



**ALASKA LAND MOBILE RADIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
(A Federal, State and Municipal Partnership)**



**MEMORANDUM FOR ALMR Executive Council**

**January 18, 2024**

**FROM: SOA Co-Chair**

**SUBJECT: October 19 Meeting Minutes**

**TO: See Distribution**

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**Executive Council Members:**

Colonel Timothy "Steiner" Meerstein  
Chief Michael Kerle

Assistant Chief Alex Boyd

Department of Defense – ALCOM/J6  
Municipality of Anchorage – Anchorage  
Police Department (via teleconference)  
Alaska Municipal League – Anchorage Fire  
Department (via teleconference)

**ALMR Support Team Members and Guests:**

Mr. Nikalus Fahnstock  
Mr. Paul Fussey  
Mr. Zach Haas  
Mr. David Reed  
Mr. Jim Nicholl  
Ms. Maymie Noble

ALMR System Manager  
ALMR Operations Manager  
Motorola Solutions (via teleconference)  
Information Systems Security Manager  
Motorola Solutions  
Motorola Solutions

Mr. John Rockwell  
Mr. Pete Rogell  
Mr. Scott Stormo

User Council Chair  
BK Technologies (via teleconference)  
Alaska Public Safety Communication  
Services

Mr. Tim Thometz  
Mr. Timothy Woodall  
Ms. Sherry Shafer

Icom America (via teleconference)  
ALCOM PM/COR  
Operations Management Office (via  
teleconference)

**1. Call to Order.** Colonel Timothy “Steiner” Meerstein, Department of Defense (DOD) Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The roll was read, and a quorum of Executive Council members were present.

**2. Opening Statements and Other Announcements.** Colonel Meerstein asked if there were any announcements and there were none.

**3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes.** Colonel Meerstein asked the members if they had a chance to review the draft meeting minutes from the July Executive Council meeting and if there were any requested changes. There were no requested changes.

**Motion: Approve the July 20, Executive Council meeting minutes, as presented.**

The motion was made by Assistant Chief Alex Boyd and seconded by Chief Michael Kerle. There were no objections or further discussion. **The motion was carried and approved.**

**4. Old Business.**

a. State Interoperability Governing Body (SIGB). Colonel Meerstein noted this item has been tabled.

Mr. John Rockwell was asked to provide an update on this item. He noted under Administrative Order Number 333, the governor created an Advisory Board for 9-1-1 and the Advisory Board submitted their recommendations to the governor on September 28. John added he had reviewed those recommendations and one of the recommendations was to create a 9-1-1 board which could substitute for a SIGB in the future and allow other areas of concern, or opportunities, to be part of that. He stated he did not know if the recommendations had been received by the governor yet, but he did know they had been sent up and wanted to apprise the council.

b. Long-term Cost Share Solution. Colonel Meerstein asked Mr. John Rockwell if there were updates and Mr. Rockwell stated there were not.

c. Fiduciary Responsibilities. Colonel Meerstein asked Mr. Tim Woodall if he had an update.

Mr. Woodall stated this was on hold after the last meeting as the Army is working out their organizational and financial structure for land mobile radio. He explained that because of the length of time that it is taking to get this determination, the Army has reverted back to where the 11th Airborne is signing on behalf of all of what used to be U.S. Army Alaska until this is resolved. Mr. Woodall noted it is an internal process that the Army has to go through, and he does not have a good timeline on when they will come to a final resolution, but he will continue to press them to ensure that it moves forward.

Mr. Woodall briefed secondary to that is a document that is very critical to both him and Mr. Stormo and the move forward, from a production standpoint, and identifies cost responsibility to infrastructure owners. He stated this is the life-cycle cost management analysis that we asked Motorola how to put together for us. Mr. Woodall explained the hope was for Motorola to get it delivered back in late August, and that moved to September, then it moved to late October, and now it looks as if it will be sometime mid-November before they will see the document. He stated the document is critical regarding the fiduciary agreement because it will define the cost basis for the next ten years in terms of life-cycle management equipment replacement and give the agencies signing that fiduciary responsibility document an understanding of what they are signing up for in terms of cost responsibility. Mr. Woodall added both he and Mr. Stormo think that it is critical on both of their parts to ensure the entities know what the cost projections are for and also to guide them in the proper budgeting process to get that assigned appropriately. He advised they were still working on this, and in every instance, they want the document to be correct, because it not only guides the fiduciary responsibility, but forms it, so that is the goal of that. Mr. Woodall assured the group they would get there, but it is just taking a bit longer.

d. TDMA versus Non-TDMA Inventory. Colonel Meerstein asked Mr. Nik Fahnestock if there were any updates regarding the ability to identify the non-APX radios and what is the next step to ensure we are meeting the deadline for all non-TDMA radios to be off the system.

Mr. Fussey volunteered to answer, and stated Mr. Fahnestock is creating spreadsheets and they have been going through those by serial numbers. He briefed that as he is doing outreach and talking to individuals, he is finding out if they have APX radios, and if so, were they purchased with TDMA capability. Mr. Fussey noted the agencies with APX radios are working with the State radio shop and whoever programs their radios, depending on who it is, and getting flash upgrades. He explained with the next version of the spreadsheet, they will be able to tell which radios are TDMA capable by the serial numbers and which ones are not. He noted when he reaches out and talks to the different entities, that's one of the questions he can ask is whether they came with TDMA. Mr. Fussey stated it is a work in progress as they continue to go through the spreadsheet.

Mr. Rockwell reminded the group that ALMR is still looking at the end of calendar year 2026 to have all the FDMA radios off the system and that is a big goal, so we are pushing hard and hopefully will be able to accomplish that.

e. Alaska Municipal League. Colonel Meerstein asked Mr. Fussey if there were any changes regarding AML and had Mr Woodall's concern been addressed.

Mr. Fussey advised that he was still working on Mr Woodall's concern and that the AML had started having weekly meetings and he had been sitting in on those trying to ascertain what AML was working on and what their meetings are about. He noted the meeting they had this week was talking about some of the different grants and one of the things that came out of that meeting was there is a radio grant that is going to be

coming up that will be open to fire departments, so they can purchase TDMA-capable radios. Mr. Fussey stated there are a lot of small volunteer departments that do not have enough money to get new radios, so he will be working with some of the representatives from AML on that. He briefed as far as the concern with the Fairbanks North Star Borough, he did not have an answer for that yet, but he is putting himself into the meetings every week.

Colonel Meerstein asked Mr. Woodall if he had any questions.

Mr. Woodall stated we need to have a final answer about where they stand, and also have them understand where they stand with regards to the cooperative.

f. Fairbanks Rabinowitz Courthouse. Colonel Meerstein asked if there were any updates on the Rabinowitz Courthouse.

Mr. Rockwell briefed, at this time, the ALMR group had identified the resources that it would take to put in the bi-directional amplifier (BDA), and the quote had been submitted to DC Barlow for funding. He explained he was told to go forward to do it, but he had not received any funding codes, and until he could get some funding codes, this was on hold.

Mr. Fussey pointed out that in the latest newsletter there is an article on BDAs, and that he had worked with the State Fire Marshal's office on the article. He noted there are state regulations and codes pertaining to BDAs in buildings, so everybody that has the newsletter can see the article reference and also the State regulations.

## **5. User Council Update.**

Colonel Meerstein asked Mr. Rockwell to please provide an update on the User Council.

Mr. Rockwell advised he had three items regarding the User Council members. He stated Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson appointed new members to the User Council and the Executive Council approved those members as of September 12. Mr. Rockwell stated the alternate southeast representative had retired, so there is a vacancy there and the Army continues to have a vacancy for their primary representative.

Mr. Woodall stated with regards to the Army, they have carried that open primary slot for going on two years now. He noted they have a MSG that is filling in as the alternate, and for the most part, Mr. Rick Williams, who is the actual alternate, has been acting as the primary representative. Mr. Woodall advised that he could press for an appointment letter. He clarified he did not mean to imply that the Army is not active within the user community, but there are rules, and it is all about documentation and paperwork. Mr. Woodall explained he had a request into the previous commander for the documentation change but the Army had just recently had a commander change, so he would reach out to the new commander and have that conversation.

## **6. Operations Management Office.**

a. Training and Outreach. Mr. Fussey briefed the ALMR Town Hall for TDMA Part 2 which occurred on September 13. He added Mr. Dan Nelson, ALMR Training Coordinator, had also posted two new video vignettes on the website on “Conventional Radios on ALMR” and “The Technology Behind ALMR.”

Mr. Fussey added, as he had mentioned earlier, he attended the AML infrastructure meetings on September 19 and October 3. He stated he had also attended the monthly Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure Protection (APIP) meetings, which were held on September 21 and this morning. Mr. Fussey noted he had attended the APOA meeting on October 3 and there was a particularly good presentation by Mr Rikk Rambo of the Western States Information Network (WSIN). He stated he also attended ARCTICOM 2023, Alaska's information security conference, on October 12, which was held in downtown Anchorage. Mr. Fussey briefed there were a lot of vendors down there, a lot of different presentations on cybersecurity and how protect your organization out on the cloud and through email, so a lot of good information was provided.

Mr. Fussey advised during his annual outreach calls with ALMR members, some of the things he has been focusing on are if agencies have any concerns regarding the current upgrade work and how their coverage is and if there has been any drop in coverage. He stated the responses he has received indicate there has not been any drop in coverage and he has gotten positive feedback that the upgrade is improving coverage. Mr. Fussey added he has also been discussing the transition to TDMA and as previously discussed, what kind of radios the agencies have and are they TDMA capable and are they coming programmed with TDMA. He noted that he also emphasizes the December 31, 2026, cutoff date for FDMA. Mr. Fussey added in response to some of the questions that he has received about TDMA and how it works, he has been sending the agencies to the radio training videos on the website and also walking them through which radios that are TDMA capable.

Mr. Fussey briefed the monthly offsite security inspections were completed for August, September, and October, and he was working with the SMO for an upcoming trip to conduct a site inspection of the Northern Region off site area sometime next month.

b. FY24 Cost Share. Mr. Fussey advised all notifications have been distributed.

c. Project Status Update. Mr. Fussey briefed the microwave hop from Alcantra to R1 North was completed on September 29 and the microwave hops from Kobe to Clear were still in progress. He advised the NICE logger Motopatch for Windows update was completed on October 17.

d. FY24 Membership Agreements. Mr. Fussey stated there were two agencies who did not return their agreements and 30-day termination letters were sent to both. He noted one agency submitted their membership agreement as soon as they got to 30-day notice, so there was only one Federal Non-DoD entity left as of this morning. Mr. Fussey advised he did send notices to the User Council Chair and to the DOD regarding

that one. He added we are down to two weeks, so he would be trying to work with that organization on a weekly basis until they do sign it, or we have to go to the next step.

e. System Metrics. Mr. Fussey stated looking at the individual calls, we had 1.4 million, so there is a little bit of drop from August to September. He added the monthly push to talks were 2.3 million, which was higher than last year at this time. Mr. Fussey advised the monthly busies were 253 and if you look at the percentage number .0001, it is a really good number. He noted the subscriber counts was 25,768, which was up by 131.

For the sites below three nines, Mr. Fussey briefed there were 12 and the reasons run the gamut from PMIs, to backhaul issues, and commercial circuit issues. He explained the commercial circuit issues were mainly in Kodiak for Pillar Mountain and Womens Bay. Lastly, Mr. Fussey noted the PMIs and that Mr. Fahnestock's team had been very busy with those.

f. Other. Mr. Fussey advised that Motorola had given a presentation on September 26 to the OMO, the SMO, and to APSCS on their new products and what their future might look like for their different radios.

Mr. Fussey briefed ALMR had tested and certified the BKR 9000 portable, and that is now listed on the web site, and it is TDMA capable.

Mr. Fussey stated he had attended a webinar on public safety radio uplinks that was focusing on radio interfaces, BDA, and building structures which tied in with what Mr. Rockwell was talking about for the Rabinowitz Courthouse and also what was published in the newsletter.

Mr. Fussey noted he was working on some other training and had attended a Virtual Training Seminar for advancing the public sector on managing the modern LMR network, artificial intelligence, machine learning risks for the public sector, and GIS basics for 9-1-1 teams.

Mr. Fussey again provided that the quarterly newsletter was sent out on October 16, and that it is now on the web site.

Lastly, Mr. Fussey added that the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) convention is being held downtown in Anchorage, October 19 - 21, so it is currently going on.

## **7. New Business.**

a. Motorola Contract. Mr. Woodall asked Mr. Scott Stormo if he wanted to talk about the contract process.

Mr. Stormo stated they would probably start that sometime in the spring, but the procurement officer that they were initially working with moved on to another job, so once that position is filled, and that the person is in place, they will start the discussion

for a follow-on contract to the one that we have with Motorola right now for operations support.

Mr. Woodall suggested this should be an item to track the status on for the Executive Council as to where we are going, the award process, timeline, and so forth, especially since they felt like this contract may not be single contract but may be multiple contracts. He added it is about a two-year process to go through the state contracting administrative process.

Colonel Meerstein clarified for those users out in MS Teams that it was suggested to add an item in New Business for the new contract award process, so we can track it at the Executive Council level.

Mr. Rockwell added the current contract is valid until June 30, 2026.

Mr. Stormo advised the last time they ended up having to extend the prior contract, so he thought this time they would be trying to get it done early, even if it did not take place for eight months or something, just to make sure they did not run into that same issue again.

b. Tudor Road Electrical Work. Mr. Stormo mentioned for awareness, there would be some electrical work at the Tudor facility and up until yesterday, they were told it would not cause a loss of power to the building to complete it. He stated they needed to now understand how long that is going to be, where the battery plant capacity is if it is going to carry the master site, and the connectivity out of here before they will proceed with that.

Mr. Woodall asked if the DOD had the ability to provide a 35KW generator for however long, would the State have the ability to do it then.

Mr. Stormo replied that was why there needed to be more conversation, because there is a generator already at Tudor Road, and the idea was to run off of that generator while they killed the commercial power and did the work, but the electricians said yesterday that they actually cannot have the generator running either and there can be no power while they're working. He stated this was something new and they had been talking to them for a year about this, and that is the first time somebody had said that, so it was always understood the building would be on the generator while they were doing the work.

Mr. Woodall asked Mr. Fahnstock, in that instance, what is the failover process for the controller.

Mr. Fahnstock stated the sites in Zone 1 would go into site trunking, the dispatch consoles would go down, but Zone 2 would stay up.

Mr. Woodall advised he knew what would happen but wanted those listening to understand. He recommended the System Management Office, through the Operations

Management Office, send out a notice so that we can inform the users of the potential outage as we refine the date and time.

Mr. Woodall asked Scott if his electrical contact would have the ability to a work around if users had significant operational issues with that at a certain timeline. He stated those would be questions he thought we would all need to be answered to ensure that we can properly inform the users and let them know what capability they have to work with around that schedule, if necessary.

Mr. Fussey advised they had been talking about that this morning and his responsibilities would be to call everybody in Zone 1 to let them know what the possibilities are. He clarified that usually when they do security patch rollovers, he calls the agencies to make sure nothing is going on and there is not a major emergency that we are not aware of before the power is shut down, so it would be a lot of proactive talking with them, putting it in the daily report, and also sending them emails to let them know the possibility of the master site going down.

Mr. Woodall then asked if there is the ability to restore the power if they are in the middle of their work if there is some sort of critical emergency, and if that is a potential or not, and if they would be willing to do that if that was the case.

Mr. Stormo responded he didn't know and it would be up to the electricians and if the generator wasn't somehow disconnected, they'd have to basically just step back off of what they were doing prior to bringing the generator getting up to rate power, but other than the State was told this in a very short conversation yesterday for the first time ever, but they have not had a conversation with the engineering side.

Colonel Meerstein asked if they had alluded to the duration it might be offline.

Scott stated he had only talked to the electrician who has been doing most of the work and he stated they would initially keep it powered up, but they have changed a few things throughout the process. He explained the entire transformer was supposed to be changed out, and the State was going to run on generator the whole time that was happening, but Chugach Electric decided they did not need to change the generator and their electrician told us we are going to have to cut all power while they are doing the cutover, but he did not say if that is a five-minute process to stop the actual commercial power and then you can turn it back on. Scott advised they don't have any idea yet what that duration is, so they will find out more and be working the notification processes and talking to people about what their backup options are if something does go down,

Colonel Meerstein stated his next question was whether they hoped to get all this done before it snowed.

Mr. Stormo responded they were trying to get all this done before it snows and this drives some other questions like the battery plant for the zone controllers age and it has never been tested like this, so we do not know how many hours' worth of runtime it has or does not have. He noted it was not the kind of battery plant that they could work on,



so they needed to find somebody to come look at it and tell them what they think about it. Mr. Stormo advised that he had a couple of people look at changing out the power system, and unfortunately every person he has had in has had polar opposite recommendations as to what they need to do, so they are kind of stuck with you got to rip the whole thing out and replace it. He stated it was unclear if it is usable with just new batteries, but they are getting different opinions from different vendors. Mr. Stormo briefed the plant was going to get that replaced anyways, but they just do not know if they are replacing everything or replacing part of it. He added in the meantime, they need to know if the battery plant they have will carry the load if they say it is an hour outage, or will it carry it for more than an hour, if needed. Mr. Stormo stated he would rather not hear five to six hours, but they will find that stuff out beforehand, because obviously the last thing the State wants to do is shut the place down for six hours.

Mr. Woodall stated he was trying to understand if they are talking about the controller being powered from the building, if we were not running power to the building like with power from a battery plant, why could you not then power directly from the generator without touching the building power.

Mr. Stormo agreed this would be totally independent, and they could run a power cable across the floor in the front door and have an electrician hook it up to the right places.

Mr. Woodall advised although he could not speak for the Colonel, he was sure he would approve it and that would be his recommendation that they do that in the attempt to keep the system operational and it seems like a low threat, low risk approach. He added they have 35KW generators that they could pull down to the building, so that Scott could have several generators in tandem that could back each other up, so they had an electrical backup as well.

Colonel Meerstein stated he would approve it, but his concern is with the UPS and the concern on how long it is going to hold the load if you have not gone through normal exercises to where you cut all the all the power over to the UPS, and you do not know how long it is going to last. He noted his experience is not favorable of testing that out during the cut over and so, he would rather us gracefully power down the equipment and transition into generator power, than put at risk hours of an outage because of the electrical upgrade that needed to take place. Colonel Meerstein added with all that being said, he was in favor of it and asked Mr. Stormo to garner the granular details of when the contractor is going to do it and what the anticipated length of time is for the outage. He thought that would give the data required to make sure that we have the proper number of generators on site with the fuel and maintainers for overwatch.

Mr. Stormo responded as soon as he gets more information, he would let the Colonel know, but hopefully it is just five minutes while they lay the new lines on it, and they say everything is going to be awesome, and then the risk goes way down.

**8. Next Meeting.** Colonel Meerstein advised the next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2024. He requested the council members please email Miss Shafer if they had any conflicts.

**9. Adjourn Meeting.** Colonel Meerstein asked if there was any other business and hearing no responses, he requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion: Adjourn the October 19 meeting of the ALMR Executive Council.**

The motion was made by Chief Kerle and seconded by Assistant Chief Boyd. There were no objections. **The motion was carried and approved.**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m.



Deputy Commissioner Bryan Barlow  
Department of Public Safety  
ALMR Executive Council

**Distribution:**

SOA/DPS, Deputy Commissioner Bryan Barlow  
USNORTHCOM/ALCOM J6, Colonel Timothy “Steiner” Meerstein  
AFEA, Mr. Christopher Jensen  
MOA, Chief Michael Kerle  
AML, Assistant Chief Alex Boyd  
SOA DPS, Mr. Scott Stormo  
OMO, Mr. Paul Fussey  
ALCOM/J64, Mr. Timothy Woodall  
MOA, Mr. Trygve Erickson  
SOA DPS, Mr. John Rockwell