

CENTRAL MINNESOTA REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)

Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 11, 2009 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Zimmerman Public Safety Building

Zimmerman, MN – Sherburne County

Members/Alternates Present:

1. Micah Myers – Vice-Chair – Designee of St. Cloud
2. Troy Heck – Designee Benton County
John Burski – Alternate Benton County
3. Tom Egan – Designee Douglas County
Michael Henrion – Alternate Douglas County
4. Troy Langlie – Designee Grant County
5. Stacey “Ace” Bonnema – Alternate Kandiyohi County
6. Randy Celander – Alternate Meeker County
Jeff Norlin – Designee Meeker County
7. Jeff Jelinski – Alternate Morrison County
8. Mark Englund – Designee Otter Tail County
Judy Siggerud – Alternate Otter Tail County
9. Tom Larson – Designee Pope County
10. John Olson – Designee Sherburne County
11. Jay Sikkink – Designee Stearns County
Dave Nohner – Alternate Stearns County
12. Judy Diehl – Designee Stevens County
Scott Busche – Alternate Stevens County
13. Bob Cuchna – Alternate Todd County
14. Trevor Wright – Designee Traverse County
15. Scott McKellep – Designee Wadena County
16. Rick Fiedler – Designee Wilkin County
Dawn Mund – Alternate Wilkin County
17. Bill Swing – Designee Wright County
Greg Howell – Alternate Wright County

Members/Alternates Absent:

18. Big Stone County
19. Mille Lacs County
20. Swift County

Guests Present:

Glenn Elvecrog, MN DPS/MSEM
Kathy Gilson, State Patrol
Tom Justin, RIC
Tim Lee and Mark Gieseke, MnDOT
Ron Whitehead, ARMER

Meeting was called to order by Chair Micah Myers at 10:25 a.m.

Chair Myers welcomes members and guests, introductions conducted. 17 Out of 20 members in attendance with quorum present.

Communications:

Nothing at this time.

Approval of Agenda:

Tom Egan moved, Judy Diehl second to approve agenda, upon vote motion carried.

Approval of July 10, 2009 Minutes:

Bob Cuchna moved, Jeff Jelinski second to approve July 10, 2009 minutes, upon a vote motion carried. Troy Langlie corrected minutes to state that 15 versus 17 were present Randy Celander was added as present for a total of 15 discussion on wording of members to add wording "voting" members, Jeff Jelinski moved to approve the August 14, 2009 minutes as amended, Bill Swing second, upon a vote motion carried.

Reports:

MnDOT:

Mark Gieseke stated a new map was produced yesterday and will be on web soon. 28 New sites in the last two months went online across the state including four in the central area in Otter Tail County; several additional sites to be on line soon and several currently under construction.

Tim explained as the upgrade was taking place there were two tables in the new zone controllers that conflicted with each other and caused the system to go into site trunking.

SRB/ARMER Update:

Did not meet – no update.

OTC:

Jay stated they met this week, more radio IDs were approved, Mille Lacs County had requested ID's, presented their participation plan, and were granted 50 IDs. Each local administrator is responsible for keeping track of the IDs they have and are required to report to the state on an annual basis the number on the system.

It was discussed whether Fire SOA's should be a state or regional standard – see discussion below. LE_TACS were discussed and whether there should be more than two encrypted state-wide, this would require reprogramming of radios and will take several years to implement. Chair Myers stated additional discussion is who is allowed to have the encrypted LE_TACS in their radios.

Interop:

On August 25th the Interop met regarding Federal Engineering's presentation and will be meeting again on the 23rd, Tim Lee is proposing to bring a plan for proceeding – it is still in draft form. Tim stated they are looking at how to bridge the gap between 800 and VHF and want to be sure to look at this long-term for interoperability. Additional updates at October meeting.

CMNRRB Update:

No meeting – next meeting is at the end of the month.

User Committee:

Paul McIntyre reported the User Committee discussed the proposed layout for regional talk groups and agreed with the RAC's recommendation with replacement of SOA's. Reviewed meeting schedule and consensus was to have meetings remain in Alexandra for a central location, rotate day and evening meetings. Moving forward with EMS meeting next Tuesday from 5:00-6:30 and invited all EMS, ambulance and hospitals within the region.

Regional RAC Committees:

No update.

Staffing Committee:

No update.

Reports: (Continued)

Training Committee:

No update.

Vendor Committee:

No update.

Participation Plans:

No update.

Regional Radio Board:

RRB will be discussing reallocation of grant funds per recommendation of the RAC, recommendation to change the talk groups and discuss unit IDs per the letter the submitted. Will be looking at modifying the letter, adding the number of IDs each entity anticipates needing to operate, etc.

Updates from Partners on Current Projects:

Alexandria Project:

Tom Larson stated they are awaiting the study results and busy with school starting.

Participation Plans:

Andy Terry explained the spreadsheet for tracking updates, currently has nine signed agreements in place, met with Big Stone, Meeker, and Morrison with draft plans in place, an additional six set up for the next couple of meetings; has a few signed agreements in place which have not been started as they are awaiting for neighboring counties so they can start to work together as a group. Grant County is ready to sign in the near future. This is a three – six month process to complete the plans.

School and Hospitals Assessment Studies:

Mike Mazzitello stated certain schools and hospitals were originally contracted for the study as a separate study and survey from the regional study. Anticipate to having a formal meeting with a select group of schools and hospitals with an October 1st timeline. We have some issues with the VA Hospital. Scope of work for hospital and school studies are presented in the packet, Chair Myers stated he does not anticipate much to change from the original scope.

Sherburne/Wright Update:

Mike stated Sherburne is conducting propagation testing on the Sherburne side of the subnet, once accepted and Wright County is complete, it will then be combined into one report. By the end of 2009 they anticipate having all of the infrastructure in place, currently have tower contracts in place, installing shelters, fleet mapping; and code plug development should be completed in the next week or so.

General Discussion and New Business:

Regional Talk Groups (A-TACS, P-TACS, and F-TACS):

This is a continuation from last month's discussion for a recommendation to RRB. Jay stated if C is the preferred standard, we would then need to change the standard. Tom Justin stated currently the F-SOA's can not be utilized in mobiles, in reference to regional interoperability the F-SOA's are not allowed in mobiles and are a concern. Jay asked if we needed a regional encrypted talk group(s) in this interop zone? Tom stated the goal for regional talkgroup 1-12 was designed to be non-encrypted as it was intended for all users and not all users have encryption.

General Discussion and New Business: (Continued)

Regional Talk Groups (A-TACS, P-TACS, and F-TACS): (Continued)

Chair Myers stated we have two issues – one is if the FSOA's should be allowed in mobiles, then the standard would need to be changed. and probably should be changed. The other is should the SOA's be allowed in the regional zone. Tom stated if the SOA was in a mobile at the top of a hill or has an antenna in place, it would then go a greater distance. Jay stated some Fire Departments in Metro use the SOA's as a fixed station. *Ace moved that the FSOA's is something we should address and propose Column D to the RRB for approval, this would include changing the HEX codes where needed* Jay clarified it is a dispatch console change system wide although in the radio it would be different. *Troy Langlie second the motion.* Tim stated in the Metro they used the old name and then tagged it with the new name following it. Tom stated in the consoles it could state both names and in the future we could take out the old name. Pat suggested putting the new name first so individuals get use to seeing the name. Jay suggested putting together a transitional plan for the dispatchers. *Upon a vote, motion carried.*

Troy Langlie moved, Judy Diehl second, to take the new proposed naming convention with as many allowable characters available to be put into the dispatch consoles, upon a vote motion carried.

Chair Myers suggested changing standards 3.15, 3.16, and 3.17 to bring forward to the RRB for approval and then have available for the November OTC. *Mark Englund moved, Jay Sikkink second the motion, upon a vote motion carried.*

Jay suggested asking to expand on the LE_TACS at the same time. Tom stated the LEISU's are not in the uniform law enforcement radios although there are times they assist the Drug Task Force. This raises question as to what talk group is utilized for the task forces and the uniform officers. Tom suggested perhaps the OTC or state subcommittees have discussion on this topic.

Chair Myers stated the RRB should draft a letter and request the OTC, Interop, or one of the subcommittees start discussion on this issue and respond. Jay suggested at the next meeting we discuss what a regional encrypted zone may look like and discuss, the region will then move forward following Chair Myers suggestion.

F-SOA in Mobiles:

See above.

Control Station Provided by the PSIC Grant:

Chair Myers stated control stations were previously approved for each EOC and PSAP's; upon further clarification it was determined that entities already on the system would not qualify for them. Ron stated they have \$1.75 million for interoperability and is designed for phase 3, 4, 5, and 6 and not 1 and 2. This is only a concern for Wright, Sherburne, Kandiyohi and Stearns Counties in this region. The State is unsure if there is sufficient funding to put in three control stations in every county as originally anticipated to meet the interoperability needs. Chair Myers stated there is concern for the entities who will be installing the control stations ahead of their county implementation. Ron stated if a county needs an antenna to reach the tower, they have funded it in the past and would hope to be able to do the same. They are anticipating approximately \$7,500 per radio and would allow about \$9,000 to install an antenna if needed and to complete the programming.

General Discussion and New Business: (Continued)

Control Station Provided by the PSIC Grant: (Continued)

Chair Myers stated this is a gateway until agencies migrate to ARMER and can they use the control stations as they build out in the future. Mike Kahl stated some of the hardware equipment would be reusable although there is some that will not. Ron stated they were originally anticipated for interoperability only and apologized for any misunderstanding. Chair Myers stated entities developed their plans around expecting the control stations and now are told they will not be receiving them, causes issues. Ron stated the original plan was not changed; perhaps it was not presented properly.

Mark asked if there is a standard agreement and Ron stated it is finalized and available to be handed out. There will be training provided as well for the agencies receiving control stations. Ron stated entities can respond to the letter and he would be interested in the costs associated with it. He stated perhaps a portion of this grant could be allocated to the region to allow them to distribute as necessary. Chair Myers stated the consensus of the group is that Ron asks Scott Wiggins if allocating a portion of the grant to the region for distribution would be possible.

Upcoming Grants:

Discussion on the requirements of upcoming grants.

Other:

Jay stated on September 21st Stearns County and the City of St. Cloud will put their systems into site trunking so all entities within their county can plan accordingly. Andy Terry made some suggestions for future testing.

Andy was contracted to look at the MN State Highway Patrol centers to see if it would be feasible to reduce the number; they are looking at a plan for one in Metro, one in Northern and one in the Southern Minnesota. It has been adopted for their dispatch function, looking at Rochester and Duluth as hosting the regional, Marshall, Mankato, Rochester, and St. Cloud would be consolidated into one southern center, the five in the northern area would be consolidated into Duluth.

Kandiyohi has completed their acceptance in the field and console tests, mid October cut over date to go live to the ARMER system.

Old Business:

Background Matrix:

Chair Myers explained the original intent of the background standard.

Owners and Operators:

Next meeting is Thursday, October 1st, 10:00 a.m. at the Douglas County Public Works Building.

Upcoming Meeting, Set Date, and Location:

October:

Next meeting will be Friday, October 9th in Stearns County. Jay moved, second by Rick Fielder, upon a vote motion carried.

November:

November meeting will be Friday, November 20th in Stevens County. Bob Cuchna moved, second by Judy Diehl to have the meeting in Stevens County for November. Upon a vote motion carried.

Adjournment:

Tom Egan moved, Randy Celander second to adjourn at 1:55 p.m., upon a vote motion carried.

Minutes recorded by Debbie Backes.