

The VIPER Semi-Annual Newsletter

(Jul. 2018 - Dec. 2018)

As part of our communications effort to keep everyone informed of our progress, we will be distributing a semi-annual newsletter via email and posting a copy of it on the VIPER website at <http://www.ncdps.gov/Our-Organization/Law-Enforcement/VIPER>. If you would like to contact us, you can email us at VIPER@NCSHP.ORG or call 1-888-92-VIPER.

What is the VIPER staff doing?

- Please help us welcome the new members of the VIPER team, Ernest “Ernie” Brooks has joined the team as a Network Technician.

Critical Upcoming VIPER Upgrades

- **7.17 System Upgrade:** Beginning 4 February, 2019, VIPER Staff in partnership with Motorola will begin to upgrade the VIPER Statewide Radio system to the Version 7.17.3 system release. This upgrade will also include and affect PSAP's and Dispatch centers that have equipment connected to the VIPER master sites. It is expected that the upgrade to the Master Site Equipment will be completed by 13 February, 2019; while the MCC7500 Console Equipment located in the PSAP's and Dispatch Center will be upgraded to 7.17.3 beginning in March. Those Dispatch Centers and PSAP's with VIPER MCC7500 consoles will be contacted by Motorola. You may also contact your local Motorola Solutions Representative for more information or Motorola's NC State Account Manager, Andrew Curd at 919-621-8605 or Andrew.Curd@MotorolaSolutions.com.

Should any user agency experience technical difficulties at any time during the upgrade period (4 February – 13 February), please contact the VIPER NOC at 1(888) 927-4737 for assistance.

Logging/Recording equipment connected to the VIPER Network is not included with the upgrade. Some IP logging recorders from NICE, VERINT, or Eventide may need to be upgraded, and VIPER users with this equipment should contact their respective recorder representative to confirm their unit's compatibility with the Version 7.17.3 release.

With the upgrade of the VIPER Network to Version 7.17.3, the State is entering into a Service Upgrade Assurance (SUA) program with Motorola in which the State, in conjunction with Motorola, will perform a System Upgrade to the latest Version every **THREE** years. It will be incumbent on the end users to budget for the upgrade of their MCC7500 console equipment in consort with the State's own upgrade timetable. Notice of future upgrades will be sent out in advance to the VIPER POC's of record and will be published in the VIPER Newsletter.

- **GTR Upgrade:** On the heels of the 7.17 Upgrade, the VIPER team will be upgrading fifty-two (52) sites from Quantar to GTR base stations starting mid-February thru end of May 2019. The VIPER staff will form small teams moving across the state targeting the already identified 52 sites for upgrades. During the upgrade, the site being upgraded will be taken out of operation for approximately 5 hours. Notification for the outages will come from the Network Operations Center (NOC) via email **prior** to the upgrade and any assistance during the upgrade should be directed to the NOC at 1(888) 927-4737.

Quick Facts

- 241 total sites planned for statewide coverage; 226 sites constructed and on-the-air
- 7 sites are fully funded and under construction
- \$202.5M funded to date for construction (includes \$7M R for tower construction in FY18-19)
- \$7.5M O&M needed at completion of build-out; Current funding = \$7.0M recurring
- Challenges
 1. In moving forward with construction of new tower sites, the challenge will be to get fully executed leases prior to site construction.
 2. Lack of an exemption for State owned property has now become a significant challenge since local governments are now able to veto the state's use of its own land.
- Additional funding for SFY18-19 (SB99)
 1. \$8.7M NR for GTR Upgrade; remaining balance of \$19,800,530 for statewide completion.
 2. \$5M NR for a one-time Service Upgrade Assurance (SUA) Catch-Up.
 3. \$1.5M NR for a long-term contract for the Service Upgrade Assurance (SUA).
 4. \$1.3M NR for completion of the MOSCAD Security Monitoring upgrades at all the tower facilities.

Tower Construction Updates

- **Completed:** Hap Mt (Madison Ct), Rich Hill (Ashe Ct), Fairview (Union Ct),
- Creedmoor Rd. (Wake Ct) tower: Power has been hooked up at the site and we are currently waiting for the installation of lines and antennas.
- Hayesville (Clay Ct): waiting on final approvals from the county to start the leasing and construction process.
- Pittsboro (Chatham Ct): NEPA checklist is complete and the Geotech has begun.
- Triad Park (Guilford Ct): Waiting for lease to be generated and structural modification documents to be completed.
- Richlands (Onslow Ct): Waiting for lease to be generated and structural modification documents to be completed.
- Rocky Top (Georgia): Due to government shutdown this lease is on hold.
- Scotland Neck (Halifax Ct): Waiting on rebuild of tower by tower owner.

Radio reprogramming (Rebanding/P25)

- Please ensure that you make every effort to update your current radio code plug to include the latest control channel list so that your equipment performs at the optimum level. When updating the control channel list, it is suggested that you ensure that the Full Spectrum Scan option is also activated in your radio code plug. As of January 2019, we are still seeing radio code plugs where the number of control channels in the list is set to ONE! If you have any questions about the control channel update, please send an email to VIPER-activate@ncshp.org.
- We continue to see radio templates that do not contain all of the talk groups required in the "Mandatory Basic Statewide Template". Please remember that this is a requirement for having radios on the VIPER system. During the Hurricane Florence response we still have counties that do not have the minimum required State Event talk groups in their radios. These deficiencies are at the local level and need to be addressed. We also ask that you consider including all of the Domestic Preparedness Region (DPR) talk groups, since we have found that it is necessary to utilize those as well as the state event talk groups, especially for more localized response. Many radios do NOT contain these talk groups. Please consider adding the additional talk groups to your radios. Note that these are all contained within the VIPER

“Recommended Basic Statewide Template”. If you need a current copy of either of the above referenced templates, please send an email to VIPER@ncshp.org

VIPER ID status

- VIPER POCs should maintain their inventory and are required to submit an annual “true-up” document to VIPER in January of each year; **however due to the 7.17 upgrade this February, the “true-up” document for 2019 is due Friday June 28th** and should be sent to VIPER-activate@ncshp.org.

VIPER approved radios

- For 2018 we continue to approve multiple radio vendors and products for use on the VIPER system. Currently Motorola, EF Johnson, Kenwood, Harris, Tait and BK Relm all have approved products for use on the VIPER system. Motorola, EF Johnson/Kenwood and BK Relm added new products for the 2018 portfolio. **New radios from vendors for consideration are due no later than 30 September of each year** so that testing and evaluations can be completed prior to the start of the new calendar year.

System Health

- The System Health is a new section that we plan to provide with each newsletter to update our stakeholders, users and partners as to how the VIPER system is doing. These statistics are taken directly from the system.

1. System count

Users (actual radio IDs, consoles not incl.)	117,079
Trunked channels	1,595
Conventional channels	616
Talk groups	3,979
Comm centers tied directly to VIPER	41

- #### 2. Busies: The percent of busies compares the number of busies vs. the number of PTTs on the system. Acceptable industry standard is 3% busies for a system. Below is VIPER’s system health as it relates to the percentage of busies that we get on the system.

	PTT average	% Busy
Daily average	280,000	0.02%
Monthly average	8,548,000	0.01%

Communications Projects in NC

- The TSU/VIPER team is working with our Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) to improve our strategic stockpile of radio assets for use during an emergency. TSU/VIPER provided a surge capacity during Hurricane Florence of over 850 additional radios to the field emergency responders supporting our state and local partners.
- The VIPER team has been working with the STARS radio system to establish an interoperable communications link between North Carolina and Virginia. The initial link will be established in the area between Northampton and Camden counties. This area will be the primary northbound route in the event that a hurricane evacuation is ordered. The final product will incorporate an interoperable communications link along the entire North Carolina/Virginia border.