

**MAGTAG ADDITIONAL SITES/OUTREACH WORKING GROUP  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1) HIGH QUALITY SPEAKERPHONES FOR CONFERENCE ROOMS**

**Background**

As part of the MAG Regional Videoconferencing System (RVS), each member agency needs to have a telephone in the room where their videoconference unit is located. This phone is needed for easy setup of a video or audio conference, troubleshooting problems with the videoconference equipment, as a speakerphone in a point-to-point or multipoint audio call and as a backup in the event that a videoconference fails. Currently, some member agencies do not have a telephone in their videoconference room or they have a telephone with a poor quality speakerphone. A phone that is designed for audio projection into a conference room does more than just allow others in the room to hear the caller. It makes meeting over the phone effortless and natural because it significantly enhances the sound quality and the overall audio experience. A good quality speakerphone should increase audio conference use of the RVS.

Since RVS inception, audio conference use has risen steadily to nearly two audio conferences per business day. In informal discussion, member agencies stated they would travel to MAG meetings less if they had a good quality speakerphone that was conveniently located at their agency. They would audio conference if videoconferencing was not necessary.

**Purpose**

To provide a high quality speakerphone with two microphone pods for MAG member agency videoconference rooms, to increase audio conference use and thereby reduce travel, ease congestion and improve air quality.

**Outcomes**

- Necessary equipment to participate in audio conferences and videoconferences
- Greatly enhanced audio quality of conference calls
- Increased audio conference and videoconference usage
- Necessary equipment to facilitate videoconference troubleshooting

**Benefits**

- Improves ease of use of videoconference equipment
- Improves quality of audio for audio conference calls
- Increases audio and video conferencing usage by member agencies
- Reduces vehicle travel
- Helps to improve air quality
- Saves staff time and travel
- Increases flexibility of RVS through addition of quality speakerphones that can be enhanced or expanded by member agencies

**Added Benefit**

An added benefit is the utilization of existing resources. Each speakerphone requires an analog phone line. As part of the RVS Project, an analog phone line has been provided in each

videoconference room for the purpose of remote diagnostics in the event of a videoconference problem. This analog line can be used for the speakerphone if it is not being used for remote diagnostics; no additional phone lines are required, allowing member agencies to make better use of existing resources. MAG already pays the monthly cost for the analog line as part of the three-year RVS demonstration project.

**Issues**

None known.

**Estimated Quantity and Cost**

A high quality speakerphone suitable for this application is available for purchase from Arizona State Contract. One example of this kind of speakerphone is the Polycom Soundstation Premier EX. Use of the State Contract procurement option would facilitate deployment of the phones upon the MAG approval process. It is estimated that 30 member agencies may require a high quality speakerphone. The cost to purchase a speakerphone is approximately \$1,300.

## 2) WEB BASED SCHEDULING PACKAGE FOR RVS

### **Background**

During the initial design and implementation of the RVS, the consultant evaluated the available web based scheduling software packages available for large-scale videoconferencing implementation. The consultant concluded that no available software met the needs of MAG at the time. MAG member agencies have been emailing or faxing videoconference requests and documentation to MAG staff. MAG staff have been scheduling and documenting RVS usage utilizing basic computer spreadsheets to collect the information. Since then, new and upgraded software packages have been developed and offered in the industry. MAG RVS usage has increased from one or two audio and videoconferences per week prior to full RVS completion, to an average of three or more per day. FHWA requires quarterly reports regarding the status and usage of the RVS over the three-year term of the demonstration project. The volume and complexity of RVS usage necessitates that MAG obtain a fully functional scheduling and usage documentation software package. Examples of software vendors are Forgent, MagicSoft and TODD.

### **Purpose**

To purchase a fully functional, integrated, web based scheduling and documentation software package for the RVS to increase RVS use by making it easy and efficient for the end user. Currently documentation is a hindrance and impedes usage.

### **Outcomes**

- Web based scheduling of videoconferences by MAG member agencies
- Integrated scheduling and documentation components of RVS usage
- Training for MAG staff and MAG member agency staff on how to use the software
- Adequate capacity of software to accommodate maximum RVS usage in the future

### **Benefits**

- Easier and more accurate documentation of RVS usage
- Ability to document continued growth in RVS usage to meet FHWA documentation requirements
- Increased RVS use, therefore less regional vehicle trips and improved air quality

### **Issues**

- Purchase of a web based scheduling and documentation software package is an RVS enhancement that has an indirect benefit to MAG member agencies
- Videoconferencing scheduling and documentation software may not be on State Contract and will necessitate going through the formal procurement process

### **Estimated Cost**

Depending upon the package, the features and functionality, the training, and the service and support purchased, estimated cost is \$20,000.

### **3) LATITUDE SERVER FOR RVS**

#### **Background**

One of the primary functions of the RVS is audio conferencing. The RVS utilizes a server that houses the Latitude software needed to send e-mail notifications and allow for web based scheduling of audio conferences. To save money, MAG did not purchase a separate Latitude server when the RVS was being implemented. MAG added the Latitude software to an existing MAG server, even though it was recommended that the Latitude be placed on its own server to alleviate failures and repairs. Currently, MAG cannot receive the latest Latitude software upgrades because the existing server is outdated. MAG needs to purchase a new server with Windows 2000 operating system specifically for the Latitude. Member agency usage of the audio conference component of the RVS has grown steadily since the implementation of the RVS. Continued use of the current server will result in increased down time of the equipment and could affect audio conference usage of the RVS if not addressed in a timely manner. A new audio conference server will enhance the functionality of the RVS.

#### **Purpose**

To purchase a new server with a Windows 2000 operating system for the Latitude audio conference software for the RVS.

#### **Outcomes**

- Necessary equipment to participate in audio conference and videoconference calls
- Increased reliability of audio conference server
- Continued effective support of audio conferences through the RVS
- Enhanced functionality of the audio conference server and the RVS
- Increased audio and videoconference usage

#### **Benefits**

- Improves reliability of audio conference server
- Improves reliability of audio conference and audio-integrated videoconference calls
- Increases audio and videoconferencing usage by member agencies
- Reduces vehicle travel
- Saves staff time and travel
- Helps to improve air quality

#### **Issues**

None

#### **Estimated Cost**

The estimated cost for an enhanced Latitude audio conferencing server is \$10,000.