ALMR User Council
Meeting Minutes

Date: October 5, 2022

1. Attendance.

P = Present	T = Via Telephone	E = Excused	U = Unexcused	N/A = Not required

User Council Members

				Primary
U	Atkinson	Ross	Mr.	Federal Non-DOD DOI, BLM-Alaska Fire Service
T	Berrian	Keith	Deputy Chief	Municipalities North, Chena Goldstream Fire & Rescue
T	Cole	Henry	Mr.	SOA DOT
E	Goggia-Cockrell	Tammy	Ms.	Municipalities Central
	VACANT			DOD US Army - Alaska
N/A	Hernandez	Brandon	SSgt	DOD USAF, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
E	Kalwara	Erann	Ms.	Municipalities Southeast
N/A	Kroona	Jon	Mr.	Federal Non-DOD DOJ, FBI
T	Nelson	James	Officer	Federal Non-DOD All Others, US Forest Service
T	Martin	Chris	Mr.	DOD USAF, Eielson AFB
T	Rockwell	John	Mr.	SOA DPS, **Chair**
	VACANT			SOA All Others, DNR Forestry

				Alternate
N/A	Acone	Abigail	A1C	DOD USAF, JBER
T	Brown	David	Mr.	Fed Non-DOD DOJ, FBI
E	Carter	Bobby	Mr.	Federal Non-DOD All Others, TSA
T	Clenendin	John	Mr.	SOA DOT
T	De Hart	Kaitlyn	A!C	DOD USAF, JBER
E	Green	Kyle	Fire Marshal	Municipalities North, University Fire Department
U	Goodman	Jim	Mr.	Municipalities Central, MatSu Borough
N/A	Maley	Christopher	TSgt	DOD USAF, Eielson AFB
T	Nelsen	Scott	Mr.	SOA All Others, DMVA, **Vice Chair**
E	Redington	Robert	Mr.	Federal Non-DOD DOI, US Fish and Wildlife Service
N/A	Roberts	Rick	Captain	SOA DPS
U	Scott	Heath	Chief	Municipalities Southeast, Haines Borough PD
E	Williams	Rick	Mr.	DOD, US Army - Alaska

Supporting Staff and Guests:

P	Fahnestock	Nik	Mr.	System Manager
T	Fussey	Paul	Lt	SOA DPS
T	Hugi	Robert	Mr.	CISA
P	Nelson	Dan	Mr.	Operations Manager
P	Reed	David	Mr.	ALMR ISSM
T	Richter	Bruce	Mr.	DHS
T	Rogell	Pete	Mr.	BK Technologies
T	Shafer	Sherry	Ms.	ALMR Document Specialist
P	Stormo	Scott	Mr.	APSCS
T	Thometz	Tim	Mr.	Icom

| T | Ulrich | Naomi | Ms. | Motorola Solutions |
| P | Woodall | Timothy | Mr. | ALCOM J6 PM/COR |

2. Meeting Minutes and Action Items.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items Assigned
Call to Order	Mr. John Rockwell called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.	
Roll Call	Roll call was taken, and a quorum of User Council (UC) members was in attendance.	
Introduction of Guests/Special Announcements	There were no announcements or special guests.	
Previous Meeting Minutes	John opened the floor for any questions, updates, changes, any issues with the September meeting minutes. Hearing no responses, John made the motion to approve the meeting minutes. **Motion: Approve the September meeting minutes as presented.** **Motion: Mr. John Rockwell** **Second: Mr. Henry Cole** There were no objections or further discussion. The motion passed.	
Issues & Risks Log	**Updates**	**Action Items Assigned**
	John asked Ms. Sherry Shafer if there were any updates to the Issues and Risks Log and she stated there were not.	
	Issues Closed at, or since, last meeting	
	N/A	
Action Items	**Review**	**Resolution**
	John asked Sherry if there were any updates to the Action Items list and she noted there were no Action Items from the September meeting.	
Operations Management Office	**Mr. Dan Nelson, Operations Manager**	**Action Items Assigned**
GTR Upgrade	1. Mr. Dan Nelson reminded the group this is the physical repeater upgrade that he's been talking about for about the last couple of years and stated he was very happy to report that on September 21, the last site at Sunny Hay was completed. Dan expressed his appreciation to all of the technicians, Motorola folks, and other contractors that have worked	

	through that process to get the entire site system moved over to the GTRs.
Annual Membership Agreements	2. Dan advised the Operations Management Office (OMO) has been working on the annual membership agreements that went out in July and trying to get them done. He briefed all but one agency has returned their agreement, and the OMO was working to get that resolved and then they would have that box ticked for the year.
System Software Upgrade	3. Dan stated we are right in the middle of our system software upgrade. He noted throughout last week there was a lot of prep work, a lot of software updates, some zone controller rollovers and this week has been a lot more of that with transport dispatch sites upgrades, transport reboots, RF site reboots, etc., and that Mr. Nik Fahnestock could provide more details on the status.
September Document Reviews	4. Dan briefed the Twitter Use Policy and Procedure, and the Asset Management Policy and Procedure were reviewed with no substantive changes. With regards to the Twitter Use Policy and Procedure, Dan reminded folks that ALMR does maintain a Twitter account at @ALMR_SOA, and we use that Twitter account for some general interest type things. He added the OMO puts out system metrics, meeting reminders, any kind of odd news or small updates. Dan encouraged folks who use Twitter to follow the account and although it doesn't have a huge number of followers, the OMO would certainly appreciate that.
September System Metrics	5. Dan noted there were no system metrics to present due to the upgrade and some other things going on, but the OMO would get those out as soon as possible and he would follow up next month with both September and October system metrics. He advised there will be some data disruption for some of the days due to the upgrade, and he would also address that next month.
Survey	6. Dan stated members would see next week or within the next two weeks the User and Coverage surveys. He reminded the council the OMO typically sends out two surveys a year, one is kind of the user experience asking about utilization of the website and just kind of the customer service experience our members are receiving through ALMR and the other one is specifically about coverage issues where our members are noticing degraded coverage, where they might want coverage added, or where they might need portable coverage improved.

	Dan advised he was getting those ready, but he was going to try at this point to combine them into a single survey to make it a little bit easier for folks. He requested the council representatives and all our member agencies that are on the call to please forward that survey link far and wide when you get it. Last year the OMO only received approximately 30 to 40 responses. Dan explained when we are talking about any of those issues whether that's getting good feedback for our programs or having to look at come coverage, out of 135 agencies, that's just not a lot of data for us to use to plan and improve on, especially the coverage information. He emphasized the responses come back to the User Council for discussion on priorities for any potential funding, so he asked that folks encourage people to complete the survey. Dan stated he knows people are busy and would keep the surveys as brief as possible, but the surveys are absolutely designed for the line level users, the radio users themselves and we really want their feedback as well.	
Outreach	7. Dan noted as he had briefed last month, he has been doing individual calls with agencies to discuss the transition to TDMA with each individual member agency point of contact and be able to look at things like their inventory and their particular situation. He added that he had paused that here for the past couple weeks due to the upgrade, but people will start seeing those emails and invites go out again near the end of this week or into early next week to schedule those. Dan stated that he blocks 30 minutes for each agency but usually it takes only about 20, depending on the discussion. He advised these calls are a great time to get one-on-one with people and be able to talk about their specific instances, so he encouraged folks to take that time.

Dan advised he expected this would take another few months at the very least and potentially more to get through all of the agencies. He stated he had started with the local agencies and the order was random. | |
| **ATP** | 8. Dan briefed there was another Acceptance Test Procedure (ATP) scheduled with two radios from EF Johnson and those would be tested on October 31. He stated hopefully that test will go well, and we will be able to add a few more radio models to our approved equipment list.

Dan added that the System Management Office (SMO) had worked very hard with the new TDMA transition to update the ATP to make sure that it is both getting the information we need for TDMA, but also trying to make it more efficient because it is a full-day test. He noted the SMO was able to combine some tests and delete others but still get the right information while reducing the impact on the users and on the staff would have to be there. | |

Municipality UC Representative Updates	Dan reminded the members if they had any radio models that they've been looking at that are not listed on the website's approved equipment list, be sure and have your vendor or your dealer get in touch with the OMO to talk about getting an ATP scheduled because we want to have as many radio options available to our members as possible. 9. Dan polled the municipal representatives to see if they had anything to report. He started with the Central municipalities but did not hear any response. Next, he asked for an update from the North region/Fairbanks area, and Deputy Chief Keith Berrian stated he had nothing to report. Lastly, Dan asked for anything from the southeast and where was no response. John had a follow-up question and referred back to when Dan mentioned TDMA surveys, which includes some of the current inventory. He asked if Dan had been finding consistent numbers from the system in inventory that you have and the numbers that the end users believe they have as far as radios on site. Dan stated for most folks, depending on what they tell me versus what I'm seeing in the system, that are generally more radios listed in the system, which tells him there are likely some radios that maybe they haven't deleted off the system or no longer in active use. He noted this is why ALMR has been encouraging folks to get with the Help Desk and assist with cleaning the database up. Dan reminded everyone we are still in a system database freeze and have been for the last month, but once that is released, we'd certainly want to keep the database cleaning up to date. He encouraged everybody to periodically test their numbers and make sure that when you're going to be adding a new unit, you're pulling off an old unit. John thanked Dan for that information and also pointed out as Dan had mentioned the Twitter account and the alaskalandmobileradio.org website. He wanted to suggest that members go onto the ALMR website periodically as there is always additional information on the website, whether it's about the upgrades or whether it's about what's going on within the coming months. John gave save-a-date regional meetings, for example, and stated the RECCWG meeting coming up on October 26, is mentioned there. He encouraged everybody to go on the website and see what is new, as well as finding the different training videos and other information.	
System Management Office	**Mr. Nik Fahnestock, System Manager**	**Action Items Assigned**

2021.1 System Upgrade	1. Mr. Nik Fahnestock briefed the upgrade was going well with only a few bumps here and there.	
Scheduled Site Maintenance	2. Nik stated there were no PMIs scheduled this week or next, but the week after they were going to try and hit possibly some of the harder to get sites before the weather starts to hit.	
State of Alaska	**Mr. Scott Stormo**	**Action Items Assigned**
Ernestine Power Line	1. Mr. Scott Stormo advised the failed power line at Ernestine was repaired on October 3 by a contracted vendor and they were crossing their fingers that it survives the winter and continues to operate because it's a very difficult site to get to refuel in the winter if it has to run off a generator.	
Divide Tower	2. Scott stated the Divide site has a new tower built by a co-located partner and they would be trying to move all the equipment over to the new tower next week.	
Outages	3. Scott briefed there were a couple outages connected to the upgrade, but they also had a couple outages going on with some commercial circuits that they were working with the vendors on and thanked everyone for their patience as they work through these issues which should not continue for too much longer.	
SOA UC Representative Updates	4. John asked for any updates from the state representatives starting with DOT. Mr. Henry Cole asked who he would talk to regarding attaching a data field to the SATS backbone and Scott stated that would be him. Henry noted he would follow up with him via email. Henry briefed he had sent his one-, three-, and five-year replacement plan to Budget for non-TDMA radios. John reminded everyone that DPS had purchased 660 portable and mobile radios and they were starting to receive some of them. Mr. Scott Nelsen stated there was nothing for the SOA All Others.	
Department of Defense	**Mr. Timothy Woodall**	**Action Items Assigned**
Frequency Requests	1. Mr. Timothy Woodall reminded the services who were doing microwave updates they needed to get their frequency requests into him as soon as possible so they could be submitted up through the command.	
DOD UC Representative Updates	2. John asked the DOD representatives if they had any updates. Mr. Williams was not in attendance, A1C De Hart noted there was nothing for JBER, and Mr. Chris Martin noted there was nothing for Eielson.	

New Business	Discussion	Action Items Assigned
Talkgroup Development Procedure Substantive Changes	1. Dan briefed as most folks are aware, the OMO does monthly document reviews and for October, since the Talkgroup Development Policy and Procedure were up for review, it was a good time to discuss some things that we've been working on. Dan reminded the council there is an issue both with talkgroups and with radios where there are generally many more talkgroups and many more radios on the system than are in active use. He noted there may be a reason for some, such as radios that are cached, but we also have been noticing that with talkgroups there were a lot that were unused for over a year. Dan explained with the updated draft procedure, the OMO has proposed some language to assist the System Management Office (SMO) in dealing with unused talkgroups. He noted the OMO added a section about inactive talkgroups, because the procedure currently only addresses every agency is entitled to have the talkgroups they need to complete their mission. Dan briefed when the OMO looked at the last time some talkgroups were used there was a significant number that were sitting in the system not being used. Dan added the proposal was to define an inactive talk group, meaning it hasn't had any activity in a calendar year, and then from system management or operations management perspective be able to contact an agency and go "You haven't used this so let's get it out of the system so the system database is smaller, so it operates more efficiently." He explained ALMR certainly knows there are talkgroups that are absolutely necessary that they don't want to mess with that may not get extensive use all the time such as interoperable law enforcement or special operations talkgroups or those that are generally more for bigger responses, like the SEOC or emergency response EOCs might use. Dan stated the proposed substantive revision to the procedure language would state when the annual inventory is sent out to agencies it would not only include the radios but also the talkgroups that each agency has, as well as the system keys and cables for those that use encryption and the preface that if a talkgroup affiliation hasn't occurred in a long time and if there's not really a good reason for that talkgroup to exist to go ahead and purge it from the system. Dan clarified ALMR would never purge a talkgroup without talking with a member agency, but there was not anything in	

Annual Election	the current procedure that goes down that road and this was an attempt to add that ability so we can start looking at those things. He briefed he wanted to bring the change to the User Council for some discussion so he could answer any questions or concerns. Dan noted the OMO would send the procedure out for council members look at this and provide feedback or approve. John stated it sounded like a reasonable plan 2. Sherry stated as most of the representatives that have been on the council for a while know, the Chair and the Vice Chair are elected on an annual basis. She noted October is the beginning of the process with the call for nominations and she would be sending out an e-mail after the meeting with the instructions. Sherry reminded the council members that the primary and alternates from each sector need to discuss among themselves and come to a consensus and provide one name for the chair position and one name for the vice chair position. Sherry stated at the end of October, she would consolidate the nominees into a ballot and then voting would take place in November and whoever is chosen by the council members that would be announced in December.	
Next meeting	**Discussion**	
	John stated the next meetings are November 2 and December 7.	
Adjournment	**Discussion**	
	John asked if there was any other discussion and hearing no response, he made the motion to adjourn the meeting. **Motion: Adjourn the October monthly User Council meeting**. **Motion: Mr. Henry Cole** **Second: Mr. John Rockwell** There were no objections. The motion **passed** and the meeting adjourned at 2:03 p.m.	