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LATEST NEWS

How can you stay connected with over 241.26 miles of highway? Connect with Ohio MARCS! The MARCS Program Office has been working with the Ohio Turnpike Commission for some time to ensure the reliable standard of voice and data communications MARCS is known for along this stretch of highway. As of June 1, 2007, the Ohio Turnpike is utilizing the full suite of MARCS services. This includes Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Mobile Data Terminals (MDT's) and approximately 150 mobile and portable radios.

SUCCESS IN SHARING

29 radios MARCS radios were allowed on the Indiana 800 Mhz statewide radio network during Ardent Sentry/Vigilant Guard 07 exercise in which several Ohio National Guard units participated. The trunked radio communications was an important link to the success of the training event. Having a wide area radio network with cross-banding capability increases your ability to complete the mission in close coordination with all your mission partners. The success stems from efforts of the State of Ohio in wanting the share the trunked radio capability with our contiguous states. The pre-disaster planning leads to pre-programming of radios which ultimately leads to "on scene" success from the outset.

TOWER TALK

Upgrades to the MARCS system continue to be made. The Eaton site has been updated from data to voice and data. In the very near future, the Edgerton, Van Wert and Kenton sites will also be upgraded from data only to voice and data sites. Another tower enhancement project we are working on is the upgrade of antenna systems to enhance both voice and data system coverage. In the long term, MARCS plans to continue to upgrade additional data sites to voice and data sites. The voice engineering team meets very often to discuss what equipment and features can be upgraded to provide optimum service to our customers.



VOICE ON THE AIR

Recently Gallia County initiated a county wide interoperability plan through the assistance of Homeland Security grants. Grant funds enabled the purchase of 12 MARCS compatible radios disbursed between 5 local agencies including police, fire, sheriff, EMA, EMS and County 911. These agencies can now communicate easily on a daily basis and during emergencies requiring interoperability without the worry of dead spots. They have been experimenting with a couple of the radios at various points around the county. The County 911 director stated, "so far, we haven't found anyplace here where they fail to work. (Granted, we haven't been to every "square inch" of property yet)...We HAVE been to locations where we have spotty VHF comms....We have given them a checkout from Huntington, WV. Even went to the Huntington Mall, which is ACTUALLY in Barboursville, WV and it worked just fine from there. The system is working great."



TEAM FEATURE

Gary Swart maintains all application databases, analyzes data and creates customized reporting environments where data becomes useful business information for customers' day-to-day operations, provides general application support to MARCS staff. Gary has 20 years of service as a state of Ohio employee working for the Department of Education and OIT. Gary also worked 10 years as an IT constant in the private sector. Gary's skills, insight and background have proven to be very valuable during his tenure with MARCS. We're very fortunate to have him as a member of our team.

Did you know...the MARCS Program Office was officially established in 1997 with a staff of six full time employees. The program has experienced many changes and much growth over the past 10 years. MARCS is maintained by twenty-three full time staff members.