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To: [Nordholm, Gail \[DOT\]](#)
Subject: FCC Narrowbanding Mandate, January 1, 2013
Date: Friday, April 01, 2011 2:10:28 PM

TO: County Engineers and City Representatives

CC: District Local Systems Engineers; Service Bureau;
Robert Younie, Office of Maintenance; James Bogner, Iowa
Statewide Interoperability Coordinator; and Office of Local
Systems

FROM: Office of Local Systems

SUBJECT: FCC Narrowbanding Mandate, January 1, 2013

DATE: April 1, 2011

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has mandated that by January 1, 2013, "all VHF and UHF Public Safety and Industrial/Business land mobile radio (LMR) systems in the 150-174 MHz and 421-512 MHz bands" must migrate from 25 kHz channel bandwidth to 12.5 kHz or narrower technology. According to the FCC, this Federal narrowbanding mandate "will ensure more efficient use of spectrum, relieve congestion, and result in increased channel availability for LMR systems."

The Iowa Department of Transportation is one of many agencies represented on the Iowa Statewide Interoperability Communications System Board (ISICSB). The ISICSB was created to help affected agencies understand and comply with the narrowbanding mandate.

This deadline for compliance is quickly approaching, so if you have not already started, **you need to begin planning, budgeting, and acting now**. To assist you in these efforts, the ISICSB has prepared the following checklist for your use.

http://www.iowadot.gov/local_systems/mailing/2011/april/interoperability_checklist.pdf

Please forward this information to others in your organization that may be affected by this requirement. If you have questions or would like additional information, **please do**

not reply to this note. Instead, please visit the ISICSB's web site at: <http://isicbsb.iowa.gov/>.

Thank you,

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Mailings are available at the Local Systems Weekly Mailing web address
http://www.iowadot.gov/local_systems/mailing/main_mailing.htm



Narrowbanding Checklist

A *trusted* radio vendor can assist you in completing this checklist.

- Evaluate all existing licenses.** Licenses for frequencies below 512 MHz need to be modified for narrowband operation. You should also develop an understanding of how the channels are being used and by whom to facilitate the planning system migration to narrowband. Verify that your agency has a current and valid FCC Part 90 radio station license. FCC licenses are usually found at the hospital, dispatch center or EMA office or go to <http://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/UlsSearch/searchLicense.jsp>
- Submit an application to modify your FCC license to add the narrowband emission.** A certified Frequency Coordinator or trusted radio vendor can assist. Do this immediately as it could take several months to obtain a modified FCC authorization.
- Conduct a full inventory of *all* radio equipment on your system.** It is important to identify the specific make, model and serial number of *all* radio equipment that you use. This assessment will help determine whether your radio equipment can be upgraded or must be replaced. This information is also essential to determine the cost to reprogram, upgrade or replace equipment.
 - Inventory all mobile, portable, and dispatch radios
 - Inventory all pagers
 - Inventory all site equipment components
 - Inventory console components and console capacity
 - Don't forget about other components using radio frequency such as tornado sirens, Knox boxes, scada systems.
- Determine which equipment can be re-programmed and which must be replaced.** A trusted radio vendor can assist.
- Initiate the internal business process of budgeting for the project.** There will be licensing fees and planning services along with software and/or hardware purchases. The overall process may take *over a year* to complete. Make sure that the budget cycle supports complete transition and relicensing before January 1, 2013.
- Develop a community coordinated implementation plan.** The plan must be well coordinated with all entities using your system and other entities that you communicate with. The statewide implementation will begin in the fall of 2012.
 - Reprogram, upgrade or replace equipment
 - Assure minimal disruption to normal radio communications operations
 - Coordinate with neighboring agencies to avoid loss of interoperability
- Schedule and coordinate** dates and times for the actual system conversion making certain that all users are aware of the process in advance. Also make certain that hand-held and mobile radios are readily available for reprogramming at the pre-scheduled time. Several radio reprograms may be necessary over an extended period of time in order to maintain interoperability.