

Marin Emergency Radio Authority
Microwave Data System Access Policy and Procedures

Purpose: To establish requirements and procedures to authorize use of the MERA Microwave Data System for non-MERA purposes.

Policy: The Marin Emergency Radio Authority operates a radio system that facilitates essential communications between and among its member agencies and non-member public and private users that serve and support all facets of public safety.

This radio system is supported by a microwave-based data system that connects various MERA sites.

Any use of the MERA microwave data system not directly related to the support of MERA's public safety voice radio system requires evaluation by MERA staff and approval by the MERA Governing Board. This includes MERA member agencies, other public agencies and private entities.

No entity, other than MERA, may be connected to the MERA microwave system until this policy and procedures has been complied with.

Procedure: Any entity wishing to use any portion of the MERA microwave system shall:

1. Contact the MERA Operations Officer in writing and provide a detailed request that includes:
 - a. Segments of the microwave system that would be affected.
 - b. Specific use desired.
 - c. Estimated impacts to the MERA microwave system.
 - d. Equipment and connectivity proposed.
 - e. A statement of how the requesting agency serves a public safety purpose and benefits MERA members.
2. The request will be technically evaluated by the MERA Operations Officer and appropriate staff to ensure it will not adversely impact MERA's system use.
3. The MERA Operations Officer will prepare a MERA Microwave Use agreement (Template attached) that will include this policy as an attachment.
4. The request and agreement will then be considered by the MERA Operational Issues Working Group, which will make a recommendation to the MERA Governing Board.

5. The MERA Governing Board will consider the request and agreement and it may approve or disapprove the request and agreement at its discretion.
6. Nothing in this policy and procedure prohibits nor requires MERA charging entities for access and for covering all costs and equipment required for access and maintenance, however it is anticipated that requesting agencies will bear all costs associated with their access.
7. MERA may immediately disconnect any user if their use of the MERA microwave system interferes with MERA's operation of its voice radio system. If possible, the outside entity will be contacted prior to any action, but in any case, will be notified as soon as possible. If the specific issue allows, time may be spent on mitigating the impacts prior to disconnecting access, at the discretion of the MERA Operations Officer.
8. Any current users of the Gen I MERA Microwave System may continue use of the system until cutover to the Next Gen Microwave System.
9. Only entities that have received MERA Governing Board approval and have a MERA Microwave Use agreement on file may access the Next Gen Microwave System.
10. The MERA Operations Officer shall maintain a list of authorized users of the MERA Microwave System, which shall be reviewed during the first Governing Board meeting of even numbered years at a minimum.
11. Upon approval of this policy and procedure, the MERA Operations Officer shall notify all affected current MERA Microwave System users that do not already have an agreement in place approved by the MERA Governing Board to obtain a use agreement.
12. Either party may terminate a use agreement with a minimum of 90 days' notice to the other party. This notice requirement does not apply to section #7, above.