



Joint Legislative Audit Committee

April 16, 2026—1:00 p.m.



Lindsey A. Perry
Auditor General

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ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE

INTERIM MEETING NOTICE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2026

Time: 1:00 P.M.

Place: HHR 1

Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here:

<https://www.azleg.gov/videoplayer/?clientID=6361162879&eventID=2026041018>

AGENDA

Call to order and opening remarks

1. JLAC-directed Arizona School Safety Special Audit—Interoperable Communication Systems, December 2025 Report 25-214

- Presentation by interoperable communication systems vendor—Mutualink
- Presentation by interoperable communication systems vendor—Motorola Solutions
- Presentation by interoperable communication systems vendor—Navigate360
- Presentation by participating Arizona law enforcement agency—Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office
- Presentation by participating Arizona law enforcement agency—Mohave County Sheriff’s Office
- Presentation by participating Arizona law enforcement agency—Pinal County Sheriff’s Office
- Presentation by participating Arizona law enforcement agency—La Paz County Sheriff’s Office

Adjournment

Members:

Senator Mark Finchem, Co-chair
~~Senator Flavio Bravo~~
 Senator Eva Diaz
 Senator Timothy "Tim" Dunn
 Senator David C. Farnsworth
 Senator Catherine Miranda
 Senator Warren Petersen, Ex-officio

Representative Matt Gress, Chair 2026
 Representative Michael Carbone
 Representative Steve Montenegro, Ex-officio
 Representative Michele Peña
 Representative Stephanie Stahl Hamilton
 Representative Betty J Villegas

04/09/2026
04/13/2026
VC

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ARIZONA AUDITOR GENERAL

Lindsey A. Perry, Auditor General

DATE: April 14, 2026

TO: Representative Matt Gress, Chairman
Senator Mark Finchem, Co-chairman
Members, Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC)

FROM: Lindsey Perry, Auditor General

SUBJECT: JLAC-directed Arizona School Safety Special Audit—Interoperable Communication Systems, December 2025 Report 25-214

Background

Pursuant to a December 6, 2023, JLAC resolution, we released the second report in a series of school safety special audit reports. This second public report evaluated the School Safety Interoperability Fund (Fund), including whether expenditures of Fund monies were for statutorily authorized purposes, whether interoperable communication systems purchased with Fund monies met statutory requirements, and whether the systems were procured in accordance with applicable requirements. The report also provided information on issues we identified related to the systems' current functionality and long-term operations.

At JLAC's January 20, 2026, meeting, we presented key findings and recommendations from the special audit report, including information about each of the 3 systems purchased using Fund monies—Mutualink, Motorola Solutions, and Navigate360. We also presented information about the factors we identified inhibiting interoperable communication systems' functionality throughout the State. At the same meeting, representatives from most law enforcement agencies that spent Fund monies presented information to JLAC about their respective systems and plans to address the system issues we identified. Chairman Gress and Co-chairman Finchem requested that each of the law enforcement agencies that spent Fund monies provide additional information pertaining to their respective systems, including the list of participating and nonparticipating schools. Twelve of the 14 law enforcement agencies provided the requested information directly to JLAC for its review; the La Paz and Pinal County Sheriffs' Offices did not.

Attachment A includes the report highlights for Report 25-214 *Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communication Systems*.

Attachment B includes page 5, Table 2—Total Fund allocations to the 14 agencies that spent Fund monies ranged between \$860,000 and \$5.15 million, and Figure 1—10 of 15 counties in the State purchased Mutualink systems, from Report 25-214 *Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communication Systems*.

Attachments C through **F** include the agency pages from the December 2025 special audit report for 4 law enforcement agencies that spent Fund monies and were requested by Chairman Gress and Co-chairman Finchem to attend today's JLAC meeting—La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, and Pinal County Sheriffs' Offices.

Action required

None. Presented for JLAC's information only.

Attachment A

Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communications Systems Highlights

Special Audit

Arizona School Safety

Interoperable Communication Systems

State's \$26 million investment in interoperable communication systems, which reportedly involve about 20% of public schools State-wide, has not yielded anticipated benefits, and their continued use is in doubt because of a lack of assured funding and, in some cases, poor system functionality



Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communication Systems

Special Audit

State’s \$26 million investment in interoperable communication systems, which reportedly involve about 20% of public schools State-wide, has not yielded anticipated benefits, and their continued use is in doubt because of a lack of assured funding and, in some cases, poor system functionality

Audit purpose

This audit is the second in a series of special audits related to school safety authorized by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee in December 2023. The first report, issued in December 2024, assessed emergency operations planning at schools. This report focuses on School Safety Interoperability Fund (Fund) expenditures by law enforcement agencies, including their compliance with statutory and applicable procurement requirements and whether the systems purchased with Fund monies met statutory requirements. The next report will address schools’ key physical safety infrastructure and related issues and is due by December 31, 2026.

Key takeaways

- ▶ **State has spent millions on interoperable communication systems that reportedly will connect about one-fifth of public schools to law enforcement agencies**

Since 2019, the State has allocated \$26 million through what has become the School Safety Interoperability Fund to law enforcement agencies to facilitate improved emergency communications between law enforcement agencies, public schools, and other public safety agencies. Law enforcement agencies have used Fund monies to purchase interoperable communication systems that meet or are reportedly capable of meeting requirements specified in Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §41-1733.

Monies were spent to facilitate emergency communications between public schools and law enforcement agencies, but some nonpublic schools may also have benefited, contrary to statute.

The systems purchased are reported to involve about 20% of the State’s public schools, which include traditional public schools and public charter schools. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter 1, pages 6 through 19, we found that 4 of 14 law enforcement agencies that received Fund monies also reported connecting private and/or tribal schools to the interoperable communication systems purchased with Fund monies, which was contrary to statute and may have improperly benefited these schools.

▶ **Interoperable communication systems can facilitate real-time 2-way communication during emergencies**

Interoperable communication systems, such as those that offer the features specified in statute, can facilitate real-time 2-way information sharing through voice, text, video, and other means to enhance public safety responses to school emergencies. For the purchase of such systems, 15 law enforcement agencies, including 13 county sheriff's offices and 2 city police departments, were allocated monies from the Fund.¹ As discussed in Chapter 1, pages 6 through 19, we found that each of the 3 interoperable communication systems law enforcement agencies purchased using Fund monies generally met, or reportedly met, statutory requirements.

▶ **Most law enforcement agencies did not follow procurement requirements, and contracts lacked essential protections**

When acquiring interoperable communication systems, 9 of 14 law enforcement agencies and their county or city procurement departments did not comply with applicable procurement requirements and/or lacked documentation required by their procurement policies and procedures, as discussed in Chapter 2, pages 20 through 28. Additionally, several agencies did not follow recommended contracting practices. As a result, many of the resulting contracts relied on vendor-supplied proposals for contract terms and did not include essential protections for the purchasers such as clearly defined performance standards, penalties for nonperformance, and contract-termination clauses. Further, agencies' contract-monitoring efforts appeared limited, as evidenced by most contracts having been paid in full despite our finding that many systems had limited functionality, and some law enforcement agencies expressed dissatisfaction with vendors' system-implementation processes.

Faulty contracting and a lack of monitoring left most agencies with few options for addressing poor vendor or system performance.

▶ **Only 2 law enforcement agencies' systems demonstrated all 5 emergency communication functions we tested, and 4 did not function sufficiently for us to observe their operation**

As reported in Chapter 3, pages 29 through 32, only 2 of the interoperable communication systems we tested during our observations demonstrated all key functions that law enforcement officials considered most useful during a school emergency. Moreover, 4 law enforcement agencies reported that the systems they had acquired with Fund monies were not working sufficiently to enable us to perform any observations or testing and had not increased their communication capabilities with schools.

¹ Coconino County Sheriff's Office declined to spend the \$1.25 million it was allocated from the Fund, and those monies have since been reallocated to other agencies.

▶ **Unrealistic vendor representations of system performance and insufficient infrastructure, training, and upkeep contributed to some agencies' dissatisfaction with their systems and poor functionality**

Unrealistic vendor representations regarding system performance and implementation timelines contributed to some law enforcement agencies' dissatisfaction with the process and with their respective systems, as discussed in Chapter 4, pages 33 through 43. Specifically, connecting public safety agencies and schools to these systems has taken longer than many law enforcement agencies had anticipated, and some reported that their systems were not fully functional across participating schools and public safety agencies in their jurisdictions. Those law enforcement agencies that reported working closely with vendors during the implementation process reported a better understanding of expected timelines and greater satisfaction with system performance. Other factors that contributed to some systems' poor functionality included infrastructure limitations and insufficient system upkeep and training for users.

As of June 2025, some agencies reported that their systems were still not fully functional across participating schools and public safety agencies in their jurisdictions.

▶ **Law enforcement agencies did not plan for ongoing costs and may abandon systems if ongoing State funding is not available**

Some law enforcement agencies indicated that they considered the interoperable communication systems purchased with Fund monies to be supplemental to existing emergency 911 communication systems, but not essential for their operations. Several agencies, including those that were pleased with their systems and the enhanced communication capabilities they provided, reported that they did not anticipate continuing to operate their systems if State funding is not available to pay for ongoing operating costs. As discussed in Chapter 2, pages 20 through 28, we estimated that an average rural county sheriff's office would need between \$15,828 and \$382,800 annually to pay for licensing, software, and other system costs, depending on which system they had acquired with Fund monies. This indicates that the State-wide annual cost to continue operating these systems could be a multimillion-dollar annual funding commitment.

We estimated an average rural county sheriff's office would need between \$15,828 and \$382,800 annually to pay for ongoing system costs.

Key recommendations to the Legislature

- ▶ Consider evaluating and revising, as necessary, A.R.S. §41-1733 to clarify whether nonpublic schools may participate in systems purchased with Fund monies.
- ▶ Consider evaluating and revising, as necessary, A.R.S. §41-1733 to clarify system requirements such as those relating to communication capabilities for all users, access controls, compatibility with existing equipment, and federal certification and connectivity.

Key recommendations to law enforcement agencies that received Fund monies

- ▶ Comply with A.R.S. §41-1733 by establishing procedures to ensure that ongoing interoperable communication system costs, such as licensing fees, for any nonpublic schools are not paid with Fund monies and reporting all Fund expenditures for the preceding fiscal year to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) by November 1 each year.
- ▶ Follow applicable procurement requirements for any future expenditures of Fund monies; ensure that any contracts, addendums, or extensions that involve the use of Fund monies follow recommended practices for contracting; and establish and implement a process to monitor contracts.
- ▶ Evaluate the implementation status and functionality of their respective interoperable communication systems and work with vendors, as applicable, to resolve functional deficiencies; and establish a process for routinely testing system functions.
- ▶ Develop a detailed cost estimate for ongoing system operational costs and a plan to address ongoing interoperable communication funding needs, including actions that will be taken if the State does not provide further funding for existing interoperable communication systems, and provide the cost estimate and plan to their respective governing bodies, the Legislature, and the Governor.

Attachment B

Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communications Systems

Vendor and Fund allocation information

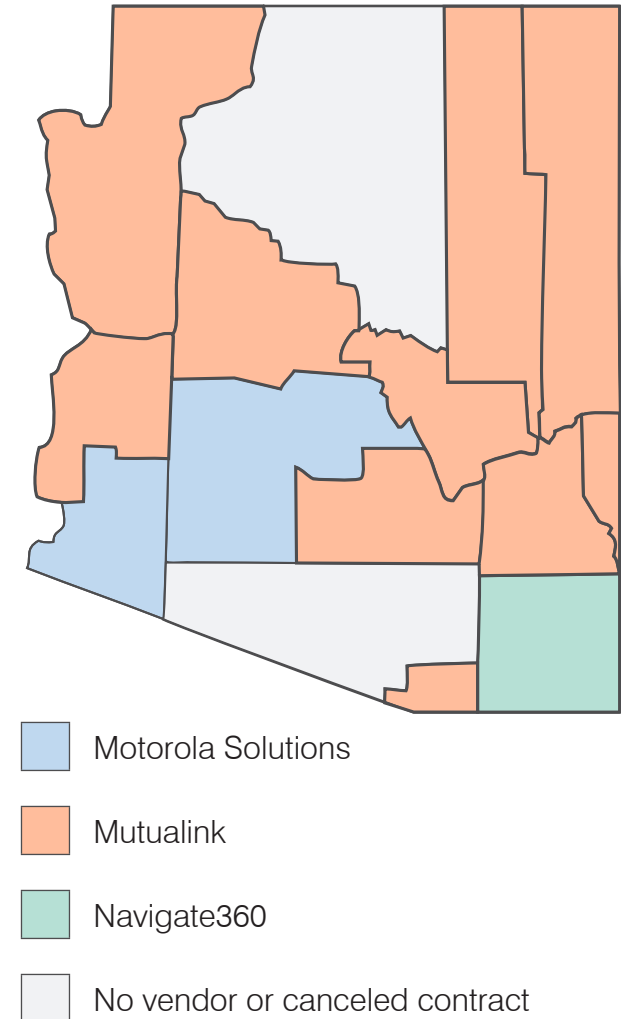
Table 2

Total Fund allocations to the 14 agencies that spent Fund monies ranged between \$860,000 and \$5.15 million

| County | Agency | Vendor | Total allocations through Sept. 2025 |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Apache | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | \$1,275,000 |
| Cochise | County Sheriff's Office | Navigate360 | 1,500,000 |
| Coconino | County Sheriff's Office | N/A ¹ | N/A ¹ |
| Gila | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 1,710,540 |
| Graham | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 1,254,930 |
| Greenlee | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 859,338 |
| La Paz | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 950,000 |
| Maricopa | County Sheriff's Office | Motorola Solutions | 5,150,000 |
| Mohave | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 1,875,000 |
| Navajo | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 1,940,000 |
| Pima | Tucson Police Department ² | Motorola Solutions (Contract canceled) | 2,000,000 |
| Pinal | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 2,455,192 |
| Santa Cruz | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 1,100,000 |
| Yavapai | County Sheriff's Office | Mutualink | 2,550,000 |
| Yuma | Yuma Police Department ³ | Motorola Solutions | 1,350,000 |
| Total | | | \$25,970,000 |

Figure 1

10 of 15 counties in the State purchased Mutualink systems



¹ Coconino County Sheriff's Office declined to spend the \$1,250,000 it was allocated from the Fund in fiscal year 2022, and those monies were reallocated to other agencies in fiscal year 2026.

² Tucson Police Department originally contracted with Motorola Solutions but canceled its contract in December 2024 after it determined the system would not meet schools' needs. Tucson Police Department reported during the audit that it is developing its own interoperable communications functionality that it will make available to schools throughout Pima County.

³ Yuma Police Department reported that its School Safety Interoperability Fund program includes schools throughout the entire county.

Source: Auditor General staff review of Laws 2021, Ch. 403, §19; Laws 2022, Ch. 313, §5; Laws 2025, Ch. 233, §127; agency-provided documentation related to contracts and expenditures for interoperable communication systems for fiscal year 2021 through September 2025; and auditor-conducted interviews.

Attachment C

Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communications Systems

Maricopa CSO page

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Maricopa County general information (fiscal year 2024)



| | |
|--|-----------|
| Population | 4,757,600 |
| School age population (projection for July 2024) | 785,530 |
| Number of K-12 public schools | 1,165 |
| Number of students enrolled at K-12 public schools | 696,724 |

Overview of School Safety Interoperability Fund monies

As of September 2025

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Total allocation | \$5,150,000 |
| Pilot program allocation | \$2,100,000 |
| School Safety Interoperability Fund allocation through fiscal year 2025 | \$3,050,000 |
| Fiscal year 2026 allocation | \$0 |
| Total interoperable communication system contracted amount | \$2,761,119 |
| Total expenditures | \$449,151 |
| Allocation amount remaining | \$4,700,849 |
| Submitted all required annual expenditure reports to JLBC? | Yes |
| Spent monies only for authorized purposes? | Yes |

Interoperable communication system information

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Interoperable communication system vendor selected | Motorola Solutions |
| Reported number of public safety agencies participating | 1 ¹ |
| Reported number of K-12 public schools participating | 5 ¹ |
| Number of students enrolled at participating K-12 public schools | 1,665 |
| Interoperable communication system utilized during real emergency event? | Yes |

¹ The agency reported it focused on making its interoperable communication system available to schools the agency identified as having the greatest need for improved interoperable communication.

System procurement

The Maricopa County sheriff's office, procurement department, and board of supervisors were involved in the procurement process for the interoperable communication system.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Procurement method | RFP |
| Followed applicable procurement policies and procedures? | Yes |

Contracting best practices

| | |
|---|------------|
| Created a contract outside of vendor proposal? | Yes |
| Contract included standards/provisions for evaluating vendor performance? | Yes |
| Contract included incentives and/or penalties linked to performance? | Yes |
| Contract included termination provisions for either/both parties? | Yes |
| Contracts contained detailed pricing information? | Yes |

Interoperable communication system functionality

| | |
|--|------------|
| Could the agency determine the emergency's location and who reported it? | Yes |
| Could the agency receive panic button alerts? | Yes |
| Could the agency view live security camera footage? | No |
| Could the agency access school maps and/or building plans? | No |
| Was access to systems limited to active emergencies? | Yes |

At the time of our observation, security cameras at the school site we visited were not connected to the system, and law enforcement could not view the school's site maps because the school had not submitted them to the vendor to be uploaded to the system. The agency reported that the issues we identified during our observations were resolved as of November 2025.

Implementation delays

Agency officials reported delays in system implementation were due to coordinating with public schools, including establishing a memorandum of understanding with each participating public school.

Timeline of system implementation

| 2021 | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| October | Allocated \$525,000 of Fund monies. |
| November | Allocated \$525,000 of Fund monies. |

↓

| 2022 | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| January | Allocated \$525,000 of Fund monies. |
| April | Allocated \$525,000 of Fund monies. |
| October | Allocated \$3,050,000 of Fund monies. |

↓

| 2023 | |
|-----------------|--|
| November | Signed \$2,761,119 contract with Motorola Solutions. |

↓

| 2024 | |
|------------------|--|
| May | Paid Motorola Solutions \$449,151. |
| September | Agency reported first school successfully connected to its interoperable communication system. |

↓

| 2025 | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| May | We conducted our system observation. |

Future plans

The agency's contract with Motorola Solutions expires in October 2026. The agency reported it is working with State, county, and local agencies to expand its interoperable communication system to other county public schools. The agency also reported it is developing training programs for public safety agencies and public schools to more quickly implement the system at additional schools.

Recommendations to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

1. In conjunction with its vendor, as necessary, develop a cost estimate for ongoing system operational costs for fiscal years 2027 through 2031 and provide this information to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.
2. Establish a process to monitor contracts that involve the use of Fund monies to ensure the vendor complies with contract terms, including any requirements to provide regular communication or updates.
3. Establish a process for routinely testing the interoperable communication system purchased with Fund monies to ensure it is functioning across participating public safety agencies and public schools, including determining whether software updates have been installed, and whether authorized system user information is accurate and up to date and authorized system users have been trained to use system features relevant to their positions.
4. Evaluate the implementation status and functionality of its interoperable communication system and work with vendors, as applicable, to resolve functional deficiencies; if resolution is not achieved, determine what actions the agency will pursue, in consultation with legal counsel, as needed.
5. Make a plan to address the interoperable communication system's ongoing operating costs, including actions the agency will take if the State does not provide further funding for existing interoperable communication systems; provide this plan to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office's response

Agency response: The information presented on these pages is agreed to. The audit recommendations will be implemented.

Response explanation: MCSO agrees with the information presented in this audit report with a note on two of the items: As the report states we could not view live security camera footage during the State Auditor General's test, but this functionality will be available when the system is fully implemented. Likewise, the access to school maps and building plans will also be a standard feature to the system and available when fully implemented. Also, as of this response dated December 11, 2025, we have three additional schools participating in the program for a total of eight implementations.

MCSO agrees with the audit recommendations 1 – 5 and will plan to implement them through a coordinated effort with participating schools, vendors and participating public safety agencies.

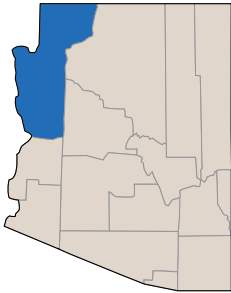
Attachment D

Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communications Systems

Mohave CSO page

Mohave County Sheriff's Office

Mohave County general information (fiscal year 2024)



| | |
|--|---------|
| Population | 230,900 |
| School age population (projection for July 2024) | 28,676 |
| Number of K-12 public schools | 64 |
| Number of students enrolled at K-12 public schools | 22,536 |

Overview of School Safety Interoperability Fund monies

As of September 2025

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Total allocation | \$1,875,000 |
| Pilot program allocation | \$100,000 |
| School Safety Interoperability Fund allocation through fiscal year 2025 | \$1,250,000 |
| Fiscal year 2026 allocation | \$525,000 |
| Total interoperable communication system contracted amount | \$1,350,000 |
| Total expenditures | \$1,065,104 |
| Allocation amount remaining | \$809,896 |
| Submitted all required annual expenditure reports to JLBC? | Yes |
| Spent monies only for authorized purposes? | Yes |

Interoperable communication system information

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Interoperable communication system vendor selected | Mutualink |
| Reported number of public safety agencies participating | 5 |
| Reported number of K-12 public schools participating | 51 |
| Number of students enrolled at participating K-12 public schools | 21,890 |
| Interoperable communication system utilized during real emergency event? | No |

System procurement

The Mohave County sheriff's office, procurement department, and board of supervisors were involved in the procurement process for the interoperable communication system.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Procurement method | Sole source |
| Followed applicable procurement policies and procedures? | Yes |

Contracting best practices

| | |
|---|------------|
| Created a contract outside of vendor proposal? | Yes |
| Contract included standards/provisions for evaluating vendor performance? | No |
| Contract included incentives and/or penalties linked to performance? | Yes |
| Contract included termination provisions for either/both parties? | Yes |
| Contracts contained detailed pricing information? | No |

Interoperable communication system functionality

| | |
|--|------------|
| Could the agency determine the emergency's location and who reported it? | Yes |
| Could the agency receive panic button alerts? | Yes |
| Could the agency view live security camera footage? | No |
| Could the agency access school maps and/or building plans? | No |
| Was access to systems limited to active emergencies? | Yes |

We were unable to observe some system functionality because school staff could not log in to the Mutualink system during our observation. Additionally, security cameras at the school site where we performed our observation were not functioning at the time of our observation, and the school had not provided site maps to the vendor to be uploaded to the system. The agency reported that it is working with participating schools and the vendor to ensure that the system is fully functional.

Implementation delays

Agency officials reported delays in system implementation were due to outdated communication infrastructure.

Timeline of system implementation

| 2021 | |
|-----------------|---|
| October | Allocated \$50,000 in Fund monies. |
| December | Signed \$100,000 contract with Mutualink. |

↓

| 2022 | |
|-----------------|--|
| January | Allocated \$25,000 in Fund monies. |
| April | Allocated \$25,000 in Fund monies. |
| May | Paid Mutualink \$50,000. |
| October | Allocated \$1,250,000 in Fund monies. |
| November | Agency reported first school successfully connected to its interoperable communication system. |
| December | Signed \$1,250,000 contract extension with Mutualink and paid Mutualink \$625,000. |

↓

| 2024 | |
|-----------------|--|
| February | Paid Mutualink \$27,604. |
| March | Paid Mutualink \$50,000. |
| April | Made final \$312,500 payment to Mutualink. |

↓

| 2025 | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| April | We conducted our system observation. |

Future plans

The agency's contract with Mutualink did not have an expiration date. Agency officials reported they are considering other interoperable communication system options. Agency officials reported that if Fund monies are no longer available to the agency, it may not be able to continue operating the system due to lack of funding.

Recommendations to Mohave County Sheriff's Office

1. In conjunction with its vendor, as necessary, develop a cost estimate for ongoing system operational costs for fiscal years 2027 through 2031 and provide this information to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.
2. Ensure that any contracts, contract addendums, or contract extensions that involve the use of Fund monies follow recommended practices for contracting by including elements such as clearly defined deliverables and obtain detailed pricing information sufficient to verify that charges are accurate and reasonable.
3. Establish a process to monitor contracts that involve the use of Fund monies to ensure the vendor complies with contract terms, including any requirements to provide regular communication or updates.
4. Establish a process for routinely testing the interoperable communication system purchased with Fund monies to ensure it is functioning across participating public safety agencies and public schools, including determining whether software updates have been installed, and whether authorized system user information is accurate and up to date and authorized system users have been trained to use system features relevant to their positions.
5. Evaluate the implementation status and functionality of its interoperable communication system and work with vendors, as applicable, to resolve functional deficiencies; if resolution is not achieved, determine what actions the agency will pursue, in consultation with legal counsel, as needed.
6. Make a plan to address the interoperable communication system's ongoing operating costs, including actions the agency will take if the State does not provide further funding for existing interoperable communication systems; provide this plan to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.

Mohave County Sheriff's Office's response

Agency response: The information presented on these pages is agreed to. The audit recommendations will be implemented.

Response explanation: The Mohave County Sheriff's Office acknowledges the findings of the Arizona Auditor General.

The Mohave County Sheriff's Office accepts the findings and the recommendations moving forward.

The Mohave County Sheriff's Office will make every effort to satisfy the recommendations.

It is the intent of the Mohave County Sheriff's Office to utilize the system as designed.

Areas of concern are noted, and immediate corrections will be made.

The Mohave County Sheriff's Office will work with the vendor and all schools attached to ensure functionality and ease of access.

Additional training will be conducted.

Sheriff Doug Schuster
Mohave County Sheriff's Office
(928)753-0753

Attachment E

Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communications Systems Pinal CSO page

Pinal County Sheriff's Office

Pinal County general information (fiscal year 2024)



| | |
|--|---------|
| Population | 486,500 |
| School age population (projection for July 2024) | 76,170 |
| Number of K-12 public schools | 126 |
| Number of students enrolled at K-12 public schools | 60,671 |

Overview of School Safety Interoperability Fund monies

As of September 2025

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Total allocation | \$2,455,192 |
| Pilot program allocation | \$655,192 |
| School Safety Interoperability Fund allocation through fiscal year 2025 | \$1,800,000 |
| Fiscal year 2026 allocation | \$0 |
| Total interoperable communication system contracted amount | \$2,455,192 |
| Total expenditures | \$2,005,192 |
| Allocation amount remaining | \$450,000 |
| Submitted all required annual expenditure reports to JLBC? | No |
| Spent monies only for authorized purposes? | Yes |

Interoperable communication system information

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Interoperable communication system vendor selected | Mutualink |
| Reported number of public safety agencies participating | 8 |
| Reported number of K-12 public schools participating | 66 |
| Number of students enrolled at participating K-12 public schools | 38,094 |
| Interoperable communication system utilized during real emergency event? | N/A ¹ |

¹ The agency reported the system was not functional as of June 2025.

System procurement

The Pinal County sheriff's office, treasurer's office, and board of supervisors were involved in the procurement process for the interoperable communication system.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Procurement method | Sole source |
| Followed applicable procurement policies and procedures? | No |

Contracting best practices

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Created a contract outside of vendor proposal? | No |
| Contract included standards/provisions for evaluating vendor performance? | No |
| Contract included incentives and/or penalties linked to performance? | No |
| Contract included termination provisions for either/both parties? | No |
| Contracts contained detailed pricing information? | No |

Interoperable communication system functionality

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Could the agency determine the emergency's location and who reported it? | No |
| Could the agency receive panic button alerts? | No |
| Could the agency view live security camera footage? | No |
| Could the agency access school maps and/or building plans? | No |
| Was access to systems limited to active emergencies? | No |

We were unable to observe the system in use during the audit because the agency reported it was not functional. The agency reported it could still communicate with schools during emergency incidents using other communication technologies, such as traditional 911 service.

Implementation delays

Agency officials reported delays in system implementation were due to unreliable technology infrastructure and a lack of communication and training from the vendor. Agency officials further reported the vendor has not successfully implemented the system at any participating public schools in the county.

Timeline of system implementation

| 2022 | |
|-----------------|--|
| January | Signed \$655,192 contract with Mutualink. |
| March | Allocated \$655,192 in Fund monies and paid Mutualink \$327,586. |
| October | Allocated \$1,800,000 in Fund monies. |
| December | Signed \$1,800,000 contract extension with Mutualink. |



| 2023 | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| February | Paid Mutualink \$450,000. |
| March | Paid Mutualink \$450,000. |
| September | Paid Mutualink \$327,596. |
| December | Paid Mutualink \$450,000. |

Future plans

The agency's contract with Mutualink expired in June 2025. The agency reported it will not renew its contract with Mutualink due to the system not functioning to the agency's standards. Further, the agency reported that it is withholding its final \$450,000 payment to Mutualink and is pursuing reimbursement from the vendor for costs it has already paid due to the vendor's failure to provide contracted services. The agency reported it is considering other interoperable communication system options. Agency officials reported that if Fund monies are no longer available to the agency, it would evaluate whether it is able to continue operating a system using other funding sources.

Recommendations to the Pinal County Sheriff's Office

1. Follow the requirement set forth in A.R.S. §41-1733(B) to report all Fund expenditures for the preceding fiscal year to JLBC by November 1 each year, and, as applicable, promptly submit any required reports that were not previously submitted for prior years' expenditures.
2. In conjunction with its vendor, as necessary, develop a cost estimate for ongoing system operational costs for fiscal years 2027 through 2031 and provide this information to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.
3. Follow its applicable procurement requirements for any future expenditures of Fund monies.
4. Ensure that any contracts, contract addendums, or contract extensions that involve the use of Fund monies follow recommended practices for contracting by including elements such as clearly defined deliverables, incentives and/or penalties tied to vendor performance, and contract termination provisions; and obtain detailed pricing information sufficient to verify that charges are accurate and reasonable.
5. Establish a process to monitor contracts that involve the use of Fund monies to ensure the vendor complies with contract terms, including any requirements to provide regular communication or updates.
6. Establish a process for routinely testing the interoperable communication system purchased with Fund monies to ensure it is functioning across participating public safety agencies and public schools, including determining whether software updates have been installed, and whether authorized system user information is accurate and up to date and authorized system users have been trained to use system features relevant to their positions.
7. Evaluate the implementation status and functionality of its interoperable communication system and work with vendors, as applicable, to resolve functional deficiencies; if resolution is not achieved, determine what actions the agency will pursue, in consultation with legal counsel, as needed.
8. Make a plan to address the interoperable communication system's ongoing operating costs, including actions the agency will take if the State does not provide further funding for existing interoperable communication systems; provide this plan to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.

Pinal County Sheriff's Office's response

Agency response: The information presented on these pages is agreed to. The audit recommendations will be implemented.

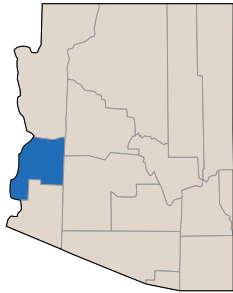
Response explanation: The Pinal County Sheriff's Office will move forward with the recommendations from this audit. We will wait to view the final draft before we choose to move on with a company that actually works and will benefit the citizens of Pinal County.

Attachment F

Arizona School Safety—Interoperable Communications Systems La Paz CSO page

La Paz County Sheriff's Office

La Paz County general information (fiscal year 2024)



| | |
|---|--------|
| Population | 17,000 |
| School age population (projection for July 2024) ¹ | 2,083 |
| Number of K-12 public schools | 12 |
| Number of students enrolled at K-12 public schools | 2,173 |

¹ The school age population is a projection of the county's population for July 2024, provided by the Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity. The number of students enrolled at public schools is school-reported data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics. The number of students enrolled in public schools appears to be higher than the total school age population due to the difference in data sources and the uncertainty inherent in making population projections.

Overview of School Safety Interoperability Fund monies

As of September 2025

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Total allocation | \$950,000 |
| Pilot program allocation | \$0 |
| School Safety Interoperability Fund allocation through fiscal year 2025 | \$750,000 |
| Fiscal year 2026 allocation | \$200,000 |
| Total interoperable communication system contracted amount | \$750,000 |
| Total expenditures | \$750,000 |
| Allocation amount remaining | \$200,000 |
| Submitted all required annual expenditure reports to JLBC? | Yes |
| Spent monies only for authorized purposes? | Yes |

Interoperable communication system information

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Interoperable communication system vendor selected | Mutualink |
| Reported number of public safety agencies participating | 3 |
| Reported number of K-12 public schools participating | 10 |
| Number of students enrolled at participating K-12 public schools | 2,104 |
| Interoperable communication system utilized during real emergency event? | No |

System procurement

The La Paz County sheriff’s office and board of supervisors were involved in the procurement process for the interoperable communication system.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Procurement method | Sole source |
| Followed applicable procurement policies and procedures? | No |

Contracting best practices

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Created a contract outside of vendor proposal? | No |
| Contract included standards/provisions for evaluating vendor performance? | No |
| Contract included incentives and/or penalties linked to performance? | No |
| Contract included termination provisions for either/both parties? | No |
| Contracts contained detailed pricing information? | No |

Interoperable communication system functionality

| | |
|--|------------|
| Could the agency determine the emergency’s location and who reported it? | Yes |
| Could the agency receive panic button alerts? | Yes |
| Could the agency view live security camera footage? | Yes |
| Could the agency access school maps and/or building plans? | No |
| Was access to systems limited to active emergencies? | Yes |

During our observation, the agency had difficulty viewing the school’s live security camera footage but was able to do so after a delay of approximately 3 minutes. Additionally, the agency could not view the school’s site maps because the school had not submitted them to the vendor to be uploaded to the system. The agency reported that it is working with participating schools and the vendor to ensure that site maps are uploaded to the system.

Implementation delays

Agency officials reported that delays in system implementation were due to vendor staff turnover.

Timeline of system implementation

| 2022 | |
|-----------------|--|
| October | Allocated \$750,000 of Fund monies and signed \$750,000 contract with Mutualink. |
| December | Paid Mutualink \$375,000. |

↓

| 2025 | |
|-----------------|--|
| February | Agency reported first school successfully connected to its interoperable communication system. |
| April | We conducted our system observation. |
| August | Made final \$375,000 payment to Mutualink. |

Future plans

The agency's contract with Mutualink expired in June 2025. The agency reported that it will extend its contract with Mutualink and continue to operate the system using its fiscal year 2026 Fund allocations. Agency officials reported that if Fund monies are no longer available to the agency, it may not be able to continue operating the system due to lack of funding.

Recommendations to the La Paz County Sheriff's Office

1. In conjunction with its vendor, as necessary, develop a cost estimate for ongoing system operational costs for fiscal years 2027 through 2031 and provide this information to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.
2. Follow its applicable procurement requirements for any future expenditures of Fund monies.
3. Ensure that any contracts, contract addendums, or contract extensions that involve the use of Fund monies follow recommended practices for contracting by including elements such as clearly defined deliverables, incentives and/or penalties tied to vendor performance, and contract termination provisions; and obtain detailed pricing information sufficient to verify that charges are accurate and reasonable.

4. Establish a process to monitor contracts that involve the use of Fund monies to ensure the vendor complies with contract terms, including any requirements to provide regular communication or updates.
5. Establish a process for routinely testing the interoperable communication system purchased with Fund monies to ensure it is functioning across participating public safety agencies and public schools, including determining whether software updates have been installed, and whether authorized system user information is accurate and up to date and authorized system users have been trained to use system features relevant to their positions.
6. Evaluate the implementation status and functionality of its interoperable communication system and work with vendors, as applicable, to resolve functional deficiencies; if resolution is not achieved, determine what actions the agency will pursue, in consultation with legal counsel, as needed.
7. Make a plan to address the interoperable communication system's ongoing operating costs, including actions the agency will take if the State does not provide further funding for existing interoperable communication systems; provide this plan to its board of supervisors, the Legislature, and the Governor.

La Paz County Sheriff's Office's response

Agency response: The information presented on these pages is agreed to. The audit recommendations will be implemented.

Response explanation: The La Paz County Sheriff's Office has reviewed the school safety and interoperability report and findings conducted by the Auditor General's office. Through this review the La Paz Sheriff's Office has made aware of areas in which best practices were not followed or utilized for the benefit of the purchaser. I agree with the report and its findings as they are outlined in the review. It also identified areas where things could have been put in place to better protect the purchaser in this case the Sheriff's Office and County. The experience was eye-opening and allowed for a better understanding on the part of myself, the Sheriff and my staff to seek more answers and set expectations when negotiating with vendors in situations such as this moving forward.

It is the intent of this agency in conjunction with the county to utilize best practices when entering into contractual agreements for products and or services in the future moving forward allowing us the purchaser to maintain better controls in such situations, thus providing further protection for the department and county.

It was a very educational experience and will allow us to be better prepared for future contract negotiation and implementation. Thank you for the time and attention that was placed into this review process.

Respectfully,
William Ponce,
Sheriff La Paz County