



**To: Bay Area UASI Approval Authority**

**From: Barry Fraser, Interim General Manager**

**Date: March 14, 2013**

**Re: Item #13: Report from the Bay Area Regional Interoperable Communications System Joint Powers Authority (BayRICS Authority)**

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**Recommendations:**

Receive and File Report

**Action or Discussion Items:**

Report from the Interim General Manager of the BayRICS Authority on the activities and progress of the BayRICS Authority for the month of February 2013.

**Discussion/Description:**

**1. BayRICS Administration**

The BayRICS Board of Directors will hold its next regular meeting at 1:30 PM on Thursday March 14 in Dublin. The Board is expected to take action on the following matters: (1) Appointment of a permanent general manager for the Authority; (2) Establish a member fee schedule for Fiscal Year 2013-2014; (3) Planning to meet the need for additional staffing and resources to carry out the Authority's proposed project work for interoperable voice and data communications.

**2. Interoperable Communications Planning**

**Interoperable Communications Status Report**

At the January 10, 2013 meeting, the BayRICS Board directed staff to develop a high-level assessment to determine the need for regional voice communications coordination, including the current status of the four P25 sub-regional projects, current regional funding efforts, and potential roles for the BayRICS Authority, and potential costs to the Authority. Staff has been coordinating with UASI Management Team staff to develop this report and a draft will be provided to the BayRICS Board in March.

Preliminary information suggests that there is a need for regional coordination to develop funding strategies for completing the P25 sub-systems and purchasing subscriber devices. Staff also identified a need for coordination in the development of regional practices and procedures among the four sub-systems, such as roaming agreements, fleetmap channel allocations, P25 technician, dispatcher and user dispatcher trainings and a regular schedule of exercises for testing the systems.

BayRICS has assumed oversight of the BayLoop microwave network on behalf of the region. In order to assume any additional regional voice communications responsibilities, BayRICS needs to identify funding sources for additional staff and resources to perform those tasks.

### **T-Band Spectrum Give Backs**

On February 11, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has issued a public notice and request for comments regarding requirements that local agencies give back spectrum in the 470-512 MHz band (“T-Band”). Many public safety agencies in the Bay Area use the T-Band spectrum for critical public safety voice communications, and the loss of this spectrum could potentially disrupt public safety activities and impose significant costs on the region.

BayRICS has previously conducted a review of T-Band usage in the Bay Area that indicates that a significant number of public safety agencies rely on the T-Band for mission critical voice communications. BayRICS staff and Technical Advisory Committee will be developing comments in response to the FCC public notice on behalf of the Bay Area to urge the FCC to ensure that any reallocation of T-Band spectrum does not disrupt public safety activities and that the costs of any reallocation to public safety agencies is fully reimbursed by the FCC. These initial comments are due to the FCC by May 13, with reply comments due June 11.

### **BayLoop**

At its February 14 meeting, the BayRICS Board approved a 12-month agreement with Aviat Networks for extended warranty, maintenance and monitoring of the BayLoop regional microwave network. BayLoop was originally funded through UASI grants. Alameda County will serve as the fiscal agent for a \$265,000 UASI grant to reimburse BayRICS for the contract. BayRICS staff has begun the implementation process with each of the seven BayLoop Counties that will benefit from these services.

In addition, the BayRICS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has begun to develop a process for implementing BayLoop operating procedures, including a process for reviewing and approving regional applications to operate on the network. The TAC anticipates that UASI-funded information sharing services such as CopLink and Aries will eventually use BayLoop for regional connectivity.

### **3. FirstNet Planning**

#### **Spectrum Lease Negotiations**

On February 22, staff participated in a conference call with FirstNet Director Sue Swenson and representatives from the other six BTOP public safety grant projects. After introductions, Ms. Swenson described at a high level the efforts undertaken by FirstNet to establish the lease agreement process. She explained that the lease documents were currently being developed and would be similar in form to the prior spectrum lease agreements for the Public Safety Broadband Spectrum. The lease documents are not yet ready for distribution, but Ms. Swenson told us she would provide an update during the week of March 4th.

Ms. Swenson verified that the leases will include several conditions, but she was not prepared to provide many details about these conditions. She did state that there would be some general conditions that would be uniform for all recipients, as well as “special circumstances” that will address the unique aspects of each grant project. She mentioned urban and rural coverage challenges and in-building coverage as two examples of potential special circumstances conditions.

Ms. Swenson acknowledged that 90 days is a very short time period for completing this process, but stressed that FirstNet shared a sense of urgency to complete the leases within the designated time period. She also stated that extensions would be available in cases where additional time was needed to complete local approval processes.

Ms. Swenson stated that her intent was to set up another group call concurrent with the distribution of the draft lease agreement and conditions, and at that time she would present a more detailed negotiation framework and schedule. Staff spoke with Ms. Swenson again on February 28 and was advised that the lease documents were still being reviewed by attorneys and that she expected distribution the week of March 11. Ms. Swenson did confirm that FirstNet expects the spectrum lease to be held by the BayRICS Authority.

#### **Reengagement Planning Meetings with Local Agencies/Site Owners**

In order to begin the process of restarting the BayWEB project, Staff has scheduled reengagement planning meetings with local public safety agencies and site owning jurisdictions. Staff met with City and County of San Francisco officials on February 28 and is meeting with Alameda County Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Association (ACCOPSA) on March 14.