

Good morning. My name is Commissioner Scott Martin of Lancaster County.

As a Lancaster County Commissioner, I experience firsthand and understand the importance of mission critical communications. My job requires that I meet regularly with Lancaster County Police Chiefs, Lancaster County Fire Chiefs and Lancaster County EMS Managers. I am also a member of Lancaster County's Public Safety Communications Committee. In addition, I spent many years working with various members of the public safety community through my time in the juvenile justice system. I also come from a long family history of law enforcement professionals, including my father who spent 15 years as a municipal police officer at East Hempfield Township, and another 15 years as a special agent for the Office of Attorney General. When it comes to public safety, I understand their operations, and I understand their communications requirements.

I will not be discussing Lancaster County's experience with our own 800 MHz OpenSky radio network as our current separation agreement does not allow me to discuss any points of our separation. Instead, I am going to focus on the conditions that users in Lancaster County continue to experience with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's OpenSky network, commonly referred to as PA STARNET, and the loss of interoperability.

In 2008, Constable Mike Lawrence was traveling through Manheim Township where he was transporting several prisoners. While driving down the road, the prisoners overpowered him, beat him, and then stole his vehicle. An off-duty Pennsylvania State Police trooper overheard a description of the stolen car broadcasted out over Lancaster County's radio system, and within 15 minutes he had the suspect stopped near Route 30 and Greenfield Road.

This real life incident ended with a positive outcome only because PSP had the ability to monitor and talk directly to Lancaster County. Had this happened today with the OpenSky system, the trooper would not have overheard the transmission, and a very different outcome would have occurred.

Prior to the Pennsylvania State Police switching to the OpenSky system, the troopers in Troop J were able to communicate directly with Lancaster County's 9-1-1 center, as well as speak directly with units from any of our municipal departments. Today, if an armed robbery occurred at the McDonalds across from Troop J headquarters, the troopers would not know about it until Lancaster County's dispatch center contacted the state police consolidated dispatch center in Harrisburg and had them relay the information to their units' right across the street.

For over 30 years, Lancaster County has enjoyed the privilege of being able to talk directly to PSP. In fact, PSP has always been allowed to program Lancaster's VHF frequencies into their radios. Now with the new radio system that capability is being lost and our county's dispatch center, along with all the first responders in our area, will no longer be able to communicate directly with the State Police. This \$500 million dollar radio system that is supposed to be providing interoperability, is actually taking it away.

The ability to talk to the different state agencies, including the State Police, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Probation and Parole, the Office Attorneys General, and the Fish and Game

Commission, is very important to Lancaster County because we back each other up. For instance, for years we have always supported agents from Probation and Parole, but last year several agents stopped into Lancaster County's 9-1-1 center to get a list of contact phone numbers they could call on their cell phone when in trouble, because they no longer had the ability to communicate with the county. The FBI, U.S. Marshals, and other federal agencies have the ability to talk directly to local law enforcement and the county, but not the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. That level of interoperability is being lost.

Another example of a problem I will share with you occurred in Lancaster County during the recent snowstorms. A PennDOT plow found its self stuck in Manor Township. Unfortunately, due to lack of OpenSky radio coverage provided by the statewide system, the driver was unable to use his radio to communicate with anyone. The driver had to use his cell phone to call Lancaster County's dispatch center for assistance. From my county's perspective, we are losing the ability to communicate with state agencies due to PASTARNET.

My county has witnessed its fair share of incidents in recent years where the state radio system failed its users. The first incident was the Amish School shooting at Nickel Mines. There is a famous photo where first responders are seen walking through a field reportedly looking for evidence. The truth is they were not looking for evidence. They were looking for a trooper's OpenSky portable radio. Earlier in the day, a trooper was trying to relay critical information during the event, but his radio was not working. After trying to communicate several times, he threw his portable in disgust. Other troopers struggling to communicate witnessed this event transpire.

The second incident occurred at Millersville University during a 2008 Presidential candidate visit by Senator Hillary Clinton. During this visit, Lancaster County's Field Communications Unit was deployed to coordinate interoperability communications with the South Central Task Force Incident Management Team, the Pennsylvania State Police, FBI, local and county police agencies, all of whom were providing security.

The PSP Lieutenant assigned to the command post tried to connect to the OpenSky network from the South Central Task Force's OpenSky mobile radio installed in the Field Communications Unit. The OpenSky mobile would not connect and the troopers had to rely on their old VHF radios and runners to communicate.

In addition, Lancaster County is an active member in the South Central Task Force, an eight county Counter-Terrorism/Emergency Response region as defined by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. In order to communicate on PASTARNET, the task force has been assigned four hundred portables and over fifty mobiles. The purpose of this cache of radios is to be able to communicate with any other agency on the network, as well as provide communications to first responders whether it be an incident in one of the eight counties within the task force, or if assets are deployed elsewhere.

While there have been several issues that we have seen with respect to PASTARNET and the task force ranging from software problems, to hardware problems, to operational policies that could potentially endanger first responders, I want to talk about the hardware issues. It took many years to finally obtain