



Two way radio systems are a vital part of Council maintenance and support for service delivery and support staff. Council radio resources are also a vital part of large scale public safety incidents, and need to integrate with Police, Fire and Ambulance radio systems at times of emergency.



Virtually all local government organisations operate two way radio systems for communication with and between council staff in maintenance, construction and operations activities that require dedicated group communications capabilities. These radio systems are often highly reliable, but can fall into disuse and even disrepair as they age. The new age of digital two way radio is here with manufacturers scaling back their support for analogue systems, driven by regulatory constraints on radio spectrum conservation and new functionality such as data transmission, GPS location and encryption.

The Business Challenge

Toowoomba Regional Council was formed from the amalgamation of 8 smaller councils, and in the process inherited 8 unconnected radio systems in varying states of reliability and coverage.

Details of the radio site's assets, including equipment types, performance and general health, was unknown.

Many Council staff used mobile phones to communicate with colleagues and managers as the two way radio systems were difficult to use.

The Gravelroad Solution

Council wanted to know the condition of their 8 networks and where the points of failure were.

First steps were an audit of infrastructure and assessment of investment options to remediate operational risks and to identify opportunities to make the network more effective for Council. It was important to minimise cost and to ensure systems worked as intended with some intergation to support operational activities.

The audit used Gravelroad templates and photographic records of equipment, buildings and masts, and identified areas of immediate work – battery and antenna replacement, Equipment retuning and spectrum changes.

A budget was developed for immediate and short term work, radio resource procurement managed to comply with Council requirements, and remediation work overseen.

The longer term options were considered next – should Council plan to replace the existing analogue systems with the new digital technology? Should they manage the radio systems themselves, outsource management, or consider a completely outsourced service?

Radio spectrum changes were necessary in several sites, and a local airport suffered poor radio coverage due to radio interference from a nearby industrial source of radio noise.

The Outcome

Gravelroad was engaged to provide ongoing radio design and management services by Council until all remediation work was completed, and Council was able to make a decision on insourcing vs. outsourcing radio services.

Other Council Radio Work

Gravelroad has helped other Councils and public utilities to assess and upgrade their radio systems in Australia and Papua New Guinea. Our independence and industry knowledge provides a unique specialist radio resource for our clients.

Gravelroad is an independent professional change management consulting firm with a difference. What sets us apart is our customer centric culture, which drives our collaborative approach. The combination of our teams' deep and practical industry experience, our ability to work in close partnership with our Clients, and our independence from any one solution, enables us to provide Clients with advice that is aligned to their strategic direction.

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