

**CENTRAL MINNESOTA USER COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday, January 20, 2009, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Alexandria Fire Hall**  
**Douglas County**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

1. Benton County – Perry Beise, Marie Herbst
2. Douglas County – Tom Egan, Dave Pedersen
3. Grant County – Vern Haack, Greg Jacobson
4. Kandiyohi County – Stacey “Ace” Bonnema
5. Meeker County – Rich Christianson, Joel Engler, Greg Gilbertson
6. Mille Lacs County – Peter Willis
7. Morrison County – Pat Boone
8. Otter Tail County – Dallas Grewe, Mark Hovland, Mathew McGuire
9. St. Cloud, City of – Gary Fletcher, Tom Justin
10. Stearns County – Paul McIntyre, Jay Sikkink
11. Stevens County – Jason Dingman, Dave Dybdal, Justin Howe, Ross Tiegs
12. Todd County – Bob Cuchna
13. Traverse County – Stan Churchill
14. Wadena County – Don Weniger

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

15. Big Stone County
16. Pope County
17. Sherburne County
18. Swift County
19. Wilkin County
20. Wright County

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order by Chair Paul McIntyre at 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:**

Quorum present with 14 of 20 entities present. Introductions were conducted.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

No communications since last meeting.

**INCIDENTS:**

No incidents to discuss at this time.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

October 14, 2008 – *Dave Pederson, moved, Tom Egan second, upon a vote motion carried.*

November 18, 2008 – *Greg Jacobson moved, Ace Bonnema second, upon a vote motion carried.*

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Under no. 9a, Chair McIntyre added appointments to RRB. *Pat Boone moved, Perry Beise 2<sup>nd</sup> to approve agenda as amended, upon a vote motion carried.*

## **REPORTS:**

### **SRB/ARMER UPDATE; MnDPS/MnDOT:**

#### **SRB Update:**

Tom Justin stated nothing since we met last.

#### **OTC Update:**

MnDOT sent out a list of their priority for build-out, there are ten points of interest; Micah Myers stated it is posted at the website, they will prioritize according to regions where they can build, areas who are already on the system, or are in area that are on the system, etc. It provides for exceptions due to circumstances such as purchasing land which is in need.

Jay Sikkink stated they are working on aviation standard and conducted testing. Settings on the radio on the actual aircraft needs to change as when aircraft affiliates to a tower, it may take up to ten minutes to find another tower. He stated it is important because if users go up in an airplane, it may take additional time to affiliate. Judy Diehl asked if they were within their own county if it would be an issue, Jay stated he didn't think it would. Bob Cuchna asked if the setting is for the plane only or does it affect dispatch, Jay stated it is the plane only and is in the programming of the radio.

Jay provided a LE and LESIU-TAC standards handout; it will be at SMG meeting tomorrow and SRB next month for approval. These will be State keys which will be programmed into the radio. He stated 2.5a standard references use of talk groups and access. Currently CMRoam is utilized and we need to determine if this will be sufficient for this region and this group needs to have discussion on this.

Jay reported that Hennepin County built and tested a truck which basically is a tower site on wheels, they want to reserve some frequencies so this truck can go anywhere in the State, he questioned if we block off frequencies in case they would need them although it ties up frequencies. He stated this is a State resource and is available if anyone needs it.

#### **Interop Committee**

Interop Committee met today Micah stated Grant Committee extended deadline of IECGP Grant, half will be computer based training and the other half for subscriber units. Discussion on whether it had to be ARMER equipment, decided it needed to be digital and will know at a later date how much this region will be allocated following tomorrow's telephone conference call.

They passed standard on 10-codes for Plain Talk. Federal Engineering provided a presentation on the State assessment studies; State hired them to analyze the VHF and interop.

#### **CMNRRB Update:**

Did not meet since October.

#### **CMNRAC Update:**

Did not meet since last month.

#### **CMN Regional Interop Coordinator Update:**

Tom Justin stated there were two new sites that are up and running this week per Dave Klema's email. He stated Grant County was awarded \$406,006 for radios. He emailed out the most recent tower sites and an ARMER update via the listserv this morning. He received several questions about the difference between Phase III and Central MN build-out. Back in 2005, 13 counties were determined to be in Central MN as Phase III and included 9 counties in the southern area. Central MN region includes 19 counties.

CMN Regional Interop Coordinator Update: (Continued)

Itasca County is up on the system, Sherburne and Wright are fired up on the system and presently are utilizing Enfield and Zimmerman; it will be an eight-site simulcast and ten channels. Tom will have a Powerpoint slide available to inform the group what is going on in the other regions as they build out.

Camp Ripley will be moving to ARMER, purchasing equipment, and it will create some interoperability issues. If an entity plans to use Camp Ripley for a training site, they will need to consider talk groups when building their fleet map.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION AND NEW BUSINESS:**

Elections of Chair and Vice Chair:

*Jay Sikkink nominated Paul McIntyre for Chair, Pat Boone second, with no other nominations, upon a vote motion carried.*

*Paul McIntyre nominated Bob Cuchna as Vice-Chair, Tom Egan second, with no other nominations, upon a vote, motion carried.*

RRB Appointments:

RRB member – *Tom Justin nominated Chair Paul McIntyre as voting member to the RRB, Jay Sikkink second, with no other nominations, upon a vote motion carried.*

RRB alternate – *Gary Fletcher nominated Tom Justin as alternate to the RRB, second by Paul McIntyre, with no other nominations, upon a vote motion carried.*

Tower Sites Update:

Email was sent out via listserv on tower site updates.

Funding and Grant Writing Update:

Micah Myers asked if anyone comes across a grant or is successful in obtaining a grant to send the information to Debbie for posting on the Central MN website. St. Cloud will post under grant funding the documents such as Kandiyohi's so entities can look at other grant applications.

10 Codes – Plain Talk Radio Communications Update:

Jay provided a handout on 10-codes, there is one additional update which has an addition under management and non-compliance and indicates if you are non-compliant you need to explain to the SRB why you are not adhering to the standard. There is still a need for some 10-codes, Tom Justin stated the goal was to standardize four-five Plain Talk 10-Codes and the plan is to utilize plain English at any multijurisdictional event.

Phase III Build-Out Status and Boundaries Update:

Tom Justin provided an update earlier in meeting; State will be working on the other entities in the ring-counties.

Grant Expense Reimbursement Policy Update and Recommendation:

Chair McIntyre stated there are some members who are not reimbursed for attending meetings, meals, etc. There is a \$105,000 grant available for reimbursements although it includes all jurisdictions in this region and all meetings. The RAC is looking for feedback on this, a draft policy and form is included in packet. Paul asked if reimbursement should only be for entities that do not get reimbursed, do we encourage carpooling, etc.

Grant Expense Reimbursement Policy Update and Recommendation: (Continued)

Jay stated it makes more sense if we take the \$105,000 and divided by each entity it would not be a lot per county. He thought it should be for mileage for the User Committee as entities such as volunteer firefighters can not get reimbursed though other means like RAC members can. Perhaps we reimburse up to two vehicles per county to encourage carpooling, have a limit on mileage, etc. Micah suggested one area this could be utilized for is other subcommittees coming off of the User Committee or to attend the RRB meetings.

Tom Egan stated they have one volunteer fireman on the User Committee and the other representatives are getting paid to attend the meetings. They are already volunteering their service and should be reimbursed for whatever they can. Dave Pedersen suggested perhaps it is pre-approved although this may be an issue to have that verbage or perhaps the meetings are preapproved and not necessarily for each person needing to be preapproved.

Tom Justin stated the mileage effective January 1, 2009 is \$0.55, Dave Nohner suggested to adopt whatever the Federal mileage rate. Micah stated the form can be downloaded and there is a formula to automatically calculate. Tom Justin stated it is a RRB policy, and indicates the RRB must disburse funds and the intent via the second paragraph is the RRB must have recognized committees in order for individuals to get reimbursed. Chair McIntyre stated this group would like mileage for individuals from the User Committee who do not already get reimbursed and up to two vehicles per entity. Tom Justin suggested having limitations as to the distance and individual who drive. Micah suggested the reimbursements be done on a quarterly basis.

*Justin Howe moved to reimburse for mileage for those members not getting paid by other means with no minimum mileage requirements, requested on a quarterly until funds are no longer available. The reimbursement rate will be at the Federal mileage rate. Bob Cuchna second, upon a vote, motion carried*

Discussion – County Interoperability Use of Regional Tactical Channels Update:

*Tom Egan moved, Pat Boone second to table until next meeting due to timeframe of tonight's meeting, upon a vote motion carried..*

**Other:**

Micah stated he met with Representative Haws this morning who is looking for co-authors to the bill, Senator Ingebrightsen will be representing it at the Senate. He stated Governor Pawlenty made a speech last week on trying to get business going. Micah will be meeting again next week to try and get this bill moving forward.

Fleet Mapping – RIC Tom Justin:

Tom Justin stated his experience in Fleet Mapping started back in 2003, there is no set rules as to how to build a fleet map. Need to determine who you talk to now, who you want to talk to that you can't now, how do you wish to talk to them. You need to involve individuals who make financial and programming decisions.

Only certain radios allow encryption and are more expensive to purchase. Will need to consider that some things may change from how you currently operate; such as you may be told what channel you will need to change to versus just changing on your own. Gary Fletcher stated St. Cloud set up multiple talk groups to be on one OPS channel and later discovered they needed an EMS channel and had to add additional channels. He said to provide yourself extra channels than what you anticipate as you will determine your need will be greater than originally thought and provide plenty of channels. Ace stated MnDOT will only authorize 50 per county though.

### Fleet Mapping – RIC Tom Justin: (Continued)

Tom stated some counties will have Intra-State and International such as talking to Canada. Consider if there are NGO's, hospitals, schools, etc. you need to talk to. He suggested making a list of deficiencies in your current system and then list solution to it. There will be procedural protocols such as PSAPS and NIMS. He stated the State's vision for Phase II includes data and you will need to take it into account. Tom stated one entity that is usually overlooked is Emergency Management and Emergency responders, look to see who else may be overlooked such as NGO's, reformatories, etc.

Look at standardizing naming conventions, whether it is called a TAC or OPS. The State started building out fast, Metro had MET-TACS, A-TACS, and P-TACS; Central MN is CM in front of the tactical channels. Tom stated there are protocols for State and regional naming, although there are none at this time for local. Jay Sikkink is working on the standardization of standards so they would be the same standard across the State.

Training is another issue if you are using ICS/NIMS protocols must be covered and in place when utilizing Federal funds for training. Bring all disciplines together when building the fleet map such as Programmers, Fire, Law Enforcement, Public Works, EMS, etc. Need to have dedicated exclusive talk groups for each agency, fleet map will have shared talk groups and Tom stated the more regional and interoperability you build regionally, the better off you will be. Be logical in thought process, go to other agencies which have their fleet mapping in place and ask questions, include private vendors such as Granite Electronics, Motorola, etc.

The system allows for changes to be made, although you will need to be patient as you will want to test and try fleet mapping prior to making changes. Currently there are 50 Regional, State, and National resources that will need to be in your radios.

### Start building like a target:

1. **Center** being your agency and should be your dedicated talk group and you need to determine if you want to allow other entities to utilize your talk group.
2. **First ring** are Local and dedicated talk groups and provide for interoperable communications, and is owned by the System Administrator.
3. **Second ring** are Regional talk groups and are designed for interoperability within regions and have identifiers by Region such as Central MN Public Works, Central MN Roam, Central MN Fire, Central MN Law Enforcement, etc. These are excellent response agency utilization talk groups in an emergency situation and would not tie up regional P-TACS and A-TACS. CMRoam allows an entity to bring their own traffic with them without tying up other resources as they travel across the county, etc. A-TACS include seven talk groups and all users can use these. CMP-TACS are for public safety only. Should request incident command talk groups and can then be assigned if they are available.
4. **Third ring** are State-wide talk groups designed for interoperability with State agencies and between regional entities. They are set under the protocol as NIMS and are S-TACS, E-TACS, L-TACS, F-TACS. State now uses LESIU-TACS (law encrypted special) and SIU-TACS (special investigations).
5. **Fifth ring** is National and are owned by the FCC.

### Fleet Mapping – RIC Tom Justin: (Continued)

There are 24 Regional talk groups in this region, 27 State resource and 5 National talk groups that should be built into each entity's fleet map by standards and protocols. A good idea is to put talk groups you will utilize the most under zone A. Zone B is the blackout zone where it mimics the zone A, but is encrypted. Zone C which is the internal talk groups; although the State is currently recommending Zone C be the State tactical channels. For the City of St. Cloud, the Police have built in another zone (i.e. Zone F) and it includes the Fire Department's talk groups so they could hand a police radio to a fire fighter and it operates just like their radio.

One thing to think about is if you have 30 little Fire Departments in your county, are you going to put every Fire Department's Admin into your radio. Tom stated if you modify anything to the zone that the State recommends, you need to apply for a modification. Dave Nohner stated Zone A is where the County Law Enforcement stays 95% of the time. You can build a separate template and customize to individual needs if you want. Tom stated the 1<sup>st</sup> talk group on the radio on each zone is the very same talk group – the main, the 16 talk groups are programmed to go to dispatch.

Tom stated to document fleet map, then program subscribers, take radios to your own entity User Committee to review and take fleet map to IT staff to review. It ultimately will need to go to the OTC for approval.

Dave Nohner stated when referring to Central MN Region, they will work in this region only and not in Metro or Duluth. He suggested dispatchers look at what they will want to record because they can't record everything. Come up with a naming convention that is a little different to make things easier.

Tom stated as RIC personnel, he would like to provide quarterly training at the User Committees. Fleet mapping training in general should take about 2-1/2 hours. Tom stated if an entity is looking at purchasing multi-ban radios, their VHF needs to be built into their fleet map. Gary Fletcher suggested you consider who you provide permission to so they can utilize your talk group, you can provide to one or numerous talk groups if you like.

### Other Items of Interest:

Tom Egan stated a lot of entities will be doing the same things and suggest getting a couple counties together from this region and pay them through the counties to get the 800 system built out to assist the counties with their build-out as they will be using the same forms, etc. rather than each county doing it on their own. Bob Cuchna stated Emergency Management had some discussion that they have some funds available which may be able to be used for this, Micah stated it will be discussed at the RAC on Friday.

Micah explained some of the grant funding which is coming available. The region is looking at purchase a cache of radios, if we have a standard that is in everyone's radios, it is better for training. Tom stated Central MN includes 19 counties, if a county has a large event taking place and all four P-TACS are being utilized, what do the other counties use if they needed to if they are already used up; if they were all in one large bank there would then be other talk groups available. If the City of St. Cloud and Stearns County need to rename their tactical channels to make it a better decision for the region, they will although it will be very expensive i.e. for Stearns it could be approximately \$50,000 and 900 radios that will need to be reprogrammed. Therefore this decision needs to be thoroughly thought through before a decision and change is made.

### **STANDARDS:**

None at this time.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

Next meeting will be Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. and March 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m., Alexandria Fire Hall. There is a conflict with the evening meeting being at the Alexandria Fire Department; Dave Pedersen will schedule the Douglas County Hospital for the evening meetings and the daytime meetings will remain at the Fire Hall.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*Pat Boone moved, Jay Sikkink second to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.*

Minutes recorded by Debbie Backes, recording secretary.