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Illinois Department of Corrections Chooses Icom Radios for Narrowbanding Solutions

BELLEVUE, WA (April 2012) — Icom America, two-way radio manufacturer of 6.25 kHz efficient technology, recently secured a contract with the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). RF Marketing, the manufacturer's representative in Illinois and Wisconsin, completed negotiations and will deliver a total of 1,734 portable radios and 50 base stations throughout 2012. The communications deal comes at a critical time for public safety and industrial/business land mobile radio (LMR) users, as these entities are mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to migrate their wideband systems to at least 12.5 kHz channel bandwidth by January 1, 2013.



“Agencies that do not comply with the narrowbanding mandate face suspension of communication capabilities, heavy fines or difficulty in obtaining new FCC licenses,” says RF Marketing Regional Sales Manager George Farmer. “By starting the narrowbanding process with Icom radios, the Illinois Department of Corrections will avoid the legal repercussions of operating aging, noncompliant radios.”

The Department of Corrections’ existing system consists of devices from various manufacturers and some radios in use for over 15 years. In response to a statewide bid opportunity to narrowband the IDOC’s system, RF Marketing submitted technical qualifications and showcased Icom’s F4161S



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series portable in a successful product demonstration. The IDOC and the Illinois Central Management Services, the state's department responsible for procurement, approved the proposal for its technical merit and competitive pricing.

“Radios used in correctional facilities need to be rugged and reliable; they are subjected to heavy indoor use and the outdoor elements of a prison yard,” says Illinois Department of Corrections Director Salvador “Tony” Godinez. “Since officers equip their utility belts with a substantial amount of gear—keys, handcuffs and more—radios should also be light enough to wear comfortably for extended periods of time.”

The 5-watt F4161 portable meets MIL-STD 810 specifications and receives an IP55 rating for dust protection and water jet resistance. The portable features 512 memory channels with 128 zones, a full dot matrix LCD with backlit capability and built-in enhanced audio. The portable's Li-ion battery pack averages 14-hour typical operating time. Additionally, the IDOC will also incorporate Icom's F6021 series—a compact, military-grade mobile unit configured as a base station. The F6021 series features 128 memory channels, six programmable buttons, multiple signaling, advanced scanning and wide frequency coverage.

IDOC currently operates 27 prisons throughout Illinois in addition to work camps, boot camps and adult transition centers. The agency is committed to operating a safe and secure prison system, enhancing prison-based treatment and prevention programs, and reducing recidivism by successfully reentering inmates into society.

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