

**Report to / Rapport au:**

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

**22 July 2019 / 22 juillet 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: MISE À JOUR DE LA FEUILLE DE ROUTE DE LA MODERNISATION  
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. Weekly conference calls are also being held between the leadership of the OPS, the City and Bell in order to review the progress of the various action items.

## **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 June 17<sup>th</sup> in order to discuss the progress of the various action items below. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Radios**

Several improvements to the radio units (in car and portable) have been identified and tested. 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 feedback from the officers regarding the changes has been very positive and their comments continue to be collected. A rollout plan will now be developed with the City and Bell Canada in order to deploy these modifications as soon as possible.

### **Radio System Coverage issues**

The City and Bell ridealongs are complete but will be scheduled in the future should they be required. The OPS is now reviewing if deploying vehicular repeaters is a viable option in order to meet the operational needs of frontline. Repeaters are used to strengthen radio signals in specific areas.

### **Third party needs assessment**

Lansdowne Technologies has completed their OPS user interviews and are going forward with their report. Users from various sections which include frontline and various specialty units (CID, Tactical, etc) were consulted. The final report is expected in early fall. Discussions with Lansdowne Technologies continue in order to identify the proper long-term planning methodology needed to meet the radio requirements of the OPS.

### **System reliability**

The IMCMS performed well with no issues during the Canada Day 2019 festivities despite having hundreds of additional officers deployed than usual.

### **Training**

A training plan will be developed with the feedback of the officers that completed the testing of the radio improvements.

## **CONCLUSION**

The OPS continues to work with the City of Ottawa and Bell to address any issues as they are 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, 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.