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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 4, 2024**

MISSION-CRITICAL RADIO SYSTEM UNVEILED

Muscatine County transitions to new land mobile radio system for First Responders

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Muscatine County has announced the transition to their new mission-critical land mobile radio (LMR) network, built on Project 25 (P25) standards for interoperability. The Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System (ISICS), from Motorola Solutions, will increase radio coverage, improve signal reception and voice quality and enhance interoperability for Muscatine County first responders, including police, fire and EMS.



"We are excited to unveil the new ISICS radio network and to begin using it across our public safety agencies," Chris Jasper, Director Emergency Manager/911, said. "This system provides significant communication enhancements for our personnel to better serve our residents. With this trusted technology, we can move forward with confidence in the usability, security and reliability of radio communications to help keep our communities safe."

The system, which consists of seven (7) radio towers, will support reliable, seamless communications between users day-to-day and during large-scale emergencies. It provides



resiliency against service disruptions, coverage where it is needed and secure communications between first responders.

"The new system will allow our ambulances going to Davenport and Iowa City the ability to still communicate with the Muscatine County Joint Communications Center (MUSCOM), which is critical for patient care and fire department operations," Muscatine Fire Chief Jerry Ewers said.

The new ISICS platform also gives those same ambulances and jail or law enforcement transport vehicles the ability to communicate with MUSCOM from anywhere in the state according to Jasper. The ISICS system will also enhance Muscatine County's interoperability with their neighboring counties, state agencies and other first responders that respond to assist with emergencies or disasters in the county.

"From responding to a severe storm to escorting a parade, and all their duties in between, this mission-critical radio network seamlessly connects police, fire and EMS as they work together to keep our community safe," Jasper said.

The ISICS transition was first discussed with the Muscatine County Joint Communications Commission several years ago and the group dedicated funds for the transition starting in FY 23/24. The project included taking over possession of a radio tower from the State of Iowa at Wildcat Den State Park.

"The Joint Communications Commission dedicated funds for this project two years ago," Jasper said. "It has been nice to see it through to the end and it finally comes to fruition."

What is ISICS?

The Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System (ISICS) is a statewide radio platform that provides microwave-based radio communications to public safety agencies and others, border to border in the State of Iowa, to improve public safety across the state. Law enforcement



officers, first responders, and others need to be able to talk to each other clearly and immediately in many significant situations that affect public safety, such as:

- Natural disasters (floods, tornadoes, blizzards, storms)
- Emergencies (active shooter, mass casualty, fires)
- Large events (coordinating crowds, equipment, traffic)

Interoperability allows many different users to talk with each other on a robust system. The national initiative to improve interoperability began after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, when lives were lost because fire and police officers could not talk to each other during the attack and the immediate aftermath. More lives could have been saved if first responders had been able to communicate.

The result of that catastrophic failure was a nationwide focus on interoperability, which brings many agencies and individuals together on a single system. They can run their own operations on separate channels, but during significant events, they are able to communicate on joint channels.

For more information visit the [ISICS Page](#) on the Iowa Department of Public Safety website.