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# Staff Report

## Infrastructure & Public Works

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**Report To:** Special Meeting of Council  
**Meeting Date:** June 5, 2017  
**Report Number:** CSPW.17.067  
**Subject:** Highway Traffic Act Review  
**Prepared by:** Jim McCannell

### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive staff report CSPW.17.067 "Highway Traffic Act Review";

AND THAT Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains supports the recommendation of the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors and requests that the Ministry of Transportation grant a permanent exemption for the holding and use of Hand-Held Devices for public works professionals and all municipal services, as is permitted to the Fire, Police and Ambulance services.

### B. Overview

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Association of Ontario Road Supervisors believes that public works professionals and all municipal services currently holding licensed two way radio systems should carry the same permanent exemption that is currently extended to Fire, Police and ambulance services. This communication equipment is vital to the delivery of service during winter control operations and emergency events as well as in everyday use to keep roadways safe for the motoring public.

### C. Background

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The current exemption under Reg. 366/09 (Display Screens and hand-held Devices) for the use of hand held devices/two way radios for municipalities is set to end on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

The Ministry of transportation is considering three options;

1. Extend the exemption for hand-held use of two-way radios for an additional 7 years.
2. Make the exemption permanent.
3. Allow the exemption to expire (making hand-held use of devices illegal and requiring all currently exempted drivers to use hands-free alternatives only)

## **D. Analysis**

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Staff support the continued use of 2 way radios for Public Works Staff for efficient and effective communication. The 2 way radio system is the backbone of our GPS vehicle tracking system. The Town will need to maintain the radio network regardless for the GPS vehicle tracking system.

## **E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan**

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Goal #5: Ensure Our Infrastructure is Sustainable

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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None

## **G. Financial Impact**

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None

## **H. In consultation with**

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None

## **I. Attached**

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1. Notice from Ontario Good Roads Association, dated May 29, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jim McCannell**

Jim McCannell  
Manager of Roads and Drainage

**Reg Russwurm**

Reg Russwurm, MBA, P.Eng  
Director of Infrastructure and Public Works

For more information, please contact:

Jim McCannell  
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**Subject:** Hands free devices email

Dear AORS Board members and LA Secretaries,

The current exemption under Reg. 366/09 for the use of hand held devices/two way radios for municipalities is set to end on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

The ministry is considering three options;

1. Extend the exemption for hand-held use of two-way radios for an additional 7 years.
2. Make the exemption permanent.
3. Allow the exemption to expire (making hand-held use of devices illegal and requiring all currently exempted drivers to use hands-free alternatives only)

Members can follow the link <http://www.ontariocanada.com/registry/view.do?postingId=24092&language=en> to obtain further details on the Reg.

AORS believes that public works professionals and all municipal services currently holding licensed two way radio systems should carry the same **permanent exemption** that is currently extended to Fire, Police and ambulance services. We strongly believe this communication equipment is vital to the delivery of service during winter control operations and emergency events as well as in every day use to keep our roadways safe for the motoring public.

This item will be included in the agenda for the June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017 Board of Directors meeting however with the deadline for comments of June 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, your president Kevin Boucock will be sending a letter on your behalf encouraging the Ministry to grant a permanent exemption from Reg 366/09 for all municipal operations. We are also aware that other organizations such as OGRA and MEOA are also commenting on this issue however AORS strongly encourages all members to make comment to the ministry prior to the June 15<sup>th</sup> deadline either through a letter from your public works department or if possible through a Council resolution.

Contact information is as follows:

Ms. Lily Nasato-Zompanti  
Safety Policy Advisor  
Safety Policy & Education Branch  
Ministry of Transportation

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Toronto, ON M3M 0B4 E-mail: [lily.nasato-zompanti@ontario.ca](mailto:lily.nasato-zompanti@ontario.ca)

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