



OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR



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COLORADO'S PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM GIVEN CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH

DENVER—rarely does the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) audit a government agency or program and not make recommendations for improvement, but that is the case today with the release of the OSA's performance audit of the Public Safety Radio Communications System at the Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT).

Public safety agencies and first responders, such as police, fire, and emergency medical services use public safety radio communication systems to respond to calls for service. In Colorado, the Digital Trunked Radio System (DTRS) is the primary voice communications system for about 1,100 state, local, and tribal public safety agencies and first responders. DTRS is co-owned by the state and local agencies and governments. In 2018, DTRS supported about 101,000 radios and an average of 8.9 million calls per month. In Fiscal Years 2016 to 2019, OIT spent about \$71 million in state funds to manage, maintain, and upgrade DTRS.

Auditors found that the OIT does a good job of managing DTRS and coordinating with public safety agencies and co-owners. All 20 sampled Memoranda of Understanding were well defined; OIT documentation and

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auditor walk-throughs showed that OIT's contract monitoring helps ensure that work on DTRS is timely and aligns with contract requirements; OIT has taken steps to improve DTRS such as by executing a \$56 million contract for equipment upgrades and that roughly 93 percent of the state has DTRS radio coverage; and in a sample of payments totaling \$15.5 million that OIT made for DTRS in Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019, auditors found that spending followed applicable statutory and contract requirements.

“We were impressed by how the state and local agencies coordinate to operate and maintain DTRS,” State Auditor Ray commented. “This demonstrates that we do not just identify problems. When we find operations being run well, we also call that out.”

The full report is available @ www.colorado.gov/auditor.

Under the direction of the state auditor, the OSA is the state's nonpartisan, independent external auditor with broad authority to audit state agencies, departments, institutions of higher education, and the Judicial and Legislative Branches. The OSA's professional staff serve the people of Colorado by addressing relevant public issues through high-quality, objective audits and reviews that promote accountability and positive change in government. Performance audits address whether programs operate in compliance with laws and regulations and in a manner that accomplishes intended program goals. Financial audits include annual audits of the state's basic financial statements and federal grants on a statewide level. IT audits review procedures and technology to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the state's critical computer systems and taxpayer data. The OSA also tracks about 4,000 Colorado local governments for compliance with the Local Government Audit Law.