS, users lost contact with other law enforcement officers and their dispatchers when they were outside of their jurisdiction.

SLERS is fully implemented statewide and has proven to be a robust public safety system through the hurricanes of 2004 and 2005. System migration to the P-25 standards-based platform is necessary. This will ensure the state is using current technology and has enhanced interoperability for its officers and first responders. In doing so, SLERS positions itself to be a viable public safety system through the term of the contract of 2021 and beyond.

P-25 currently is the proven platform of public safety radio communications nationwide. The JTF Board agencies will continue to work with DMS to follow the ongoing rapid development of new technologies as they mature. We will determine if these technologies can become part of the services offered to the public safety community.

The initial investment began the build out of the system 11 years ago. What is needed now are additional funds to provide the public safety communication tools to protect our citizens, officers and first responders. This will also enhance interoperable communications between federal, state and local users.

Appendices:

Coverage maps
SLERS Partners

Attachments:

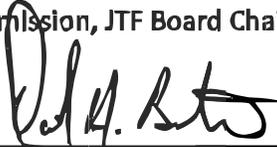
Planning Report to the Legislature December 2009
OPPAGA Report August 2004

**Joint Task Force Board Report – Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS)
Enhancements Needed for SLERS to Improve Law Enforcement Communications and Safety**

Respectfully Submitted by the Joint Task Force (JTF),



Lt. Colonel Bruce Buckson, Deputy Director
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Commission, JTF Board Chair



Colonel David H. Brlerton
Florida Highway Patrol, Department of
Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles



Gregory Gibson, Assistant Director
Division of Law Enforcement,
Department of Environmental Protection



Mark R. Trammell, Law Enforcement Major
Division of State Fire Marshal,
Department of Financial Services



Kenneth Tucker, Assistant Commissioner
Florida Department of Law Enforcement



Colonel David A. Dees, Director
Office of Motor Carrier Compliance,
Florida Department of Transportation



James Upchurch, Chief
Bureau of Security Operations,
Department of Corrections



Michael Fraher
Division of Alcoholic Beverages and
Tobacco, Department of Business and
Professional Regulation

Attachment B



HARRIS CORPORATION

1065 Crystal Way, Suite J
Delray Beach, FL 33444
(561) 251-2313
michael.ryan@harris.com

Date: December 10, 2010
From: Mike Ryan
To: Greg Prescott, Bill Smith, Bruce Meyers, Todd Preston,
Major Steve Williams, Lt. Russ Bass
Cc: Dwane Hartmann, Curt Jones, Bill Tinsley, Walt Boll

Gentlemen,

Per our discussions, here is the EDACS end-of-life summary.

As the Land Mobile Radio marketplace has shifted to industry standard protocols such as P25 and IP-based networks, Harris has focused its engineering resources to develop state-of-the-art products to meet these market needs. This fact, combined with the mature feature set of the EDACS platform is driving Harris to announce the last order date for EDACS Site Products. The last order date for all EDACS site-related products is December 30, 2011.

This notice provides the last opportunity to buy any additional EDACS Site equipment for the following applications: Single Site, Multisite, Simulcast and Voted Only. Also, this is the last opportunity to add any additional Control Points, Sites, Auxiliary Receivers or channels.

Harris will provide service parts support for these products through the end of the SLERS contract – June 2021. Here is a brief overview of Harris' plan to ensure parts will be available.

1. December 30, 2011: Last order date for EDACS site-related products
2. July 2017
 - a. Identify SLERS system inventory (e.g., age and number of sites, transmitters, channels, etc.) as of July 2017.
 - b. Review history of SLERS service parts usage.
 - c. Estimate future service part requirements.
3. September 2017: Order appropriate amount of service parts, including buffer, based on analysis in step 2, to last through end of contract.
4. Each quarter from Q4 2017 through 6/2021, review SLERS system performance and parts usage against Harris' inventory to adjust service part requirements.
5. June 2021: SLERS contract ends.

Thank you for your time, and if you have any questions, please call or email me.

Sincerely,

Mike Ryan



HARRIS CORPORATION

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Lynchburg, VA 24501
Phone: 434 455 6600
www.harris.com

April 14, 2011

Mr. Greg Prescott
Mr. Bill Smith
Mr. Bruce Meyers
State of Florida Department of Management Services
4030 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Mr. Todd Preston
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 South Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Major Steve Williams
Lt. Russ Bass
Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles
2900 Apalachee Parkway, MS 46
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: Withdrawal of Harris Corporation December 10, 2010 Letter

Gentlemen:

Please accept the Harris apology for any misunderstanding and confusion caused by the December 10, 2010 letter to you from Mike Ryan at Harris. This letter should not have been sent to the State of Florida; please consider the letter withdrawn. Harris will continue to fully honor and comply with all of its obligations under the September 28, 2000 SLERS Contract between The State of Florida and Harris Corporation, the Com-Net Ericsson successor. Specifically, Harris has more than sufficient inventory and parts to continue to sell to the State EDACS EA site related products for the SLERS project after December 30, 2011, the date in the 2010 letter. In addition, Harris will continue to actively provide support services and spare parts for the SLERS system through June 30, 2021, the end of the SLERS Contract.

As always, Harris appreciates the opportunity to be a long term partner with the State for the SLERS project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles Shaughnessy".

Charles Shaughnessy
Vice President, LMR Products

cc: Commissioner Gerald Bailey, FLDE
Mr. David Faulkenberry, DMS
Inspector Tal Whiddon, FDLE