



# CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

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July 3, 2024

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Foreperson  
Ventura County Grand Jury  
800 S. Victoria Ave.  
Ventura, CA 93003

Dear Foreperson:

The City of Simi Valley has received the 2023-2024 Grand Jury report, "Linking First Responders – Ventura County Regional Radio System," and in accordance with Penal Code Section 933.05, we submit our response to the Grand Jury findings on the enclosed.

The City Council considered the Grand Jury's report at its June 24, 2024, meeting and authorized this response. We appreciate the efforts of the Grand Jury in reviewing this matter and providing the City an opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Samantha C. Argabrite".

Samantha C. Argabrite  
City Manager

cc: Honorable Kevin G. DeNoce, Presiding Judge  
City Council  
City Attorney  
Director, Administrative Services

Enclosure



# COUNTY of VENTURA

## Grand Jury

800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009  
Tel (805) 477-1600  
Fax (805) 658-4523  
grandjury.countyofventura.org

### Response to 2023-2024 Ventura County Grand Jury Report Form (Please See California Penal Code Section 933.05)

Report Title: *Linking First Responders – Ventura County Regional Radio System*

Responding Entity: Mayor Fred Thomas, City of Simi Valley

#### FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: F-11
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered: Ref. -10  
*(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the Findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons.)*

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ have been implemented.  
*(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)*
- Recommendations numbered R-09 have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.  
*(Attach a summary indicating the timeframe for implementation.)*
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ require further analysis.  
*(Attach an explanation to include: scope and parameters of the analysis or study and timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion with the agency or department head. The timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the report.)*
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.  
*(Attach an explanation.)*

Date: July 1, 2024

DocuSigned by:  
Signed: Fred D. Thomas  
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Title: Fred D. Thomas, Mayor City of Simi Valley

Number of pages attached: 2

## City of Simi Valley - Responses

### Overview

The City's Information Services Division, which has primary responsibility for the Simi Valley Police Department (SVPD) radio system, was not consulted during the design phase of the VCRRS project. On February 15, 2024, the subject of interoperability was discussed during a meeting with the county; this was months after the design was finalized.

### Recommendation R-09

The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Simi Valley verify radio interoperability with Ventura County first responders who have adopted the VCRRS by July 2025.

### Response to Recommendation R-09

SVPD has the ability to communicate with the county's current system, VCRRS is not in production as of the time of this writing.

SVPD will have the ability to communicate with the VCRRS participating agencies provided SVPD receives cooperation from the county and purchases additional licenses from Motorola. Alternatively, the city may be able to patch the systems together but as noticed in the report this is not as efficient. The City will work with the County to create a detailed plan to ensure interoperability testing is performed prior to July 2025.

### Finding F-11

The system in use by the City of Simi Valley can only communicate with other Ventura County agencies' dispatch using a "patching" system, which is not as efficient as direct communication.

### Response to Finding F-11

This is correct, currently SVPD can communicate on the same channels by patching them into SVPD's channel. Additionally, SVPD has a standalone radio console, which includes all applicable frequencies with neighboring agencies that SVPD needs to monitor and communicate with. These frequencies are integrated and show up on SVPD console stations.

### Discussion Ref-10 (Page 4)

The City of Simi Valley has decided to independently upgrade its communication system and will not participate in the VCRRS.

### Response to Discussion Ref-10 (Page 4) (disputed)

At the time of this report, The City of Simi Valley has not made this decision.

### Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7)

The City of Simi Valley declined to participate in the VCRRS. The City recently upgraded its outdated system with Comm-Line radios rather than Motorola, the radio used in the VCRRS.

### Response to Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7) (disputed)

In 2023 the City gathered requirements and issued an RFP to update its 18-year-old public safety radio system. The City has received responses to the RFP and is currently evaluating the option of joining VCRRS or purchasing their own system. It is anticipated that the City will make a decision by September 2024.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 the City Council approved the purchase of one hundred and eighty (180) APX 8000 portable and fifty eight (58) APX 8500 Motorola radios that have subsequently been deployed to SVPD. These radios are compatible with VCRRS but will require additional licenses and cooperation from the county for configuration to work on the new system.

**Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7)**

Simi Valley can communicate with other Ventura County agencies using a dispatch "patching" system, which is not as efficient as direct communication.

**Response to Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7)**

Agreed

**Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7)**

The City of Simi Valley plans to install a new communication tower and rehabilitate an existing tower at the city's expense.

**Response to Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7) (disputed)**

At the time of this report, The City of Simi Valley has not made this decision.

**Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7)**

Because of its geographical proximity, the city prefers Los Angeles County as its primary interface rather than Ventura County.

**Response to Discussion Ref-10 (Page 7)**

It is imperative that Simi Valley can interface and have seamless communications with neighboring agencies including Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), LAPD Air, Metrolink, Ventura County Fire, LA County Fire, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Highway Patrol, and other agencies that use a common mutual aid channel.

It is unclear to the how other VCRRS participants will communicate with outside agencies.

If SVPD participates in VCRRS, additional equipment will be required for them to communicate with other agencies.