

# **Board of County Commissioners**

## **Agenda Request**

Date of Meeting: April 7, 2009

Date Submitted: March 20, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator  
Lindsay Stevens, Assistant County Administrator  
G. Scott McDermid, Director, Department of Public Safety

Subject: Request Board Approval of an Memorandum of Understanding  
Establishing the Department of Public Safety to Serve As An Emergency  
Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS) Host Agency  
for the North Florida Domestic Security Task Force (NFDSTF)

---

### **Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item requests Board approval of an Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Department of Public Safety to serve as an Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS) Host Agency for the North Florida Domestic Security Task (NFDSTF) for the Region 2 disaster communications package.

### **Background:**

Wakulla County, Florida resides within the North Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force's (NFRDSTF) geographic area; otherwise known as the Regional Domestic Security Task Force Region Two (RDSTF2). In February 2009, the City of Tallahassee asked the NFRDSTF to re-assign the Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS) package to another host agency. The EDICS package is a package of communications equipment that can be deployed to assist public agencies in emergency communications during disasters. Wakulla County has a strong volunteer network that includes many citizens with radio communications expertise. The County has the space, technical expertise, and interest to represent Wakulla County, Florida as a good neighbor and proud partner in the North Florida Domestic Security Task Force.

### **Analysis:**

The City of Tallahassee has been the host agency of this particular package for 4 years. There are 8 EDICS packages throughout Florida, 2 within our North Florida region. The other EDICS package is hosted by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in Tallahassee. The opportunity to host the EDICS package was announced throughout the region's membership. Staff received the notification on March 20, 2009, by email. Additionally, staff replied on the same day with an interest in reviewing this opportunity to share the preparedness burden for our region and to show support for our region. The City of Tallahassee is in transition from an analog two way radio system to a full digital radio network. Staff understands that the EDICS package is no longer compatible with their radio network; subsequently they are limited in the ability to properly maintain and exercise the equipment.

Agenda Request: Request Board Approval of an Memorandum of Understanding Establishing the Department of Public Safety to Serve As An Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS) Host Agency for the North Florida Domestic Security Task Force (NFDSTF)

April 7, 2009

Page 2

---

Staff has performed a preliminary inspection of the equipment; it simply includes a 30 foot enclosed trailer with a 6 wheel drive diesel prime mover. The prime mover is similar in size to one of the County's ambulances, or a small fire engine. FDLE has agreed to provide training on the equipment for a team we gather; it is staff's recommendation that we use our radio expert friends through the volunteer fire network. The EDICS package is fully compatible with the County's current two way radio and computer technologies. There is approximately \$7,000.00 provided annually for maintenance, cell phone and satellite connection fees, and other ancillary costs. There is no direct cost on the part of Wakulla County during the tenure of our host agency obligation.

Deployments are routed through the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and are done under governor declarations. There are 8 EDICS in Florida, so our deployment area is limited to our region, which we share with the EDICS housed at FDLE. Our basic deployment plan is to move the unit with one person, a member of the volunteer team. Then those who are trained to use the equipment will rendezvous with the driver and equipment at the deployment site. The duty of the host agency is to simply care for the equipment, protect it from harm, and make sure it gets to the appropriate location when deployed. The EDICS trailer and prime mover will be housed at the Wakulla County Fire Training Grounds, under an awning that covers a concrete pad. The prime mover will be housed with the EDICS trailer; however, it will not be stored connected to the EDICS Trailer.

Once our County is approved to be a host agency, FDLE and State Emergency Management will provide training on the operations of the EDICS trailer and the systems that it houses. A special Volunteer Fire team will be developed; this team will provide those who have experience and expertise in two way radio communications an opportunity to serve their community; without having to only fight fire. We already have 4 individuals that have volunteered their time to this project. In addition, there have been several others that have expressed an interest in participating. Every opportunity our County has to further develop and strengthen our volunteer network is an opportunity to develop and strengthen our County.

**Options:**

1. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute the Memorandum of Understanding, establishing Wakulla County's Department of Public Safety as the host agency for the regional communications disaster package.
2. Do not approve and do not authorize the Chairman to execute the Memorandum of Understanding, establishing Wakulla County's Department of Public Safety as the host agency for the regional communications disaster package.
3. Board Direction.

**Recommendation:**

Option #1

Agenda Request: Request Board Approval of an Memorandum of Understanding Establishing the Department of Public Safety to Serve As An Emergency Deployable Interoperable Communications System (EDICS) Host Agency for the North Florida Domestic Security Task Force (NFDSTF)

April 7, 2009

Page 3

---

**Attachment(s):**

1. Example of MOU Between DCA and the City of Tallahassee
2. Memorandum of Understanding presented for signature between Wakulla County BOCC and the State's Department of Emergency Management