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By Donny Jackson

## Raytheon JPS P25 migration path demonstrated in Wisconsin

FOND DU LAC, Wis.--The Wisconsin State Patrol yesterday demonstrated interoperable communications using the Raytheon JPS P25 Channel Controller (P25CC) solution to transform conventional analog repeaters into P25 trunking repeaters at three sites supporting multiple frequencies with relatively little expense.

Operational for six months, the Wisconsin State Patrol's beta system features high-band VHF at all sites and 800 MHz transmissions at one site. With a P25CC, off-the-shelf PC server support and an interface card, the analog repeaters were transformed to support P25 trunking. Subscriber equipment from five vendors—EFTJohnson, Kenwood, M/A-COM, Motorola and Tait—were demonstrated to work on the system.

The solution is targeted to the many public-safety entities that would like to migrate from conventional systems to P25 but lack the budget to perform a forklift upgrade that many vendors propose, said John Hobbs, integration sales manager for Raytheon JPS. By using the P25CC solution featuring software from Etherstack, an entity can migrate to P25 while leveraging its existing radio investments.

"There is a direct cost savings of 50% to 75% compared to the cost of the competition," Hobbs said. "We don't require a massive switch."

In addition to keeping hardware costs to a minimum, the P25CC solution also promises indirect cost savings, as the ability to continue to

use existing subscriber equipment means little or no user training is necessary, Hobbs said.

Meanwhile, the interoperable capability—at one point, communications between a P25 800 MHz conventional portable radio and a VHF trunked portable was demonstrated—means the solution meets the requirements for interoperability grant funding, and the ability to have multiple vendors bid can reduce future subscriber costs.

But the most important aspect of the solution is the flexibility provided to a public-safety entity, said Kevin Swann, Etherstack's director of business development.

"This way, you can buy P25 subscribers when you are ready or when you have the budget," Swann said.

The Wisconsin State Patrol supports the establishment of a statewide P25 backbone—accessible to all first-responder agencies in the state—using the \$15 million federal interoperability grant money generated for the state from the anticipated proceeds of the upcoming 700 MHz auction.

Despite the fact that the state patrol has worked with Raytheon JPS on this beta system, the first-responder organization has no formal commitment to the vendor if it gets the funding to pursue its statewide plan, said Carl Guse, frequency coordinator for the Wisconsin State Patrol.

"It's a very significant option, but we'll look at all the opportunities that are out there," Guse said.