



Ventura County SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jim Fryhoff - Sheriff | **John Reilly** - Undersheriff

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July 12, 2024

The Honorable Kevin G. DeNoce
Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: Response to the 2024 Ventura County Grand Jury Final Report entitled *Linking First Responders—Ventura County Regional Radio System*

Dear Judge DeNoce:

As required by Penal Code § 933.05, this letter is in response to the findings and recommendations of the 2024 Ventura County Grand Jury's ("Grand Jury") Final Report "Linking First Responders—Ventura County Regional Radio System," Dated May 22, 2024. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office appreciates the time and effort the Grand Jury exerted to examine the functionality and reliability of the Ventura County Sheriff's Office Radio Communications system. Moreover, we are excited the Grand Jury was able to hear about the County's efforts to build and implement a new Ventura County Regional Radio System. The Grand Jury's concern on the topic is much appreciated and we are thankful for the recommendations that have been provided.

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: F-01 through F-02.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- I (we) partially disagree with the Recommendation numbered R-01 and R-02.

Recommendation R-01:

The Grand Jury recommends that the Ventura County Sheriff's Office transition to the upgraded system by July 2025.

Response R-01:

Partially disagree. The current project schedule for the Ventura County Regional Radio System extends well into 2026 making meeting the Grand Jury's recommended deadline of July of 2025 not possible.

However, a partial transition to the new Regional Radio System is underway with the deployment of advanced portable two-way radios. These radios have the ability to communicate over RF to nearby mountaintop receivers, through Wi-Fi access points in county buildings and via LTE connectivity offered by AT&T First Net. Because of the vast amount of coverage provided by AT&T First Net LTE network, an early transition to the new digital radio system on our portable radios is possible.

As new mountaintop radio infrastructure is built to support the Regional Radio System, the Sheriff's Office is committed to testing the coverage limits of this equipment and determining if earlier adoption is feasible.

Recommendation R-02:

The Grand Jury recommends that OES complete an integrated testing and training plan for all participants of the Ventura County Regional Radio System by July of 2025.

Response R-02:

Partially disagree. As mentioned previously, the construction and implementation schedule for the Ventura County Regional Radio System extends well into 2026 so meeting the Grand Jury's recommended deadline of July 2025 is not possible. The Sheriff's Office does agree that maintaining a robust testing and training plan for all Regional Radio System participants will be key to our joint success. Sheriff's Emergency Services has already started the development of training materials that will be circulated amongst Sheriff's personnel in August of 2024.

The responses provided in this letter were jointly discussed by the Sheriff's Office, County Executive Office and Ventura County IT Services. All agencies agree with the information provided and are in full support of the plans moving forward. Lastly, we appreciate the Grand Jury's efforts to bring awareness to the need for reliable, interoperable communication in Ventura County. The County of Ventura is committed to ensuring all Ventura County Public Safety Agencies have access to interoperable communication, including the Ventura County Regional Radio System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Reilly', with a date '8/28/24' written at the end of the signature.

John Reilly
Undersheriff

CC: Ventura County Grand Jury