

**Report to / Rapport au:**

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD  
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERS D'OTTAWA**

**27 May 2019 / 27 mai 2019**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

**Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa**

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**SUBJECT: INTEROPERABLE MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGED SERVICE  
(IMCMS)**

**OBJET: SERVICE GÉRÉ DE COMMUNICATION MOBILE INTEROPÉRABLE  
(IMCMS)**

**REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information**

**RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information.**

**BACKGROUND**

The Ottawa Police Service operates just over 1600 radios on the system provided by the City of Ottawa.

In 2013 the radio system commonly named EDACS in use by the City of Ottawa was declared end of life by 2015. Following a request for proposal (RFP) Bell Canada was selected in March 2013 as the integrator to replace the EDACS system with the implementation of the Interoperable Mobile Communications Managed Service (IMCMS). The contract that went into effect in April 2015 is of a 10 year term with provisions for 5 additional 12 month extensions.

The OPS was the final user group to migrate to IMCMS in January 2019. Additionally, because of contractual limitations the City must represent all users and the OPS cannot interact directly with Bell to investigate complaints or deal with any matter.

## **DISCUSSION**

The implementation of the IMCMS is a priority project for the OPS. The radio system is a key tool and safety device for OPS members and the public. Since implementation of the system earlier this year, members have been encouraged to report any issues they are having with the system so that they can be addressed. The main identified issues are listed in this report. As part of this approach, the Communication Equipment User Group (CEUG) has been established comprised of members from Frontline, OPS Executive and Senior Officers, the City radio team and Bell. This group meets regularly to address the difficulties being observed and to report on progress in identifying and implementing solutions. The updates of those discussions are widely circulated to all members of the OPS and the Board and will be included in this monthly report. As well, the OPS has taken on a project manager to ensure long term plans are put in place to track and solve issues and to ensure the longer term radio needs of the OPS are addressed.

## **IDENTIFIED MAIN ISSUES**

### 1. Low volume complaints when officers transmit

Members report that the volume on the radios is not consistent creating the need to continually adjust the volume during the performance of their duties.

### 2. Radio coverage issues (outside and inside)

Many complaints are being received by members regarding no radio coverage inside and outside of buildings.

### 3. System reliability

Members are reporting many issues including radios not transmitting when the push to talk button is pressed, emergency activations not going through, transmissions being received on one radio but not another, etc.

### 4. Bell troubleshooting methodology and feedback

The OPS has expressed concerns regarding the methodology used by the City and Bell when investigating complaints. Their review process is not clear and most of the complaints submitted by the OPS have not yielded any acknowledgement of an issue with either the radio system or the equipment.

## **ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The CEUG met on April 12<sup>th</sup> in order to review the four major issues. A follow-up meeting was held on May 16<sup>th</sup> in order to identify and action plan.

### **Radios**

Several potential improvements to the radio units (in car and portable) have been identified and will be rolled out in the coming weeks. The list of improvements include shortening the required time for an emergency activation, implementing a lock feature for the radio toggle to address the accidental changing of channels, improving volume issues and shortening the tone experienced when trying to transmit on a busy channel.

The intent is to develop a test group of Frontline officers to validate the solutions before full implementation.

The City and Bell have performed several ride-alongs (more are planned in the future) with officers to observe the radio system in the field and identify potential issues/solutions.

### **Radio System Coverage issues**

Testing completed so far has not identified any issues. However, the City and Bell are aware of reports from our Service and we continue to seek solutions to address member concerns. These solutions could include additional equipment (for example repeaters or antennas) to boost radio strength in certain areas. These discussions are preliminary and the results will be available in the near future.

### **Third party needs assessment**

The City has engaged Lansdowne Technologies to conduct a needs review for radio system users (for example Ottawa Fire, Ottawa Police, Public Works and OC Transpo) to determine how the current system fulfills operational requirements and identify gaps.

### **Training**

We have identified some issues that can be addressed with further training of Members. We are working to identify training opportunities and will have more information to Members soon.

## **CONCLUSION**

The OPS continues to work with the City of Ottawa and Bell to addresses the issues being identified by radio users. Recent discussions with Bell and the City have identified several technical solutions to various issues that are expected to be implemented soon. However, several more issues like in-building penetration continue to require solutions.

We are all committed to working on these solutions together and understand the solutions will range from the more technical to requirements for more training. Frontline members will continue to be part of this solutions process and we continue to encourage the reporting of any issues with the system.