



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



**MEMORANDUM FOR ALMR Executive Council**

**January 17, 2019**

**FROM: DOD Co-Chair**

**SUBJECT: October 25, 2018, Meeting Minutes**

**TO: See Distribution**

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**Executive Council Members Present:**

Deputy Commissioner Bill Comer	State of Alaska – Department of Public Safety
ASAC Antony Jung	Alaska Federal Executive Association - Federal Bureau of Investigation (via teleconference)
Mr. Dave Koch	Municipality of Anchorage – Anchorage Police Department

**ALMR Support Team Members and Guests Present:**

Mr. John Rockwell	User Council Chair
Mr. Del Smith	Operations Manager
Mr. Tim Woodall	DOD ALMR Program Manager
Mr. Trygve Erickson	MOA AWARD Manager
Mr. Nate Skinner	User Council Vice Chair & DNR Forestry
Ms. Bonnie Clark	Information Systems Security Manager
Ms. Sherry Shafer	Operations Management Office (via teleconference)

**1. Call to Order.** Deputy Commissioner Bill Comer, State of Alaska (SOA) Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Roll call was read.

## **2. Opening Statements and Other Announcements.**

Deputy Commissioner Comer stated he had not previously met Ms. Bonnie Clark and Mr. Nate Skinner and asked them to introduce themselves, as, which they both did.

Mr. Del Smith added Ms. Clark also reviews the policies and procedures which address any of the System security measures.

Mr Timothy Woodall noted her position also benefits the State of Alaska (SOA).

**3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes.** Deputy Commissioner Comer asked the other council member if they had reviewed the July meeting minutes and requested a motion for their approval.

**Motion: Approve the July 19 Executive Council meeting minutes, as written.**

The motion was made by ASAC Antony Jung and seconded by Deputy Commissioner Comer. There were no objections. **The motion was carried and approved.**

## **4. Old Business.**

a. SOA Quantar Replacement/Separation Study. Mr. Timothy Woodall addressed the separation study stating Motorola had provided an updated analysis to the Department of Defense (DOD). He added the report assumed the Federal agencies could no longer operate in Non-FCC controlled spectrum and the SOA could no longer operate in NTIA spectrum. Therefore, the System would have to be re-channeled/reconfigured and the DOD would have to buy new radios and repeaters.

Mr. Woodall reminded the council of the history behind the waiver to share FCC and NTIA spectrum and the upgrades are driven by the DOD requirement for security compliance.

Mr. Dave Koch asked if the report addressed the loss of operational interoperability that would occur and Mr. Woodall responded that it only provided a technical answer on the separation.

Deputy Commission Comer asked who would maintain a copy of the report and Mr. Woodall stated he had sent a copy to Mr. Scott Stormo, who had questions, but the Operations Management Office (OMO) would maintain a historical copy for record.

Mr. John Rockwell suggested that the Executive Council (EC) request the User Council (UC) analyze the report and assess the impact of a separation with regard to the loss of technical capabilities and also the operational impacts.

Mr. Rockwell advised as far as the 7.17 upgrade and the replacement of the Quantars, they didn't have a firm date yet, but the last he had heard it was sometime in July.

Mr. Woodall though it had been changed to April and advised the DOD funds would be at the Defense Finance and Accounting Agency (DFAS) in December so they would have to arrange for Motorola to draw on the funds for the site surveys, etc. He added they couldn't have the funds sitting there untouched until July or they would risk losing them.

Mr. Smith advised he had heard Motorola had a contract with Mr. Mike Ball to handle the upgrade.

Mr. Woodall stated he believed he and Mr. Stormo would be able to handle the Project Management.

Mr. Rockwell reminded the council members they had approved the annual budget to move forward at the July meeting and Mr. John Roberts was submitting it through the Department of Administration (DOA). He noted it contained \$22M in capital asks, plus \$5M over 5 years for replacement of subscribers and would be in by close of business on Monday.

b. State Interoperability Governing Body (SIGB). Mr. Rockwell briefed the Governor had signed Administrative Order (AO) 298 which established the SIGB and builds a group which will look at all aspects of interoperability. He provided a graphic of the new SIGB organization and stated right now there was no date for the kickoff meeting.

Mr. Rockwell advised the current members were: DPS – Deputy Commissioner Bill Comer, DMVA – Deputy Commissioner Bob Doehl, DHSS – Chief Medical Officer Dr. Jay Butler, DNR – Deputy Commissioner Heidi Hansen, CIO of DOA – John Boucher, AML – David Gibbs, Fire and Emergency Services – Fire Chief Jeff Tucker, Public Safety Communications (APCO/NENA) – Erann Kalwara, and 9-1-1 Coordinator – himself. He noted the Governor's Tribal Advisory Council (GTAC) and Public Safety Communications (Association of Chiefs of Police) did not have anyone assigned yet and neither did the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator since he was also currently filling that position too. Mr. Rockwell stated he was hoping to have the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) facilitate the first meeting.

Mr. Woodall asked if there were provisions for liaisons and Mr. Rockwell advised there were other positions for Homeland Security, DOD and industry leaders, as well.

c. 9-1-1 Enhancement. Mr. Rockwell requested Mr. Roberts provide the update on this item.

Mr. Roberts briefed they were still in the first phase, which was the dispatch center. He advised there was \$3.5M set aside for rural 9-1-1 and \$1.2 for the center consoles. Mr. Roberts noted they were currently putting together the dedicated space and had \$6.75M total to get it completed.

Mr. Rockwell noted they had a very aggressive timeline for the Phase 1 construction, which included the office space, the consoles and all the other equipment. He added Phase 1 would also include completing the pipeline to transfer 9-1-1 calls from the Soldotna and MatComm dispatch center, and Phase 2 would include rural unorganized boroughs.

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

a. Vacant Council Positions. Mr. Rockwell briefed there were currently vacant positions for the alternate Federal Non-DOD Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the primary Municipalities-North. He added the alternate Federal Non-DOD US Forest Service position would be vacated at the end of the year with the retirement of Mr. Paul Kain.

b. Annual Elections. Mr. Rockwell noted the annual elections were currently in progress for the Chair and Vice Chair.

Deputy Commissioner Comer asked how many individuals were on the UC and Mr. Smith stated there 12 primary and 12 alternate positions from the four cooperative sectors.

c. UC Subcommittees. Mr. Rockwell advised the talkgroup and codeplug subcommittee chaired by Mr. Skinner had met and was devising ways to assist agencies by reviewing the codeplugs and capturing the issues they came across. He also noted the other goal they had was to reduce the number of un-used/under-used talkgroups on the System to cut down on traffic congestion.

Mr. Rockwell asked Mr. Nate Skinner to explain what a codeplug is/does.

Mr. Skinner stated a codeplug is simply the radio programming and what the subcommittee was doing was looking for programming issues that affect the agency's ability to communicate effectively. He noted a lot of the issues with the municipalities' radios is they lack the funding to pay for reprogramming so their radios are out of date.

Mr. Woodall advised the National Guard is another organization whose radios sit in storage until they have an incident or exercise, where they then encounter issues. He briefed there are regional and statewide incident command zones that are supposed to be programmed in all radios on ALMR as noted in current standards and policies.

Mr. Smith stated most recently there was an agency from outside operating on the System who was having codeplug difficulties and Mr. Skinner, Mr. Travis Conant and Mr. Greg Eubank all looked at the codeplug and found multiple issues. He stated the more eyes we can get to review the codeplugs, the better end result.

Deputy Commissioner Comer noted these instances create so many problems, and it's basically a lack of education.

Mr. Rockwell stated the other subcommittee under discussion was going to address outreach. He added Mr. Smith was currently reaching out to the dispatch supervisors after the accident up north, and he asked Del to explain why.

Mr. Smith briefed there had been a quadruple auto accident fatality near the Honolulu site and there were 1,090 push to talks and 88 busies with 7 talkgroups involved over a 5 hour period. He advised Honolulu was a three-channel site and was severely impacted. Mr. Smith noted he wanted to address the responders utilizing both their portables and their mobiles on different talkgroups which doubles resource usage and causes busies to those who need to get on the channels. He added he was going to be addressing some of the Alaska State Troopers (AST) tomorrow morning regarding this same issue.

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

a. FY19 Membership Agreements. Mr. Smith stated the membership agreements were completed on Aug 20. He added the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) withdrew from ALMR stating they did not use their radios as much as they anticipated and that St Paul Island agencies did not renew their memberships because they had installed a conventional system on the island. Mr. Smith also noted the ALMR site was shut down July 7.

b. Annual Inventory Verification. Mr. Smith advised the inventory was completed on July 25 and the Nelchina-Mendeltna membership was terminated July 18 for non-compliance.

c. Zone 1 ALMR UPS. Mr. Smith briefed the A-side UPS was replaced and cutover completed on Aug 28 and the B-side UPS was replaced and cutover completed on Sep 6. He added the new equipment was much smaller and quieter than the old equipment.

c. Zone 2 USARAK Sites/Power. Mr. Smith briefed the Birch Hill Master site only has four good inverters and should have 8. He added he knew Mr. Rick Williams had been traveling to the USARAK sites with a team from Hawaii and hopefully some funding to fix the issues would come forth. Mr. Smith also noted Donnelly Dome recently went off the air when it ran out of fuel and the batteries went dead. Lastly, he pointed out Fort Greely needs a battery plant installed for backup power.

Mr. Woodall explained this was one of the issues they were not able to resolve through the most recent contract because Motorola was not willing to accommodate that level of maintenance at ALMR sites. He clarified Mr. Williams was out with the USARAK Program Office, but the funding process is slow.

c. Third Quarter Master Site Rollover. Mr. Smith stated the first scheduled event was cancelled on August 7 due to issue w/ Zone 4 when Motorola began to update the active zone controller and all the sites went into site trucking. He briefed it was rescheduled for September 24, but during background updating that was not supposed to impact the zone controller, an issue took all of Zone 2 down. Mr. Smith also noted the

provisioning manager was unavailable for 36 hours due to this anomaly. He added that after consultation with Mr. Woodall and Mr. Stormo, they requested a report from Motorola on what caused the event and decided no further rollovers would take place until after the 7.17 upgrade.

Mr. Rockwell stated it was better to freeze the System at this point during the 7.17 engineering phase and that doing so was not a big issue for the UC.

f. Exercise Arctic Anvil 19-01. Mr. Smith advised the Army had forces in Alaska exercising in the Fort Greely – Fort Wainwright area over the past month and they had added 540 radio to the System. He noted they had seriously hammered a couple of the sites with long-winded conversations, some lasting as long as two minutes and normal ALMR radios transmissions should be 8-10 seconds each. Mr. Smith added there were also over 400 busies at the Donnelly Dome site. He stated both he and the System Manager had agreed to extend the Memorandum of Understanding for an additional exercise in spring 2019 requested by the Army in Hawaii, and there would only be 40 radios used in the Anchorage area.

Mr. Woodall shared this group was using Harris tactical radios and exercising their quick-reaction forces as part of the homeland defense mission.

Mr. Smith stated he had reached out to the points of contact for the spring exercise and they would be talking next week.

g. Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) Update. Mr. Smith briefed that both times in the past the DOD had paid for the TICP updates but had turned them over to the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs (DMVA) several years ago and they have just sat since then. He added Mr. Rockwell and Mr. Bruce Richter had secured an OEC Technical Assistance Grant and they were going to be updating the Kenai Peninsula and MatSu Borough TICPs to start. He added the kickoff meeting was scheduled for November 6.

Mr. Rockwell noted the kickoff meeting was to set the stage and they were also going to visit the regions. He added Region D would be next and they would migrate around the state until complete.

Mr. Woodall gave an explanation of the TICP purpose/use.

Mr. Rockwell added they would be creating a new flip book which could be downloaded from the web site to a phone. He also stated OEC would be helping put on Auxiliary Communications Training (AUXCOMM) focused on HAMM radio operators on Nov 3 – 4.

h. September System Metrics. Mr. Smith noted there were 1,066,236 voice calls, 1,964,853 push to talks and 766 busies, which was down approximately 35 – 40 from August.

## 7. New Business.

a. Long-term Cost Share Solution. ASAC Jung stated the Federal Non-DOD agencies were still interested in long-term cost share agreements and his headquarters wanted to continue to explore that option with the State.

Deputy Commissioner Comer stated he would keep it on the list of discussion items and maybe Mr. Roberts and Mr. Rockwell could address it in January.

b. Importance of ALMR. Deputy Commissioner Comer stated the information from the accident near the Honolulu site is super important to first responders and troopers regarding what the ALMR System means to the state. He noted that incidents out in the middle of nowhere highlight the realities and it's huge and we need to capture this kind of information and make it part of the presentations during funding talks. Deputy Commissioner Comer pointed out the System handles so many crises as normal business and we need to slide that message forward.

Mr. Rockwell stated these types of things would be good to get out on Twitter and this was also a good topic for outreach. He noted we needed to communicate what we are doing the right way.

8. Next Meeting. Deputy Commissioner Comer briefed the next meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2019. He stated since there was an election pending for a new Governor, he would probably not be around for the January meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Comer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. ASAC Jung made the motion and it was seconded by Deputy Commissioner Comer. There were no objections. **The motion was carried and approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Timothy P. Maxwell, Colonel  
USAF USNORTHCOM ALCOM  
J6 ALMR Executive Council

**Distribution:**

USNORTHCOM ALCOM J6, Colonel Timothy Maxwell  
SOA/DPS, Deputy Commissioner Michael Duxbury  
FBI, ASAC Tony Jung  
MOA, Captain Dave Koch  
OMO, Mr. Del Smith  
SOA DOA, Mr. Chris White  
SOA DPS, Mr. John Roberts  
SOA DOA, Mr. Scott Stormo  
ALCOM/J64, Mr. Timothy Woodall  
MOA, Mr. Trygve Erickson  
SOA DPS, Mr. John Rockwell  
SOA DOA, Mr. Randy Kilbourne