

Ohio Department of Administrative Services
MARCS Steering Committee
Sunset Review Committee
February 25, 2020

Good afternoon Chairman Roegner and members of the Sunset Review Committee. My name is Mariah Halleck, and I am the Legislative Liaison at the Department of Administrative Services.

I am pleased to appear before you today to testify in support of the Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) Steering Committee. MARCS is a radio and data network that provides a statewide, secure, and reliable communication system for public safety and first responders in Ohio.

The MARCS Steering Committee is an advisory body charged with providing assistance to the Director of Administrative Services for the effective and efficient implementation of MARCS, as well as development of policies for the ongoing management of the system related to statewide interoperability for first responder communications. The MARCS Steering Committee was originally formed to oversee the development of a statewide public safety radio system. Because the original build and deployment, as well as an upgrade from the original legacy MARCS system to a modern P-25 system, was in the capital budget, the Steering Committee's authority has remained in capital budgets since.

The Steering Committee is comprised of representation from our state agency customer partners, which includes the Directors or their designees from the departments of Administrative Services, Public Safety, Natural Resources, Transportation, Rehabilitation and Correction, Office of Budget and Management, and the State Fire Marshal, as well as the chair of the Steering Committee's local government subcommittee. This membership provides an effective governance model and solid representation of the first responder and public safety community. The committee has no associated budget, and members serve without compensation. Committee support amounts to less than 8 hours per meeting for two MARCS staff members.

Historically, the Steering Committee has met at least quarterly or on an as needed basis. The Steering Committee provides valuable advice and recommendations on policies and issues. The Steering Committee provides MARCS customers with direct influence in a service that is critical to their mission and operations. The meetings are open to the public and are well attended by state and local government first responders.

Chairman Roegner and members of the Committee, the MARCS Steering Committee continues to provide value and benefit to the public safety and first responder community and for this reason we recommend its continuation. It has been my pleasure to testify before you today in support of the MARCS Steering Committee. I thank you for your time and would be happy to answer questions.