



**SAN BENITO COUNTY
AGENDA ITEM
TRANSMITTAL FORM**

Dom Zanger
District No. 1
Vice-Chair

Kollin Kosmicki
District No. 2
Chair

Mindy Sotelo
District No. 3

Angela Curro
District No. 4

Ignacio Velazquez
District No. 5

Item Number: 3.1

MEETING DATE: 08/12/2025

DEPARTMENT: SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

AGENDA ITEM PREPARER: Eric Taylor

DEPT HEAD/DIRECTOR: Eric Taylor

SUBJECT:

SHERIFF'S OFFICE - E. TAYLOR

1. Approve a \$1,250,000.00 contract with California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) for access to the California Radio Interoperable System (CRIS) and the buildout of new repeater sites; and
2. Approve the purchase of handheld and mobile radios for the Sheriff, Probation, and Resource Management Agency for \$1,299,723.51 to ensure CRIS compliance and compatibility; and
3. Authorize the Board Chair or County Administrative Officer to sign the CRIS contract and approve the radio purchase. The total combined request for consideration is \$2,549,723.51.
SBC FILE NUMBER 110

AGENDA SECTION:

REGULAR AGENDA

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY:

For many decades, the staff of the Sheriff's Office, Hollister Fire Department and Hollister Police Department have complained about the dangerous situation presented by an antiquated and non-functioning public safety communications system. This very topic has also been addressed in reports compiled by the San Benito County Civil Grand Jury. In the past 5-7 years, the problem has been exasperated by unexplained interference on the public safety primary channel.

We have had no less than four (4) different contractors work on this over time (Metro-Mobile, Vision Communications, EVS, Santa Cruz County Radio Shop) as well as technical assistance from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Nobody has been able to solve the interference problem on our channel and we have not been able, as a county, to fund improvements to the system. For context, the County of Santa Cruz is in the midst of a multi-million dollar upgrade to their radio system. Estimates are that it will be cost 30-45 million at buildout.

Things have become so dire, that we have had to abandon our primary law frequency and are now operating on a shared channel, Public Works. This means the following agencies in the county share one channel:

- Sheriff
- Police
- Fire
- Public Works
- School Bus Service

This is unsafe and not sustainable. We have also learned the repeater for public transit/metro (COG) is operating in a mode that may be interfering with our law channel. At times, we have had to unplug the COG repeater, leaving the metro service without radio communications.

Just over one year ago, an ad-hoc committee of Supervisor Curro, Supervisor Zanger and public safety representatives was formed. The ad-hoc received presentations and proposals from Motorola Inc, The Santa Cruz County radio shop, and California OES (CRIS). The ad-hoc overwhelmingly asked staff to pursue a contact with OES/CRIS as it was the most economical with the best coverage and compatibility. The ad-hoc also asked we include probation and public works in the quote/contract as their systems are in need of repair also.

During this time, the county reallocated \$1.85 million of ARPA funds for this project. Those funds have since been moved into the General Fund and have still been earmarked for this project.

On November 26, 2024, staff presented an item to the Board seeking ratification of a preliminary agreement with CRIS. However, the agreement was never fully executed and has since been rendered void, as it does not reflect potentially updated costs, terms, or conditions necessary for a fair and accurate contract.

The ability to join the CRIS system gives us the following:

- Digital radio channels for law, fire and PW
- Unlimited talk groups (Channels) for each
- Ability to communicate directly with CalFIRE, Caltrans, and CHP (as well as other stakeholders) on the CRIS system seamlessly.
- An expanded coverage footprint from Fremont Peak that is better than current coverage with 4 repeaters.
- Addition of new repeaters to enhance coverage in rural San Benito County for not only local agencies, but CHP, CalFIRE and Caltrans also.
- Built-In maintenance and crisis response from CRIS contracted service technicians (currently we have no radio repair).

ABOUT THE CRIS SYSTEM

The California Radio Interoperable System (CRIS) Program was established in 2019 as part of a strategic effort to leverage the more advanced radio technology available on the market today to put a more robust and effective communication tool at the disposal of California's first responder community. The key features of the CRIS will be:

- Project 25 compliant trunked radio system which interfaces to similar local systems throughout the state of California.
- When fully developed the CRIS will provide radio coverage to over 90% of the State's population and over 60% of the State's geographic footprint.

- To ensure all of California's Public Safety Agencies have access to reliable interoperable communications capabilities.

Our goal is to design and operate the CRIS to:

- Cover the greatest portion of the population Reach the broadest geographic footprint Maintain the highest network reliability, using advanced network technology
- Eliminate the need for a patchwork of multiple smaller systems
- Make efficient use of limited radio spectrum
- Our mission is to design and implement a statewide communication system with emphasis on providing interoperable communications between California's Public Safety Agencies while supporting normal day-to-day public safety operations.

We accomplish this by building and maintaining a state-of-the-art, Project 25 compliant interoperable radio platform that is:

- Resilient enough to withstand the harshest elements and most rugged locations
- Adaptable enough to accommodate any size or complexity of incident, and Capable of connecting frontline operators with any unit, agency, command post, or dispatch center.

At CRIS, we recognize that first responders have a dangerous and difficult job, so we build communications platforms to help them get the job done and go home afterward.

HISTORY

2010 - System of Systems concept is created as part of the PSC Strategic plan. The idea was to implement a system that interconnects individual public safety systems with one another to facilitate improved interoperability and enhanced coverage. This concept would later lead to the vision for CRIS.

2018 PSC - studies the feasibility of implementing a statewide interoperable radio system designed for public safety. Planning and requirements are documented in the form of a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) to seek funding to implement CRIS.

2019 - PSC is granted funding to implement CRIS. The central California region is selected to pilot CRIS with six repeater sites using microwave backhaul operating on one central core. Under Phase 1, PSC completed the installation of a P25 trunking core in Northern California and 6 pilot 700 MHz trunked repeaters sites in the Central Valley from Sacramento to Bakersfield, providing radio coverage along the major traffic arteries of Highway 99 and Interstate 5. Refer to the predicted coverage map for Phase 1 Central Valley Region.

2020 - Phase 2 consisted of 20 additional 700 MHz RF sites bringing the total to 26 repeater sites. This extended CRIS North Valley coverage from Sacramento to Redding, added coverage in the Bay Area from approximately Clear Lake to Santa Cruz, and added coverage in the Los Angeles, Ventura, and Orange Counties and the major roadways in those areas. In addition, three Phase 3 sites were installed ahead of schedule, adding coverage from approximately Auburn to Blue Canyon along the I-80 East corridor. Refer to the North Valley Region, Tri-County Region, Bay Area Region, and I-80 East Region predicted coverage maps.

2021 - Phase 3 is underway and includes planned deployment of an additional 10 700 MHz repeater sites, bringing the total to 36 repeater sites by year end. These sites will add Central Coast coverage from approximately King City to Santa Barbara, extend I-5 North coverage to Yreka, and improve Bay Area coverage.

2022 - Phase 4 plans to install VHF highband repeaters sites in Mono County and 700 MHz repeaters in

the San Diego, Imperial, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Kern Counties.

CONCLUSION:

Joining CRIS will immediately address coverage and interference issues we currently have as local public safety in San Benito County. We will have multiple channels to communicate for the safety of our public. The interference issues are expected to cease as this will be a digital platform.

This expenditure, as per the Ad-Hoc recommendation, will give new radios and infrastructure to the Office of the Sheriff, County Probation and County Public Works. It will also allow the Hollister Fire Department and Hollister Police Department to join our system to enhance their coverage also.

RESOLUTION OR ORDINANCE NEEDED FOR THIS ITEM:

No

CONTRACT NEEDED FOR THIS ITEM:

Yes

RFP AND BID HISTORY:

NA

LAST CONTRACT AMOUNT OR N/A:

NA

CONTRACT HISTORY (Describe all amendments and previous contracts):

NA

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 1. Operational Development & Excellence

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 2. Planning And Sustainable Growth

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 3. Technology

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 4. Community Engagement

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 5. Health & Safe Community

Yes

BUDGETED:

Yes

BUDGET ADJUSTMENT NEEDED:

No

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Non-general Fund

UNFUNDED MANDATE:

No

SBC BUDGET LINE ITEM NUMBER:

101-15-1047-1000-650.205

CURRENT FY COST:

\$2.55 million

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. Approve and authorize the Board Chair or County Administrative Officer to sign a \$1,250,000 contract with CalOES for CRIS access and the buildout of repeater sites. This amount will be credited to the county's account and offset subscriber fees through August 31, 2046.
2. Approve the purchase of radios and infrastructure totaling \$1,299,723.51 to modernize the county's communication system and ensure CRIS compatibility. Radios will support Sheriff, Probation, and Public Works; infrastructure will serve all Public Safety and Public Works, with future expansion capacity.
3. Approve a total expenditure of \$2,549,723.31, with \$1,250,000 reimbursed via deferred user fees through 2046.

ATTACHMENTS:

[SBCO Comms Presentation](#)

[CRIS contract SBCO](#)

[CalOES RF Sites - San Benito County - FINAL Jul11](#)

[CRIS FAQs](#)

[Motorola Radio Information](#)

[APX8500 Data Sheet](#)

[Motorola Quote Radios](#)