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## **Review of MARCS upgrade progress among topics of December steering committee meeting**

The Ohio Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) Steering Committee will meet from 1 to 3 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8 on the 31<sup>st</sup> floor of the Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 S. High St., Columbus.

MARCS, overseen by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, is an interoperable radio communications system that uses state-of-the-art wireless technology to enable first responders to send and receive clear, reliable communications throughout the state.

Agenda items include reports on progress of continuing upgrades to MARCSIP, a review of MARCS' budgets for Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016, and an overview of the ongoing statewide initiative to deploy MARCS radios in schools as a way of immediately alerting first responders to the need for law enforcement assistance.

Currently, nearly 48,000 voice units and more than 1,800 mobile data units serve more than 1,200 public safety and service agencies in Ohio. Approximately 6,600 MARCS radios have been added to the system since Jan. 1, 2014, not including 3,300 radios recently deployed by the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The final phase of the upgrade includes a reprogramming of all MARCS' portable, mobile and base radios to the VoIP system. When the upgrade is completed, MARCS will have the ability to provide voice service to more than 125,000 radios.

The upgrade will maximize statewide interoperability and save taxpayer dollars by reducing the number of autonomous infrastructures and sharing network capacity.