

MARCS

Making Ohio Number One in Statewide Interoperability

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Issue 4

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LATEST NEWS

A multi-county initiative has been introduced and is well into the planning stages to upgrade local agencies in Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam and Wood counties. These agencies are working with the MARCS office to enhance coverage in these counties, to include in-street portable coverage so first responders may jointly communicate on the MARCS infrastructure.



TOWER TALK

The MARCS office has been performing prop studies in 7 northwest Ohio counties. The MARCS office has been meeting with officials and technicians from Mercer, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Allen, Wood and Putnam counties to discuss the needs of local fire, police, sheriffs and EMA agencies, to enhance mobile and portable voice communications. Officials are interested in making the MARCS network available to all first responders in the region. In light of the recent storms that passed through the area, it has become evident all first responders and public safety officials need to be able to talk to each other to plan, train and exercise in preparation for incidents such as this.

SUCCESS IN ITEROPERABILITY

Recent flooding in central and north central Ohio has been tremendous. This creates challenges to public safety and first responders in these flood ravaged areas. Fortunately, the capabilities of the MARCS system has allowed first responders to hail additional resources they need from all over the state AND allow them to communicate before these resources even reach the incident site. With the interoperability plan in place, first responders have been able to hail the assistance of public safety resources all over Ohio with a single P-T-T (push to talk). Through the interoperability capabilities, these agencies arrive on scene fully briefed of the current situation on site. This saves time, thus saving lives.



VOICE ON THE AIR

Last month, the MARCS newsletter featured the Local Emergency Use Only (LEUO) service offered by Ohio MARCS. Remember, LEUO is a subscription option offered to local public safety and first responders so they can subscribe to MARCS on a limited basis. They all agree to use the radio for emergencies only. BUT...although the LEUO subscription is for emergency use, the MARCS office still encourages these LEUO subscribers to test their radios AND users on a regular basis. It is COMPLETELY permissible to perform routine radio checks, use the radios during emergency exercises, employee training, etc. It is advisable to keep at least one radio turned up so you can monitor traffic in your area. MARCS suggests monitoring the MCALL/MCOMM or sheriff's office regional talkgroups (SO-CEN, SO-NE, SO-NW, SO-SE, SO-SW).

TEAM FEATURE

Dick Miller certainly looks pleased to be a member of the MARCS team. Dick joined the MARCS team in 2006 after retiring from the Ohio State Highway Patrol Ashland Post. Dick serves as the Office Manager as well as the main contact for any matters pertaining to MARCS real estate, and in the field MARCS interoperability coordination. Dick recently completed the COML (Communications Unit Leader) course work and has worked to help with local agency response during recent weather related incidents.



DID YOU KNOW...

Ohio MARCS invested in Communications Unit Leader (COML) certification for one staff member to assist in state of Ohio emergencies. Communications Unit Leader (COML) training is designed to prepare the student to accomplish the duties and responsibilities of a Communications Unit Leader (COML) on a large incident. Course topics include gathering information, organizing the communications unit, designing communications systems, installing, maintaining, and assigning equipment, internal and external coordination, and demobilization. We offer this assistance free of charge and the COML is on call 24/7. All MARCS staff members are on call to assist you whenever necessary. You can call the helpdesk (1-866-OHMARCS) if you do not have a staff member's phone number. You may also use your MARCS radio on HELPDESK. They can relay messages to the staff.

Send your MARCS worthy news and pictures to teri.steward@ohio.gov.