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RAMBIS UPDATE

GeoComm was engaged to facilitate the development process of the bid specifications for the Regional Area Multi Band Integrated System (RAMBIS) project. RAMBIS is the cornerstone solution outlined in interoperability study completed in 2003, and GeoComm is very familiar with the scope of the project and the unique complexities of the region.

In January, the RAMBIS RFP was released to potential vendors. Since the release of the RFP, two formal addendums have been issued and vendor representatives have attended a pre-bid conference and tower site tours. The formal proposals were evaluated on April 6 by members of the Regional Interoperability Committee, Public Safety User's Committee and the Interoperability Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP).

REGIONAL INTEROPERABILITY OPERATIONAL PLAN

Public safety and public health representatives recently met to assist members from the ICTAP team with development of initial chapters of the Regional Interoperability Operational Plan. Substantial progress was made during this meeting and a draft of the plan is completed.

The final plan will encompass all of the regional interoperability operational mechanisms and procedures. Once adopted by the region and accepted by participating agencies, this plan will outline when to use which type of interoperable mechanism, and how participants will operate, train and maintain them.

MARC ISSUES RFP FOR DYNAMIC MULTIPLE AGENCY INTERCONNECT

Technical advisors, Regional Interoperability Committee and MARC staff members have assisted with the development and writing of the Dynamic Multiple Agency Public Safety Interconnect System RFP.

This technology will provide each public safety communications center in the MARC region, with the ability to create a software patch to communicate with another public safety communications center regardless of the radio system type used by each agency. The final RFP was released April 1, 2005, and proposals will be received no later than June 1, 2005.

The contract award is anticipated at the end of June 2005. For further information contact Kevin Whittaker at kwhittaker@marc.org or 816-701-8323.

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Upcoming Events:

- Register for the 8th annual 9-1-1 Appreciation Celebration, April 16, 2005
- April 17-20, 2005, APCO North Central Regional Conference at Downtown Kansas City Marriott
- May 25, 2005, Professional Development Series, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Training Standards for Communications Personnel
- For more information about upcoming events, contact e911@marc.org or 816-701-8330

VOIP INFORMATION FOR PSAPS AND SUBSCRIBERS

As Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) becomes increasingly common in businesses and households across the Kansas City area, VoIP subscribers need to understand the challenges it can potentially create when placing a 9-1-1 emergency call. PSAPs also will find this information helpful as community members contact them with questions about VoIP.

VoIP telephone service gives a person the ability to make and receive phone calls by sending the calls through non-traditional methods rather than the normal telephone service people are accustomed to using. Customers are drawn to VoIP because it often lowers costs for long distance and other services.

Consumers should note that not all VoIP providers are currently providing enhanced 9-1-1 service. All telephone providers, including VoIP service providers, do have the ability to interconnect with the regional 9-1-1 system and subscribers should request that their providers do so.

"It is important that consumers read the fine print and question their service providers," according to Annie Akehurst, Public Safety Outreach Coordinator for MARC. "If a VoIP customer places a 9-1-1 call using a service provider that isn't properly connected to the system, it is unlikely that the dispatcher will be provided with a call-back telephone number and/or location information, even if the call is routed to the correct 9-1-1 center."

Although VoIP service providers may claim that they offer 9-1-1 service, they may be erroneously directing emergency calls to an administrative phone number. "The only authorized emergency number in the region is 9-1-1," Akehurst said.

MARC suggests that VoIP customers contact their service providers immediately and ask them to interconnect with the regional 9-1-1 system. If providers have any questions about providing this service, they should contact the regional 9-1-1 office at 816-701-8314 for assistance.

Check out the upcoming 9-1-1 Training Program Courses

<http://www.marc.org/emergency/9-1-1/courselisting.htm>

Register online or call 816-701-8330.



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REGIONAL INTEROPERABILITY ADOPTS FORMAL GOVERNANCE

A formal governance structure for the regional interoperability program was recently established. The Public Safety Communications Board was created and combined with the 9-1-1 Coordinating Committee to provide policy guidance and oversight. The purpose of this change is to provide policy-making authority and create a management structure for regional interoperability matters.

“We are encouraged by the progress and support of the committee members and constituents,” said Kevin Whittaker, public safety technical coordinator. “The new structure has streamlined the work and decision-making processes, allowing the group the chance to get more done in a shorter period of time.”

This board consists of elected officials and agency directors from throughout the region as defined in the 9-1-1 Interlocal Cooperation Agreement. In addition to the board, a User’s Committee was defined to ensure that all stakeholders are represented in communications issues. The Regional Interoperability Committee (RIC) was created as a subcommittee to the regional Public Safety Communications Users Committee.

Regional Interoperability Committee Co-Chairs:
Dwight Purtle, Technical Systems Manager for Johnson County Emergency Communications

Major Jesse McLendon, North Kansas City Police Department

KC SCOUT TO OPERATE 24/7 THIS SUMMER

The traffic operations center at Kansas City Scout will be open 24 hours per day/seven days per week beginning this summer. With the expanded hours of operation, additional staff positions will also be available. The center is located in Lee’s Summit, Mo.

Kansas City Scout is Kansas City’s new traffic management system. KC Scout is designed to lessen traffic jams by improving rush-hour speeds, to increase safety by decreasing the number of rush-hour accidents, and to improve emergency response to traffic situations.

The KC Scout Web site also features real-time camera images, activated message boards and average freeway speeds — allowing travelers to check Scout’s freeway conditions from their computer before they head out on the road.



Scout is a joint effort of the Kansas and Missouri departments of transportation (KDOT and MoDot.)

Many PSAPs have become familiar with KC Scout because KC Scout also dispatches Motorist Assist, MoDOT and KDOT trucks. Conversations are also continuing toward the integration of the KC Scout Center and 9-1-1.

For further information about KC Scout, www.kcscout.com or call (816) 622-6500.

ANNUAL 9-1-1 TELECOMMUNICATOR APPRECIATION CELEBRATION IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Mark your calendars for the 8th Annual 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Appreciation Celebration scheduled for 6:00-10:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 16, 2005, at the Kansas City Westin Crown Center. The registration fee is \$10.00 per person. This event is held each year during National Telecommunicator Week to honor the nearly 600 professional men and women who answer over two million 9-1-1 calls in the Kansas City region. The evening will consist of entertainment, prizes, dinner and more. Prizes consist of two round-trip tickets from Southwest Airlines, tickets to ComedyCity, a one-night stay at the Raphael on the Plaza, a year’s free video rentals from Hy-Vee, and much more!

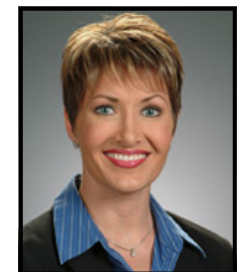
A highlight of the evening will be entertainment by John Berry. He has had multiple gold and platinum albums and nominations from the Grammys, the Country Music Association and the Academy of Country Music. John Berry is described as having one of the most powerful and distinctive voices in music. A few of Berry’s most popular songs include “Your Love Amazes Me,” “Kiss Me in the Car,” “She’s Taken a Shine,” and “Standing on the Edge of Goodbye.” John Berry will also be available to sign autographs following his performance.



In addition, comedian Mary Feeley will perform at the event. Mary’s audiences laugh and learn! She has uniquely combined experience from the corporate office and the comedy club stage. She is an award-winning stand-up comedian who has performed in top comedy clubs throughout the United States. Known as the “Provocateur,” her insight is sure to enlighten, motivate and make this event unforgettable!

The Kansas City String Quartet Program has also been added to the line-up of entertainment for the evening. The program strives to nurture young musicians through the study and performance of music. The group will provide music during the cocktail hour and meal. This will be an opportunity to hear some of the top student musical performers from across Kansas City.

Loren Halifax will serve as Emcee for the 2005 event. She co-anchors FOX 4 News from 5:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. alongside Mark Alford. Loren has worked in television news for more than a decade. She has received the Midwest Broadcaster’s Association honor for Investigative Reporting and National Press honors. She was an Emmy Award finalist for breaking news coverage.



Register by returning the enclosed form or register online at www.marc.org/emergency or call 816-701-8330. We hope to see you there!

In Memory of E.B. Chester

Ray County 9-1-1 Director, E.B. Chester, died Sunday, February 20, 2005. Mr. Chester served as the director since January 1, 1999. He was a former Ray County Sheriff’s Deputy and member of the Hardin Volunteer Fire Department for 30 years. Mr. Chester was instrumental in the re-addressing of the county for 9-1-1. He was also responsible for initiating mapping for the county, issuing addresses and coordinating the PSAP equipment. His participation in 9-1-1 services for the region will be missed.