



## **Administrative Report**

### **Office of the Chief, Essex-Windsor EMS**

**To:** Warden McNamara and Members of Essex County Council

**From:** Bruce Krauter  
Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

**Date:** Wednesday, June 16, 2021

**Subject:** Replacement of Computers in Essex Windsor EMS Vehicles

**Report #:** 2021-0616-EMS-R004-BK

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#### **Purpose**

The following report is to provide information and request approval for the scheduled replacement of computer devices in Essex Windsor EMS vehicles.

#### **Background**

Essex Windsor EMS (EWEMS) has a fleet of thirty-nine (39) ambulances and nine (9) Early Response Vehicles (ERV's). Each vehicle has a combination of computer configurations within them. Additionally, each vehicle has internet connectivity via wireless hotspots and each hospital emergency department is equipped with dedicated and secure WIFI hotspots for EWEMS.

The computers are primarily used for electronic patient care record (ePCR) input, storage and transmission. In the case of ambulances, one device is secured in the front cab of the vehicle and this platform is also used for mapping, dispatch recording, call response records and other online reference material. For the devices installed in ERV's, the device is mounted in the front cab, and has the ability to be removed from its mount to provide valuable mapping, response guides and reference materials.

In 2016 and 2017 EWEMS purchased the bulk of devices for all configurations. The expectation, at the time, was for the devices to have a

life cycle of approximately four (4) years. In 2019 the Microsoft operating system (Mos) was upgraded for security purposes and as a result, EWEMS purchased approximately fifteen (15) devices to address a shortfall due to this Mos change and vulnerability.

With the 2019 devices, and in conjunction with the 2016 and 2017 original purchase, the computer device inventory resulted in a variety of models, most with an extended life span, and an increased amount of maintenance, device failure and extensive repairs. Within the 2021 approved Budget, computer device replacement was addressed for the entire fleet.

## **Discussion**

The current models of computer devices are the Panasonic CF 31 and Panasonic FZG1. These are ruggedized tablets and laptops that have proven to be able to handle the forces and impacts Paramedics face each day. They have proven to respond in all environmental and climate conditions paramedics respond in. Although there are various models of computer platforms, the Panasonic model has proven its strength, durability and reliability over the years within EWEMS.

In research and development of the proposed replacement platforms, EWEMS and County of Essex Information Technology (IT) staff consulted and reviewed available hardware. Additionally, EWEMS Fleet Services staff were utilized to develop a mounting and docking platform to secure the devices within the vehicles. It was determined the devices that best suit the needs of the service, the paramedics, IT service techs and fleet services was the Panasonic CF33 (rear ambulance, mobile documentation device) and the Panasonic FZ 55 (ambulance front cab fixed, ERV and DC device) and their associated mounting and docking platforms.

The options and functions allow for larger screens, larger keyboards, the most up to date operating system, larger memory, advanced connection technology and safe and secure mounting.

The County of Essex County Financial Services staff was consulted to determine procurement efficiencies and access to various buying groups. The County of Essex Procurement and Compliance Supervisor recommends the utilization of Kinetics GPO Inc., CDW for the provision of the computer devices.

The following provides an understanding of the rationale for the decision to utilize a buying group solution. The Essex County Procurement Policy 19-003 states;

## **Section 10.0 Cooperative Procurement (Buying Groups)**

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- 10.1 A department may participate in a procurement process administered by a Buying Group provided appropriate approvals from the designated approval authority are obtained based on the anticipated dollar value.
- 10.2 In participating in a Buying Group:
- 10.2.1 To the extent practicable, the County shall ensure that the procurement is carried out in a manner consistent with the Trade Agreements; (CFTA/CETA)
  - 10.2.2 The County shall publish a notice of its participation with the Buying Group annually.

## **Who is Kinetic GPO Inc. (GPO - Group Purchasing Organization)?**

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Kinetic GPO is a CFTA (Trade Agreement)- compliant cooperative purchasing organization established for Public Sector and MASH entities across Canada, with the specific purpose of reducing procurement costs by leveraging the purchasing power of group buying and saving members time by simplifying steps to procure. Membership is free, with no volume commitments.

## **Why are we buying through CDW?**

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CDW was awarded the contract under Request for Standing Offer (RFSO) Technology Solutions for Canadian organization in the public sector. CDW Canada under the standing offer (SO) offers guaranteed minimum discounts off advertised price from CDW Canada's entire portfolio of hardware, software, solutions and services

It is the recommendation of Essex Windsor EMS, with the support of the County of Essex IT Department, the EWEMS Fleet Services and the County of Essex Procurement and Compliance Supervisor for the following:

1. 45 Panasonic FZ-55 tablets. This includes 6 devices to act a spare devices.

2. 56 Panasonic CF 33 laptops, this includes 8 devices to act as spare devices.
3. Power supplies for both models.
4. Docking stations for both models.
5. Mounting support for both models.
6. Extended warranty for all devices.
7. Programming of devices to Interdev specifications

The quoted price from Kinetics GPO INC., CDW is \$514,206.50 (plus HST) for all items listed in points 1 through 5. Interdev Technologies (ePCR vendor) is required to program all new devices to current configurations, specifications, apply updates and provide an additional seven (7) user licenses, at a cost of \$56,860.00. The County of Essex IT department is recommending an extended warranty for all devices at a cost of \$20,200. Installation of all mounting hardware, docking platforms and electrical adapters will be completed in house by EWEMS fleet services, eliminating third party costs. The overall quoted cost of the project is \$591,766.50 (plus HST). Therefore, this project is below the 2021 Budget allocation of \$600,000.

## **Financial Implications**

The total amount of the project is \$591,766.50 (plus HST). The 2021 EWEMS Budget allocates \$600,000 for the replacement of computer devices. The quoted amounts for the replacement of computers in EWEMS is below the 2021 Budget amount.

## **Recommendation**

That Essex County Council authorize Essex Windsor EMS to proceed with the procurement of replacement computer devices, compatible mounting hardware and programming in the amount of \$591,766.50 (plus HST) from Kinetics GPO Inc., CDW Distribution and Interdev Technologies.

Respectfully Submitted

*Bruce Krauter*

Bruce Krauter, Chief, Essex-Windsor Emergency Medical Services

Concurred With,

*Mike Galloway*

Mike Galloway, Chief Administrative Officer