Department of **Public Safety**

Monroe County, New York

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PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT – COMMUNICATIONS FACT SHEET

Overview

A number of critical public safety communications projects are either under way or under review. Some confusion has resulted when referring to the various projects. This fact sheet is designed to identify the different projects, briefly define the issues associated with each, and summarize the status of the project. This fact sheet is not meant to be an exhaustive or detailed description of each project or a policy statement about the direction any project will take.

As part of this effort, there are a number of definitions at the end of the fact sheet to assist in understanding the terminology utilized throughout the document.

There are four (4) key projects that relate to public safety communications to describe.

Projects

1. 900 MHz Digital Paging System [also known as, Digital Paging]

   The 900 MHz digital paging system will replace the current 450 MHz digital paging system that is obsolete. Equipment for the system is no longer available and maintenance is very costly. The system is a communications necessity for public safety officials and other municipal officials. The new two-way is now scheduled to be activated Spring 2006. Testing is under way now. The user device, 1501 Responder pager, is available and can be ordered by contacting **Radio Center at 428-5146**.

2. Law Enforcement Voice System [also know as, 800 MHz-Trunked System or MACRO]

   The current law enforcement voice communications system is an UHF system [Ultra High Frequency band ranges from 406.000-470.000 MHz] and is over 25 years old. It also needs replacing. The FCC has mandated these frequencies be “narrow banded” to create additional frequencies for public safety agencies. The decision has been made to upgrade and enhance this system.

3. Public Safety Data System [also known as, MDT System, vehicle laptops or MACRO]

   MACRO completed a second study of the public safety data system and recommended a replacement. This system has reached its life cycle and is in need of replacement. This system supports MDT’s, and laptop computers in the cars as well as station house MDT units.

4. Fire Service Narrow-Band Project [also know as, Refarming Project, Palidor Study and Narrow-Band Project]

   The current radio system used by the fire and emergency medical services uses radio frequencies in the VHF band [Very High Frequency ranges from 138.000-174.000 MHz]. Most frequencies used in Monroe County are in the 153-155 MHz range. Like the UHF frequencies, FCC is requiring them to be "narrow-banded". This change means moving to a 12.5 MHz split between the next closest frequency. Many current radios used by the services (both mobile and portable) are not manufactured to the new 12.5 "narrow-band" standard and therefore will not accept the new frequencies.

   - The plan is to become compliant in 2006. The Fire/EMS Communications Board has set September 2006 as the date for the county and all users to by narrow band compliant. Efforts are on schedule for this date.

   - Special operational frequencies are available for mobile and portable use. Agencies must obtain a FCC license to operate on a base station.

Name	Frequency	Digital Tone	Use
OPS 1	154.1075	D031	First Battalion
OPS 2	155.2575	D074	Second Battalion
OPS 3	156.2325	D047	Third Battalion
OPS 4	155.0025	D065	Fourth Battalion
OPS 5	155.3175	D223	Fifth Battalion
OPS 6	155.3925	D245	Shared Frequency

Terms and Definitions

1. The FCC is the sole entity governing the allocation of radio frequency spectrum and the granting of radio licenses to public safety agencies in the U.S. [From the MACRO Report of May 2003, see page 12 and footnote 17]

2. Narrow banding is the reducing of the allowable spectrum to transmit on a given frequency, in half.

3. An 800 MHz-Trunked radio system is a computer time-managed radio system designed for optimum spectrum efficiency.

4. The FCC defines 'Refarming' as an effort to develop an overall strategy for using spectrum in various radio allocations more efficiently to meet future communications requirements. [From the MACRO Report of May 2003, see page 13 and footnote 20]