

Grand Jury

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Response to Grand Jury Report FormReport Title: Linking First Responders – Ventura County Regional Radio SystemReport Date: July 23, 2024Response By: Mike Pettit Title: Assistant County Executive Officer**FINDINGS:****F-01, F-02: Agree****RECOMMENDATIONS:****R-01: Partially Agree**

The Ventura County Regional Radio System (VCRRS) was approved by the Board on June 20, 2023, with a multi-year implementation plan. The County's key deviation from the recommendation of the Grand Jury is with timing. The current project schedule for the VCRRS extends into 2026 making meeting the Grand Jury's recommended deadline of July 2025 not possible for both completion and testing of the system. The remaining work to be done to complete the system involves design, engineering, radio signal propagation studies, equipment purchase, buildout and testing of all the necessary mountain top, dispatch, fixed and mobile radio infrastructure.

A significant portion of this work has been completed and a partial transition to the new Regional Radio System is underway with the deployment of advanced portable two-way radios, however, work to complete the full integrated radio system build-out remains to be completed and will require time beyond July of 2025.

To date, the County and vendor have completed the buildout of six (6) sites which cover the entire coastal plain including the jurisdictions of Ventura, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, Santa Paula, and Fillmore. The County has currently received executed Memorandums of Understanding from the Cities of Ventura, Oxnard, and Port Hueneme, Channel Islands State University, Ventura County Community College District, Ventura County Probation Department, and the United Water Conservation District.

The County intends to complete seven (7) more sites by October 2024 to cover the remaining densely populated areas of the County including the South end of Ojai, the West end of Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, and Simi Valley. Three additional sites are expected to be operational by the fourth quarter of 2025, and will cover the Ojai Valley, Lockwood Valley, and complete the coverage of the Conejo Valley.

R-02: Partially Agree

Testing of the new integrated system began in early 2023 for the sites that were operational. This included all core integrated components, site equipment, software, and radios. The area covered was the coastal plain. Each agency considering joining the regional network, which included all cities, were provided radios to test their respective jurisdictions.

As indicated in the response to Recommendation R-01, the current project schedule for the VCRRS extends into 2026, making meeting the Grand Jury's recommended deadline of July 2025 not possible for integrated testing and training of the system. The remaining work to be done to complete the system involves design, engineering, radio signal propagation studies, equipment purchase, buildout and testing of all the necessary mountain top, dispatch, fixed and mobile radio infrastructure.

Once the work is completed, full integration testing of all sites will be conducted by the County and participating agencies as part of operational certification and the training plan will be implemented.

In conclusion, the County of Ventura remains committed to ensuring that all Ventura County Public Safety Agencies have access to interoperable communication systems, including the Ventura County Regional Radio System and is determined to complete this work as soon as possible to support much enhanced communications during major events and incidents.