



**JOHN D. IDLEBURG**  
**SHERIFF**

## **OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE**

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**DATE: May 27, 2025**

**TO: Purchasing Agent Yvette Albarran**  
**Deputy County Administrator Matthew Meyers**

**CC: Undersheriff Lawrence Oliver**  
**Business Manager James Chamernik**

**FROM: IT Manager Bernard Malkov**

**REFERENCE: Request for Bid Exemption Motorola Solutions**

In October of 2013, an RFP (#13231) was issued to replace radio communications in Lake County and migrate those communications to Starcom21. As part of this process, coverage studies were completed to determine outdoor sites. Additionally, more studies were completed to determine if there were any gaps in coverage indoors in critical areas that needed to be addressed. Those studies identified 15 areas of the Waukegan campus that had a weak signal and needed additional coverage. These areas include courts complex, admin building and the jail. Because of this critical coverage gap, a DAS (Distributed Amplifier System) was included in the RFP response. The DAS takes RF signal, converts it to fiber and then distributes coverage in those areas that are lacking.

In March of 2025, we had an antenna failure on the roof at 18 N County because of 80MPH winds. When the antenna was swapped, the DAS system should have taken over to provide coverage during this outage. It did not. Additionally, when a spare antenna was put back on the roof, we still noticed degradation in our radio system. We had Motorola check the radio system to see why we were having issues. We were told the DAS system was end of life and no longer working as expected. This system is meant to be replaced every 10-12 years. During this time, the jail had to be placed on full or modified lockdown for safety reasons. Motorola was able to make some slight adjustments to improve coverage, however, we are still experiencing dead spots. After speaking with people who were here when our Starcom system was put in place, these parts have never been replaced. In March, when this came to our attention, we initially thought this system was for the jail. However, in working with Motorola and doing more research, it was discovered it was a campus wide system and can only be replaced that way. This system was initially maintained by the Radio Department before that department was disbanded.

The Sheriff's Office is taking the lead on this since it impacts us the most. We are asking for a Single Source BID Exemption under 33.066(B)(2) of the Lake County Purchasing Ordinance. The DAS system was originally procured under RFP 13231 which was awarded to Motorola. Therefore, Motorola is the only vendor that can work on the Starcom system and provide equipment. The Lake County Board previously approved a bid exemption request on August 8, 2023.