



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



MEMORANDUM FOR ALMR Executive Council

January 16, 2020

FROM: SOA Co-Chair

SUBJECT: October 17 Meeting Minutes

TO: See Distribution

Executive Council Members Present:

Deputy Commissioner Leon Morgan

Colonel Timothy Maxwell

ASAC Adam Pierce

State of Alaska – Department of
Public Safety

Department of Defense – ALCOM/J6

Federal Non-DOD – Federal Bureau of
Investigation (via teleconference)

ALMR Support Team Members and Guests Present:

Mr. John Rockwell

Mr. Nate Skinner

Mr. Del Smith

Mr. Scott Stormo

Mr. Tim Woodall

Mr. Trygve Erickson

Mr. Chris White

Mr. Jim Nicholl

Mr. Sean Kostelnik

Ms. Naomi Ulrich

Mr. David Reed

Mr. Bill “William” Doolittle

Mr. Ted Johnston

User Council Chair

User Council Vice Chair

Operations Manager

SOA ALMR Program Manager

DOD ALMR Program Manager

Municipality of Anchorage/AWARN

SOA DOA

Motorola Solutions

Motorola Solutions

Motorola Solutions

Information Systems Security Manager

Department of Public Safety

Department of Public Safety Technology
Officer

Ms. Sherry Shafer

Operations Management Office (via
teleconference)

1. Call to Order. Deputy Commissioner Leon Morgan, State of Alaska (SOA) Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Roll call was read.

2. Opening Statements and Other Announcements.

Deputy Commissioner Morgan asked if there were any announcements and there were none.

Mr. John Rockwell advised there was one guest present at today's meeting.

Mr. Ted Johnston introduced himself as the Department of Technology Officer for the Department of Public Safety and stated he had started full time on October 1.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes. Deputy Commissioner Morgan

Motion: Approve the July 18, Executive Council meeting minutes, as written.

The motion was made by Colonel Timothy Maxwell and seconded by Deputy Commissioner Morgan. There were no objections. **The motion was carried and approved.**

4. Old Business.

a. SOA Quantar Replacement/Separation Study. Mr. John Rockwell advised there was a copy of the Motorola Separation Study included with the meeting materials and it was basically a stab at one of the scenarios if the State had to disconnect from the Department of Defense (DOD). He wouldn't call it well thought through and suspected there would be other analyses but this was one of the possible scenarios.

Deputy Commission Morgan stated in the analysis it included that the State would have to go to UHF sites and asked if that was correct, because there was not the availability of VHF frequencies.

Mr. Scott Stormo clarified it was 700/800MHz.

Mr. Tim Woodall advised this was just one of the options and the State could also use 700/800MHz or a combination of frequencies such as 700/800MHz in the Fairbanks area and VHF along the roadway. Mr. Woodall stated, Motorola had not changed their philosophy from the 2008 study and noted the theory stays the same and the idea is for this study to give us some idea of the cost basis of separation versus an upgrade, which is a more feasible stand point than paying for an upgrade.

Colonel Maxwell stated he had seen all the bases except Fort Wainwright and Mr. Woodall explained it was covered under the USARAK figures.

The Separation Study is now **CLOSED**. There was no discussion regarding the Quantars replacement for this meeting.

b. State Interoperability Governing Body (SIGB). Deputy Commissioner Morgan asked if there was a date for the meeting.

Mr. Rockwell advised this had been a moving target. He stated there is a meeting with the Governor's office next week to discuss this and there were also some bills they are contemplating to introduce to the legislature that would also address it. Mr. Rockwell advised they would have a better update for the next meeting.

c. Long-term Cost Share Solution. Mr. Rockwell briefed some of the discussion with the Governor's office would include a long-term cost share solution, as well.

Deputy Commissioner Morgan advised it's not lost on anyone they are asking for more money for ALMR and they should be, but they believe they have developed some solutions for long-term funding.

d. Operations Management Office Contract. Mr. Rockwell briefed there was no update on this, but that Mr. Stormo had put in a request for purchase (RFP).

5. User Council Update.

Mr. Rockwell briefed there were still two vacant positions, one was the Federal Non-DOD BLM alternate position and the other is alternate for the Department of Public Safety. He stated there was additional information to be presented under New Business.

6. Operations Management Office.

a. 7.17.3 Upgrade. Mr. Del Smith stated a couple weeks ago there was a crew doing a System security scan conducted as part of the Risk Management Framework and it was used to identify issues that would need to be remediated. He advised he invited Mr. David Reed along if there were any questions.

Mr. Reed added there would be two individuals back here to go through step four of the accreditation process.

Mr. Smith briefed everything is moving along and there were still a couple punch list items to resolve.

Deputy Commission Morgan asked if there were any issues and Mr. Reed stated there were several issues across the board, but he is getting them marked out to the correct Motorola areas for action.

b. Birch Hill Master Site. Mr. Smith noted the contract is in place with USARAK Department of Public Works and they are currently reviewing the statement of work. He advised the parts should be in hand by December 31 and the work completed by April 1, 2020. Mr. Smith added he would be very glad to have this finished as this is the Zone Controller for Zone 2.

Mr. Woodall stated the issue with the time to get this rolling was there wasn't a lot of money for the DOD in the past couple years and what they got went to other purposes. He stated they were in a better fiscal status this year.

c. Out of Cycle Zone Controller Rollover. Mr. Smith stated an out of cycle zone controller rollover occurred on September 16. There was an issue during part of the upgrade with the IPCAP01 upgrade to 7.17, so they rolled to Zone Controller 2 and they fixed the issue with Zone Controller 1.

d. Quarterly Zone Controller Rollover. Mr. Smith briefed the next quarterly rollover would occur on November 6.

e. Money Knob Site. Mr. Smith advised a section of the power line to the site was damaged during the summer wildland fires. He added the site was being powered by a short-run generator after that and the SOA had no contingency budget to repair it. Mr. Smith stated the Office of Technology (OIT) could not find a vendor to survey the site and provide an estimate to replace the line, so they found one spool of line that was exactly enough to replace the burnt section, and they did it themselves and the site was back on power from the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Mr. Rockwell added the User Council had looked at different options, whether we let it go down or not, but since it's one of the farthest out sites, they determined it was important

f. Pillar Mountain Shelter. Mr. Smith briefed OIT had replaced the shelter in September and a new fiberglass shelter is in place. He noted they had combined the separate ALMR and 2-way radio shelter and the SATS microwave shelter into one new shelter and cleaned up the area. Mr. Smith added a new microwave was also installed and a battery plant.

Mr. Stormo briefed they were there almost two weeks completing all the work.

g. New Member Agencies. Mr. Smith stated ALMR continues to grow and there were three new agencies to join in 2019, so far – the US Postal Service Office of the Inspector General, the City of Kodiak, and the City of Ketchikan.

Mr. Rockwell briefed Kodiak was one of the places they said can we supplement ALMR with other technologies, and once we started looking at coverage and capacity there was no practical application.

h. Harris PRC152A Acceptance Test Procedure. Mr. Smith advised this was just informational material. He added the radios were for Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Security Forces and they had requested a waiver for one of the Acceptance Test Procedure tests, Multigroup Call for Interrupt Mode, and it was granted. Mr. Smith concluded this was primarily a tactical radio, but the P25 portion works on ALMR.

i. User Council Election. My Smith advised the annual User Council election will occur in December and the OMO was currently accepting nominations. He added the new officers would take over in January.

Deputy Commissioner Morgan stated he didn't have any questions at this point, but wanted to talk about what DPS is doing as far as their communications strategy for the State moving forward. He advised they are consolidating their services into Fairbanks and Anchorage and taking full advantage of ALMR and other technologies, whether it's WAVE or satellite that they can push into the ALMR System. Deputy Commissioner Morgan added they have a July 1, 2021 timeline to complete the project and are basing their future communications on ALMR.

j. September System Metrics. Mr. Smith briefed the monthly September push to talks were 1,862,083 which was down about 400K from August, so we are seeing the season drop right now. He added there 1,003,807 group calls and the busies, which were at a high of 2,223 in July, dropped by about half in August and were down to 289 in September.

7. New Business.

Proposed New Incident Command Zones. Mr. Rockwell stated the User Council has been working with a sub-committee and he was going to let Mr. Nate Skinner address the on-going effort on the Incident Command (IC) Zones and talkgroups and trying to streamline them and make them more efficient.

Mr. Skinner introduced himself and gave a brief history of his career starting off working on radios, into his career in firefighting, moving on as a structural guy then as a fire chief. He noted during his time as a fire chief, he also worked with law enforcement communications, as well. Mr. Skinner briefed this is why, when talking about redesigning codeplugs, it always comes back to his unique skill set. He noted Forestry probably uses their radios more despite the short fire season window.

Mr. Skinner stated the User Council has been talking about the IC Zones for numerous years and how they are not as useful as they could be. He added that this has also come from individuals out in the field and they have never quite been what they hoped they would be. Mr. Skinner advised after discussion with the sub-committee and lots and lots of users, they came up with a basic plan and agreed the IC Zones were too complicated with not enough flexibility and they wanted to reduce them from the seven regional zones and the Statewide zone to three total zones, not including the ADMIN zone. He briefed the new zones would be the North zone, the South zone and the Southeast zone. Mr. Skinner noted they also align with the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG).

Mr. Rockwell stated as far as the timing goes they are currently re-doing the Alaska FOG and the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs).

Mr. Skinner advised this was the basic plan they are looking at moving to right now. He explained currently everyone with a radio must have the Statewide zone, plus the regional zone they are in and if you have the availability in your radio, you must have all of the IC zones. Mr. Skinner briefed the proposal is to keep it much the same with the new proposed zones where your radio would have the region you are in and the ADMIN zone. He added the biggest problem will be the re-programming and locals might incur some costs with this change, but the sub-committee will try to assist them as much as possible.

Mr. Rockwell noted this also gives us the opportunity to clean up code plugs along the way and eliminate cloned radios on the System. He suggested opening up the conference room for some time periods to share the information with users. Mr. Rockwell added before they could make any type of recommendation, they would need a motion and vote from the Executive Council and to open it up for questions, as well.

Mr. Smith pointed out the Executive Council had previously mandated what programming must be in all radios and that is why they were briefing them today on this proposal. He noted if this was approved there would be documents that would need updated, certainly the ALMR Concept of Operation (CONOP) would need to be.

Mr. Woodall recommended to the Executive Council, the UC put a program plan together that first explains what the change is and provides the timeline to accomplish, time to fund the plan and time to complete it. He suggested they keep the old zones in the radios and add the new ones and make a transition to those and at a certain point move over permanently to the new zones.

Mr. Skinner stated almost 90 percent of the locals don't know they have the IC Zones in their radios, so it may or may not make any difference.

Colonel Maxwell asked about funding and Mr. Rockwell stated they had talked about it, but had not come up with a solution, and right now they were focusing on solving the issue of simplifying the use of radio and eliminate unused talkgroups.

Mr. Woodall suggested the User Council develop the project plan and present to the EC which lays out the process and apply it through the membership agreement so they understand the process, the timeline and the cost.

Mr. Smith suggested it be an addendum to the membership agreement.

Mr. Woodall added they could also have workshops for agencies to send their programmers to and this plan could help eliminate any pushback from the agencies.

Deputy Commissioner Morgan stated they could develop a cheat sheet for the old and new zones like the Troopers currently use. He advised this would help eliminate the number of times the radio needs to be reprogrammed. Deputy Commissioner Morgan asked what they needed from the Executive Council.

Mr. Rockwell responded they would like an endorsement to move forward with the program. He stated he is not opposed to additional requirement to bring back to the Executive and if it makes sense, they will keep moving forward and if it doesn't make sense they will drop it.

Deputy Commissioner Morgan stated anything they can do to condense the talkgroups and code plugs across the state, he is all for, with the caveat it be centered on "less is more."

Motion: The Executive Council endorses the User Council effort to redesign the Incident Command Zones, as presented.

The motion was made by Deputy Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Colonel Maxwell. There were no objections from Assistant Special Agent in Charge Adam Pierce. **The motion was carried and approved.**

8. Next Meeting. Deputy Commissioner Morgan briefed the next meeting is was scheduled for January 16, 2020, and asked if anyone had any conflicts. There were no responses.

9. Adjourn Meeting. There was no further discussion and Deputy Commissioner Morgan made the motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Colonel Maxwell. There were no objections. **The motion was carried and approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.



Deputy Commissioner Leon Morgan
Department of Public Safety
ALMR Executive Council

Distribution:

SOA/DPS, Deputy Commissioner Leon Morgan
USNORTHCOM ALCOM J6, Colonel Timothy Maxwell
FBI, ASAC Adam Pierce
MOA, Captain Julie Shank
AML, Mr. David Gibbs
OMO, Mr. Del Smith
SOA DOA, Mr. Chris White
SOA DOA, Mr. Scott Stormo
ALCOM/J64, Mr. Timothy Woodall
MOA, Mr. Trygve Erickson
SOA DPS, Mr. John Rockwell
SOA DOA, Mr. Randy Kilbourne