



*ALMR User Council
Meeting Minutes*

Date: August 14, 2024

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	Draves	Kayla	MSgt	DoD USAF, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
E	Goggia-Cockrell	Tammy	Ms.	Municipalities Central, Vice Chair
T	Kalwara	Erann	Ms.	Municipalities Southeast
U	Kroona	Jon	Mr.	Federal Non-DoD DOJ, FBI
T	Nelsen	Scott	Mr.	SOA All Others, DMVA
T	Nelson	James	Officer	Federal Non-DoD All Others, US Forest Service
T	Rodriguez	Joe	MSgt	DoD USAF, Eielson AFB
T	Rockwell	John	Mr.	SOA DPS, Chair
U	Smith	Eric	Mr.	DoD US Army - Alaska

Alternate				
N/A	Brown	David	Mr.	Fed Non-DoD DOJ, FBI
T	Carter	Bobby	Mr.	Federal Non-DoD All Others, TSA
T	Clendenin	John	Mr.	SOA DOT
T	Edwards	Karl	Mr.	DHS, SOA All Others
P	Endres	Benjamin	Lieutenant	SOA Department of Public Safety
E	Green	Kyle	Fire Marshal	Municipalities North, University Fire Department
P	Goodman	Jim	Mr.	Municipalities Central, MatSu Borough
N/A	Hammer	Nathan	SMSgt	DoD USAF, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
N/A	Herman	Mary	Captain	DoD USAF, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
E	Higginbotham	Dave	MSgt	DoD US Army - Alaska
N/A	Maley	Christopher	TSgt	DoD USAF, Eielson AFB
N/A	Peace	David	Mr.	DoD USAF, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
	VACANT			Federal Non-DoD DOI
N/A	Dryden	Josh	Sgt	Municipalities Southeast



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Supporting Staff and Guests

T	Barry-Garland	Eli	Mr.	BLM
P	Burnham	Mary	Ms.	Operations Management Office (OMO)
T	Butcher	Joel	Mr.	City of Wasilla
P	Fahnestock	Nik	Mr.	System Manager (SMO)
P	Farrell	Kevin	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
P	Fussey	Paul	Mr.	Operations Manager
T	Haas	Zach	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
T	Marlow	Ryan	Mr.	State of Alaska (SOA)
P	Nicholl	Jim	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
P	Piksa	Joe	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
T	Ragadio	Rob	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
P	Remaley	Dakota	Mr.	Palmer FD
P	Reed	Dave	Mr.	Security Manager
T	Rogell	Pete	Mr.	BK Technologies
P	Sasai	Richard	Mr.	Motorola Solutions
T	Schijvens	Sanders	Mr.	Wostmann & Associates CEO
P	Stormo	Scott	Mr.	State of Alaska (SOA)
T	Thometz	Tim	Mr.	iCom America
P	Ulrich	Naomi	Ms.	Motorola Solutions
T	Ventura	Nestor	Mr.	USAF
P	Woodall	Tim	Mr.	Department of Defense (DoD)

2. Meeting Minutes and Action Items.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items Assigned
Call to Order	Mr. John Rockwell called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.	
Roll Call	Roll call was taken, and there was a quorum of User Council (UC) members in attendance for the meeting. Mr. Eli Barry-Garland, Mr. Bobby Carter, Mr. Joel Butcher, Mr. Nestor Ventura, LT Erann Kalwara, and MSgt Kayla Draves joined the meeting after the role was taken.	
Introduction of Guests/Special Announcements	John inquired if there were any guests or new members to be introduced. Mr. Jim Goodman introduced Mr. Dakota Remaley with Palmer Fire Department.	
Previous Meeting Minutes	John proceeded to the next agenda item, which was the review and approval of the July meeting minutes. He stated he would entertain a motion to approve.	



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	<p>Motion: Approve the July 3 monthly User Council meeting minutes.</p> <p>Motion: Mr. Jim Goodman Second: Mr. John Rockwell</p> <p>John asked the council members if they had there were any updates or changes to the meeting minutes. Hearing none, John stated the motion was approved.</p>	
Issues & Risks Log	Review	Resolution
	<p>John moved on to the review of the Issues and Risk Log. He stated that he believed there was only one item that is still open or changed since the last meeting, which would be the Zone 2 master site power issue. John commented that the update is for Fort Wainwright DPW, who will be working to troubleshoot/fix the transfer switch on August 7. He inquired if the council could get any updates to this item.</p> <p>Mr. Nik Fahnstock briefed that the morning everything took place, it was 100 percent successful, with no outages or downtime as far as he understood. Nik stated that Fort Wainwright DPW did complete everything they wanted to, including the generator test run.</p> <p>John said that issue can be closed for the next meeting.</p>	
Action Items	Updates	Action Items Assigned
	<p>John noted that he was moving on to the Action Item List and asked if there are any updates at this time. He stated there are three items that were being tracked, one is the APX NXT radio discussion as the council moves forward with some of the newer technology. John noted the other two items are the Operations Management Office (OMO) letters both to the telcos as well as the issues regarding outages. John asked Mr. Paul Fussey if he could provide any updates regarding these two action items.</p> <p>Paul briefed that the OMO drafted a letter, and the reason was because GCI and some other carriers were running tests on their system and the Alaska Public Safety Communication System (APSCS) has contracts with them to use some of their commercial circuits for the microwave backhaul. Paul noted that when GCI and the others were doing their testing, they would not notify the OMO/SMO and it was causing the system to crash in certain areas,</p>	



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	<p>specifically Southeast, without any warning, so, a letter was drafted and sent out to the User Council Chair and some other ALMR individuals to approve. When those letters were approved, they were mailed to GCI, AT&T, Verizon, and MTA. Paul asked the chair's permission to close those items.</p> <p>John responded that he would approve of closing those two items and that he would move on to the next agenda item, which is the OMO's overview.</p>	
<p>Operations Management Office</p>	<p>Mr. Paul Fussey, Operations Manager</p>	<p>Action Items Assigned</p>
<p>Training</p> <p>Outreach</p>	<p>1. Paul briefed that the August training video topic, which is "Understanding Failed Transmissions," is posted on the ALMR website and he would like to remind everybody that with the update to training videos section on the website, it is more user friendly, with the newest video being the top one in the second to the left column.</p> <p>2. Paul briefed that he has been making calls to different members to verify the information for Ms. Mary Burnham, and there are a couple of agencies that have not reached back out to OMO. He noted he has been calling them one by one to have them sign their membership agreement, and that the OMO appreciates everyone who has sent everything back. Paul stated some of the members, when he called them, had either a new point of contact or individuals had retired and did not notify ALMR. He commented that this has been a long ongoing process, but the OMO is now down to just a handful of agencies.</p> <p>Paul briefed that he was tasked with collecting radio data at the request of the state OMB. He has been reaching out to different agencies to get their radio data, which is: do they have TDMA or FDMA radios; and which ones need flash upgrades on them. Paul noted that out of 135 emails that he sent out he has only received 62 responses. He commented that so far with the responses, it looks like over 2,000 portable radios that need to be replaced and over 1,000 mobiles with TDMA radios.</p> <p>Paul noted that the DoD membership agreements have been sent to DPS for yearly payments.</p> <p>Paul stated that coming up the Kenwood engineers will be at the ALMR office on August 20, for an acceptance test on their new mobile radio.</p> <p>Paul asked if there were any questions before he moved on to the system upgrade, and hearing none he continued.</p>	



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<p>Upgrades</p>	<p>3. Paul noted that the upgrade is still being worked on and that ALMR and the Motorola team had another meeting today to discuss where ALMR is at, and they are looking forward to hopefully being completed by September. He stated once the upgrade testing is completed, he and Nik will start doing some system testing by activating different talk groups for TDMA just to make sure that they are going to be working.</p>	
<p>July Document Reviews</p>	<p>4. Paul mentioned that the High-Level Communications Strategy, Interoperability Policy and Procedure, Key Management Facility Policy and Procedure, and User Council Charter have been reviewed.</p>	
<p>July System Metrics</p>	<p>5. Paul briefed that there were 1,588,685 calls last month. The monthly push to talks were 2,614,183 and the monthly busies were 1059, which is well below the numbers that would give him any concern. He noted the subscriber counts were 31,699.</p> <p>Paul stated the sites below three 9s were 15 and that they were from software upgrades, PMIs, testing, microwave repairs, etc.</p> <p>Paul noted the website had 373 sessions, 709 page views, and what is interesting is that 94% were new users. Paul commented that as he reaches out to all the agencies about subscribers, he is talking to them about the ALMR website and the training videos, and it is nice to see that the website is getting new users.</p> <p>Paul asked if there were any questions on the metrics, hearing none, Paul moved on to the Other Items.</p>	
<p>Other Items</p>	<p>6. Paul noted that the monthly security check was completed on August 13.</p> <p>Paul briefed that the systems management office (SMO) conducted 25 PMIs in July and 7 so far in August. They have been very busy out in the field and the technicians are still out there conducting work even as of this morning.</p> <p>Paul commented that there was a large power outage in Anchorage the other day, and he wanted to let everybody know that the Zone 1 master site did not lose any power during that outage on 12 August. He said if anybody is not familiar with that, there were about 50,000 residents and buildings in the Anchorage and Mat-Su area that lost power</p>	



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	<p>for several hours, but the Zone 1 master site kept working without any loss of power.</p> <p>Paul briefed that the quarterly security update for all zones will be conducted on August 27 and 28, which he, Nik, and his team will be in early contacting all the dispatch centers before the update.</p> <p>Paul noted that Mary posted the August updated documents on the website.</p> <p>Paul stated that he and staff from APSCS attended the yearly APCO meeting which is the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials and the Motorola Trunk Users Group (MTUG). Paul noted that they met with several vendors and listened to briefings and seminars.</p> <p>Paul said his last item is that the Executive Council meeting that was held on July 25, if you look on the website, was changed to a discussion since none of the co-chairs were available, which means the April meeting minutes will be approved during the October meeting. He stated that on the website, even though it is not an official meeting, the agenda, recording, and notes are posted.</p> <p>Paul stated that this completes his report, pending any questions from the group.</p> <p>John opened the floor for any questions for Paul, hearing none, he stated the council would move on to the next agenda item, which is the system management office overview.</p>	
<p>System Management Office</p>	<p>Mr. Nik Fahnestock, System Manager</p>	<p>Action Items Assigned</p>
	<p>Nik briefed that, as Paul mentioned, the SMO has been doing a lot of PMIs and he said thank you to the members for being patient with the SMO as they complete them. He noted they are trying to get as many done as possible during these good summer months.</p> <p>Nik stated that he is kind of repeating but the Birch Hill stuff, sections that he did not want to get too deep into, however, the bypass switch was in fact not broken, it was just a lack of procedures on their part as far as how it worked. He noted that everything with that went very well.</p> <p>Nik commented that is all he had.</p>	



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	John opened the floor for any questions for Nik or the SMO, hearing none, he moved on to the SOA and DoD overviews, and he turned the floor over to Mr. Scott Stormo with the SOA.	
State of Alaska	Mr. Scott Stormo	Action Items Assigned
Upgrade Status	<p>1. Scott briefed he wanted to give a quick update on the upgrade that ALMR has been going through with Motorola. He noted that they are down to the last couple of sites that they are doing the TDMA test plan and once that is done all the Juniper routers will have been installed, which means for all the state RF sites they are approaching the point where ALMR can switch the system over to TDMA. Scott stated that the state is starting to get close to the end of a multi-year upgrade.</p>	
Periodic Maintenance Inspections	<p>2. Scott noted, other than that the state's teams have been out doing a lot of PMI work at the sites and that ranges from cutting the brush away from shelters, the towers, and the fences, as well as servicing generators, changing filters on HVAC units, fixing minor things that the teams discover on site, and documenting major things that are discovered on site. He stated the teams are getting a lot of the basic stuff done and finding more work as would be expected. Scott said they have one or two generators that are determined to be inoperable at the moment and they will continue to work to get those straightened out. Scott briefed the state has been hiring some tower crews lately to do some dish replacements and the realigning of some dishes that have gotten out of alignment over the years. He also noted they are working on getting trees cut down that are in the way at some places, to improve those microwave shots. He commented they are making progress, but, unfortunately, they don't have the in-house resources to do some of these items, so it kind of depends on what they can find for contractual crews and funding to pursue that. They have been making good progress repairing any issues on the system.</p> <p>Scott stated he did not have anything else to add unless there were any questions.</p>	
Association of Public Safety Officials (APCO)	<p>3. John asked before the council moves on, could either Scott or Paul give an update or highlights on the APCO or MTUG. He also commented that later the council would be having a proposal briefing from Motorola Solutions, so if they could give any background on that, that would be helpful.</p>	



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<p>Bi-Directional Amplifiers</p>	<p>Paul briefed that during APCO and MTUG they sat through a lot of different sessions looking at the new products coming out, and they went around and spoke with multiple vendors, set up meetings and appointments to have their products tested on the system, and looking at the new cybersecurity information. He noted that one of the things that was very productive for him and Scott was doing some research on BDA systems. Paul commented that at the last User Council and Executive Council meetings, Mr. Tim Woodall asked Paul to research bi-directional amplifiers (BDAs), especially since ALMR is going from FDMA to TDMA, to see if individuals need to update or change out their BDA or distributed antenna systems (DAS). Paul noted that he and Scott talked to several engineers and since ALMR is going from a digital FDMA system to a digital TDMA, individuals will not have to replace their systems, however, they will have to recalibrate them.</p> <p>4. Scott stated he wanted to add something to what Paul said about the BDAs, which is that ALMR and pretty much everyone else in MTUG that has anything to do with BDAs recently learned that in the last year or two that nobody has been doing anything that they are supposed to do with BDAs and a lot of that is changing. He noted that what it all really comes down to may be some changes in the coding, but more about people's awareness of what is required in the code, and having staff that actually understands that and enforces or requires the processes to be followed. Scott commented that most of it does not exist right now in Alaska, so it is really at the infancy stage, which sounds bad until you get presentations from the people in the Seattle area who basically started from scratch on this a few years ago. He stated that there is probably going to be some changes going forward on BDAs, but it really comes down to the enforcement officials who are going to push for some of these requirements.</p> <p>Scott briefed that the one thing ALMR has a lot of control over is if someone is using a BDA to rebroadcast somebody's frequencies, they have to have permission from the licensed owner of those frequencies, which means the BDA cannot go in and rebroadcast ALMR frequencies without the SOA and possibly the DoD's written authorization from the license holder. Scott noted that ALMR will need to develop some policies and procedures and get a document put in place, because as a statewide system codes exist differently in different places, which makes this more complicated. He commented that the one thing in general is that people cannot</p>	
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	<p>rebroadcast frequencies that they do not own without the license holder’s permission and that they are required to do annual testing and certification of equipment to make sure that it is properly functioning and not causing interference or any other difficulties, so there will be lots to come on BDAs.</p> <p>Mr. Timothy (Tim) Woodall asked the chair (John) if the council members in the conference room could entertain an offline muted conversation for a moment.</p> <p>John responded in the affirmative and announced to the council members online that the meeting was just pausing for a brief moment while the council members in the conference room had a quick conversation.</p> <p>After the pause, Paul spoke for the group and apologized stating something had come up and the agenda item under new business is going to be tabled to a future date.</p> <p>John thanked Paul for the update and moved on to the DoD overview.</p>	
<p>Department of Defense</p>	<p>Mr. Timothy Woodall</p>	<p>Action Items Assigned</p>
	<p>Tim briefed that the DoD is working for the infrastructure owners in the DoD with the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF) level infrastructure folks and the Army G9 to execute a community partnership program based intergovernmental support agreement that will be between the infrastructure owners in ALMR and is currently being worked at that level. He stated when it is done, the agreement will address financial responsibilities and contractual responsibilities as infrastructure owners, which will be fully defined. This will be helpful because right now the DoD is a third party to the SOA contract, meaning the SOA is the signatory to the contract with Motorola, but the DoD receives services as a third party. Tim noted that the intergovernmental service agreement will be seen by the DoD as in fact a contract which has a must pay addendum to it, much like if the DoD had a contract in place and they were a party to a signatory contract. He commented that it will solve some of the issues that they are having, and it is taking much longer than was anticipated, but there is a lot of legal climbing that must occur, a lot of negotiations, but it is progressing, so please be patient.</p>	



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	<p>Tim said they are pressing forward, and it will be good when they get that in place, and he asked if anyone had any questions.</p> <p>John thanked Tim, and that he appreciates Tim for pushing forward with this additional direction. He commented that the council has talked a lot about sustaining the ALMR infrastructure as well, and it has always been kind of confusing at times about who has the money, and he appreciates Tim trying to establish a standard to continue to go forward. John, hearing no questions, moved on to the User Council representative updates.</p>	
User Council Representative Reports	Represented Areas	Action Items Assigned
SOA DOT	1. John called for updates from DOT, and there was no response.	
SOA DPS	2. Lt. Ben Endres from DPS stated that since the last meeting, DPS was able to spend about \$400,000 on some new radios, and about a month after that order was placed, it came down from the DPS command that they had to cancel that order. He noted that DPS is doing an inventory of all their radios right now so they can present an accurate picture of what they have. He commented that they are in a situation where if an order is not in place before very long, especially with the Spring Academy coming up, they will be looking at issuing XTS 5000 portables that were already pulled from the ALMR system. Unfortunately, that is what they will have to issue to recruits.	
SOA All Others	3. John called for updates from all other SOA components, and Mr. Scott Nelsen stated there were no updates	
DoD US Army Installations	1. John called for updates from DoD US Army, and there was no response.	
DoD JBER	2. MSgt Kayla Draves briefed that they are currently working with contracting on getting the R1 North batteries upgraded, and she knows this has been a long process, but they are really trying to push forward. She noted they have a site survey with contractors on 28 August. MSgt Draves commented they are also in the process of gathering all of their flash codes for the TDMA upgrade, so that way if funding drops anytime during or before the new fiscal year,	



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<p>DoD Eielson</p>	<p>they are ready to execute as soon as they can and get the TDMA software.</p> <p>3. John called for updates from DoD Eielson, and there was no response.</p>	
<p>Federal Non-DoD DOI</p> <p>Federal Non-DoD DOJ</p> <p>Federal Non-DoD All Others</p>	<p>John called for updates from the Federal Non-DoD, DOI, DOJ, and all others, and there were no responses.</p>	
<p>Munis-Central</p> <p>Munis-North</p> <p>Munis-Southeast</p>	<p>1. John requested updates from Munis-Central, and Mr. Jim Goodman responded. Jim stated that all he could talk about right now is Palmer, and they are full-fledged ahead with TDMA and they now have full redundancy at Palmer Police Department. He noted they have backhaul going both directions, so they are no longer just a spur in the loop.</p> <p>2. John called for updates from Munis-North, and there were no responses.</p> <p>3. John called for updates from Munis-Southeast, and there were no responses.</p>	
<p>New Business</p>	<p>Discussion</p>	<p>Action Items Assigned</p>
<p>Introduction of new Motorola Solutions Representatives</p>	<p>1. John noted that the council had been asked to change the agenda slightly by removing the new contract proposal briefing from Motorola under new business. He opened the floor for any new business that anybody would like to present.</p> <p>Mr. Joe Piska with Motorola commented that Mr. Jim Nicholl is there as well, and they have a couple of employment announcements to make, since a little bit of shuffling has been going on, and some new hires, so they would like to introduce them to the council.</p> <p>John asked him to proceed</p> <p>Jim introduced Mr. Richard Sasai, who is the Regional Services Manager (RSM) now for Territory 8, which Alaska is included in, and then Mr. Kevin Farrell, who is the Customer Support Manager (CSM) on the state and local side. Joe stated they both live in Washington but have accounts in</p>	



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<p>FedRamp Approval</p>	<p>Alaska. He stated he would let Richard talk for a quick second and give a little bit of background.</p> <p>Richard stated it was great to be here and nice to meet everybody, it is his first meeting, and he is excited about this. He commented he spent 21 years at Verizon before moving to Motorola and Alaska was part of his territory then, so he is familiar with the landscape and going to the different areas, and he is looking to continue to meet people and to continue relationships that Jim has built.</p> <p>Kevin noted he has been with Motorola 15 years, and he is an engineer who most recently worked on systems design, and he is an integration specialist on the Astro systems. He stated he is here as the CSM role, and that it is good to meet everyone.</p> <p>Joe noted that Kevin was a primary engineer on multiple of his projects in the Washington area and every one of my projects, the people that Kevin was working with, not only asked but begged to have him back, since he did such a good job, and Joe is really excited to get him in his territory and to work with Kevin in the CSM role. Joe commented he thinks ALMR is going to see good things from Kevin and Richie.</p> <p>John thanked Joe for the introduction and welcomed Kevin and Richard aboard. John inquired if there was anything else for new business and that he would open the floor for any questions or observations from anybody online or there in the conference room.</p> <p>2. Scott stated he had one thing that he wanted to mention that nobody asked about and he had forgotten to bring up. He said that Motorola stated at the MTUG meeting, the FedRamp approval for Smart Connect is on the one- or two- year line and they basically expect approval to come anytime, days to weeks. He commented that obviously it has been heard many times before, but Motorola was quite confident in the fact that they have had a lot of back and forth with the FedRamp process and all the questions have been answered, all the paperwork has been done, and they are just waiting for the FedRamp office, federal government, to grant the final approval. Scott noted that Motorola thinks they are close and there is nothing left to do but wait for hopefully good news. ALMR has heard news like that for a couple of years, just not this confident.</p> <p>John stated all that is excellent news and thanked Scott for the update. He asked if there was anything else, and hearing nothing he moved on to announce when the next meetings would be held.</p>	
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Next Meeting	Discussion	
	John briefed the next meetings are currently scheduled for September 4 and October 2.	
Adjournment	Discussion	
	<p>John stated that the floor is open for any questions, comments, or observations, and hearing none he would entertain a motion to adjourn.</p> <p>Motion: Adjourn the August 14 User Council meeting.</p> <p>Motion: Mr. Jim Goodman</p> <p>Second: Mr. Scott Nelsen</p> <p>There were no objections or further discussion, and the motion passed.</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.</p>	