

Report to / Rapport au:

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

23 September 2019 / 23 septembre 2019

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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SUBJECT: INTEROPERABLE MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGED SERVICE

OBJET: SERVICE GÉRÉ DE COMMUNICATION MOBILE INTEROPÉRABLE

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 continues to be 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 circulated to all members of the OPS and the Board and will be included in this monthly report.

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 September 11th in order to review action plan below. The next meeting of the group will occur in mid October following the implementation of the identified items in order to review the results.

In order to expedite the deployment of the improvements mentioned below, the replacement portable radios (same model as currently in use), scheduled to be replaced in year 5 of the contract, are being deployed now with the updated software.

Radios

Several improvements to the radio units (in-car and portable) have been identified and tested. The rollout of these changes will occur in early October when, as part of the contract, the current portable radios are replaced. Frontline officers will be the first users to transition with the remainder of the OPS users afterwards. The deployment plan for the in-car radios will be identified following the successful rollout of the portable radios.

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, adding a 2-step power off function, improving volume issues and shortening the tone experienced when trying to transmit on a busy channel.

Radio System Coverage issues

It is expected that portable radio users will experience better coverage due to a programming improvement identified by the OPS. Feedback will be collected following the deployment in order to measure its effectiveness. A project plan is also being developed by Lansdowne Technologies to facilitate the installation of equipment that will improve the radio reception in the Provincial Courthouse located at 161 Elgin St.

Third party needs assessment

Lansdowne Technologies has completed its report and will be presenting the results to the Radio Steering Committee on September 23rd, 2019. Once that the report has been released, its content will be reviewed in order to identify potential next steps for both the city and the OPS.

Training

A training and communications plan is being created in order to support the upcoming changes and provide the required supports to OPS members.

CONCLUSION

The OPS continues to work with the City of Ottawa and Bell to address the issues being identified by radio users. The improvements being deployed beginning in October are expected to improve user concerns pertaining to the radio system. Frontline users will continue being consulted with regards to any future potential changes to the system and user gear.