

UCA NEWSLETTER

June 2021



UCA UPDATE

UCA's Executive Director, Dave Edmunds

A short tribute to fathers and grandfathers is given based on our proximity to Father's Day. UCA is immersed in the P25 migration and constantly preparing for the future, including through extensive training on the new P25 system so that we can maintain this new system for decades, similar to the way the legacy equipment has been maintained for decades by UCA.

Father's Day was a few Sundays ago, and right on cue, my second daughter informed me that I am to be a grandfather. Me? Grandpa? My grandfathers were both WWII veterans, and, well, old men. I remember looking at my maternal grandpa (my paternal grandpa died before I was born) like he was George Patton, Jr. He scared the hell out of me. In my mind, there was nothing he did not know; there was nothing he could not do; and he was the only

man that ever told my mother what to do—no one tells my mother what to do, and I love that about her! My grandpa was an administrator/educator in the Downey Unified School District. Notably, his leadership won him countless adherents and accolades. He frequently said, "I never met a kid I did not love." The only thing he demanded from his students, or his progeny, was loyalty to one's heart.

My favorite memory of my grandpa is the day we watched Daryl Gates sworn in as Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department. I remember pointing at Chief Gates and telling my grandpa: "That's what I want to be." The old man leaned back in his chair, pulled his glasses below eyeline, looked me directly in the eyes, and said: "Then that's what you damned-well should be." No attempt to tone down such lofty aspirations, no attempt to dissuade me from shooting for the moon. And 20+ years later, by the grace of God, I was elected sheriff. I hope I will have the wisdom to

do what my grandpa did when my grandchildren tell me what they want to be. If I don't, I'm unworthy of them. To all fathers and grandfathers everywhere, thank you for your service.

UCA continues to ready its infrastructure for the P25 cutover. Site remediation has been difficult, but great progress has been made. The summer of 2021 will long be remembered as a crucible; however, that is precisely what is required to achieve a successful migration. Our confidence in L3Harris is absolute. We can attest that L3H employs some of the finest engineers in the business. Expectations from Utah's public safety professionals could not be higher—we know this, and we work daily to conform to those expectations. In our frenzy to prepare ourselves for the migration, we have not forgotten our responsibility to constantly be mindful of strategic planning. At the conclusion of this migration, UCA technicians will be L3H master technicians. And that means we will be prepared to service our new system with singular supremacy. In short, the work we are doing today will benefit our partners for years to come.

David Edmunds

Executive Director
Utah Communications Authority





“For best operational performance, vehicle antennas should be mounted on the roof... with high gain 7-800mhz NMO antenna”

DIVISION SPOTLIGHT

UCA's Interoperability Director, James Baker

Following Gordy Coles Retirement, James Baker is now UCA's Interoperability Division Director. Dan Dialogue is UCA's Radio Programming Manager and Garrett Millward is UCA's Radio Programming Author. UCA is working with installers to program radios before the vehicles hit the field and has been busy installing flashport upgrades. Utah's radio network has unmatched interoperability and James is happy to meet with anybody to discuss or train on these features. It is important to install the right antennas on the right places in order to utilize the radio network's coverage. James is happy to meet with anybody on these or other issues.

This quarter, one of UCA's most tenured leaders, Interoperability Director Gordy Coles, retired with over 30 years of dedicated service to the citizens of the Great State of Utah. Gordy is now working for the federal government in a similar capacity, making me think of a quote from the great Mr. Fred Rogers, “[o]ften when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else.” Utah is definitely better having known Gordy and I wish him the best in his new beginning. I am James Baker and I have accepted the torch as the Director of Interoperability with many goals for the division into the foreseeable future. My former role as Radio Programming Manager has been filled by Daniel Dialogue and his former role as Radio Programming Author has been filled by Garrett Millward. If you have not had the chance to meet either Dan or Garret, feel free to reach out to them. They are fantastic people and skilled radio programming professionals.

Programming

As users begin cycling in new fleet vehicles and new radios, UCA's Programming Team is working with several installers in the state to have a flow in place to have whereby users' radios will be programmed *before* delivery of the vehicle to the field. This will eliminate any downtime for the vehicle making it instantly deployable.

With this quarter almost in the rear-view mirror, the opportunity to purchase Motorola XTL/XTS flashport upgrades was successfully taken advantage of by many, and UCA's programming team has been inundated with requests to fulfill the flash service bringing the radios into P25 compliance.

Interoperability

As Utah's trunked radio system reliably operates daily, we are a rare beacon of success as it relates to interoperability. From the core of our dedicated public safety users, to the selfless staff of UCA's Radio Division keeping everything in an immaculate state, I am grateful. I have begun working with PSAP/Dispatch centers one-on-one to address their ability to interoperate and expand their knowledge on how to best leverage one of Utah's best kept secrets. If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please do not hesitate to contact me as I would be more than happy to discuss radio and interoperability with anybody.

With fire season upon us it critical to make sure we are all aware of our means to interoperate within the state. Most recently Morgan County Fire and Summit County Fire were engaged in a fire outside of the East Canyon State Park. This event brought Unified Fire Authority, South Weber, and Summit County together. All three agencies where able to communicate clearly and allow for their primary dispatch centers to still be involved in the operations on the ground by utilizing “EVENT 4.” The fire was successfully extinguished with no further incident.

Training

Our next interoperability training will be held on August 4th at 10:00am. We will also be conducting an end-user radio training on August 25th at 10:00am. Both of these trainings will be available remotely with links to both being published in the announcements section of this newsletter.

Radio Knowledge

While working with users on coverage and equipment installations, I have been able to address many concerns with both mobile and portable antennas. For best operational performance, vehicle antennas should be mounted on the roof of the vehicle with no obstructions. A high gain 7-800mhz NMO antenna will provide a more reliable means to access the system as opposed to a low-profile plastic fin style antenna. When it comes to your handheld radios, utilizing a “stubby” antenna on your portable radio will dramatically reduce your ability to access the best radio site. The full length 7-800 antenna provided with your portable is recommended. UCA's coverage maps and system are planned utilizing the assumption that end-users are utilizing the right equipment. So many coverage issues are solved when these changes are made. We encourage everybody to review their equipment and to utilize the best equipment for the best communications.

Conclusion

I welcome all questions, calls, or requests for an in-person meeting to share with you the many options UCA has available to interoperate within the State of Utah. I am passionate about radio, public safety, and Utah's success, both at a micro and macro level. I am very excited to serve as UCA's Interoperability Division Director and as the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (“SWIC”).

James Baker
Interoperability Division Director



DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

UCA's 911 Division, Melanie Crittenden

The NG911 System implementation is well underway with cutover in process in Region 1 with Regions 2 through 5 in various stages of planning and implementation. UCA conducted an interoperability exercise for PSAPs which was a successful event.

It's hard to say where the last 3 months have gone since our last newsletter. The flood gates have opened, per se, and we are well on our way to getting this NG911 movement started at PSAPs are now on the cusp of going live. This new NG911 phone system has, obviously, been the immediate focus for the 911 Division. Several milestones have been completed in this NG911 project. All of the site visits have now been completed. The final policy routing calls with Regions 4 & 5 have occurred. After all of these one-on-one calls with PSAPs discussing policy routing and backup centers, several issues were discovered where the proposed backups would create a discouraged loop. Many hours were spent and compromises made and, ultimately, UCA, Vesta, and Utah's PSAPs participated in some really good, statewide planning calls to discuss these looping issues and give some recommendations. It has been great to see how well everyone works together to make these changes and to implement these new technologies. Recommendations were made, but the final decisions were left to each individual PSAP. I am happy to announce that, at least for the time being, statewide policy routing is complete.

It's mind boggling what all goes into a statewide NG911 solution. From Call Handling meetings to Policy Routing meetings, to 911 transfer calls across state lines, to mapping calls, and issues with delays caused by our legacy 911 vendor, no stone has been left

untaken. UCA participates in multiple weekly status calls with Motorola Solutions, as well as, with PSAPs in preparation of the live cut over to the Vesta Call Handling equipment. In Region 1, work stations have been installed and connected to the new NG911 call handling servers, located outside of Utah. Equipment has been ordered for the Regions 2 and 3. Circuit work has been confirmed for Region 1 as well as testing of those circuits to check connectivity to the Data Centers. Circuits were also ordered for Regions 2 and 3. Preparation for Regions 4 and 5 are likewise in process and proceeding on schedule.

With all of this, I am excited to announce that the first call taking positions will soon be cutover. It is anticipated that our first PSAP to migrate will be Bountiful and we are excited for that day!

In conformity with Utah Code Ann. §63H-7a-304.5, and part and parcel to PSAPs qualifying for the distribution of certain Remaining Funds from the 911 account, UCA presented a PSAP Interoperability Exercise in May. The exercise was presented by UCA's Interoperability Division Director, James Baker, who did an excellent job of providing some training and scenarios to emphasize the use of the interoperability channels and features of the statewide radio network. The training was very well attended by PSAPs and we want to thank them for their participation and comments. Things are crazy busy for the 911 Division right now, and we look forward to reporting several cut overs in the third quarter newsletter. Until then, have a great and safe summer!

Melanie Crittenden
911 Division Director

UCA TRAININGS:

August 4th, 2021 at 11:00 am:

Interoperability Training (remote)

<https://uca911.webex.com/meeting/jbaker>

August 25th, 2021 at 10:00-11:00 am:

Radio Training (remote)

<https://uca911.webs.com/meeting/jbaker>

Please contact James Baker at jbaker@uca911.org
for more information



DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

UCA's Radio Division Director, Brad Morris

UCA is engaged in its most ambitious build season yet, despite the shortages and inflation that we are facing. UCA has added new employees, Jim Fresh, Jeremy Drummond, and Lori Harrington and is happy to welcome Omar Issa back to UCA after a short retirement. The Bookcliffs site is now available for public safety use and serves Uinta and Grand Counties. The hot weather has caused some temperature issues at some sites and we thank those who have helped with these issues. Contact UCA if you need assistance.

We are now more than halfway through the year and the weeks are passing quickly. The Radio Division has been trying to maximize the time in these fleeting weeks, staffing up for a heavy build season and ordering parts and equipment in an unprecedented post-pandemic economic environment. This has affected every aspect of our daunting uphill battle. Construction shortages for things like wood, concrete, and steel, as well as chip shortages and other supply

issues, have not done any favors for UCA when trying to source materials in a cost-effective manner. Notwithstanding, I would like to share with you some of the successes and challenges we have faced in preparation for our busiest and best build season ever!

First, I am happy to announce the addition of some new technicians (including a familiar face) and a new Resource Coordination Manager to help keep us playing like a finely tuned orchestra. We were fortunate enough to hire some amazing talent. Jim Fresh comes to us with vast and far-reaching experience in the civil construction arena and is a licensed Journeyman electrician. Jim has proved himself over the short time he has been here as a critical part of our success, taking large projects and wrestling them to the ground. We are excited to have him on the team.

UCA sees a veteran with thirty plus years return to the public safety arena, Omar Issa, a technician that many of you are familiar with, has decided that as good as retirement was, he could not pass on the opportunity to see Utah get the upgraded Statewide Radio network we have all

hoped for and is back amongst the UCA family. Lori Harrington is our new RCM. She comes to us with a fervor for efficiency and has proved her ability to contribute to the team and get people and resources where they need to be for maximum efficiency. Also, starting in July is Jeremy Drummond coming with a passion for radio and ready to make his mark.

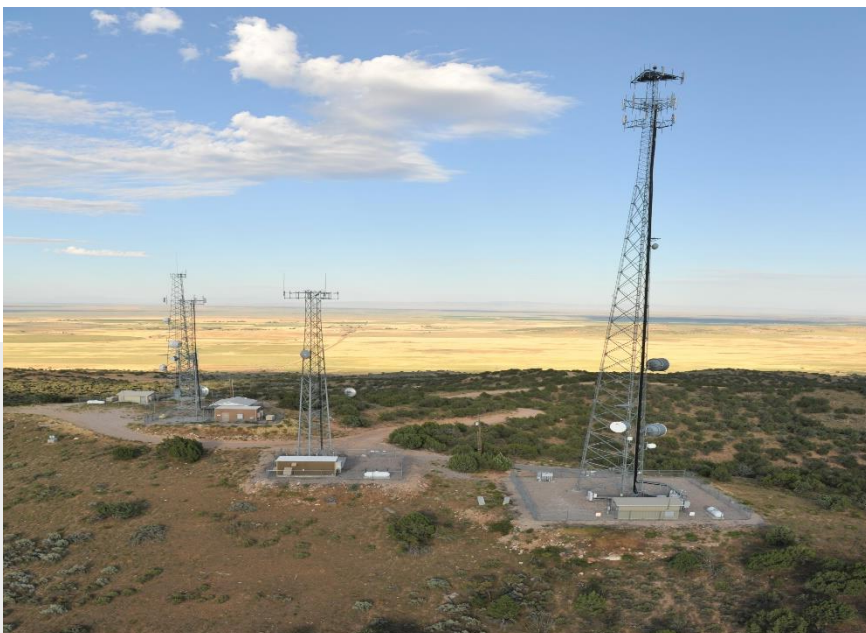
The Radio Division continues to assist with the heavy lift of remediating sites for the P25 upgrade, I do not want to steal Harold's thunder so I will let him elaborate on this, but make sure to read his article for all the details!

I am also very happy to report that contemporaneous with the publication of this newsletter, UCA has completed the construction and testing of a new and improved Bookcliffs site servicing Uinta and Grand counties. We look forward to the increased footprint and capabilities that it provides.

As always, with the hot weather we have seen an influx of sites and equipment feeling the heat throughout the state. Record temperatures are trying to test our abilities as technicians and make us wish for a teleportation machine. We appreciate the help at many of our co-location sites and want to thank Washington County, Justin Grenier and St. George Fire, for the late-night rescue of the Web Hill air conditioner, keeping the simulcast system operational in a scorching 122 plus degree equipment room. In the meantime, we will continue to knock these overstressed A/C's out like a bad game of Whack-A-Mole.

Again, and as always; please feel free to reach out to me directly with issues that you have or things that we can work on together to improve communications throughout the State. I have had great conversations with many of you, so thank you for taking advantage of that opportunity. Thanks again for all that you do and for letting me serve you better.

Brad Morris
Radio Division Director





DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

UCA's P25 Division Director, Harold Clements

As part of the P25 migration, UCA is engaged in its most ambitious work schedule of all time, remediating a high number of sites, building new sites, and maintaining the legacy system. L3Harris is likewise busy installing the new P25 radio system. UCA appreciates the efforts of everybody involved and encourages anybody with questions to contact UCA.

Our UCA technicians and L3Harris contractors are in the midst of their scheduled work for this calendar year. The technicians are tackling the most ambitious work schedule in the history of the communications authority and L3Harris has seven separate teams at work in the field. I am impressed with the dedication of our employees who routinely work fourteen-hour days to complete the required infrastructure upgrades. As we work this Summer, we are keenly aware of higher-than-average temperatures and extreme fire dangers at our communications sites. Our employees and our contractors evaluate risks and take necessary precautions to remain safe and protect the public safety radio system.

As of June 17, we had thirteen design packages left to approve with eleven of them near completion. L3Harris had installed equipment at all 8 Network Switching Center locations and had installed equipment at 6 of 46 communication sites scheduled for installation this Summer. UCA and L3Harris had begun grounding improvements and infrastructure upgrades for 58 communication sites. These upgrades include installing at least one new equipment shelter, installing up to three new towers, and re-enforcing up to ten towers. UCA had installed 4 of 20 entry ports, moved equipment racks at 29 of 37 sites, installed 7 of 28 Uninterruptable Power Supplies, installed 8 of 18 HVAC units, installed 1 of 8 generators, installed 1 of 8 battery plants, upgraded 1 of 7 solar arrays, and installed 101 of 347 electrical outlets with breakers. As you can see, this is truly a busy summer for L3Harris and UCA, and by the publication of this newsletter, I anticipate these statistics will be outdated based on the rate at which all of these teams are working now that summer is here!

The second round of equipment production, consisting of forty-two RF sites, and the associated factory acceptance testing is scheduled to be complete in the latter part of this summer. The third round of equipment production, consisting of eighteen RF sites and 177 dispatch consoles, is scheduled to begin in mid-September and continue into February of 2022. In addition to all of the work listed above, our technicians have built another new communication site with others in various stages of completion, all while continuing to maintain our legacy radio system.

I am appreciative of UCA's staff, L3Harris's employees, and our combined contractors, partner agencies, and private leasing entities that are working together to complete the P25 project. It is extremely rewarding to know that there are so many people that have a vested interest in making this project a success. The legacy 800 MHz system has been reliable for over twenty years. I am confident that the new P25 system will be just as reliable with all of the competent professionals involved in the implementation.

If anyone has any questions about the P25 Radio System upgrade, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at hclements@uca911.org or by phone at 801-633-2387.

Harold Clements
P25 Division Director

