

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of	)	PS Docket 06-229
The Region 33 (Ohio)	)	
700 MHz. Plan	)	WT Docket 02-378
	)	

To: The Commission

**Comments of Ohio's Statewide  
Interoperability Executive Committee**

The Mission of the Ohio Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee is to provide guidance and strategic direction for Public Safety first responders in their communications initiatives, for the purpose of continuous improvement in reliable, mission critical wireless communications interoperability.

The Ohio Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee was formed in November, 2002. Authorized in the **Fourth Report and Order and Fifth Notice of Proposed Rule Making**, Adopted January 11, 2001 and released January 17, 2001, the states were given the option to form SIEC's but, if it chose not to, the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) would perform the function of over-seeing interoperability. In mid-2002, after discussions between the RPC and the State, the Region 33 700 MHz. Planning Committee requested the State seek permission to assume the Interoperability oversight.

Then-Governor Bob Taft wrote to Chairman Michael Powell requesting authorization for Ohio to convene such a committee. Permission was granted by Chairman Powell in a letter received November 19, 2002 and the Ohio Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee has been very active ever since, holding 40 regular meetings, numerous special meetings and several workshops and seminars. All meetings are advertised in advance and are open to the public.

Formal members of the Ohio SIEC include a representative from each of the following: The Buckeye State Sheriff's Association, The Ohio Department of Administrative Services, MARCS Program Office, The Ohio Department of Public Safety Divisions of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, Ohio Emergency Medical Services Board, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio State Fire Marshal, Ohio Association of Fire Chiefs, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Ohio Department of Health Ohio County Commissioners Association, Ohio Township Trustees Association The Emergency Management Association of Ohio, Ohio National Guard, Ohio Chapter, Association of Public Safety Communication Officials, Ohio Bureau of Identification & Investigation, Chairman, Region 33 700 MHz. Planning Committee, Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services, Department of Youth Services, Board of Regents - University Public Safety, the Cleveland, Columbus, Southwest Ohio and Toledo USAI regions and a representative from each of the 8 Ohio Homeland Security regions. Representatives

of other agencies regularly attend SIEC meetings with attendance averaging between 35 and 60 each time.

The State of Ohio (Ohio) currently operates a trunked 800 MHz. radio system <sup>1</sup> providing routine and emergency voice and data communication services to more than 700 first responder and public safety – public service agencies who operate over 33,000 subscriber units statewide. These agencies consist of all level of government; from state, county, municipal and township, all Sheriffs, all county Emergency Management Agencies, all hospitals and health departments as well as private and or quasi-governmental agencies, such as medical helicopter services and the Ohio Rural Electric Cooperative, consisting of 25 different electric co-ops serving more than 380,000 homes and businesses in 77 of Ohio's 88 counties.

MARCS serves as the platform for Homeland Security and Interoperability in Ohio and has an excellent track record in this regard. Numerous public officials from all over the state have written to the Governor, the Director of Public Safety, the Executive Director of Homeland Security as well as new papers and other media outlets, praising MARCS for how it operated for them during this emergency or that, how much better communications were now than in years past and how MARCS helped to mitigate the effects of their particular situation.

The Ohio SIEC has worked diligently with MARCS and the Region 33 700 MHz. Planning Committee to promote additional interoperable communication spectrum for public safety / service entities and continues in this endeavor.

In our several highly urbanized areas, like Cleveland-Cuyahoga County, Akron-Canton, Columbus, Dayton and Hamilton County-Cincinnati, the proliferation of 800 MHz. systems has greatly increased public safety communications interoperability but has all but exhausted the available spectrum.

In conjunction with the Cuyahoga County Commissioners and many of the 59 cities, villages and townships in the county, MARCS is preparing to roll out a 14 site 15 channel trunked radio system, as the first step toward countywide communications and to aid their first responders with communications interoperability, a feature they have never had before. However; with the available 800 MHz. spectrum exhausted in the area, this roll-out is totally dependant on the 700 MHz. spectrum, as soon as it becomes available. The Ohio SIEC has been a partner in these plans and will insure the necessary interoperability goals will be met to the highest degree possible.

Ohio SIEC is also looking forward to additional spectrum for broadband data communication to replace and improve the MARCS existing RD-LAP network as well as a number of local and county data systems. The Ohio SIEC hopes the Commission will act swiftly to either proceed with the nationwide program in cooperation with the Public Safety Spectrum Trust (PSST) or release the spectrum back to the Regional Planning Committees so they may oversee and promote the construction and / or expansion of broadband data solutions to increase the interoperability capability of public safety entities at all levels of response.

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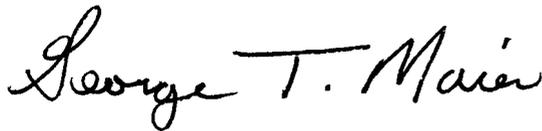
<sup>1</sup> known as MARCS, the Multi-Agency Radio Communications System

## CONCLUSION

Ohio badly needs the additional spectrum which will be available when the Region 33 700 MHz. Plan is approved and released. Ohio will make all haste to construct the Cuyahoga County system and promote greater public safety interoperability throughout the state, at all levels of government. This, we feel, is clearly in the public interest and will further the Homeland Security mission the State is charged with.

The Ohio SIEC sincerely hopes the Commission will look favorably on the Region 33 700 MHz. Plan, fully approve it and release the spectrum as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George T. Maier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'G' and 'M'.

George T. Maier  
Assistant Director, Ohio Department of Public Safety  
Chairman, Ohio Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee

May 29, 2009