



IN THIS ISSUE

- LATEST NEWS
- SUCCESS IN OPERABILITY
- MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU
- DID YOU KNOW
- TEAM FEATURE

LATEST NEWS

The state of Ohio submitted their application for the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant (PSIC) last month. Ohio EMA is the state administering agency for this \$29,377,337 grant. The first draft of the statewide strategic interoperability plan was also released to SIEC members late last month. In order to comply with the PSIC grant guidelines, this plan must be submitted by December 3, 2007.

SUCCESS IN INTEROPERABILITY

Chief John Sabo and Chief Rick Helminski were regional coordinators for the recent Ohio flood response. Chief Sabo and Chief Helminski traveled throughout the flooded areas coordinating rescue efforts. The first day, Chief Sabo was first deployed to Mansfield and Shelby. The Chief was able to assess the situation before he even arrived on scene, by monitoring his MARCS radio through regular updates from the 8 homeland security regional coordinators throughout the state, Ohio Emergency Operations Center, on site responders and from his communications center in Columbus (Mifflin Emergency Communication Center). The next day, Chief Sabo and Chief Helminski were dispatched to Ottawa and Findlay, respectively. While en route to Findlay, they encountered flooded roads. From their MARCS radios, they were able to contact OSHP and ODOT to find alternate routes so they could reach the on-site command center. Chief Sabo said, "My ability to communicate across the state was never compromised on my portable radio. For accountability, operations and updates; the statewide system was SO invaluable in our efforts to clear up loose ends on such a large scale operation such as this. We were in constant contact through the MARCS system with Tom Beatty (assistant state coordinator) at the state EOC, and Paul Slaughter (state Coordinator at MECC). We were able to communicate amongst ourselves and monitor all the other radio traffic during the entire operation." Chief Sabo also told the MARCS office how responders were able to receive hourly updates on water levels in Findlay. Flooding in Ottawa arrives about 12 hours AFTER flooding in Findlay. This allowed teams in Ottawa to be prepared for the upcoming rising waters and have citizens safely evacuated BEFORE the water peaked in Ottawa. It's all about interoperability!

MAKING IT EASIER FOR YOU

It is now possible for MARCS subscribers to make payments via credit card. After several months of planning, the DAS/OIT business office has successfully tested this new option and is ready to accept credit card payments. Numerous MARCS subscribers expressed interest over the past year in submitting payments via credit card. This process will make it easier for subscriber to account for expended grant funds. Interested subscribers should contact Teri Steward (teri.steward@ohio.gov) if they are interested in the credit card payment system. Be prepared to give the agency name, customer ID, invoice number and contact name for the individual responsible for managing the agency credit card. Confirmation will be sent to the responsible part after the payment is posted.

Did you know...

MARCS recently improved Mobile Data Capabilities for enhanced public safety. MARCS is most known for its interoperable voice communications, but mobile data is a large portion of the MARCS network. Recently, MARCS upgraded to a new IP based software product that allows the transfer of high amounts of data to occur much faster than before. The new software was strenuously tested (transferring 300-400 pieces of data averaging 20 kilobytes in size) and proved to be the ideal solution for MARCS customers. Currently the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Emergency Management Agency and Ohio Department of Natural Resources use the mobile data system on a daily basis. The new application has received rave reviews from these customers.



TEAM FEATURE

Devin Miller is the newest member of the MARCS staff serving as Network Services Technician for MARCS. Devin collaborates with other members of the MARCS Data Team to ensure the networking infrastructure for the MARCS system is available to MARCS customers. Devin previously worked in the private IT and education industry. He has over 10 years experience in the IT field and a passion for serving the community. When Devin is not serving MARCS customers he enjoys spending time with family and friends as well as home brewing.