

TALKING PAPER

Possible merging of the Nebraska State Wide Radio System with the Douglas County Radio system also known as the Omaha Regional Interoperability Network (ORION).

In November of 2015 Douglas County approached the State of Nebraska OCIO's office with the idea of letting the State use the radio coverage of the ORION system in turn allowing ORION to connect to the States Master Site.

The state needed coverage in Douglas and Washington Counties and in some areas that OPPD had coverage because their system provided sketchy coverage at best within our borders. In fact we already supported the State Patrol within our borders so it was obvious this would have little or no impact on our capacity.

The advantage of this proposal for Douglas County is two-fold. The state would administer and maintain the Master Site and give ORION access to a second Master Site providing us the redundancy and resiliency we needed.

Since the State had to maintain the Master Site they were paying for the maintenance and annual upgrade cost. For ORION that is an annual shared cost of around \$450,000 that we currently pay. That expense would be eliminated and assumed by the state. Plus for Douglas County there is the annual cost of around \$180,000 that we pay OPPD to maintain our system which includes the Master Site. That cost would be greatly reduced.

ORION whose members are Douglas, Washington, Pottawattamie and OPPD . have been meeting since November and have identified all the issues that must be addressed in an inter-local agreement if this was to take place. We have arranged a meeting with the OCIO's office this week to further explore this possibility.

The City of Lincoln is taking the same approach and if this transpires we would have a radio system for use by Douglas, Washington, and Lancaster counties in Nebraska. Pottawattamie in Iowa and the Omaha Public Powers District on the Eastern Boundary of Nebraska. The coverage and interoperability achieved by this merger would greatly increase our communication capabilities in this area. And the significant decrease in our annual budget would be noteworthy.