



MARCS monthly radio fees to be cut in half

The state budget bill ([HB 64](#)) included language authorizing the transfer of up to \$2.0 million in each fiscal year from the state general fund to the [Multi-Agency Radio Communications System](#)



(MARCS) Administration Fund for the purpose of reducing or eliminating MARCS subscriber fees. These fees are paid by political subdivisions and regional public safety and first response agencies classified as Tier 1 subscribers by the MARCS Steering Committee. Based upon this budget provision the Department of Administrative Services has announced that **the \$20 per month subscriber fee per MARCS unit will be reduced to \$10 per month effective July 1, 2016.**

The MARCS system is operated by the Department of Administrative Services as the radio system for Ohio's state agencies. The state offers the system to other Ohio political subdivisions to provide radio communications for their public safety and services forces. MARCS is designed to provide statewide, secure, reliable public service wireless communication for public safety agencies and first responders. There are currently over 47,500 radio units and over 1,800 mobile data units on the system which serves over 1200 public safety/public service agencies across the state. Because of Federal funding support requirements MARCS is required to charge a monthly user fee for each unit on the system. The amount of this monthly fee has been a deterrent that has kept many smaller and rural Ohio governments from joining the system. The fee reduction will make the system much more affordable and may make the system a viable option for many more local government public safety forces.