



**ALMR User Council  
Meeting Minutes**

**Date: April 5, 2023**

1. Attendance.

P = Present	T = Via Telephone	E = Excused	U = Unexcused	N/A = Not required
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**User Council Members**

Primary				
U	Atkinson	Ross	Mr.	Federal Non-DOD DOI, BLM-Alaska Fire Service
E	Berrian	Keith	Deputy Chief	Municipalities North, Chena Goldstream Fire & Rescue
T	Cole	Henry	Mr.	SOA DOT
T	Goggia-Cockrell	Tammy	Ms.	Municipalities Central ( <b>Vice Chair</b> )
	<b>VACANT</b>			DOD US Army - Alaska
	<b>VACANT</b>			DOD USAF, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
T	Kalwara	Erann	Ms.	Municipalities Southeast
T	Kroona	Jon	Mr.	Federal Non-DOD DOJ, FBI
U	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, <b>Chair</b>
	<b>VACANT</b>			SOA All Others, DNR Forestry

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

**Supporting Staff and Guests:**

T	Butcher	Jacob	Mr.	MATCOM
P	Fahnestock	Nik	Mr.	System Manager
T	Flores	Mickey	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
P	Fussey	Paul	Mr.	Operations Manager
T	Haas	Zack	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
T	Patterson	Dave	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
P	Reed	Dave	Mr.	Security Manager
T	Rogell	Pete	Mr.	BK Technologies
T	Shafer	Sherry	Ms.	ALMR Document Specialist



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P	Stormo	Scott	Mr.	ALMR/ASPCS Manager
P	Ulrich	Naomi	Ms.	Motorola Solutions
P	Woodall	Timothy	Mr.	ALCOM J6 PM/COR

2. Meeting Minutes and Action Items.

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action Items Assigned</b>
<b>Call to Order</b>	Mr. John Rockwell called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.	
<b>Roll Call</b>	Roll call was taken, and a quorum of User Council (UC) members was in attendance for the meeting.  Mr. Jacob Butcher joined the meeting after roll call was read.	
<b>Introduction of Guests/Special Announcements</b>	Mr. Paul Fussey stated Ms. Naomi Ulrich, Customer Support Manager for Motorola Solutions, was visiting at Tudor Road.	
<b>Previous Meeting Minutes</b>	John asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the March meeting minutes and asked if they had any changes. There were no responses and John requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes.  <b>Motion: Approve the March User Council meeting minutes.</b>  <b>Motion: Mr. Henry Cole</b> <b>Second: Fire Marshall Kyle Green</b>  There were no objections or further discussion. The motion passed.	
<b>Issues &amp; Risks Log</b>	<b>Updates</b>	<b>Action Items Assigned</b>
	John advised there were no changes to the Issues and Risks Log from the last meeting.	
	<b>Issues closed at, or since, last meeting</b>	
	N/A	
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Review</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
	John stated there were no Action Items from the March meeting.	
<b>Operations Management Office</b>	<b>Mr. Paul Fussey, Operations Manager</b>	<b>Action Items Assigned</b>
<b>March Document Reviews</b>	1. Mr. Paul Fussey stated for the month of March the Operations Management Office (OMO) had updated the System Management Office (SMO) Customer Support Plan, the Virus Protection Policy and Procedure, the Records Management Policy and Procedure, the System Backup	



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<b>March System Metrics</b>	<p>Recovery Policy and Procedure, and the System Key Usage Policy and Procedure.</p> <p>2. Paul reported for March, the calls were at 1.6 million and push to talks were 2.6 million. He stated looking at the busies, we had 1,576 which is still well below one percent (.0009) and advised he had been curious on why there was a spike. Paul advised he started doing some research and found there was a military exercise with 8000 soldiers and more than 500 military vehicles taking part, so that was a huge influx on there, but if you start looking at the amount of busies, that is very still small percentage.</p> <p>Paul briefed there were 25,500 subscribers on the system at the end of March which was up 110 from the last meeting.</p> <p>For sites below three nines, Paul advised there were nine and some of them were the circuits which are beyond our control, and we are also starting up PMIs again.</p> <p>Paul noted the website had 329 sessions with 178 users, and 81 percent of those were new.</p> <p>Fire Marshal Kyle Green, Northern Region, stated he really appreciated these metrics and was wondering if there would be any way to delve into the specific regions a little bit more than just a global view. He advised he has gotten some questions about these numbers and how much of that is this region versus that region and could we do that?</p> <p>Paul advised the SMO would have to go by site and then extrapolate from there and then look at regions and get an average which would be a pretty heavy lift. He asked Kyle if there was something particular that he was looking for that the SMO might be able to isolate for him.</p> <p>Kyle noted there is an interest in understanding what the system usage at a regional level is and there is some value in that for future planning of infrastructure. He stated they see growth occurring in the Northern region with the addition of some agencies down in the Parks highway corridor and then some expansion of stuff occurring in Delta, and it would be nice to track that and see what that is for the Northern region.</p> <p>Kyle added that he is not just thinking of themselves, there is probably some benefit to the other regions like the Anchorage municipal area in central. He explained when they are talking to the local representatives or just the fire chiefs or police chiefs or the users, they can say this is what we're seeing here in our region for the system use and its impacts.</p>	
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	<p>John stated a few months ago, he received a report similar to that in a spreadsheet and was able to take the site and then map them to the regions to respond to a request from the legislators who wanted it broken down by legislative district.</p> <p>He noted he had to do the manual mapping, but once he had done that, he was able to come up with the answers they wanted. He advised Kyle if he requested just the raw report and then took the time to break it out, he might be able to be successful with answering some of the questions. John also noted to Scott, he didn't know if that helped or hindered what he was going to suggest.</p> <p>Scott responded that was why they were just talking about it and whether there is that manual effort afterwards or if there is an automated way to have Genesis group by regions or not, but they can look at it because he didn't know.</p> <p>Henry stated he didn't know what format the raw data was in, but if it had geographic coordinates tied to the sites, the DOT GIS section should be able to map that against. Legislative districts or House districts, as well as other geographic boundaries if the format is already there.</p> <p>Mr. Nik Fahnestock, System Manager, pointed out another variable to consider was whether you are talking about where the call originated from or where it's going to, in which case a single call that may originate in Anchorage may go down to Juneau and Fairbanks and many other locations all at the same time, so I don't know how that would play out.</p> <p>John responded that was why he had to normalize that data and make assumptions, but Nik was right, and he could not give an accurate count because how do you say if it's a call going from Anchorage to Matsu or the opposite because it's both and so you have to make some assumptions along with the data and add those notes to the to the data. He briefed he felt that it helped, and it did take a little bit of time, but it was worth it, and if Kyle was willing to do just a little bit of effort to map the towers, he thought Kyle could get fairly close, if not at least a general idea of percentages when looking at these numbers.</p> <p>Kyle responded he was not looking for any immediate results, but when we're looking at use in the regions, it doesn't have to be like super specific and he appreciated how the system works and it might sometimes be difficult to tell based upon where the calls originate and where it's getting sent, too which region you would associate that to, but he thought in this instance where if we can identify what data point would be close enough to associate it by region</p>	
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	<p>and provide some type of output that's automated that doesn't require this heavy lift; there is some value in that for us as users, user representative, especially in having that information available and being able to advocate for ALMR and its use and its support. He stated he wasn't sure if he needed to make a motion here for a longer-term suggestion of a project to support that, but he would like to learn more on how they can maybe get to that point to where they can be a little bit more geospatially specific with this data and provide more value to it.</p> <p>Kyle added the numbers on the graph are still a good indication of overall system use, but again, there are people asking more specific questions and I think having something like that close enough for geographic use is beneficial for us as advocates.</p> <p>John suggested that instead of a motion to open an action item to look into if it's feasible to provide those metrics at a system level through existing tools We can see what it would take and what the SMO could do instead. John asked if that made sense to Kyle and asked Nik if that was something that he could take on as an action.</p> <p>Nik responded he could look into it.</p> <p>Ms. Sherry Shafer asked Kyle to clarify his request for the action item stating originally, he had asked about busies broken out by region.</p> <p>Kyle stated he was also interested in the push to talks and where those calls are coming from, but noted he needed to learn about what these numbers on the busies graph actually mean, where those busies are measured from. He added does that mean when the radio might be hitting multiple towers, and maybe one of those three towers or two of those three towers are now one of those busies?</p> <p>Nik responded with the busies there are two terms which are all start and fast start in this scenario. He continued that most of the radios are set for all start, meaning for me to transmit on my radio, everyone is listening, has to be able to listen before my call can go through. If even one site out there for one radio is busy or can't receive that call, then that whole transmit or talk group call is busy and that would count as one busy for one site.</p> <p>Kyle stated he appreciated that info, but this also reiterates that the users that he is talking with and other folks who are asking about ALMR don't understand or necessarily want to know what is what, they just they want to see the global picture as far as how this region is using ALMR. That's</p>	<p>1. Fire Marshal Kyle Green requested the ALMR offices look at the feasibility of adding additional metrics slides which present the push-to-talks and the busies by region.</p>
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<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>where he is at with it being kind of close enough and distributing all that technical information to make a visual product that accurately or mostly accurately, describes these busies, or the push to talks, or the monthly group, and individual calls by region.</p> <p>3. Paul briefed the International Wireless Communication Expo (IWCE) just finished up last week and he and some members of the APSCS office went down and spent two days going through a lot of different sessions and seminars, which were very heavy on P25, security, and interoperability.</p> <p>Paul advised the next day and a half was spent talking to the different vendors and equipment managers about antennas, power, tower equipment, generators, and shelters so it was a really good visit down there. He added, he also spent time talking to some of the radio vendors we are already dealing with and new ones about sales.</p> <p>Paul thanked everyone who has been rebooting their consolettes which has been a topic over the last couple of months at the UC meetings and that the number has drastically dropped. Although there are still some out there that he needs to get ahold of the individuals and have to reboot their console.</p> <p>Paul briefed that for outreach and training, he was working with Mr. Dan Nelson, who is finishing up a couple more training videos and those should be posted on the website next week. He noted Dan was also working on setting up a TDMA town hall meeting for this quarter and was just starting on the PowerPoint for that one. Paul advised that on the ALMR website there are also some new training video vignettes posted.</p> <p>Paul stated the last couple of weeks we've had several users send in some subscriber requests to add their new TDMA capable radios, which are wonderful, and Nik and his team have been getting those radios on the system, but as a friendly reminder, as agencies are getting their new radios on the system they need to send in a subscriber request to remove any of the old or unused radios for optimum accounting and optimum system use. He emphasized once agencies get the new ones up and running and issued out, those old ones in a storage closet or on a shelf somewhere, need to be taken off the system.</p> <p>Paul reminded the council that at the last couple of meetings there were lots of questions about the approval of the APX Next radios and were advised Mr. David Reed has been getting the status briefings on the radio approval. He</p>	
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	advised that Motorola had reached out to ALMR with a request to demonstrate some APX Next features, but we are still waiting for Fed ramp approval and then Nik, him, and their team will have to do ATP testing on the radio before it can be added to the system.	
<b>System Management Office</b>	<b>Mr. Nik Fahnestock, System Manager</b>	<b>Action Items Assigned</b>
<b>Periodic Maintenance Inspections</b>	1. Mr. Nik Fahnestock stated although they do PMIs year-round, it will be starting to come into the summer months soon, so those will start picking up, and he asked that all users bear with them with the downtimes that are associated to the sites as they go through and do these PMIs.	
<b>Saddle Mountain Channel 1 Off</b>	2. John asked if they had seen any issues with the Saddle Mountain site being turned off for the moment.  Nik advised that the slides Paul had shown with the Saddle Mountain Channel 1 issue had gotten worse, so they turned it off and are waiting for Mother Nature to allow them to go up to that mountain to fix it. He added that there haven't been any issues associated with them running off the site for the time being and any radios affiliated with it have roamed over to other sites nearby. Nik stated the weather is the issue right now preventing them from getting up there to repair it.	
<b>State of Alaska</b>	<b>Mr. Scott Stormo</b>	<b>Action Items Assigned</b>
<b>Smart Connect</b>	1. Mr. Scott Stormo briefed that Smart Connect was still waiting for Fed ramp approval, but it is making positive steps forward, so the expectation is it will be coming shortly. He noted there is a freeze on the system as part of the upgrades that are still ongoing through much of the month of May, and due to that, they have pushed the Smart Connect implementation off until the June time frame. Scott stated if all goes well with the Fed ramp approval, they will get Smart Connect installed and configured on the system and can start seeing how that works. He advised he has heard good things from others that are using it in several places that they basically have switched entirely to APX Next radios just because of that ability to roam the network, so hopefully it's a promising addition to the system up here, as well.	
<b>Radio Management</b>	2. Scott stated they started the radio management with the kick-off meeting, but don't have any timelines or anything set up for that. He reminded everyone this allows programming over the air, either through the ALMR system, which will allow minor changes because it doesn't have a lot of throughput through Wi-Fi, or direct connecting to a computer that is somehow connected back into Radio Management. Scott clarified the radio must be an APX radio, although other manufacturers may have their own versions of the remote programming, but this is the Motorola product that	



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<p><b>TDMA</b></p>	<p>we're looking at and you've got to have a feature set known as OTAP enabled on your radio. He said they will be starting with DPS, who recently made a large order of 660 radios and all of those came capable to do this, so that's kind of where they are going to start and see how this works.</p> <p>3. Scott advised it looks like they are finally going to start the TDMA process this summer, probably later in June. He added one of the major hangups has been getting the appropriate routers as there are severe supply-chain constraints. Scott stated Motorola has finally been able to obtain a number of them, so they can try to get a bunch of our sites cut over to TDMA this summer. He stated there weren't enough routers, and he was not sure there was enough summer to do all the sites anyways, but they're going to have a pretty aggressive schedule to try to get 50 or so of the sites done before winter rolls in again.</p> <p>John asked Scott to share the discussion from earlier today about the Smart Connect product and the possibility of using Wi-Fi in the vehicles and asked him to share some of his thoughts because this is more than just utilizing an APXnext in an environment that is outside of maybe radio coverage.</p> <p>Scott explained that first it has to be programmed into the radio, and the example they were talking about earlier today was DPS, having LTE Sierra Wireless routers in their vehicles, if they have the Wi-Fi enabled and they have an SSID and it sounds like maybe that is going to be standardized, so it might be easier to program that way. He briefed, if you take Nikiski as the example where sometimes DPS says when they get out of the vehicle, they can't talk on their portable. If the portable is connected to that Sierra Wireless Wi-Fi bubble in their vehicle, they would still be able to talk the same way they would be able to talk, for example through the cell network, so either cell network or Wi-Fi if it's programmed in the radio is another way to use Smart Connect and to be on ALMR.</p> <p>Kyle stated they are super excited about Smart Connect becoming available and he is looking forward to continued discussions on it. He asked if the Smart Connect feature will eventually be available to ALMR users or is it going to stay within DPS.</p> <p>Scott responded that Smart Connect will be on the system and available to anyone who has the radios capable of using it. He noted he was not sure if there was licensing for Smart Connect but could ask. He did reiterate that agencies must have Wi-Fi or the APX Next radio and presumably if you have the APX Next radio that's coming with everything</p>	
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	<p>necessary to connect through that to the network, but I think you would need to have a Wi-Fi capable radio and have a Smart Connect feature.</p> <p>Kyle briefed about UFD and their partnership with FirstNet, they have created a system for one of the command vehicles that they are testing right now using the mega range equipment for FirstNet connectivity, then utilizing a Sierra Wireless MG90 router to rebroadcast a Wi-Fi signal and so the testing side of it is driving around and comparing or looking at cell coverage areas that he can measure as he is driving down the road. He added he completed a round trip down the Parks Highway through Anchorage on the Glen highway, then back up the Richardson and collected all of that data recently. He noted they are acquiring the APX8000 that has Wi-Fi capability because they have to replace their radio fleet and can't wait for the APX Next. Kyle stated they would also be purchasing APX Next with the idea of using that Wi-Fi connectivity, particularly in government buildings where they can have memorandums of agreement to use those secure networks to transmit on. He asked if it was time to start thinking about a policy related to the Smart Connect use and its connection to ALMR through networks.</p> <p>Mr. David Reed stated he would look at how that Smart Connect package will connect into the network and if it works the same way as the APX Next system, it's going to connect through the LTE network into the Federal secure Cloud for Motorola, and there's going to be an approved connection from there back to the network in order to route that information. He would have to check on secure connect to see what that does.</p> <p>Kyle asked if there would then probably be some policy documents or other guidelines put out to the user agencies that if they're interested in taking advantage of this, then they're going to have to follow certain procedures to ensure security of the communications whether VPN or other technology like that.</p> <p>David advised as far as Wi-Fi networks are concerned, we are not going to be managing those networks in any way. He added that those networks are going to connect through the internet and the radios know where to go to reach back into ALMR. David added if the radio does not connect directly to ALMR, the radio will connect to the Federal secure cloud and that will manage everything else, and we do not have control over that cloud on a system level here.</p> <p>Kyle suggested it still would be worth putting some kind of document together that at a minimum just talked about the</p>	
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	<p>feature sets that you want to do these types of things and maybe a little you know help as to as to how to set them up or there are specific ports that do need to be open and you've got a program the SSID to ensure users don't think anywhere their app just connect to the stuff that's Wi-Fi, because it's not going work then. He requested it be kept as an action so the conversations stay tuned in on a policy creation or guide for user agencies on how to properly connect to that Federal cloud server and the rules to connect to it to communicate.</p> <p>David responded that we don't know enough about it yet because it's not here, but it doesn't care where you're coming from on the Internet whether it was through your secure Wi-Fi or an unsecure Wi-Fi, because basically it is acting as an additional radio or additional site. So when you radio in, it checks to make sure you're radio is authorized to be on the network and it shows that it's coming from those sites when it comes into the ALMR network and that's probably going to see it connected to the government cloud and not Joe's coffee shop.</p> <p>Kyle stated he would stay tuned, and he would put his name out there for helping with the policy document to have local representation from the Northern region to help folks sort this out as we transition into this next generation of emergency responder communications.</p>	
<p><b>Department of Defense</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Timothy Woodall</b></p>	<p><b>Action Items Assigned</b></p>
<p><b>DOD Fiduciary Responsibilities</b></p>	<p>Mr. Timothy Woodall stated the Air Force has just implemented Air Force enterprise ALMR capabilities and they're going to manage ALMR from an enterprise perspective. He explained the Army and Navy have already been doing that for some time and the reason he mentioned it is that an ALMR does not fit nicely into their very large enterprise program approach, and it creates some funding and policy conflicts that we have to work out and work very diligently to ensure that we're in line with life-cycle funding requirements.</p> <p>Mr. Woodall briefed as we've seen with the Army in their enterprise ALMR, they prioritize their systems and their updates according to the enterprise priority requirements and often the radio sites in Alaska that the DOD operates on are not prioritized in those same measures. This drives an even heavier requirement that we have an Intergovernmental Service Agreement to address the fiduciary responsibilities of the agencies with regard to the cooperative partnership within the Alaska Land Mobile Radio system.</p>	



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	<p>Mr. Woodall noted Congress has established a program that the DOD and all federal government agencies can participate in called the Government Cooperative Partnership, which states that any government agency, federal, state or local, that is using the same type of services can share their services, can share contracts together. He explained that the ability to establish ourselves and work within the enterprise ALMR networks that Army, Navy, and Air Force are having will drive us to have an Intergovernmental Service Agreement that supports our funding requirements, instruction, and agreement.</p> <p>Mr. Woodall advised within the next 60 days or so, that agreement will be pushed out to you for coordination at your levels and again, because this is an Intergovernmental Service Agreement, it will cover all the government agencies participating in Alaska Land Mobile Radio that have fiduciary responsibilities.</p>	
<b>User Council Representative Reports</b>		<b>Action Items Assigned</b>
<b>SOA DOT</b>	1. Mr. Henry Cole stated he had nothing to report for DOT.	
<b>SOA DPS</b>	2. John reported he had nothing from DPS.	
<b>SOA All Others</b>	3. There was no representative present.	
<b>US Army Installations</b>	1. There was no representative present.	
<b>DOD JBER</b>	2. SRA Kaitlyn DeHart stated she had nothing to brief.	
<b>DOD Eielson</b>	3. There was no response from the representative.	
<b>Federal Non-DOD DOJ</b>	1. Mr. Jon Kroona stated there was nothing from the FBI.	
<b>Federal Non-DOD DOI</b>	2. There was no representative present.	
<b>Federal Non-DOD All Others</b>	3. There was no representative present.	
<b>Munis – Central</b>	1. Ms. Tammy Goggia-Cockrell advised she had nothing. Mr. Jim Goodman requested a call with Mr. Paul Fussey after the meeting adjourned.	
<b>Munis-North</b>	2. Kyle had nothing for the group.	
<b>Munis-SE</b>	3. There was no response from the representative.	
<b>New Business</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action Items Assigned</b>



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<b>Next meeting</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	
	John stated the next meetings were May 3 and June 7.	
<b>Adjournment</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	
	<p>John asked if there was any other discussion, and hearing no response, he made the motion to adjourn the meeting.</p> <p><b>Motion: Adjourn the April User Council meeting.</b></p> <p><b>Motion: Mr. John Rockwell</b> <b>Second: Mr. Jim Goodman</b></p> <p>There were no objections or further discussion and the motion passed.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned: at 2:18 p.m..</p>	