

MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

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RE: Stakeholder Questions - Next Generation System

The MERA Governing Board, Executive Board in addition to the Finance, Outreach and Coverage Committees have been queried on the cost and efficacy of the next generation system. Following our most recent series of meetings, I volunteered to compile a list of outstanding questions on behalf of the member agencies. In light of the current economic environment and many issues with the legacy MERA system, member agencies willingness and ability to participate in the next generation system has been strained. Therefore, your thoughtful consideration and responses to the following questions may restore confidence and provide the assurance our methods are not cavalier.

Questions:

- Has a third party feasibility study been conducted on the next generation system?
- Will previous system deficiencies be addressed? How?
- Are we required to move to this technology? By who? Why?
- Have any recent system changes locked us into a single vendor?
- Utilizing existing system infrastructure, can a hybrid system work? (VHF Trunked)
- Is the current system paid off, before we start paying for the new system?
- Will moving non-emergent system partners to other bands lower cost?
- Will pager / plectron / station alerting be incorporated in the new system?

- Will conventional channels be incorporated in the new system?
- Will the successful vendor support the technology for the life of the system?
- Will interoperability be achieved with system partners such as CHP, NPS, State Parks? How? Can we use the same technology?
- The system costs are extraordinary, how can we effectively articulate the cost / benefit?
- What are the continuing operational costs?
- Are there alternatives? Low band, VHF, UHF, Trunked, 700mhz, Hybrid?
- Is this the answer moving forward? Why?
- What happens if we do nothing?

As you can see, there is tremendous trepidation related to the next generation system. I believe addressing these questions and taking necessary actions will ultimately provide clarity and comfort to the member agencies, while demonstrating the next generation system is the right choice.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Pearce
President