ISICSB
Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board

Report to the Iowa Legislature on the Status of the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board (ISICSB) Calendar Year 2022

ISICSB 2022 Executive Summary

The Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board (ISICSB) again met the statutory obligations outlined in Iowa Code 80.28 and 80.29 in calendar year 2022. As of the publishing of this report, there over 200 agencies and nearly 31,000 radios that can access ISICS. These users span all levels of government (municipal, county, state and federal) and non-governmental organizations. The ISICS Platform is officially accepted as a completed project and now serves as the interoperability platform for the entire state of Iowa and its 3.19 million residents.

The ISICSB has been in existence for fourteen years, progressively improving policy and procedures for Iowa interoperability and advancing stakeholder involvement in decision making.
All that work led to hundreds of successful interoperable events in Iowa during 2022. Work will continue in 2023 to build on these successes.

The ISICSB holds monthly public meetings, on the second Thursday of the month. The meetings are streamed live for public viewing in addition to a conference line being available for remote attendance. The ISICSB posts information such as meeting agendas, minutes, polices, standards and a calendar of events on a website at https://dps.iowa.gov/divisions/commissioners-office/interoperability-communications/iowa-statewide-interoperable-communications-board.
Each ISICSB member maintains a full-time professional position and performs ISICSB duties on a volunteer and part-time basis. The current board members are:

Member	Representing	Department
Michele Bischof **(Chair)**	Fire Department (Career)	Des Moines Fire Department
Patrick Updike **(Vice-Chair)**	Iowa DOC	Iowa Department of Corrections
Mindy Benson	Emergency Management	Black Hawk County
Rhonda Braudis	Member-At-Large	Marshall County Communications Commission
Daniel Brown	Iowa DOT	Iowa Department of Transportation
Blake DeRouchey	HSEMD	Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Bridget Edson	EMS	Chickasaw County Rescue
Dan Fank	County Sheriff	Worth County Sheriff's Office
Cindy Heick	Iowa DPH	Iowa Department of Public Health
Wendi Hess	Communications Center	Woodbury Communications Center
Heath Hove	Iowa DPS	Iowa Department of Public Safety
Haley Nichols	ILEA	Iowa Law Enforcement Academy

David Ness	Municipal Police	Des Moines Police Department
Daniel Schaffer	Municipal Police	Denison Police Department
Michael Strauser	Iowa DNR	Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Jessica Turba	OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
Curtis Woten	Fire Department (Volunteer)	Blakesburg Fire and Rescue
Vacant	Communications Center	
Vacant	County Sheriff	

Legislative Ex-Officio Members

Senator Jesse Green
Senator Kevin Kinney
Representative Kristin Sunde
Representative Jarad Klein

In 2022, the ISICSB continued to rely on an $115,661 appropriation in state funding. The State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP) 2.0 funds are no longer available due to the grant concluding in March 2021. The appropriations are used to sustain ISICSB activities, salaries and benefits for the SWIC and the ISICSB administrative assistant. With the lack of SLIGP 2.0 funds, additional funding will likely become necessary to sustain the ISICSB's activities.

Since its inception, the ISICSB has addressed legislative mandates, as contained in Iowa Code 80.29. The primary committees under the ISICSB all have goals, metrics, objectives and action plans that are outlined in the *Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) 2020-2023*. Since the adoption of this plan in December of 2019, each committee has made progress towards achieving the goals laid out in the SCIP. The ISICS committees listed below continued to meet to discuss interoperability needs and develop policy, procedure, standards and other work products.

- **Governance Committee**
- **Finance Committee**
- **Operations Committee**
- **Outreach Committee**
- **Technology Committee**
- **Training and Exercise Committee**
- **User Group Committee**
- **FirstNet Broadband Committee**

ISICS Funding Needs

The ISICSB continues to operate on a budget comprised of a General Fund allocation of $115,661 for salaries, benefits and ISICSB activities. The ISICSB recognizes that in the long-term the General Fund allocation will become insufficient to sustain ISICSB staff and activities. The ISICSB plans to

request increased General Fund appropriations for future fiscal years in order to help sustain and expand interoperable efforts in Iowa.

Following the closure of the SLIGP2.0 grant, the SWIC's salary was moved to 75% ISICSB funds and 25% DPS. In 2021, the ISICSB administrative assistant's salary was moved to a combination of ISICSB funds and a $40,000 grant provided by Iowa Department of Transportation. This grant was not made available by the DOT in 2022. This resulted in the Department of Public safety funding the now existing shortfall from its operational budget.

Historically, the ISICSB has been highly reliant upon grant funding to sustain activities. To strive towards fiscal solvency, ISICSB members, DPS, and interoperability stakeholders must work together to identify potential long term funding mechanisms to enhance interoperability in Iowa. A defined ten-year financial plan was drawn up by the ISICSB Finance Committee. This was recently updated to extend to 15 years and is ready for implementation within the next few fiscal years.

The ISICSB continues to seek ways to identify sustainable, long-term funding and cost containment measures for communications interoperability. Continued state funding for the ISICSB allows this board to continue to seek federal grant opportunities. Without this funding, the ISICSB will be denied many grant opportunities due to inability to meet grant requirements specifying a match.

Local, county and state funding is essential for sustainability of any interoperable communications system. State funds will continue to be used to train, educate, and where possible build and maintain infrastructure. The ISICSB will continue to seek grants and outside funding; however, federal grants specifically for interoperable communications are diminishing making state support all the more crucial in receiving such funding due to match requirements.

The Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System (ISICS) network proved essential during missions to address the COVID-19 Pandemic and other emergencies and disasters since its buildout. Funding opportunities for further enhancement of the ISICS are possible with the American Recovery Plan (ARP). Given those opportunities, several options for enhancements to the ISICS Platform have been discussed and planned. This document summarizes a list of possible projects, their priority and costs.

Any project listed in this document is configured so that all costs associated with procurement, installation and maintenance are covered for seven years. This will contain costs over the course of the projects and lower the potential for additional need for state funds.

The table below outlines expected high end costs if specific projects are funded along with a total if all are funded. Depending on project-specific variables, these costs could be lower.

Project Type	Low	High
Additional Channel Capacity	$1,812,500	$1,812,500
Cybersecurity MTM (7 years)	$5,700,000	$5,700,000
Site Battery Replacements	$1,500,593	$1,500,593
Additional Core with DSR	$5,100,000	$5,100,000

Additional Site Resiliency	$13,200,000	$18,000,000
Local Grant Program	Unknown	Unknown
Total	**$27,313,093**	**$32,113,093**

Additional Channel Capacity at Select Sites

Some of our sites are seeing a lot of traffic during what are deemed as busy times defined by a situation in which all the channels to carry traffic are taken. The sites below currently have seen more busy times than others by either total seconds of busy time or the actual number of busies. Adding an additional channel pack to the sites below would solve a large majority of the busies ISICS sees throughout the year. The simulcast sites in the table below consist of two sites that must be identically configured which means that we are adding a channel pack to two physical sites. Simulcast is used to help enhance coverage in difficult terrain or high traffic areas.

Maintenance costs for the equipment would be paid for upfront. The maintenance term would align with the current maintenance agreement for the rest of the system.

Priority	Location	Project Type	Goal	# of Packs	Est Cost
1	Mason City	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	1	$150,000
2	Linn/Johnson Simul	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	2	$300,000
3	Muscatine/Scott Simul	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	2	$300,000
4	Waterloo/Bremer Simul	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	2	$300,000
5	Madison County	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	1	$150,000
6	ISICS Adair North	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	1	$150,000
7	ISICS Fairfield	Add Channel Pack	Increase Capacity	1	$150,000
Maintenance for the channel pack additions					$312,500
				Total	**$1,812,500**

Cybersecurity Monitoring and Threat Mitigation (MTM)

The ISICSB commissioned the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and its contractors through the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) to conduct a cybersecurity assessment of the ISICS network and provide a prioritized report. This high-level project will convey the immediate needs, but it may not address individual risks at all sites, cores and console positions.

The system manufacturer, Motorola, offers a cybersecurity suite that would complement and address the findings in the report from CISA. In addition, Motorola offers active cybersecurity monitoring and threat mitigation for the system cores, sites and console positions. Motorola has named this service the Managed Detection and Response (MDR) Cybersecurity. The MDR program provides Security Operations Center support 24-hours per day.

The cost of this program is estimated at $5.7 million over seven years. This cost would cover all ISICS cores and back-up cores, state consoles and local consoles. Funding for this cybersecurity initiative would help ensure that any cybersecurity risks to the ISICS network would be addressed before anything is compromised or a potential cyber-attack is executed.

Site Battery Replacements

All of the ISICS sites run on a 48-volt circuit. This allows us to run the power for the site through the batteries to condition the voltage and reduce potential power surges. It also allows us to keep the site running when the generator activates if grid power is lost. When the batteries are new, they can power a site for up to eight hours at full load in the event a generator does not start.

The batteries are specialized lead acid batteries that have a ten-year life from date of shipment. Based on the date stamps on the batteries on the ISICS sites, they will all need to be replaced by SFY2026 or SFY2027. This is because the sites were built and running a few years before final system acceptance. This allowed us to have beneficial use of the system while it was being constructed. It worked to our advantage because all the site equipment and shelters were pre-built before the equipment arrived on location.

In addition, there are different sets of batteries at the three core locations that would need to be replaced. The batteries at the core sites are vital to ensuring the entire network functions as expected during a loss of grid power to the cores.

If any ARP money is used to replace the batteries, it would reduce our RIIF request in future fiscal years. We could stipulate that the batteries would not be shipped prior to their installation in order to maintain a fresh of an install as possible. This would allow us to spread out future year replacements.

The new estimated costs that attempt to account for recent price increases are below:

Site Batteries (SB)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
ASR Batteries	$223,272.00	$232,202.88	$241,491.00
Prime Site Batteries	$63,792.00	$66,343.68	$68,997.43
Labor	$131,255.00	$136,505.20	$141,965.41
SB Yearly Total	**$418,319.00**	**$435,051.76**	**$452,453.83**

Core Batteries (CB)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Parts	$51,059	$53,101	$55,226
Labor	$11,335	$11,788	$12,259
CB Yearly Total	**$62,394**	**$64,889**	**$67,485**

Yearly costs for battery replacements at sites and the cores are:

- SFY2024 - $480,713
- SFY2025 - $499,941
- SFY2026 - $519,939

Additional Core with DSR

During the construction phase of the ISICS Platform, the system configuration was converted from a single zone to dual zone with dynamic system resiliency (DSR) due to the rapid growth. This rapid growth has continued.

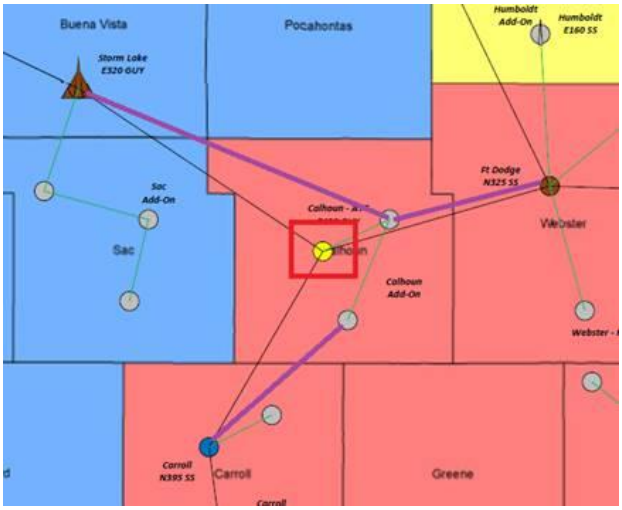
While the core capacity for expected future users was forecasted to be sufficient, an additional zone core to make the ISICS a three-zone system would ensure that any future users beyond what was originally forecast could be easily accommodated. At this point, it appears the initially forecast adoption rate will be exceeded.

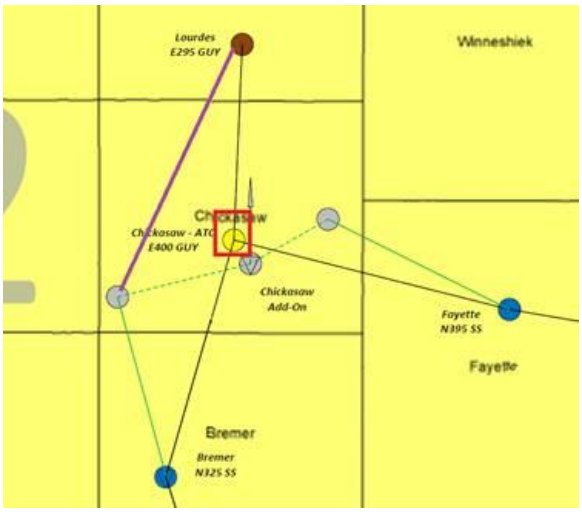
Additionally, a back-up core for a potential Zone 3 would ensure that the DSR capabilities with Zones 1 and 2 are realized with Zone 3. This would increase the resiliency of the system and allow for additional geographic diversity among zone core locations.

It is expected that an additional core with backup DSR would cost $2.0 million with an additional $3.1 million for maintenance for seven years. Any maintenance costs for the equipment would be paid for upfront. The maintenance term would align with the current maintenance agreement for the rest of the system.

Leased Site Removal

There are two local enhancement projects that may afford us an opportunity to remove two leased microwave (MW) only sites from ISICS. MW sites do not provide radio coverage. With the Calhoun and Chickasaw local enhancement projects, we no longer need those leased MW sites. We can re-work our microwave paths to match below. The leased MW site is denoted by a yellow dot. If we cut out that site, we just have to realign our MW paths as denoted by the purple lines.





By pulling the equipment out of those leased sites, we would have spare parts for MW links for other sites to build in resiliency. It would also potentially save us leased costs up to an estimated $812,347 through SFY 2032 (table below).

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032
Estimated Lease Costs for Motorola Leased Sites per Contract Design	$172,152	$177,317	$182,636	$188,115	$193,759	$199,572	$219,263	$225,841	$232,617	$239,595
Average Lease Cost Per Site	$34,430	$35,463	$36,527	$37,623	$38,752	$39,914	$43,853	$45,168	$46,523	$47,919
Savings w/ Removal of Two leases	$68,861	$70,927	$73,054	$75,246	$77,504	$79,829	$87,705	$90,336	$93,047	$95,838
Savings through FY2032	**$812,347**									

The specific project listings are in the table below

Location	Existing	Lease	MW Only	Project Type	Goal
Chickasaw Co	Yes	Yes	Yes	Remove Site/Equip	End Lease / Repurpose Existing Equipment
Calhoun Co	Yes	Yes	Yes	Remove Site/Equip	End Lease / Repurpose Existing Equipment

Additional Site Resiliency

There is an opportunity to add some additional sites to ISICS in order to increase the resiliency, reliability and coverage of ISICS in some areas of the state. Spurs in the network are sites that only have one microwave (MW) link. The other sites in ISICS generally have at least two in order to have a back-up path to the core in the event one goes down. In addition, some of the state agency users (Iowa State Patrol, DOT, etc.) have noted some higher traffic areas of the state could benefit from an additional site. In addition to providing additional coverage, another level of resiliency would be added to the network in those areas for the MW paths. Sites are listed in order of priority below.

Maintenance costs for the equipment would be paid for upfront. The maintenance term would align with the current maintenance agreement for the rest of the system.

Priority	Location	Existing	Local Tower Avail	MW Only	Project Type	Goal	Cost Low	Cost High
1	Winneshiek	No	Yes	N/A	New Site	Coverage/Fix Spur	$1,700,000	$2,500,000
2	Wapello Co	No	Maybe	N/A	New Site	Coverage/Resiliency	$1,700,000	$2,500,000
3	Wayne Co	No	Maybe	N/A	New Site	Coverage/Resiliency	$1,700,000	$2,500,000
4	Osceola Co	No	Maybe	N/A	New Site	Coverage/Fix Spur	$1,700,000	$2,500,000
5	Mitchell Co	No	Maybe	N/A	New Site	Coverage/Fix Spur	$1,700,000	$2,500,000
6	Jasper Scales	Yes	N/A	Yes	Add LMR	Coverage/Capacity	$1,700,000	$2,500,000

Maintenance for six additional sites to match current contract.	$3,000,000	$3,000,000
Total	**$13,200,000**	**$18,000,000**

ISICS Local Grant Program

As a part of the ARP request, stakeholders have expressed an interest in exploring the potential use of ARP monies to assist with a migration to or expansion of the ISICS platform. This program would be structured in such a way that the interested county would apply to the ISICSB for a grant to help subsidize a project. This subsidization could be used to fund the procurement of radios, installation of dispatch consoles or the construction of new ISICS local enhancement sites.

In 2018, the ISICSB began working on a standard that would outline any type of award process that would be conducted for programs relating to local migration to the ISICS. This standard was put on hold until monies would be available. Upon award, the rubric outlined in this standard would be followed to award monies to the applying agencies.

Agency Use of the ISICS Platform Levels 1-4

The ISICSB has worked to expand and engage county and local membership. State agencies are expected to use ISICS for operability as well as interoperability. Local entities have also chosen to use ISICS for operability and add tower sites to locally enhance the network. Numerous other agencies at a local, county and federal level have opted to use the ISICS infrastructure for some level of operability that does not include the addition of infrastructure. Several other counties have opted to join at increased levels for operability.

A **Level 1** User of ISICS has access to all ISICS talkgroups for interoperability purposes. This is exemplified by a local agency that may have their own radio system, but still needs to have radio communications with an outside entity like a neighboring county or state agencies. Local entities such as counties, sheriff offices and others have free access to ISICS and many have signed on to use ISICS for interoperability. All Iowa Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) are pre-approved as Level 1 Users of ISICS. This allowed for and helped facilitate the deployment of control stations to get them connected to ISICS for interoperability. In addition, all PSAPs that border Iowa in neighboring states have also been approved for Level 1 access to ISICS. This will help facilitate the expansion of interstate interoperability.

A **Level 2** User of ISICS consists of a local agency using basic free access and ability to interoperate with other agencies, but also wants an enhancement of features offered by the ISICS system which would include custom talk groups for their local operations (operability). Dozens of local and state public safety entities and federal agencies have joined ISICS as a Level 2 user.

A **Level 3** User brings all the features of Level 1 and Level 2, but adds in direct connection to the ISICS core computers via a hardline or hardwire connection to the system. This direct connection to the system requires significant engineering and coordination and allows for extra features for use by this local agency. In some cases, additional capacity may be added by the local user to a site to support their additional traffic.

Level 4 Users have chosen to add infrastructure to the network such as additional towers, at the local agency cost to enhance performance and/or expand the coverage offered by ISICS in their community. Enhancements may be needed to guarantee a feature like in-building coverage. Table 1 shows a complete listing of ISICS users by level.

Table 1: List of ISICS Users by Level

CITY AGENCIES	LEVEL
Altoona FD	1
Altoona PD	1
Altoona Public Works	1
Anamosa Fire Department	1
Ankeny FD	1
Ankeny PD	1
Atkins, City of	2
Aurelia	2
Baxter FD	2
Blakesburg Fire & Rescue	2
Bondurant FD	1
Camp Township FD	1
Carlisle FD	1
Cedar Rapids, City of	2
Clear Lake PD	3
Coulter FD	1
Delaware Township FD	1
Des Moines, City of	4
Elkhart FD	1
Fonda PD	1
Granger FD	1
Jewell Fire Rescue	1
Johnston PD	1
Johnston-Grimes FD	1
Mapleton PD	2
Maquoketa PD	3
Mitchellville FD	1
Mitchellville PD	1
Nevada, City of	2
Northern Warren FD	2
Osceola, City of	3
Pella PD	1

Pleasant Hill FD	1
Pleasant Hill PD	1
Pocahontas PD	1
Polk City FD	1
Polk City PD	1
Saylor Township FD	1
Virginia Township FD	1
Waukon PD	2
Webster City PD	3
West Branch PD-FD	2
Windsor Heights, City of	1

COUNTY AGENCIES	LEVEL
Adair & Guthrie County EMA	4
Adams County EMA	3
Allamakee County EMA	2
Appanoose County Sheriff's Office	1
Audubon County	3
Benton County	2
Black Hawk County 911 Board	2
Black Hawk County EM	1
Boone County Sheriff's Office	4
Bremer County EMA	1
Bremer County Sheriff's Office	2
Buchanan County	1
Buena Vista EMA	2
Buena Vista Sheriff’s Office	2
Butler County	3
Calhoon County EMA	4
Carroll County	4
Cass County EMA	3
Cerro Gordo County Sheriff's Office	3
Cherokee County	2
Chickasaw County 911 Service Board	4
Chickasaw County EMA	1
Clarke County EMA	1
Clarke County Sheriff's Office	1
Clay County	2
Clayton County	2
Clinton County	4

Crawford County	2
Dallas County	4
Davis County	2
Delaware County	1
Delaware Dubuque Jackson County	2
Dickinson County EMA	3
Dubuque E911	1
Emmet County Sheriff's Office	2
Fayette County EMA	4
Fayette County Sheriff's Office	4
Franklin County	3
Fremont County	4
Greene County Sheriff's Office	3
Grundy County Sheriff's Office	1
Hamilton County	4
Hancock County	4
Hardin County	2
Harrison County 911	4
Henry County	3
Howard County EMA	1
Humboldt County	4
Ida County	3
Iowa County	1
Jackson County EMA	1
Jasper County	2
Jefferson County	3
Johnson County JECC	2
Jones County	1
Keokuk County EMA	2
Keokuk County Sheriff's Office	1
Kossuth County	2
Lee County EMA	2
Linn County Sheriff's Office	1
Louisa County	2
Madison County Sheriff's Office	3
Mahaska County 911	1
Marion County Sheriff's Office	2
Marion County EMA	2
Marshall County EMA	2
Mills County EMA	4
Mitchell County	1

Mitchell County EMA	2
Monona County 911 Dispatch	3
Monroe County	1
Montgomery County EMA	4
Muscatine County EMA	2
O'Brien County	2
Page County EMA	4
Palo Alto County Sheriff	2
Palo Alto EMA	1
Plymouth County	3
Polk County Sheriff's Office	1
Pottawattamie County	2
Poweshiek County EMA	1
Ringgold County	2
Sac County	3
Scott County - SECC	2
Scott County Health	1
Shelby County	3
Story County 911 Board	2
Tama County	1
Taylor County	2
Union County LEC	4
Wayne County	2
Webster County EMA	4
Winnebago County	3
Winneshiek County	1
Worth County Sheriff's Office	4
Wright County	4

STATE AGENCIES	LEVEL
5th Judicial District	2
8th Judicial District	2
185ARW - IA Air National Guard	2
Glenwood Resource Center - Iowa DHS	4
Independence Mental Health Institute - Iowa DHS	2
Iowa DNR	2
Iowa DOC - Clarinda	2
Iowa DOC - Fort Madison	4
Iowa DOC - Mount Pleasant	2
Iowa DOT	4
Iowa DPH	2

Iowa HSEMD	2
Iowa National Guard	2
Iowa Veterans Affairs (VA)	2
Van Buren County 911 Board	2
Warren County Sheriff's Office	4
Washington County Communications	2

FEDERAL AGENCIES	LEVEL
10th District Reserve Law Enforcement	1
ATF	2
DEA/DOJ	2
DHS - Investigations	2
DHS OEC	1
FBI	2
FEMA	1
OIG HHS	2
United States Army Corps of Engineers - Lake Red Rock Project	2
United States Capitol Police	2
US Fish & Wildlife Service	1
US Marshal Service	2
US Probation Office (USPO) - Southern Iowa	1

AMBULANCE/HOSPITAL AGENCIES	LEVEL
Air Methods	2
American Medical Response	2
Avera Health - Avera Careflight	2
Cherokee Regional Medical Center	2
Genesis Ambulance Service	1
Global Medical Response	2
Medforce Quad City Helicopter EMS	2
Medic EMS (Davenport)	2
Mercy Ambulance Des Moines	2
Mercy Hospital (Iowa City)	2
Sioux Center Ambulance	1
Tipton Ambulance Service	2
Unity Point Health	3
Wings Air Rescue	2

ELECTRIC/POWER COMPANIES	LEVEL
Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO)	2
Consumers Energy	2
Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative	2
Farmers REC	2
Guthrie County REC	2
Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives	2
Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities	2
Metro Waste Authority	2
Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative	2
Osceola Electric Coop	2
Southwest Iowa REC	2
TIP REC	2

SCHOOLS	LEVEL
Des Moines Public Schools	2
University of Iowa	2
University of Northern Iowa	4
Urbandale Community School District	2
Waukee Schools	2

OTHER	LEVEL
Burt County EMA (Nebraska)	1
Des Moines International Airport	2
Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)	3
Des Moines Metro Water Reclamation Authority	2
Freeborn County (Minnesota)	1
Fulton PD (Illinois)	1
Jo Daviess County Sheriff's Office (Illinois)	1
Lee Comm	4
MICRN	2
Minnesota ECN	1
Mower County (Minnesota)	1
Nebraska OCIO - Patrol	1
Region 6 Local Emergency Planning Committee	1
Safeguard Iowa Partnership	2
STARCOMM	4
Westcom	4
Whiteside County (Illinois)	2

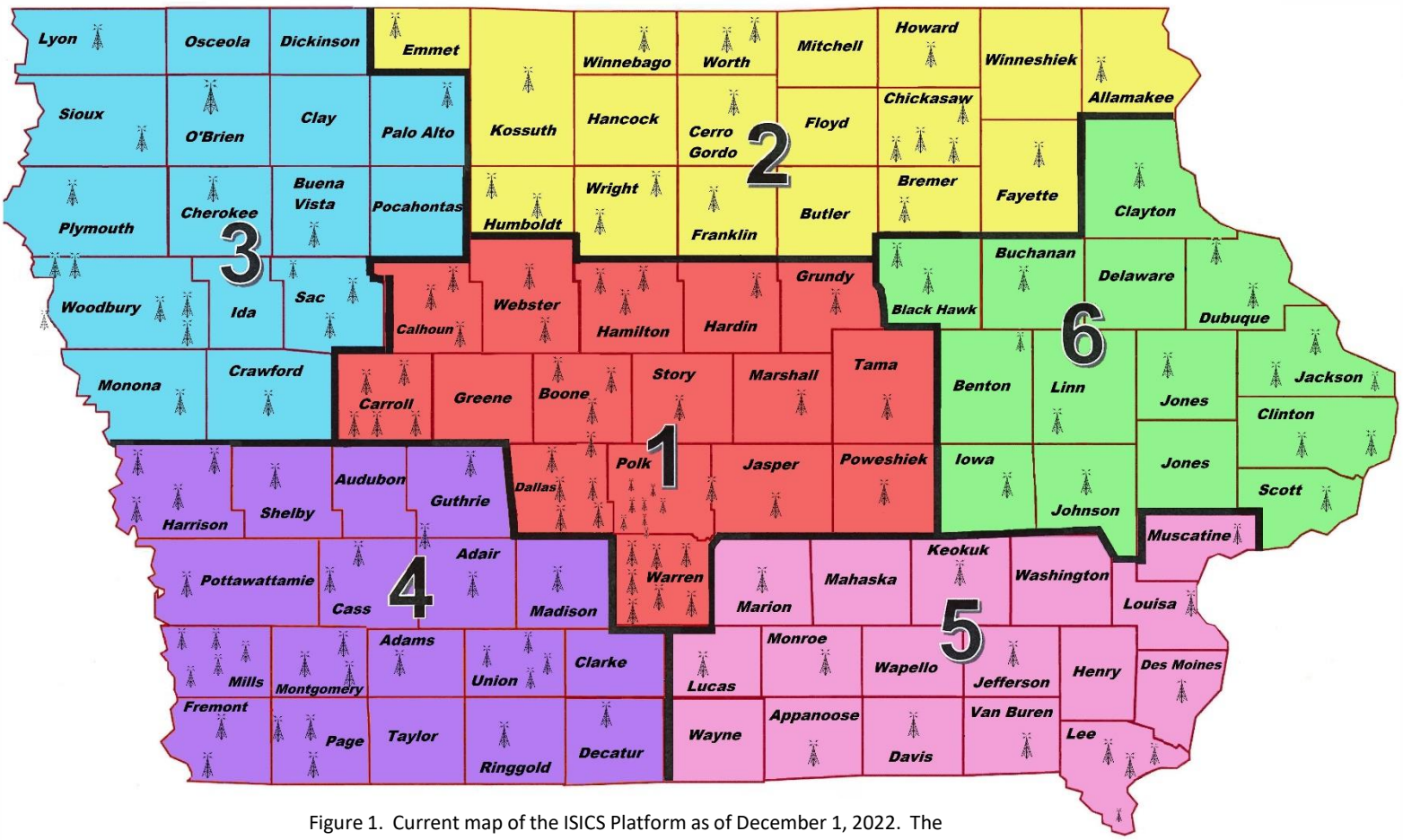
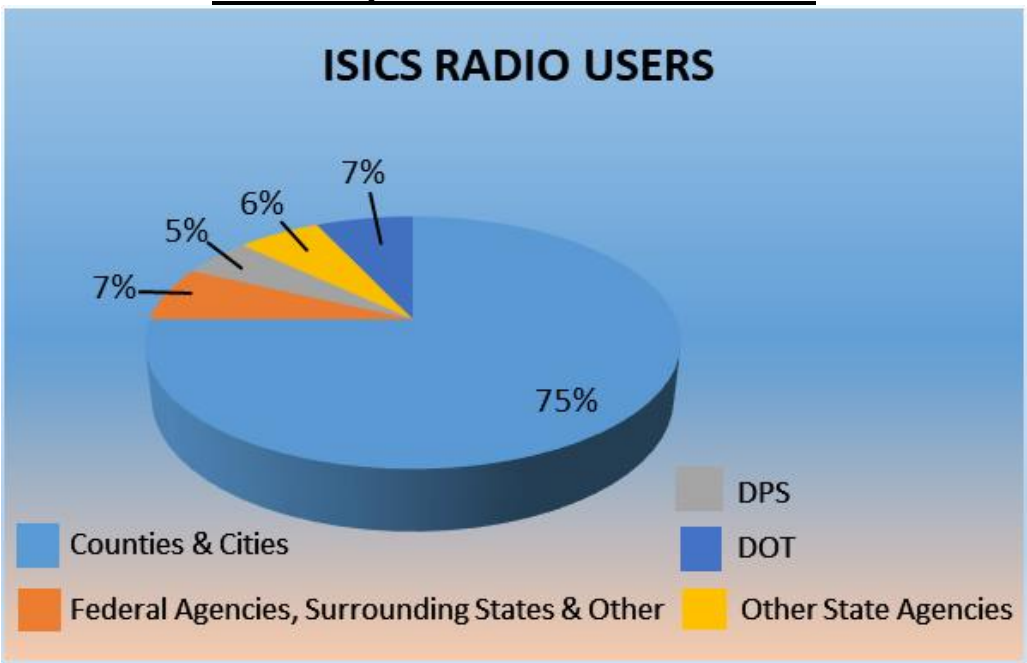


Figure 1. Current map of the ISICS Platform as of December 1, 2022. The tower icons represent ISICS sites. The numbers represent the ISICS operating regions. All sites are networked together with microwave or fiber-optic connections.

Summary of all ISICS Radio Users



Conclusion

The ISICS Platform can present significant cost-saving opportunities to local counties if they currently need to update or replace their existing LMR infrastructure or improve interoperability. Since ISICS provides an average mobile coverage of at least 95% across the state, ISICS could serve as a starting point for local agencies when considering options in replacing their current radio systems and improve statewide interoperability. For example, if an ISICS tower is located within their county, that existing tower has the potential to cut local costs by $500,000 to $1,000,000 in addition to savings on long-term maintenance cost on those structures. For many communities, using ISICS could eliminate the need for additional communication towers resulting in a lower tax burden for its residents. The additional capabilities of the ISICS Platform may also save local agencies money by establishing pathways for interoperability with their in- and out-of-state neighbors and encryption key management and updating.

In the fall of 2018, HSEMD and DPS facilitated a grant program to help provide equipment to PSAPs that did not already have a connection to ISICS for interoperability. That equipment was deployed in 2019. PSAPs have installed the equipment and completed test calls with State Radio as of 2020. There have been numerous success stories through the use of the consolettes and control stations distributed to the PSAPs.

There is a potential role for the Iowa Legislature to further promote interoperability in Iowa by financially empowering the ISICSB to assist counties, PSAPs, and other dispatch centers in identifying a pathway to ISICS access. This would align well with the long-term financial needs of the ISICSB. From its inception in 2007 to present day, the ISICSB has relied on Federal Interoperability Grants and State appropriations to support Board activities. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2018 and 2019, $115,661 in state funding was appropriated to the ISICSB.

As part of a national interoperability initiative, each state was to establish a Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) position and this position is now required by statute. The SWIC position has been critical to improving interoperability in Iowa, addressing these legislative mandates, and the resulting accomplishments of the Board.

Until 2014, the SWIC salary was paid for by Federal Interoperability grants. Starting in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2015 and continuing through FFY 2017, State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP) paid half the SWIC's salary and expenses. In 2018, SLIGP 2.0 was implemented and covered approximately half of the SWIC's salary. It is essential that legislative funding continue to be appropriated to pay half of the SWIC's salary so as to continue to meet Iowa's various non-broadband radio interoperability needs.

In state fiscal years 2014 through 2017, the ISICSB received $154,661 annually in state appropriations to conduct State of Iowa interoperability matters not covered by federal grants. For state fiscal year 2018 and 2019, the ISICSB's appropriation was reduced to $115,661 to conduct State of Iowa interoperability matters not covered by federal grants. The ISICSB plans to request increased appropriations for future fiscal years in order to help sustain and expand interoperable efforts in Iowa.

The ISICSB continues to seek ways to identify sustainable, long-term funding and cost containment measures for communications interoperability. Continued state funding for the ISICSB allows this board to continue to seek federal grant opportunities. Without this funding, the ISICSB will be denied many grant opportunities due to inability to meet grant requirements specifying a local match.

Local, county and state funding is essential for sustainability of any interoperable communications system. State funds will continue to be used to train, educate, and where possible build and maintain infrastructure. The ISICSB will continue to seek grants and outside funding; however, federal grants specifically for interoperable communications are diminishing making state support even more crucial.

The ISICSB developed ideas for potential funding streams that could be ready for legislative consideration in future legislative sessions. If enacted, the funding streams would allow the ISICSB to maintain and expand ISICS infrastructure, and administer grants to local municipal and county public safety agencies to promote and expand interoperability. These grant monies could include allocations for training and educational opportunities, procurement of subscriber units and/or expansion of local LMR infrastructure.

Any new funding mechanisms and resulting programs would be structured to be consistent with all state and federal laws regarding grant awards, accounting and distribution of funds.