



William Cass, P.E.
Commissioner

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

IF



David Rodrigue, P.E.
Assistant Commissioner

Bureau of TSMO
April 2, 2025

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, NH 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Authorize the Department of Transportation to continue its membership with Electronic Communications Association, Inc., Charlestown, NH (Vendor # 155592) by paying annual membership dues in the amount of \$2,500 to be effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. 50.9% Highway Funds and 49.1% Turnpike Funds (Intra-Agency Transfers).

Funding is available as follows:	<u>FY 2026</u>
04-096-096-960515-3052	
Trans Sys Mgmt & Operations	
026-500251 Membership Fees	\$2,500

EXPLANATION

The Department of Transportation operates a statewide land mobile radio (LMR) communications system that consists of statewide dispatch, mountaintop repeater sites, mobile and portable radios that link Toll, Bridge and Highway maintenance operations facilities with field staff. Electronic Communications Association's (ECA) Mount Ascutney facility serves as one of those sites in this LMR communications system. ECA is an association that provides technical knowledge exchanges and manages the use of a communications facility located at the summit of Mount Ascutney, West Windsor, Vermont. This physical facility consists of a radio equipment shelter with standby power, and a free standing self-supported antenna tower previously owned managed by a commercial television broadcaster.

This membership participation essentially serves in place of lease arrangements that are more typically used for tower communications access and regional coverage. NHDOT has lease arrangements for similar mountaintop tower communications on Mt Washington, Mt. Whittier, and Mt Uncanoonuc with annual cost ranging from \$3,000 - \$14,000 each. ECA's prime lease for the tower site precludes subleases and hence the membership arrangement.

Membership benefits of utilizing the Association's communication facility on Mount Ascutney are outlined below in item # 5. The Department participates in technical conversations about site management and utilizes two radio repeaters at this communication facility to support Highway Maintenance Districts Two and District Four highway maintenance. This tower is essential for providing dispatch and mobile communications coverage for both District 4 and District 2 through the Connecticut River valley, and portions of Sullivan and Grafton Counties, especially since the recent loss of the Mt Cardigan fire tower.

Listed below are answers to standard questions required for Governor and Council organization dues and membership approval submissions:

1. How long has this organization been in existence and how long has this agency been a member of this organization?

Answer: The ECA has been in existence for 44 years, the Department has belonged to and used the Association's services since 1990.

2. Is there any other organization, which provides the same or similar benefits that your agency belongs to?

Answer: No, this business model for technical exchanges and radio communication site use is uncommon. No other non-profit organization or association is able to provide what the ECA provides the Department with access to the Association's facility or similarly.

3. How many other states belong to this organization and is your agency the sole New Hampshire state agency that is a member?

Answer: No other State of New Hampshire or State of Vermont state agencies are current members; however several Vermont public utilities are members as well as municipal and county public safety agencies.

4. How is the dues structure established? (Standard fee for all states, based on population, based on other criteria, etc)

Answer: Dues are not flat, they are established for respective members based on occupied floor space within equipment shelter and annual operations cost budget that is voted on by the members at the annual Association meeting.

5. What benefit does the state receive from participating in this membership?

Answer: The State receives the benefit of obtaining operational dispatch radio coverage for the Department on a uniquely located mountaintop from a well-established, safe secure and monitored, communication facility, with use of a common Association owned and maintained antenna system, in a secure facility with both commercial electric and standby power provided. The Department also

receives technical assistance from the Association's site engineer regarding Department located radio equipment and Association antenna performance and operations.

6. Are training or educational/research materials included in the membership? If so, is the cost included? Explain in detail.

Answer: There is no specific training provided by the ECA, however the Department does have the option to participate in a ECA technical advisory committee that works with the site engineer to review technical issues related to new Association member's equipment operation, facility upgrades and improvements.

7. Is the membership required to receive any federal grants or required in order to receive or participate in licensing or certification exams? Explain.

Answer: This membership has no Federal requirements or benefits.

8. Is membership required for any funding program?

Answer: No

9. Is there any travel included with this membership fee? Explain in detail any travel including the number of employees involved, the number of trips, destination of known and purposes of membership-supported trips.

Answer: There is no travel provided as part of the membership fee. Required travel is limited to once a year for one (1) employee or a proxy to attend the annual meeting called for in the ECA bylaws when the annual budget is reviewed and voted on. This annual meeting is held in the greater Hanover, NH area.

10. Which state agency employees are directly involved with this organization? (Indicate if they are members, voting members, committee members, and /or officers of the organization)

Answer: The Bureau of Transportation Systems Management & Operations, Communications Supervisor or predefined proxy per occurrence is a voting member of the ECA.

11. Explain in detail any negative impact to the state if the Agency did not belong to this organization.

Answer: Not belonging to this organization would require re-engineering of the Department's Land Mobile Radio system for Highway Maintenance, Districts 2 and 4 with either new radio tower site development, leasing commercial sites that do not provide the same amount of dispatch radio coverage, or a combination of both. These alternatives would be more costly than the current membership in lieu of lease arrangement.

12. How many memberships are attributed to the specific department?

Answer: One

Your approval to pay annual membership dues of \$2,500 is respectfully requested.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Cass". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "W" and "C".

William J. Cass, PE
Commissioner

Attachment

ECA, INC.

PO Box 412
Charlestown, NH 03603
603-369-0103

INVOICE

3/6/2025

Janelle Marquez
NHDOT
Bureau of Traffic,
PO Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Dear Janelle :

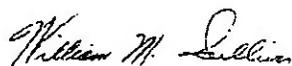
For membership in ECA & use of communications facilities at Mt. Ascutney,
Windsor, Vermont for the period July 01, 2025 to June 30, 2026. Amount due
\$2,500.

Please make check payable to:

ECA, INC.
PO BOX 412
Charlestown, NH
03603

Attn: William M. Sullivan, President

Sincerely,



William M. Sullivan
President, ECA, Inc.