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Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB)

What is the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board?

- Established in 1979 by Joint Powers Agreement to oversee the 9-1-1 system, the metro portion of the Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response (ARMER) system, and EMS in the metropolitan area of Minneapolis/St. Paul.
- Supports public safety for the residents of Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, and Washington Counties, and the City of Minneapolis.

What is ARMER and How does it Work?

- The Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response (ARMER) is Minnesota's primary two-way public safety radio system used by most state, county, and local public safety agencies.
- MnDOT owns and operates the ARMER backbone, including the core network and regional sites; local governments fund and maintain local equipment and access costs.
- MESB governs the region-wide shared-radio system covering the ten metro counties that is part of the larger state-wide system and provides regional administrative and operational support, including tower site leasing, utilities, grant coordination, and regional system standards.

MESB Values

Public Trust, Commitment, Collaborative Government, Innovation

Chair	Vice Chair	Secretary	Treasurer
Elliott Payne, City of Minneapolis	Tom Wolf, Scott County	Kelly Miller, Ramsey County	Mike Gamache, Anoka County



ARMER RADIO SYSTEM

Protecting public safety communications



ARMER RADIO ISSUES

- ARMER is essential for public safety--it is the backbone of coordinated response.
- Infrastructure and equipment across the state is becoming outdated and will need replacement soon.
- With out a stable funding source for maintenance, reliability, and modernization, public safety is at risk.



WHY IT MATTERS:

- First responders rely on seamless communication across jurisdictions during daily operations and large-scale emergencies.
- Gaps in maintenance funding, system upgrades, and data sharing create real public safety risks.



SOLUTION:

A coordinated package of policy and investments that funds the purchase, installation, upgrades, and maintenance of the ARMER system, supports local partners, and invests in Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) level of encryption.

2026 MESB ARMER Legislative Priorities:

New Statewide Approach

Support the Minnesota Public Safety Radio Communications Funding and Interoperability Act

- Establishes statewide funding and governance for ARMER infrastructure and equipment
- Eliminates the requirement for counties to fund ARMER network expansion.

Funding Solutions to Bridge Toward a Statewide Approach

- 1. Support MnDOT's \$11.5 million ARMER capital investment request** for the replacement of ARMER radio communication towers and equipment buildings.
- 2. Provide Ongoing Maintenance Funding for County Infrastructure** to ensure radio systems are reliable and are maintained.
- 3. Expand and Support ARMER Equipment Grants.** Build on the \$4 million appropriation allocated in 2023 and dedicate additional state dollars for towards grants for the purchase of public safety radios.

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