



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



MEMORANDUM FOR ALMR Executive Council

July 24, 2019

FROM: SOA Co-Chair

SUBJECT: April 18 Meeting Minutes

TO: See Distribution

Executive Council Members Present:

Deputy Commissioner Michael Duxbury

Colonel Timothy Maxwell
ASAC Adam Pierce

Mr. David Gibbs

State of Alaska – Department of
Public Safety
Department of Defense – ALCOM/J6
Alaska Federal Executive Association -
Federal Bureau of Investigation
(via teleconference)
Alaska Municipal League – Fairbanks North
Star Borough (via teleconference)

ALMR Support Team Members and Guests Present:

Mr. John Rockwell

Mr. Del Smith

Mr. Scott Stormo

Mr. Tim Woodall

Mr. Chris White

Mr. Jim Nichol

Mr. David Reed

Mr. Bill “William” Doolittle

Maj Frank Teranova

Ms. Sherry Shafer

User Council Chair
Operations Manager
SOA ALMR Program Manager
DOD ALMR Program Manager
SOA DOA
Motorola Solutions
Information Systems Security Manager
Department of Public Safety
Department of Public Safety
Operations Management Office (via
teleconference)

1. Call to Order. Deputy Commissioner Michael Duxbury, State of Alaska (SOA) Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Roll call was read.

2. Opening Statements and Other Announcements.

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

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes. Deputy Commissioner Duxbury asked the other council member if they had reviewed the January meeting minutes and had any changes. There were no responses.

Motion: Approve the January 17, 2018, Executive Council meeting minutes, as written.

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

4. Old Business.

a. SOA Quantar Replacement/Separation Study. Deputy Commissioner Duxbury asked Mr. Scott Stormo and Mr. Timothy Woodall if they had any updates on these issues.

Mr. Woodall advised that at the previous meeting they were expecting Motorola to update the study with new pricing and he hasn't been provided an updated copy.

Mr. Stormo stated he was still working through some of the numbers and quantities with Motorola.

Mr. Woodall asked Mr. Jim Nicholl if he had any input and he responded he would take this as a "to do" to get in touch with the State and Federal points of contact to have that by the next meeting.

For those who are new, Mr. Woodall gave the history of the previous separation study and the cost to replace the System should the cooperative go back into independent systems for the SOA and the DOD. He added that presently ALMR has a Cooperative Agreement and shared controllers and also had a waiver to share spectrum, which was approved by both the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Telecommunications Industry Association (NTIA). Mr. Woodall pointed out that if the System is separated, the State would have to completely replace all their infrastructure, and the current DOD spectrum would no longer be useable by DOD and they would have to move to the Ultra-high Frequency (UHF) band.

Mr. Woodall further explained that ALMR operates on the SOA Telecommunications System (SATS) backbone in connecting the System together, so there are a lot of parts and pieces that make this System not only affordable as a cooperative but also make it interoperable beyond a degree of anything you could achieve with separate systems.. He also added that any separation doesn't just involve what the cost would be, but emphasizes how long it would take. Mr. Woodall pointed out under the Cooperative Agreement agencies leaving must give at least a one-year notice, and in the case of the

DOD, they would need at least three to five years to get the funding for a new system, which would cost upward of \$34M.

Mr. John Rockwell stated for clarification, if the SOA had to go back to their own separate system, they wouldn't have enough bandwidth to run the system. He added it's not just the separating and reprogramming involved, it would be insufficient to run the system as designed. They would have to look at doing a major forklift to the system to support the SOA and other entities who are on the system.

Mr. Scott Stormo advised not only would the DOD have to replace their radios and infrastructure, the SOA would probably not have enough frequencies to continue to use their radios and would have to switch over to the 700MHz spectrum and essentially replace 100 percent of their owned equipment.

Mr. Woodall pointed out when they were designing the system in the early 2000s, they found out quickly they had to reuse spectrum because they didn't have enough pure spectrum to complete the system from a statewide perspective and that's why they paired the spectrum. He added they would hopefully get the updated study so senior leadership understands what they are facing, and if the decision is made to withdraw it should be made as early as possible because of the cost impact to execute such a change in the relations.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated, being new this project, in terms of DOD having the mandate for the communication in the Arctic, has this been a topic of concern for you if for instance what just happened in Norway happened here and both those vessels go up on shore and you are trying to work with us and we are trying to work with 124 other agencies, there is no capability after this December date or so, and there is no opportunity to work with you and be cooperative and collaborative, how does this look in your scheme?

Colonel Maxwell stated in his opinion the Cooperative Agreement is the way to go, and the earthquake demonstrated the need. He added if we separate, they would have to revamp the whole system and bring in new equipment and that would take years.

Mr. Rockwell added, even if they did rebuild, it still would not provide the interoperability between the DOD and the State that we have today. It is still doable with different work arounds but when they are on the road system, especially if they decide to freeze in place, and we don't have a system that is maintained and updated, they will have limitations on the flexibility how they use the system and that would become limited.

Colonel Maxwell pointed out another issue is the terrain with the size of the state.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated he'd been working with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Global Policy folks on their Arctic security issues and this interoperability, or lack thereof in the future, could punch a hole in their theory.

Deputy Commissioner asked Mr. Stormo if there were any updates on the Quantar replacement.

Mr. Stormo advised the group there was nothing he'd seen in the current Governor's budget and was not expecting anything to come out of it if the Governor hasn't asked for it.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated no one in the Legislature plans to put anything forward from what he understood.

Mr. Stormo briefed this is the last year to get this stuff done and if it's not in next year's budget or a supplemental budget, we are talking six months before patching and support ends, unless Motorola continues to support 7.17 beyond the current dates.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury briefed about a conversation he'd had when he first showed up, and knows everyone else has had trouble with, but was surprised to have it come out of the Governor's office, is "why can't you just use cell phones?" He added that happened in the last couple weeks and it started out as a conversation on providing security to the State building when a bunch of people occupied it and so he just explained it in slow motion. Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated it was an interesting conversation, but they are not understanding the need to update and the updates to the software. He advised he tries to explain it to people when they engage me using the example "you have an iPhone 4 and you still want to talk on it but it's not possible. What time in the last four months have you not had an update on your phone and taken the time to do it?" Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated they are starting to understand it in the terms of the technology, but they still don't understand it in the terms of the service that it helps us provide to people and you guys have all experienced it, but it was a frustrating experience for me, as well.

Mr. David Reed stated an additional highlight that came out in response to the earthquake, and was highlighted in a recent security conference here in town, was that after that earthquake when things started happening they started losing connectivity with the cell towers and so people rolled over to ALMR for the reliability aspect.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury advised he'd read Del's paper on it, and the 603 hours of push-to-talk time, but it's the craziest thing to try explain to people how you have 603 hours in 24 hours. He added the other aspect is, in the conference room next door, how we operated a state agency providing safety, security and fire and life. Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated the Anchorage Police Department (APD) also came and we had laptops, and we had cell phones that weren't working, and how we did almost all our business to support the activity through PTT. He pointed out folks understand that people like you and I, and the people in this room, will always take our band aids and our duct tape and bailing wire and make it work in a crisis, but they don't understand that's not sufficient.

Mr. Woodall highlighted if the State is unable to update the Quantars, and the DOD can't move beyond 7.17 upgrade timeframe by 2021 and be funded and ready to go, when we

hit that and Motorola can't do patching and maintain the System in a cyber-ready perspective, the Federal agencies that operate on the System will no longer be authorized to operate on it. He added their authority to operate will be in jeopardy and it requires them, from the Federal perspective, not only DOD, to start looking at the risk and mitigation factors and how long they can stay on the System without proper patching. Mr. Woodall stated they will have to have an alternative solution approach and that is where the separation aspect comes into play, because they will look at whether the State is moving forward or do they need to separate. He briefed they have an advantage, because Colonel Maxwell is the authorizing official for the Authority to Operate, but he is also constrained by Federal regulations that won't allow him to go beyond a certain time period without some significant change in the status of the System that would permit patching. The lack of funding or moving forward with that is more critical than a lot of people understand or maybe foresee. It could have a significant impact on Federal agencies.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury asked, because he'd been asked, what would it look like if utilizing Alaska as the legitimate access to the Arctic and the Arctic security policy plan they are building, if they were to decide that DOD being responsible for Arctic communications, could they take on or fund the whole project.

Colonel Maxwell stated probably not and Mr. Woodall clarified from the Stafford Act prospective they'd be prohibited, because they can only fund the infrastructure DOD would need for its day-to-day operations. If DOD was expanding its presence into the Arctic and they needed to put in land mobile radio to support their function for homeland defense, they certainly could fund it. He briefed the unique thing people don't realize about ALMR is that although we share a common infrastructure none of the agencies, not the State, locals or DOD, purchased equipment that they did not need for their own missions and if they had, it would have been an Economy Act violation, as well as a Stafford Act violation, for the DOD. Mr. Woodall advised lawyers looked at it very closely and what they did was agree to build a common infrastructure, buy the same technology, and connect it together to share collectively to get a level of interoperability you can't normally get.

Colonel Maxwell pointed out because all this happened in early 2000s, so now as you change Governors out everyone is trying to learn together. He added the DOD goes through the same process every time we change leadership.

There was additional discuss on how to get the message across about the level of interoperability enjoyed.

Mr Woodall pointed out for Arctic Shield when they were in Cordova supporting the Coast Guard and during that operation we were able to give the Coast Guard Alaska Land Mobile radios, and they were able to talk to the Alaska State Troopers, to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to the military and again to the Coast Guard – all talking together seamlessly. He added this was a level of interoperability even the Coast Guard was surprised we provided. Mr. Woodall stated in doing those types of interagency operations, until we have a very large emergency, that level of

communications is rarely recognized, but when it's not there in an emergency it becomes one of the largest after-action issues. In fact, the Coast Guard said it was the first time they had an after action in which they did not have to bring up communications as an issue.

Colonel Maxwell added Admiral Bell was the one who had made the statement and they could hear the transmissions like they were next door.

b. State Interoperability Governing Body (SIGB). Mr. Rockwell briefed the Governor has appointed individuals to all the slots including Deputy Commissioner Duxbury but they have not convened the first meeting yet. He reminded everyone that one of the projects was to implement a statewide dispatch and there are a lot of moving parts to be addressed.

c. Long-term Cost Share Solution. Mr. Stormo advised the council the Non-DOD Federal agencies are the only ones who currently contribute to the State's shared costs. He added it was approximately \$50K last year because they couldn't get the go ahead to bill them at the cost they agreed was fair, but instead the previous administration changed it back to the same costs as the previous year.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury advised he had discussed the issue of reimbursement with the Department of Administration Commissioner Kelly Tshibaka and this administration seems amenable to the idea.

Mr. Rockwell stated there were two on-going issues as they had budgeted for the increase and then lost the funding which caused a lot of heartache. He added that they appreciate the DOA Commissioner understands.

Mr. Woodall explained difference between the non-infrastructure owners (NIOs) versus the infrastructure owners and that the NIOs have no burden to maintain the System, they just get to use it.

Mr. Rockwell added, with regard to long-term sustainability, a lot of ideas have been presented in the past such as a license and vehicle plate surcharges and they are continuing to go down that path.

5. User Council Update.

a. Vacant Council Positions. Mr. Rockwell briefed the council received a nomination letter to fill the primary and alternate Municipalities-North positions and asked Ms. Sherry Shafer to read the prepared motion for the Executive Council's consideration, which she did on his behalf.

Motion: Approve the appointment of Deputy Chief Doug Fournier, North Star Volunteer Fire Department, and Deputy Chief Keith Berrien, Chena-Goldstream Fire and Rescue, as the new primary and

alternate Municipalities North representatives to the ALMR User Council, respectively.

The motion was made by Colonel Maxwell and seconded by ASAC Adam Pierce. There were no objections. **The motion was carried and approved.**

b. Funding Issues. Mr. Rockwell briefed the User Council is also concerned about the funding issues and has discussed it over the previous years and offered their recommendations.

c. Codeplug and Talkgroup Subcommittee. Mr. Rockwell stated the Codeplug and Talkgroup subcommittee is working on streamlining and simplifying the Incident Command (IC) Zones and will be presenting their ideas to the User Council at the next meeting.

d. Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs). Mr. Rockwell added they were preparing for the TICIP updates for SOA in the August timeframe and the last update for the documents had been in 2010.

6. Operations Management Office.

a. Operations Management Office (OMO) Contract. Mr. Del Smith stated June 30 was the end of the current OMO contract. He added SOA has requested, and Wostmann had agreed, to a one-year extension, so the new end date for the contract would be June 30, 2020.

Mr. Rockwell asked Mr. Smith if he would be staying and Mr. Smith replied he would be here for some portion of the extension.

b. First Quarter Master Site Rollover. Mr. Smith advised the rollover had occurred on March 20 and 21 and there were no issues. He noted this would be the last rollover prior to the upgrade as the System was going to be locked down to any changes on April 28.

c. 7.17 Upgrade. Mr. Smith briefed the OMO had facilitated a teleconference for Motorola with the dispatchers to talk about what to expect and to ensure the dispatchers understood they needed to be able to operate on their backup communications for up to two hours. He added that Motorola was supposed to contact each dispatch and discuss any concerns they may have, but as of last week, they hadn't contacted any of them.

d. Annual Subscriber Inventory Confirmation. Mr. Smith stated currently 84 out of the 124 agencies had responded, which was approximately 68 percent. He added the suspense was April 30 and he would be on the phone starting next week contacting those agencies would had not submitted their forms yet. Mr. Smith pointed out this was a Legislative audit mandated yearly requirement.

e. DiagnostX. Mr. Smith advised the SOA had purchased four of the devices and installed them in sites in the valley area. He stated the staff is currently training on how to use them and deferred to Scott for further explanation.

Mr. Stormo advised they had put them at several State RF sites and that Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) was also looking at buying some to put at the R1 North site and at Site Summit. He explained the device looks at the radio transmission and detects if it is in need of maintenance. Mr. Stormo stated the devices can be moved and hopefully they will eventually have listened to all the radios on the System. He added 10 percent of radios on any given system may flag as needing maintenance. Mr. Stormo clarified it doesn't mean the radios won't work, it means they are working at less than optimum performance and there are troopers all over the state and they can't come to us and we can't go to them every year, so this will help us look at their radios and identify any issues. He added this is a popular technology around the lower 48 and we are excited to have gotten it and would like to see the DOD get a few to cover their sites as well, and we will move ours around the state when we get a chance.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury asked if this was a system within a system that was hardware and software.

Mr. Stormo replied it was and explained there is a master server here and the four boxes but they could have 85, put one at each site if they wanted, so if the DOD wanted to buy some to put at their sites they could then hook into the State. He advised they can also send out reports to the different user agencies with radios that are showing up

Mr. Rockwell added the server was a data base that just collects the information so the box is basically another radio.

Mr. Smith noted MSgt Connolly at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson was pursuing it for his installation.

Mr. Woodall stated he would check with Eielson and Mr. Rick Williams, USARAK, but he didn't think they were doing anything.

f. March System Metrics. Mr. Smith stated there were 1,054,475 group calls and 1,959,123 push to talks, which was up slightly from February. He added there were 359 busies compared to 282 in February, but this is the normal pattern every year.

g. ALMR Funding. Mr. Smith briefed he had talked to Mr. Bill "William" Doolittle, who is involved with several projects going on with dispatch centers and 9-1-1 around the state and he had a suggestion maybe this needs to be pushed a little higher. He stated with the council's deference, he would let Mr. Doolittle comment on it.

Mr. Bill "William" Doolittle stated he was coming to the council with an ask, and briefed he'd been chartered with Mr. Rockwell and a number of others to look into statewide call taking and dispatching in the State of Alaska. He added having ALMR and the SATS network in place would makes that planning much easier because geography fights

them at every opportunity where they look at taking 9-1-1 calls from rural areas and answering them at a trained dispatch center and dispatching them back to volunteer agencies and providing that full lifecycle of emergency communications.

Mr. Doolittle added he had to get read up on ALMR, but his observation is they were 60 percent of the way to chaos. He stated, in his personal opinion, having the separation study implies there is an alternative, but what he's heard today is there really is no alternative, you either have ALMR or you are dead in the water. Mr. Doolittle advised the thing he has struggled with and is asking for is something that says we have those concerns and we are reaching an end point and we need the Governor and this entire administration to understand we are at the tipping point where ALMR separates/terminates and that is a terrible thing.

Mr. Doolittle stated ALMR serves so many other purposes. We talk about subscriber units, but from a dispatch center perspective having dispatch centers talk to each other and dispatch other agencies is his perspective now and ALMR is such an important part of that picture. In his mind there is no future vision without it. He added his modest proposal to Del was for command staff, executives, agencies that participate to correspond with the Governor and tell him in simple terms how important it is. Mr. Doolittle suggested a one or two pager that says, "absolutely, yes we do, got to be there in the budget." He stated not having a capital budget request in front of the Legislature this year is the third or fourth year of no movement forward on funding for the necessary capital expenditures for ALMR.

Mr. Woodall asked if the request was for the Executive Council to pen a one- or two-page memo, signed by the Executive Council voting members, that would go forward to the Governor since it's a cooperative approach and affects not just the State, but many agencies.

Mr. Doolittle responded absolutely. He added they have tremendous vision for the State of Alaska and being able to provide access to emergency communications into rural areas. We necessarily have to have some kind of infrastructure so the dispatch centers can provide the services. We are not just talking about the highway corridors and participants in ALMR, but extending current-day technology into rural villages and towns that do not have it today. We hear stories about 9-1-1 calls answered by a citizen in her home who have worked out a deal where dispatch centers will then take those calls and use ALMR. In a few minutes, we worked out an alternative to route those calls to ALMR. We took it a step further, we don't have latitude and longitude from wireless 9-1-1 calls and will continue that discussion, but with a stroke of a pen and ordinance you can create the ability to ask for that service and for that capability from your wireless carriers. Literally, within an hour we improved communications. The vision is we want to make a statewide emergency communications capability and ALMR is a very important part of that.

Colonel Maxwell pointed out Lieutenant General Thomas Bussiere, Commander Alaskan Command, was selected as the Arctic lead and for DOD is the go to person in

Alaska. One of the things on his plate is the Alaska Native Federation and if we can get that letter sent up the chain it is a great way to seed out chances.

Deputy Commissioner Duxbury stated letters going to the Governor are usually intercepted at the level of Ms. Gina Ritacco, so we have to make sure the boss knows this is coming.

Mr. Rockwell stated someone should probably be appointed and Mr. Woodall stated he had penned it under new business

7. New Business.

Mr. Woodall suggested the council might make a motion to assign the OMO as the office of responsibility to draft the letter to the Governor regarding the current funding issue for the Quantar replacement.

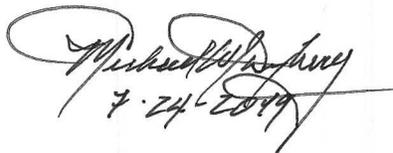
Motion: The Operations Manager will take the lead to prepare a letter on behalf of the ALMR Executive Council regarding the critical funding for Quantar replacement to be disseminated among State and Department of Defense executives.

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

8. Next Meeting. Deputy Commissioner Duxbury briefed the next meeting is was scheduled for July 18 and advised everyone to check their schedules and notify Ms. Sherry Shafer in the Operations Management Office if they had any conflict.

9. Adjourn Meeting. There was no further discussion and Deputy Commissioner Duxbury 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 2:45 p.m.



Handwritten signature of Michael Duxbury, dated 7-24-2019.

Michael Duxbury, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Public Safety, State of Alaska
ALMR Executive Council

Distribution:

USNORTHCOM ALCOM J6, Colonel Timothy Maxwell

SOA/DPS, Deputy Commissioner Michael Duxbury

FBI, ASAC Adam Pierce

MOA, Captain Julie Shank

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