

Alaska Statewide Emergency Communications

FY2006 Request: \$2,500,000

Reference No: 40061

AP/AL: Appropriation

Project Type: Health and Safety

Category: Public Protection

Location: Statewide

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Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2004 - 06/30/2010

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This project will merge three emergency communications systems into a single, operationally integrated concept. This will expand the current Emergency Alert System (EAS) to rural communities using a concept titled Mini Radio Service (MRS), modernize the National Alert and Warning System (NaWaS) to 29 statewide locations and provide basic 911 service to all wired phones in the state. This comprehensive, statewide network integration system will reduce costs, improve service and comply with federal mandates.

Funding:	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	Total
Fed Rcpts	\$1,950,000	\$2,400,000	\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000		\$10,350,000
Gen Fund	\$550,000						\$550,000
Total:	\$2,500,000	\$2,400,000	\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$10,900,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	300,000	3
One-Time Startup:	0	
Totals:	300,000	3

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

None

Project Description/Justification:

This project will merge three emergency communications systems (MRS, NaWaS, and Basic 911) into a unified, integrated system and meet the current federal requirements of notification of the public of pending emergencies while allowing the use of a single, nationally recognized system to summon assistance in the event of an emergency. For purposes of this CIP request, the concept will be described in three sections as follows:

Mini Radio System (MRS): Federal government requires the states to be able to specifically and individually target every community in their respective state with specific information about pending emergencies. The design of the national EAS by the FCC and FEMA in 1994 failed to account for rural areas of Alaska where communities do not have access to traditional regulated FCC broadcast radio and television services. Since EAS and the national emergency alerting service were not available throughout many rural Alaskan communities, DMVA designed and received FCC approval to test an Alaskan based system in 1998. This concept was titled the Mini Radio System (MRS) and was successfully demonstrated in Shishmaref in 2000.

Tsunami prone communities would be the first place the system would be deployed. DMVA also identified that there were up to a total of 245 communities throughout the state that may require this type of emergency alerting system.

National Alerting System (NaWaS): NaWaS is a national alerting system designed in the 1960's that is used by the Federal and State governments to alert specific organizations and individuals of a pending emergency. It is designed around the use of standard analog telephones that are operated in a "party line" configuration. Under this system all parties hear the same message at the same time if they are within hearing distance of the receiver.

The purpose of this portion of this CIP is to upgrade the State NaWaS equipment with a more modern system and integrate this alerting system with other more robust network architectures. This is possible because the federal government maintains all circuits between the State alerting equipment in Anchorage and the communities.

Statewide Basic 911: Many rural communities do not have Basic 911 services. Alaska needs to develop a plan to ensure that basic 911 service is available to the public on all commercially, regulated wired phone instruments in the State. This was mandated by the Federal government in 2001. The statewide regulated telecommunications providers want to comply with this requirement. However, until 2004, no single State agency has been statutorily responsible to develop a statewide plan for the implementation of a statewide 911 system, to request federal funding to operationally implement the plan, and to ensure the system is maintained.

Implementation of a phased-in approach for a statewide 911 system will leverage additional federal funding in future years.

The State of Alaska is neither in compliance with the federally mandated infrastructures required to support the national EAS concepts nor in compliance with the three digit dialing associated with 911 emergency assistance. By merging the operational requirements associated with the EAS, using the MRS concept, refreshing the NaWaS system and providing basic response services traditionally associated with wired 911 telephone systems into a single project, the entire emergency response communications infrastructure can be modernized and be in compliance with Federal requirements.

This project will be supported by State agencies who deal in health care, fire suppression, emergency response and policing actions. The regulated telecommunications industry will endorse the concept as they are currently not in compliance with the FCC federal 911 mandate. This project will also be endorsed by all communities who do not currently receive EAS messages through the traditional radio-television regulated infrastructure. Communities and organizations using the outdated NaWaS will also support the upgrade of the system in their community.