



EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

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City of Victoria
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Feb 24, 2017

Dear Mayor and Council,

In the interest of keeping our shareholders informed and up-to-date on the Capital Region's emergency communications system, the following is a brief highlight of February's board meeting.

As you know we have embarked on our technology renewal project taking place between 2016 – 2018. The "next generation" technology will replace the existing radio system that currently serves 50 emergency response agencies within the Capital Region. The new radio system will be based on digital radio technology known as Project 25 (P25), which provides first responders with enhanced audio clarity and coverage among other operational and safety benefits.

As we enter the most critical phase of a radio & system replacement program, I wanted to recap what has led us to this point, and acknowledge the work put in by the user groups guiding our process. We have been fortunate to have active participation from a number of departments. Both the Fire Services & the Police Service Committee has undertaken a great deal of effort, specifically in evaluating of the RFP issued for new P25 radios in 2015, which also included a rigorous test period of the 2 vendors products (EF Johnson & Motorola) by a number of our user agencies. Ultimately the user groups showed a strong preference for the Motorola APX radio with the military (both police & fire), RCMP, Victoria FD, Saanich FD, Esquimalt FD, Oak Bay FD, UVic Security, and BC Ambulance investing in these radios to date. Currently over 500 new radios are in service at CREST, with another 2000 to be deployed over the next two years.

As 2017 starts we have taken receipt of the new Motorola P25 network equipment. The fall of 2016 saw CREST staff, outside consultants, and Motorola engineers design our replacement system, which then followed with a build and test stage at the factory, before acceptance at the end of 2016.

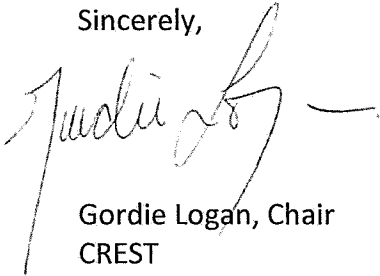
With the new system in hand our next steps are to start the cold installs in the core (Phase 1 – Victoria/Saanich/Oak Bay/Esquimalt) which will take us into May. Once the Phase 1 is complete we undertake static testing and configuration (offline) for several months (June – August). We also will quantify the coverage provided and will also verify the coverage before and after. User testing could start in the fall. We will establish a group of user representatives to specifically test performance of the new system, as well as undertake our own CREST verification. Once we are satisfied it is performing as per our contract we then coordinate a cutover with user agencies in the core (late 2017). The cutover process will be coordinated on an agency by agency basis, and typically takes place quite quickly.

Phase 2 (Westshore & Saanich Peninsula), Phase 3 (Gulf Islands & Pacific Rim) will follow the same pattern, with an expectation that the new system will be complete by end of 2018.

Stay tuned for further updates.

Please feel free to let general manager Gord Horth at ghorth@crest.ca or myself know if you would like more information on the work of CREST.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gordie Logan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Gordie Logan, Chair
CREST