

Region 43 700 Mhz Regional Planning Committee
Convening Meeting Minutes
November 14th, 2000

Held at:
King County Emergency Management
7300 Perimeter Road South
Seattle, WA 98108

In attendance:

Kevin Kearns	King County Emergency Management Division (convener)
Gerald Ferris	FEMA
Spencer Bahner	Snohomish County Emergency Radio System
Clark Palmer	Washington State Patrol
Allan Josue	Washington State Emergency Management Division
Jimmie Hocutt	Washington State Emergency Management Division
Jon Marcinko	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Kevin Donahoe	Tacoma Fire Department
Howard Junge	Tacoma Public Utilities
Bill Wilson	Port of Seattle
Tamara Bernstein	Snohomish County Emergency Radio System
Dave Brush	City of Yakima
Gary Duncan	City of Yakima
Lance Johnson	Nextel Communications Strategy Department
Jay Paull	Nextel Communications Strategy Department
Jon Wiswell	City of Seattle
Steve Leonard	Nextel
Bruce Branlund	Motorola
Terri Scott	Kitsap County CENCOM
Fred Radovich	Motorola
Steve Taylor	Taylor Consulting Group
Gary Amundson	Motorola
Pat Buller	APCO Frequency Coordinator
Stephen Lockwood	Hatfield and Dawson
John Gallagher	Motorola
Bob Alexander	Motorola
Kris McGowan	Federal Communications Commission
Gary Palmer	Pacific Electronics
Dick Westrope	Com-Net Ericsson
Denny Casto	Motorola
Ron Hansen	City of Renton
Bette Rinehart	Motorola
David Eierman	Motorola
Alan Hull	Washington State Department of Transportation
Tom Howell	SNOPAC

Meeting called to order at 1:05 PM

Introductions

Convener Kevin Kearns called the meeting to order and suggested that those attending briefly review the agenda for any needed changes. Mr. Kearns then asked that those present introduce themselves, state their organizational affiliation, and make sure that they had signed in on the provided sign-in sheets. Mr. Kearns then called for any modifications to the working agenda. None were suggested.

Background on 700 Mhz Process and NCC

Kevin Kearns provided a brief background on the process by which spectrum has been allocated for public safety use at 700 Mhz, addressing the reassignment of spectrum formerly assigned for television broadcasting use. Mr. Kearns mentioned the efforts of PSWIN and APCO in the reassignment and provided background on the inclusion of guard bands in the assignment planning process.

Kevin Kearns also offered information on the role played by the National Coordinating Committee (NCC) in the formation of the technical plan for the use of the reallocated spectrum. Mr. Kearns stressed the roles played by national and regional players in the process of developing rules through the NCC process and the active engagement of the APCO chapters in that process. Kevin suggested that attendees may want to review the informative materials provided on the NCC web page (add web page here....) including extensive materials covering the history of the reallocation process (including extensive meeting notes from the periodic NCC planning meetings) and extensive documentation on the details of the planning efforts concerning the public safety allocation at 700 Mhz. This site also includes information on the NCC organizational structure.

Key Documents

Kevin Kearns then described each of the key documents that trace the process of the reallocation and the evolution of specific service rules. Copies of these documents were available and also can be downloaded from the NCC web site. Mr. Kearns stressed that the most important of these documents are the Report and Order and Memorandum Opinion and Order documents issued by the FCC. Kevin indicated that the best way to determine the current technical service rules is to review each of these in sequence and noted that the Code of Federal Regulations (or CFR) has not yet been brought up to date. The provided agenda lists all of the documents essential to developing a thorough understanding of the current state of the allocation. The following is a summary of the recommended sources provided in the meeting agenda:

- FCC 98-191 1st Report and Order and 3rd Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- NCC Recommendations to the FCC for Technical and Operational Standards
- FCC 00-264 2nd Memorandum Opinion and Order
- FCC 00-271 4th Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

- FCC 00-348 3rd Memorandum Opinion and Order and 3rd Report and Order

Regional Planning Process

Kevin Kearns reported that the NCC suggested that the process for the allocation of channels at 700 Mhz be based on the process originally developed to assign the NPSPAC 800 Mhz spectrum allocation, but with a few added improvements to the process resulting from lessons learned by the original NPSPAC committees. Most significant of the suggested changes from the NPSPAC process was consideration of a different region structure. In the same way that the original Region 43 Committee considered the inclusion of Idaho and Oregon in a larger region with related interests, the NCC suggested that the regions for assignment of 700 Mhz spectrum might look quite different from the NPSPAC committees and include multiple states or a mixture of states and large cities. Kevin reported that in conversations with interested public safety communications professionals in Idaho and Oregon, it was felt that the existing structure had worked well in the Pacific Northwest and that this should probably be the process followed in the assignment of 700 Mhz spectrum. As a result, it is expected that Washington State will be a single coordinating region.

Kevin Kearns stressed that the NCC clearly expects that the process of assigning spectrum via a regional process will be significantly more inclusive than the process used for the allocation of NPSPAC channels. The interests of those attending and those not attending the planning meetings are to be considered and their input is to be actively sought. Kevin stated that this will certainly include meetings around the entire state as well as extensive use of electronic means of communications such as e-mail. The strong NCC position is in response to processes in other regions that left stakeholders less than satisfied with their ability to add to the dialog. Kevin indicated that this was not an issue in Region 43 and complemented Alan Hull on his leadership as the convener of the Region 43 NPSPAC process.

Kevin Kearns then provided an outline of the current process being used to ensure the engagement of all interested parties. He also stressed the need to maintain a complete and accurate record of all meetings that lead up to the preparation of a regional plan for Washington State. Kevin indicated that in contrast to the coordination process used with the NPSPAC channel assignments, APCO is not to be the sole provider of coordination services with the 700 Mhz spectrum and that there was expected to be a degree of competition between the certified coordination bodies.

Kevin Kearns stressed that in reading over any of the source documents, it is essential to read them in the order of their release so as to be sure to understand the evolution of the rule making process.

Kevin Kearns stated that federal government agencies are encouraged to participate in the regional committee process but that they are limited by rule to non-voting status. He indicated that the NCC expectation is that the regions will work toward full consensus among all potential spectrum users and that the active involvement of Federal agencies was a key part of this process. Kevin added that the full and active involvement of

Federal agencies would ensure interoperability with the Federal government in disasters and civil emergencies. Kevin also mentioned that specific FCC Rule Parts allow Federal agency participation in shared systems for their daily agency activities, not just in any mutual aid scenarios.

David Eierman from Motorola added that there is still a restriction concerning direct Federal access to the 700 MHz spectrum and that only state and local governments may actually license channels at 700 MHz.

Kevin Kearns indicated that the NCC planning process will establish spectrum access priorities for different categories of applicants. Kevin also indicated that the NCC plan documents allow coordinators to assign specific channels from the 700 MHz spectrum if regional committees are unable to do so as a result of time or funding resource limits. Kevin indicated that the costs of regional planning efforts may also potentially be repaid to the regional committees by the frequency coordinators and stated that APCO has already indicated a willingness to do so.

Mr. Kearns then provided a briefing on the unique provisions of the plan as it relates to specific assignments to meet the needs of state governments. Kevin stated that the existing plan allocates a full 2.4 MHz entirely to the states for their communications requirements and that this spectrum is assigned without the involvement of the regional committees. He indicated that the intent is to meet the pressing needs for fully usable spectrum for statewide communications while also allowing the regional planning process to stay focused on the requirements of non-state agencies. The same 2.4 MHz is assigned to all states, simplifying the state-to-state mutual aid coordination process, and will be assigned on a geographic (non-site specific), and that these assignments are to be coordinated directly between the states.

Spencer Bahner asked exactly how it was envisioned that the state-to-state coordination process would be facilitated and Kevin Kearns responded that that was not entirely clear yet.

Kris McGowan asked how the coordination process will work relative to Canada. Kevin Kearns replied that Motorola would cover the details of this in their presentation. Kevin added that while public safety has only modest influence in the United States on spectrum issues, that the commercial interests involved in the nearby commercial spectrum assignments have considerable influence with the FCC and that these interests are likely to lobby both the FCC and Industry Canada on border area spectrum issues.

Kevin Kearns then introduced Bette Rinehart and David Eierman from Motorola.

Motorola Presentation on the 700 MHz Transition

Bette Rinehart presented an outline of the history of the needs for additional public safety spectrum and the process by which spectrum was moved from other services to public safety use following congressional action. Bette also covered some of the details of the band plan in the Motorola provided handout.

David Eierman then began a detailed discussion of the specific band planning information present in the Motorola handout. David covered the selection of conventional P25 for use on the mutual aid/interoperability channel assignments. He also indicated that the plan permitted trunking for regional interoperability on the interoperability channels. He also indicated that there was some continuing evolution of the interoperability standards.

Pat Buller asked if there was currently available radio capable of operating on the 6.25 KHz channel spacings at 700 MHz. David Eierman said that none was currently available and that the currently suggested approach would be to seek to aggregate channels to create immediately usable 12.5 KHz channels. David stated that this approach would meet FCC bandwidth efficiency requirements provided a protocol at least as efficient as P25 was used. Davis also said that a 25 KHz assignment may be the best initial step for some organizations.

Steve Taylor asked if P25 was a requirement. David Eierman said that P25 was required only on the interoperability channels.

Bette Rinehart then provided information on the development of the NCC standards and NCC organizational history, followed by details of the naming protocol established for use when describing the interoperability channels.

Jon Wiswell asked when may the states submit their license applications to the coordinators. Bette Rinehart replied that they may act now and that action by interested states is required no later than 12/31/2001 for use of the state channel pool. Wiz followed this question by asking how adjacent states are dealt with in the regional planning committee (RPC) process. Bette replied that spectrum should be set aside in the border areas between states and that a plan should be submitted for review. When the plan is accepted for review, the public comment period would allow input from interested parties in adjacent states. Kevin Kearns added that Idaho and Oregon are interested in the process and that Oregon will engage with the Washington State RPC as a regional plan is being developed.

David Eierman then began a brief discussion of the television migration issues and Canadian coordination issues. He indicated that these are substantial unresolved issues that create significant 700 Mhz spectrum usability concerns in much of the northern United States. David indicated that it is likely that the efforts of commercial wireless carriers bidding on adjacent spectrum will move the process along more quickly and that this will ultimately benefit public safety spectrum users. He stated that the issues of Canadian channel allotments are much more complex and create problems in many border areas. David felt that public safety agency contact with the U.S. Congress would be essential to moving the process forward in a timely fashion.

A question from the audience (from one of the Yakima representatives) was asked concerning the status of the TV channel 68 assignment in Yakima. David Eierman

replied that this was likely a low power, secondary status assignment. He added that Canadian DTV, especially in Victoria, was the greatest impediment to 700 MHz channel use in Washington state.

Clark Palmer stated that public safety agencies would be unlikely to be able to fund the early migration of television users, unlike commercial interests that have future revenues to use in relocation. David Eierman agreed with Clark's comments.

Break at 2:45 PM

Re-Convene at 3:05 PM

Leadership Positions/Elections

Kevin Kearns called the group to order again and initiated a discussion of the election of the RPC chairperson. Calls for the nomination were made. Alan Hull nominated Clark Palmer and Pat Buller seconded the nomination. Kevin Kearns was nominated by Kevin Donahoe, with the nomination seconded by Spencer Bahner.

Spencer Bahner asked if it was appropriate to have the chairperson be a representative of state government when the states had entirely separate allocations that were not a part of the RPC process. Kevin Kearns responded that it was appropriate to have the state representatives involved due to the small pool of available candidates.

Jimmie Hocutt offered a motion to close the nomination process which was seconded by Pat Buller.

Kevin Kearns was asked about his ability to devote adequate time to the RPC process. He replied that he could manage the additional commitment and provided a brief summary of his other significant commitments.

Clark Palmer provided a brief background on his experience and current activities. He also indicated that he was likely to be as busy as Kevin and that his activities and current level of involvement in non-RPC issues were similar to Kevin's.

Kevin Kearns had to leave the room on urgent business and Jon Wiswell acted in his place to continue facilitating the meeting. At this point Clark Palmer also left to allow free discussion of the respective nominees. There was brief discussion by the group concerning the skills and abilities of both candidates and emphasis on the superb qualifications of both individuals. There was also discussion by the group concerning selection of a vice-chair at the same time the chairperson was selected. Jon Wiswell suggested that the group simply select the chairperson at this point in time.

A vote of those attending who were not federal agency representatives, vendors or consultants selected Clark Palmer as the chairperson. At this point in time, both Kevin Kearns and Clark Palmer returned and Jon Wiswell announced the result of the vote.

Alan Hull then nominated Kevin Kearns for vice-chairperson. This was seconded by Jon Wiswell. Jimmie Hocutt then moved that nominations be closed, which Jon Wiswell seconded. Kevin Kearns indicated his acceptance of the selection, as no other attendees were available.

Clark Palmer and Kevin Kearns then called for volunteers for the role of secretary. There were no volunteers and the chair and vice-chair will work on the appointment of someone to the role.

Kevin Kearns asked the group if bi-monthly or quarterly meetings made the most sense. Kevin Kearns then suggested that the RPC attempt to meet on a bi-monthly basis due to the amount of work to be done. Late January would be the next period for a meeting based on the suggested interval. Jon Wiswell suggested alternating eastern and western Washington locations for meetings or use of an agreed upon mid-point location. He also added that six annual meetings made the most sense to him. Kevin Kearns added that bi-monthly meetings held on odd numbered months helped to miss the August vacation period and that the next meeting should be held in western Washington so as to avoid the larger number of western Washington attendees from having to traverse the potentially snow-covered passes. Kevin suggested that the alternating meeting process then begin, and that the meeting date be set to the last Wednesday of the month. There was clear group consensus that this made the most sense and this approach was selected as the meeting schedule.

Kevin Kearns said that this placed the next meeting on January 31st at a location in western Washington.

Kevin Kearns then indicated that the King County web page would be used to house the RPC documents and Jon Wiswell expressed concern about using the King County web page. Spencer Bahner stated that he would like to see the page hosted on a web site that would allow documents to be in true database form to allow greater flexibility in access. Clark Palmer and Kevin Kearns acknowledged the situation with the King County web page would prevent this. Clark said he would check to see if the Washington State web page would be better with regard to databases.

Kevin Kearns stated that he felt that the use of a list server is essential to keeping RPC members and interested parties informed about the current status of the RPC process. Jay Morrison was concerned that the use of a list server might not allow easy transfer of data files. Clark Palmer stated that he would research use of the state list server capability.

Kevin Kearns stated that a by-laws subcommittee should begin work on development of by-laws for the RPC and pointed out that draft guidelines for the committees were included in the handouts provided. Jon Wiswell was appointed to lead the by-laws subcommittee and Alan Hull, Spencer Bahner, and Alan Josue volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. Alan Hull was also willing to serve as the vice-chair of the subcommittee.

Kevin Kearns covered a proposed agenda for the next meeting and suggested that a DTV subcommittee might be in order.

Jimmie Hocutt asked what the group wanted to use as its next meeting location and suggested that Camp Murray would be available if that worked for everyone. Kevin Kearns and Clark Palmer stated that that was a good choice. Hearing no objections, the next meeting will be held at Camp Murray.

Kevin Kearns asked if there were any other items for the good of the order. Spencer Bahner asked if a date should be set to meet on development of by-laws. The group consensus was that this could wait for a later date.

Jimmie Hocutt then stated the groups appreciation for Kevin Kearns' efforts on the RPC process and the group responded with a round of applause for Kevin.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:51 PM