

Alaska Land Mobile Radio

**ALMR User Council
Meeting Minutes**

Date: May 5, 2010

1. Attendance Roster

User Council Members and Alternates

P = Present	T = Via Telephone	A = Absent
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Primary

T	Adams	Ocie	Mr.	SOA DOT&PF
A	Beals	Mark	Chief	Municipalities Central, Bear Creek Fire Service Area
T	Fronterhouse	Bev	Ms	Fed Non-DOD, Bureau of Land Management
T	Johnson	Brad	Chief	Municipalities Northern , Fairbanks PD, Vice Chair
P	Leveque	Matt	MAJ	SOA DPS, AST, Chair
A	Mitchell	William	Mr.	DOD USAF, Eielson AFB
A	Murphy	Peter	Mr.	Fed Non-DOD, FBI
A	Schmidt	Sheldon	Chief	Municipalities Southeast, Sitka PD
P	Schoenwald	Doug	Mr.	SOA All Others, DMVA (representing all other SOA Agencies)
T	Taylor	Marlon	MSgt	DOD USAF, Elmendorf AFB
	VACANT			DOD US Army Alaska
	VACANT			Federal Non-DOD, TSA

Alternate

A	Arasz	Paul	Mr.	Fed Non-DOD, FBI
A	Ashley	Freddie	Mr.	DOD USAF, Clear AFS (Eielson Alt)
A	Borrego	Susan	Ms.	Fed Non-DOD, FBI
A	Caldwell	Jim	Mr.	Fed Non-DOD, TSA
A	Garriott	Marcus	TSgt	DOD USAF, Elmendorf AFB
T	Gibbs	David	Mr.	Municipalities Northern, Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Manager
A	Hansen	Glenn	Mr.	SOA All Others, DMVA (representing all other SOA Agencies)
A	Horton	Tia	Ms.	Municipalities Central, Anchorage Fire Department
A	Keeney	George	Chief	Municipalities Central, Valdez FD
A	Leggett	Ray	Chief	Municipalities Southeast, Skagway PD
A	Lewis	Mike	Mr.	Fed Non-DOD, US Fish & Wildlife Service
P	Newman	Natalie	Ms.	DOD US Army Alaska
A	Patz	Greg	Mr.	SOA DOT
T	Pyne	Kathryn	Ms.	SOA All Others, DNR Forestry (representing all other SOA Agencies)
A	Royal	Ronald	Mr.	DOD USAF, Eielson AFB
A	Rudorf	Karl	MSgt	DOD USAF, Elmendorf AFB
A	Wilson	Barry	Capt	SOA DPS, AST

Other Attendees



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T	Borg	Casey	Mr.	System Manager
P	Hauck	Jeff	Mr.	USARAK, 59th Signal Battalion
A	Ince	Chester	Mr.	OMO Subject Matter Expert
P	Kohler	Jim	Mr.	SOA ALMR Program Manager
P	Kreitzer	Annette	Commissioner	SOA Department of Administration
A	Leber	Rich	Mr.	OMO Technical Advisor
A	Quickel	Joe	Mr.	DOD Project Office
P	Richter	Bruce	Mr.	DHS OEC
P	Shafer	Sherry	Ms.	OMO Document Specialist
P	Smith	Del	Mr.	Operations Manager
T	Tucker	Jeff	Chief	AML Representative to the Executive Council
A	Woodall	Tim	Mr.	DOD ALMR Project Officer

2. Meeting Minutes and Action Items

Agenda Item / Topic	Discussion	Action Items
Called to Order	Major Matt Leveque called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.	
Roll Call	Roll call was taken and a quorum was not achieved at first. Other members subsequently joined and a quorum was achieved.	
Previous Meeting Minutes Approval	Minutes from March 3 meeting were reviewed. Motion: Accept April 7, 2010, meeting minutes as written. Motion: Ms. Natalie Newman Second: Mr. Doug Schoenwald The minutes from the April 7 meeting were approved.	
Review of I&R Log	Active Issues Item #57 – The Federal Non-DOD TSA primary position remains vacant since October 2007. The USARAK primary council position is vacant as of August 31, 09. Major Leveque has spoken with Chief Browning at Juneau PD about nominating one of his officers to the User Council to represent the Southeast.	
	Pending Issues There were no pending issues.	
	Issues Closed at, or since, last meeting There were no issues closed.	
Review of Action Items from Previous Meeting	Both Action Items from the Apr 5 meeting were closed.	
New Business	Major Leveque asked the council if there were any	



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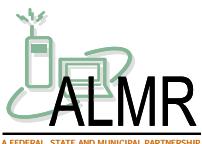
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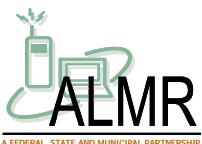
	<p>objections to changing the order of the agenda and brings 'New Business' up front. There were no objections. Major Leveque introduced special guest Commissioner Annette Kreitzer from SOA Department of Administration and SOA Co-Chair to the Executive Council.</p>	
ALMR Cost Share	<p>Commissioner Annette Kreitzer handed out two documents to those present, one was House Bill (HB) 300 and the other was the legislative intent language from the State operating budget. She promised copies would be emailed out to the others after the meeting.</p> <p>The Commissioner explained to the council that on page four of HB300, the legislature had directed the DOA to contact the participating entities during the second half of the fiscal year (2011) and negotiate cost share agreements.</p> <p>What this amounts to is that the \$150,000 in general fund in the DOA ALMR FY11 Operating Budget is to be replaced with \$150,000 in general fund program receipts - meaning that it is up to the DOA to make up the funds by collecting them from participating entities operating on ALMR. This is to be implemented in the second half of State Fiscal Year 2011 (December 2010).</p> <p>The two main proponents of this language were House Finance Subcommittee Chair Representative Bill Thomas and Senate Finance Co-Chair Senator Lyman Hoffman.</p> <p>DOA still must determine how it will collect the \$150,000. She asked those on line for their ideas.</p> <p>Deputy Chief Brad Johnson spoke on behalf of the NGOs and municipalities, as the Northern UC representative, stating that their agreement was with the Cooperative not directly with the State.</p> <p>Del stated that although this was true, the State sponsors them onto the System and has the right to collect a portion of the operating costs much the same way the Alaska Command advises the two Air Force wings and the US Army of their cost share amounts each year and collects it against the OMO and SMO contracts.</p> <p>Brad asked how the DOA planned to apportion this out to agencies.</p> <p>Commissioner Kreitzer stated she didn't have an answer at this time because she hadn't sat down to look at possible solutions. Her first concern was getting the information out and letting everyone know what came out of the final budget discussions. She was not sure how the Legislature arrived</p>	

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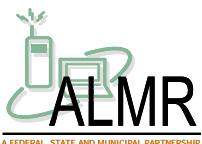
	<p>at the \$150,000 figure. Additionally, DOA got no increase for FY11 ALMR operations in its department budget. This is the second year DOA has had to absorb the costs.</p> <p>The Commissioner stated it is not something that has to be solved at the meeting since it doesn't take effect until the second half of the fiscal year; however, it is important to begin strategizing soon.</p> <p>Commissioner Kreitzer mentioned a discussion that occurred during the April 21 Executive Council meeting with regard to the State picking up the cost of the OMO/SMO contract audit. The UC recommended to the EC that the audit be performed. In the two years since the System was declared operational, no audit has been performed. (This is a check and balances audit to ensure that the SOA and DOD are receiving the services from the OMO/SMO as outlined in their statements of work and contracts.)</p> <p>Returning to the cost share discussion, Brad stated although it wasn't a huge amount of money for any of the NGOs or municipalities, most had already set their budgets for their fiscal years because they are not on the same cycle as the State. His biggest concern at this point is that before anyone had to pay, everyone would come to some kind of final resolution of what the future of cost apportionment is going to be for NGOs and municipalities now and into the future. What has happened is what agencies were afraid was going to happen, that before being able to come to a long-term agreement, it's now been foisted upon them. Many of the agencies will push back and may walk away from ALMR all together. He asked the Commissioner if the agencies didn't want to pay, would they be kicked off the System.</p> <p>The Commissioner stated this would have to be looked at a later date and there was still a lot of discussion to take place between now and then, such as other methods of apportionment besides a per radio fee. The UC has to determine what services they really want and what they don't use.</p> <p>Mr. David Gibbs asked what the additional costs of having the local governments on the System were. The locals don't use most of the services and never will. He'd like to see what the actual costs are for having locals on. The System clearly wasn't built to solely satisfy the local needs so he'd be interested in seeing what additional costs are incurred with having locals on. That's the level they are interested in beginning discussions at.</p>	
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	<p>Mr. Jim Kohler stated the agreement could be restructured for usage only but a system would have to be set up similar to a wireless system with various pricing options. You would spend a whole lot of money setting up the structure to do this. Industry has taken the approach where you buy a cell phone and you pay for the ability to use that phone in all 50 states although you don't use it that way 24/7. What agencies are paying for is the available capability versus what is actually used. When you move toward a more granular usage fee, you will spend more money to on this than what the State is trying to collect for the overall capabilities. Jim stated in the lower 48, agencies are paying \$50 - \$60 a month per radio, where the possible cost here for only the \$150K in shared costs, which amounts to \$4 - \$6 a month per radio.</p> <p>Commissioner Kreitzer stated where this all goes back to is some legislators concern that local governments should be paying a portion of ALMR costs when the State is providing revenue sharing, education funding, and a large portion of PERS/TRS costs.</p> <p>Brad interjected that this will probably be less of an issue from the municipalities' points of view on this fact, because they do benefit from these. Whereas the NGOs do not receive this and would take issue.</p> <p>Chief Tucker said, for the local users, the fees seem to be based on political motivations. One of the other issues for local users is although previous discussions did come up with the cost share allocation method, they never went any further to discuss if that was appropriate. People were told things over the years as the System was being built and there was never a good business plan from the onset on how to fund the System. Now we are there trying to figure out how to do this. If folks were told up front knew they were going to be paying an amount, they would have probably began long ago budgeting for it. The lion's share of local users on the System is the not-for-profit agencies providing public safety response, and they will be hit the hardest.</p> <p>Commissioner Kreitzer stated if there is a lack of understanding by the legislature, it's not due to the DOA who has done many presentations and made offers to meet individually with legislators.</p> <p>Chief Tucker stated he didn't think it was a lack of education, it's that they (legislators) haven't been listening to the message they've been given to them. It's rather a lack of understanding; either they don't understand or they don't want to understand. It's not the fact that DOA, and AML,</p>	
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	<p>haven't educated them. In some cases, it's just not important to them; the areas they represent and serve don't benefit from ALMR.</p> <p>Major Leveque stated he just had two things to bring to the table concerning this. First, the net of this issue is that if something isn't worked out, DOA takes a \$150,000 hit this year and there is a very real lack of money. Secondly, is it helpful for us to realize that this has nothing to do with what is fair and that this is just politics? If it's ignorance (on legislators' behalf), it's willful ignorance and since it (ALMR) does nothing for their area, they don't care. He asked, "Do we need to completely restructure the way we approach radio communications in Alaska so it's visible to legislators that although ALMR doesn't work in Bethel, there are other things going on, and the State has made a concerted effort to not invest grant money in areas that already have radios?" It feels like ALMR is getting beaten for something they are not guilty of.</p> <p>Commissioner Kreitzer stated that what they (DOA) have run into is the Senate saying 'it doesn't affect my area' and the House saying 'we thought they were supposed to pay all along.' Whether they truly believe this or that is a convenient excuse that is what is being said at the table. She stated when she comes back to talk about this again, they are going to really parse the language in the bill because it doesn't say who will pay; it says "It is the intent of the legislature, that the Department work with the entities participating in ALMR to negotiate a cost share agreement." It doesn't say it has to come from any particular person. There will be more to talk about but she didn't want to miss the opportunity at the end of the session to come and tell the council. Commissioner Kreitzer reiterated no one has to come to a resolution until the second half of the fiscal year, which gives everyone some time to talk about some of the broader issues. She noted there is concern with the support, all around, for ALMR. Right now the State is solid through the end of this fiscal year and for Fiscal Year 11 other than trying to find the \$150,000.</p> <p>Major Leveque asked the council if there was anyone else who had not spoken that had a question for Commissioner Kreitzer.</p> <p>Ms. Kathryn Pyne asked the Commissioner if the budget approved covers the microwave, the backbone, and the maintenance for the PMIs.</p> <p>The Commissioner stated this wasn't a legislative issue and DOA would cover it.</p>	
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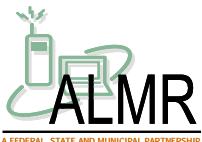
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	<p>Jim clarified at the EC level, the UC recommended the base budget and also an increment of approximately \$37,000 for additional User Council support and to fund travel for the OMO oversight of the SMO inspections of the sites. That total was requested to be added to the budget. That would be split between the State and DOD. DOA independently of any participation by the Army, it is the State's intent to cover their half of that amount.</p> <p>Mr. Bruce Richter asked the Commissioner if the State was looking at the lower 48 and states such as Oregon, who also has multiple agencies who are networking on their system, each brings something to the table such as land, towers, power connections which lowers the cost of building expense public radio systems. They are also considering broadening the user base and allowing utilities on the system. Perhaps others could bring assets to the System such as providing land as alternatives ways of getting a value brought to the table.</p> <p>Jim stated that ALMR was unique in that only the State and DOD owned the assets comprising the System, and ALMR rides on the SATS backbone. Other states didn't have the pre-existing infrastructure when they started so their situations are different, allowing them to look at these alternative methods of funding. Additionally, circuit costs are not factored in to any of the shared costs at this time. ALMR comprises approximately seven percent of the circuit usage.</p>	
Operations Management Office Update	Mr. Del Smith, Operations Manager	
User Council Charter	<p>1. Del reminded the council at the last meeting there was discussion on updating the Charter. The OMO has made some proposed changes, most dealing specifically with Article 6 - Organization and member attendance at meetings.</p> <p>Major Leveque proposed everyone come to the next meeting prepared to discuss and vote on the changes. One issue to be considered is whether these clauses should be retroactive or begin upon approval.</p>	<p>1. The OMO will distribute the draft revised User Council Charter to members after the meeting for review and comment.</p>
2011 Budget	<p>2. Del advised the council that the Executive Council did not vote on the 2011 Operations and Maintenance Budget. Ms. Pamela Bergman, being new, was not prepared to vote on behalf of the Federal Non-DOD agencies without first discussing the budget with them and gaining their approval.</p>	

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Exercise Arctic Edge/Alaska Shield/Vigilant Guard 2010	<p>Additionally, the OMO would like to have the 2012 budget to the User Council in June for discussion. The ideal situation would be to move the User Council support costs and PMI costs into the base budget and then perhaps talk about the additional verbiage concerning IWCE and APCO conferences and any other travel the council thinks the OMO needs to accomplish, as well as the audit cost if the council thinks it needs to be accomplished every year. The goal is to get the 2012 Budget approved and to the Executive Council for their August meeting so it can get into the State budget cycle.</p> <p>3. From the OMO, Rich Leber has been heavily involved from the oversight perspective monitoring the exercise to see if the transportable were deployed in the appropriate timelines, etc.</p> <p>Del commented that once again he thinks the After Action Report will show that the National Guard units that pick up the radio once a year have extreme difficulty in operating them.</p> <p>He also stated the NORTHCOM observer had made a comment that ALMR didn't work when they took them outside the prison but the individual obviously didn't know what he was talking about because corrections facilities do not use ALMR radios. First, building penetration would be an issue in the facility where they are at, and secondly, there's no sense having a trunked radio inside a facility as conventional frequencies would adequately meet the communication needs.</p> <p>The other comment was on the Valdez portion of the exercise, NORTHCOM stated locals couldn't talk to DOD. Del stated he was unaware DOD was involved in the Valdez portion of the exercise. Doug clarified it was an air-to-ground problem concerning the JISC. Del said once again the NORTHCOM observer implied it was an ALMR problem, which it was not.</p> <p>The OMO will respond to these allegations accordingly.</p>	
System Management Office Update	Mr. Casey Borg, System Manager	
System Busy Reports	Casey stated that they were still on deployment with the transportable for the exercise and the SMO would pull System traffic reports from the deployments for the next meeting.	
Joint Project Team Update	Mr. Tim Woodall, ALMR Project Manager Mr. Joe Quickel, PMP	
	There was no representative available for a DOD update.	



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Joint Project Team Update	Mr. Jim Kohler, SOA ETS Program Manager	
Outstanding Change Request Documentation	1. Mr. Kohler stated that there has been some outstanding documentation due from the State of Alaska Telecommunications System technicians for a long period of time. They are due to be completed no later than June 1.	
Deferred Maintenance Issues Cleanup	2. The second item Jim addressed was the issue of deferred maintenance on the ALMR sites. ETS received budget funds this year for their deferred maintenance budget that should take care of the outstanding maintenance issues, including the R56 grounding, at the sites.	
Old Business		
	There were no old business items for this meeting.	
Next meeting		
	The next regularly scheduled meetings are June 2, July 7, and Aug 4.	
Adjourn		
	A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Natalie and seconded by Doug. The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.	