

**CENTRAL MINNESOTA REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Friday, May 16, 2008 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Browerville Community Center, Todd County, MN

**Members/Alternates Present:**

1. Micah Myers – Vice-Chair – Designee of St. Cloud
2. Troy Heck – Alternate Benton County
3. John Haukos – Designee Big Stone County
4. Tom Egan – Designee Douglas County  
Michael Henrion – Alternate Douglas County
5. Troy Langlie – Designee Grant County  
Greg Lillemon – Alternate Grant County
6. Stacey “Ace” Bonnema – Alternate Kandiyohi County
7. Jeff Norlin – Alternate Meeker County
8. Jeff Jelinski – Alternate Morrison County
9. Mark Englund – Designee Otter Tail County  
Judy Siggerud – Alternate Otter Tail County
10. Dave Pikal – Alternate Sherburne County
11. Jay Sikkink – Alternate Stearns County
12. Judy Diehl – Designee Stevens County
13. Scott Mattison – Designee Swift County
14. Bob Cuchna – Alternate Todd County
15. Trevor Wright – Designee Traverse County
16. Dawn Mund – Alternate Wilkin County

**Members/Alternates Absent:**

17. Mille Lacs County
18. Pope County
19. Wadena County
20. Wright County

**Guests Present:**

Tom Justin, Central MN Interop Coordinator  
Tim Lee, Mn/DOT

**Meeting was called to order by Micah Myers at 10:15 a.m.**

Chair Myers welcomes members and guests, introductions conducted. 16 out of the 20 members in attendance with a quorum present. Micah welcomed commissioners to the meeting and thanked them for their time to attend.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Chair Myers asks for a motion to approve RAC minutes of April 25, 2008. *A motion by Tom Egan, Judy Diehl second, upon a vote motion carries.*

## **Communications:**

### Alexandria Technical College:

Chair Myers stated that Alexandria Technical College is adding a PSAP training facility on to their program; they are looking at the possibility of using it as a training center for dispatchers to work on items such as patching. They will be on the agenda at the next meeting to discuss their proposal.

### State Patrol:

Chair Myers stated Richard Neitz from the State Patrol is requesting to become a member of the RAC they would not be a member of the RRB. Jay stated they have a purpose and stated it would make sense to have State patrol as a member. Jay Sikkink moved, Bob Cuchna second to approve State Patrol as a RAC member. Upon a vote, motion carries.

### Allina:

Jay Sikkink stated Allina is requesting permission to utilize the system when they come into the area. Jay stated it will affect Wright and Sherburne County more. Dave Pikal moved to accept Allina to utilize the system, Judy Diehl second, upon a vote, motion carries.

### Regional CASM Representative:

Chair Myers stated the region needs to have a designee for maintaining the Central Region's information through the CASM tool, training will be provided. Jay Sikkink asked if this is something the RIC (Regional Interop Coordinator) could do. Tom Justin stated at this time he can not, and it is not called for in the RIC position and the time commitment is too much to be added to his position. Micah Myers stated the State is looking at providing monies to each radio board to offset operational cost, – it is a three-year funding mechanism being phased out. Chair Myers stated the budget includes for administration, and it is something we could contract out. We would need to name someone and the person could be changed at a later date. He asked if anyone was willing to sit in the training and report back to the region.

Tom Justin stated the state was looking for a CASM representative from each RAC. He can talk to Tom Johnson to see if he feels it should be in the RIC position if the state is willing to support. Tom Egan asked if this was something a couple of people could do? Chair Myers stated he can provide a letter to Tom Johnson and ask for the time commitment. He suggested today we designate an interim, Mark England suggested it be tabled due to not knowing what the requirement is. Chair Myers stated it will be tabled until we have more details, Jay asked we should find out what the possible funding would be to see if that would be feasible. Scott Mattison asked if this is something through the Homeland Security Regions, Chair Myers stated he thought it was also intended to assist with the TIC Plan.

Tom Justin stated one thing the state would be looking for from the CASM Rep is for them to gather the information for the whole region and it would include utilizing information in the plan. Tim Lee stated the Metro hired a consultant and thought it was Mark Keefer and suggested asking the Metro how long it took, he stated it is no small task. Jay stated perhaps it could be broke down as one person to gather and a second person to input the data. Chair Myers stated the biggest piece is the frontloading of the information, he stated we are setting up the Central MN Regional website that is not available to the public, if you make changes to the equipment or data, changes would be done there. He stated they are looking for a name today, although the consensus is we are not ready to make that decision today. Mark England moved to table the appointment, second Tom Egan. Upon a vote, motion carried.

**Reports:**

SRB/ARMER update, MnDPS/MnDOT:

SRB – PISC Grant Money Update:

Tim Lee stated the state is continuing to move forward, from last meeting. Chair Myers stated the state has not met since our last meeting. Central MN moved zone controller this week.

OTC Update:

Jay stated they were suppose to meet this week, although did not, once the plan is complete they will then work on the aviation piece as the next item to be discussed and are working on fine-tuning that.

Jay stated the majority of the discussion is the management of the state-wide standards. It came up three months ago such as standard 3.2h came through – on the old system versus the new, the numbering system is not consistent throughout the state. The consensus is the numbering system should be consistent throughout each region. He stated such as 4.10 the states is 4.10, Central MN is 4.12, northern is 4.13, etc. Suggestion is to have the standard consistent, yet regions can make it more appropriate for them. Once a new standard is implemented, there will be a central point for them to go to for the new standard numbering.

Tim Lee stated the standard on the OTC agenda was the Systech standard, it is mainly for the state's staff as all technicians enter a site, they need to announce when they are working and going into a site. It was suggested that the sys-tech talk group be encrypted with a tentative date of August 1<sup>st</sup>. They would this in place before the National Republican Convention. Jay stated they are changing the key data.

Interop:

Chair Myers stated this is two parts – grant funding and interoperable piece. The interop had a conference call on Wednesday, looking at a distribution model for PSIC money, put a formulate together on how the regions would get funding from this, also has the layout for subscribers, there will be discussion at a meeting on Tuesday and should be completed by the next RAC meeting. Was some questions on the disbursement model and he will have an outcome at the next RAC. Jay stated they are a little disappointed with the disbursement model, there is \$4.5 million for subscribers and \$1.5 would be for the metro and all other regions would get \$3.00 yet most of the Metro already has their radios. Chair Myers stated the primary goals are to get the first-responders onto the system, the concern is how to get the agencies onto the system who do not have funding to purchase radios. Jay stated with that formula Central MN has close to \$800,000 allocated to us. Chair Myers stated there is a time constraint as to when the money needs to be spent, agencies need to have a commitment they are coming onto the system and have a 20% match, if they can't make that commitment, the funding will be distributed elsewhere.

Jay stated they met this morning, it is a big task to determine what resources area available, looking at how they communicate from VHF to 800, etc. they will meet again after Memorial Day, looking at resources are available, the operational costs, etc. He has additional agencies helping now.

Chair Myers stated discussion was to use IP background and link to VHF to see if that will work, more information will follow.

## **Reports: (Continued)**

### **CMNRRB:**

Chair Myers stated they met two weeks ago, one of the main topics of discussion was the MOU, there were some minor language adjustments, and the RRB approved the state to manage five of the nine investments of the plan. Another item was the reimbursements to appointees to the User Committee. The User Committee is made up of a lot of volunteers who are representing on their own time, it came down to each county is responsible for making that decision on their policy.

Preliminary talks on budget, putting together a financial statement, Chair Myers next meeting is the budget items and any plans ready to go will be approved, the next meeting is June 18<sup>th</sup> at City Hall. Jay Sikkink asked if sometime this summer we can see how much money may be available for outsourcing the CASM fee. Chair Myers stated there is a separate line item for professional services in the amount of \$5,000.

### **User Committee:**

User Committee Chair McIntyre stated they met Tuesday night in Morris, discussed the patching issues, soft and hard patching, interop utilizing different mechanisms, discussed user fees. Discussion also on funding sources, grants, small agencies have concern on how to obtain funds to come onto the system. Had general discussion of having a regional RCC for hospitals and ambulances when coming onto the system. Next meeting is in Swift County. Reminded everyone about the surveys that are coming out, letting them know they will be utilizing the same surveys through the PSAP. Chair Myers asked everyone to submit the information to Debbie (last page of packet).

### **Regional RAC Committees:**

Chair Myers stated we have one additional RRB formulated, two remaining, they are moving fast and looking to this region as a model and for assistance. Northern part of the State is constituted, the South is remaining. They should all be formed by the June meeting.

### **BCA Background:**

Chair Myers thanked Mark Englund for all his work on the BCA background forms. He stated he sent the letter out to all of the sheriffs. He stated the Standard he has written has the City of St. Cloud as the data holder and we should put this information on hold until the CASM representative decision is made. He asked if the forms could be downloaded off of the site, Chair Myers stated yes and he is working with his staff so the form can be a pdf where the information can be entered into it, hopefully a draft model will be complete by the next RAC meeting. Currently there is a contact list on the website for the members and alternates, gathering of information on the background checks, etc. and can be determined by your user name log-in. Mark stated the letter sent to the sheriff's will need a minor change. Mark stated we should have two-four law enforcement officers for the background checks, Dan Hartog, Mark Englund, Tom Egan, and Tom Larson. Mark stated under management number six will need to change pending the CASM representative, the approved/denied form was revised so the sheriff or designee can authorize this; he made some language change to assist the committee in making decisions. Tom Justin asked on the naming of the forms, suggestion was to use Central MN Radio Board as the titles, Mark will make the changes and forward for submission. Judy Diehl moved, Troy Langlie second. Upon the following discussion, a vote, motion carries.

Richard suggested perhaps the committee may want put a stipulation saying if you no longer qualify, they are responsible to contact the RRB and perhaps extend the length to something longer than annually. Any charges or convictions to the above questions, they are responsible to contact the RRB. Scott Mattison suggested we stick to a year so we can keep standards high, although Swift Counties works with fewer technicians than some other counties. Mark stated they could make an exception for law enforcement employees as they are already monitored on a regular basis. Scott stated he liked the idea of contacting the vendors on an annual basis to see if any information has changed.

## **Reports: (Continued)**

### **BCA Background: (Continued)**

Mark asked if we would want to do background checks on the current PSAP employees or do we want to grandfather them in, background checks were conducted when they were hired. Chair Myers stated the City has a policy that Granite needs to provide background checks already. The details here will be referred to the application and standards committee to make the above discussed recommendations.

### **Interoperability – CASM Tool Demonstration (Tom Justin):**

The demonstration is not possible due to the internet not working.

Community Asset Survey Mapping Tool – Tom Justin stated a homeowner in California, works for the Military and Navy designed the CASM tool to track the resources that are available via agencies by clicking within the software. I.E. you could click on a county, it would tell you the contact for the PSAP, what frequency they use, the equipment they have available, etc. It basically is garbage in, garbage out i.e. the information needs to be updated continually and be accurately inputted. Tom stated you can put a checkmark i.e. in Dakota County – draw a line to Big Stone County and it will tell you want data these two agencies have in common i.e. local or state talk groups, etc. He stated Tom Johnson was being tasked with the CASM Coordinator, he and John Dooley are in control of entering data in and out. One disadvantage this region has is we did not collect all of the data when we completed the studies. The RFP's for the other regions – one of the requirements is the gathering of the CASM data. The state's commitment is John Dooley would be responsible keeping the data current once it is all entered. Tom stated once everyone was on ARMER, the tool may not be necessary as it would be understood that everyone would have consistent talk groups programmed into the radios, although not everyone is going on to the 800 at this time. The data would have to be updated on a regular basis. This will be demonstrated at the next RAC meeting.

Tom attended the 12-hour training and at the time only South Dakota Counties could click onto another South Dakota County; therefore for the Minnesota Counties who needed to communicate with the Dakota's and Canada were not able to. Currently the owners of the software are changing it to be allowed for this option. Tom stated it is designed to be utilized mainly for the incident command centers, his suggestion is this reaches further than just fire and law enforcement to utilize it. Scott Mattison asked if there is currently data on the system, Tom stated Metro has extensive data in the system, the State Duty Officer would have access to this data, there is not any data entered outside the 7-county Metro area. Scott asked if the data will be secured, Tom stated yes the public would not have access to it, in order to get a password to get into the system; you would need to attend a six-hour training and can only access and not enter data. Chair Myers stated this was the topic of conversation at the SRB as to what data is public and secured data. Tom stated the data is actually owned by the Department of Defense and not states. He stated each member could have someone in their agency attend the training so they can have access to the data for viewing only.

Scott stated vendors are advertising they have devices to scan 800 MHz data. Tim Lee stated the scanners do follow the talk groups the only way to avoid this is to go encrypted. Tom stated the frequencies are public data.

## **Regional Radio Board:**

### **Budget Planning:**

Chair Myers stated last year a budget was put together without knowing the outcome we are going into this year carrying over half of the budget. The state is looking at putting funds into the region for a TIC Plan and CASM position. He stated insurance was obtained for approximately 1/5 than anticipated, and should be comparable. Administration is we are 1/3-1/2 of resources expended and about half of the way through the year. There will be some reductions in the budget from last year and he will have the financial statement out in the next week or so. Jay stated he felt comfortable keeping the budget the same and possibly could provide for some outsourcing in the future if we need to and perhaps shift some of the insurance amount to professional services. Chair Myers stated an item that came up in the User Committee is grant writing. He stated we do have funds available for grant writing in the budget, do we want to add additional funds for grant writing, funds for training and administrative? He asked if anyone has issue in making the payments, it was weighted on population, radio, counts, etc. Scott Mattison felt we should anticipate having a line item for legal for an attorney who specializes on communications law. *Bob Cuchna moved, Jay Sikkink second to maintain the same budget and reallocate funds. Upon a vote, motion carried.*

Chair Myers stated with the joint powers funds can be carried over for surplus, he stated the funds from the state will have to be earmarked for certain items.

## **Updates from Partners on Current Projects:**

### **Wright and Sherburne Counties Planning Project Update:**

Dave Pikal stated the process is going well, Mike Mazz stated Wright and Sherburne County are moving forward, asked if they can bring the plan back on the 20<sup>th</sup> for re-approval. Chair Myers stated there is an approval process to be followed. Sherburne and Wright went to the OTC although there were some frequency concerns and asked if it needed to come back for re-approval. Mike stated it was a paging concern such as timeline and frequencies they will use, they were also looking at updating their mobiles and pagers and timelines. Tim Lee stated the microwave paths have changed when it was addressed at the OTC; they need it brought back when finalized. Mike stated it should be brought back for approval. Chair Myers stated the RAC needs to make recommendations to the RRB, his concern is if the plan goes to the OTC and is denied, does the plan need to go back to the RAC and then the RRB to be approved again. Tim stated it depends on what was in question and suggested Geo-Comm talks to Joe Glaucom for clarification. Need a motion upon the clarification of the approval process from the OTC if it needs to come back go the committees again. Jeff Jelinski moved, Troy Heck second, upon a vote, motion carries.

Wright and Sherburne are deep in the RNC plans, whatever is in place of the RNC happening, they have communications inside the building, looking at getting console technology updated, console will be connected to the network so communication will be available for transport for the anticipated traffic to the jail. Infrastructure is tagged for when Enfield and Zimmerman is done, Buffalo will be later, Tim Lee clarified they have the land and the bid is written and will be out for RFP soon. Mike stated there was some tower site juggling, looking at using an existing County tower which will minimize costs. Mike stated items like this are the dangling items in the county plans. Overall for Wright and Sherburne, it will be sometime 1<sup>st</sup> quarter when the radio system will be up, in Buffalo possibly spring. He stated Wright County has a proposal out for a new console and are not pressured at this time to be on the 800 until next spring. Great River Energy Plant in Elk River was one of the sites although nothing will happen at this point due to the falcons; therefore they may use a water tower in Elk River.

## **Updates from Partners on Current Projects:**

### Kandiyohi, Meeker and Todd Planning Project Update:

Meeker and Todd plans have been completed and delivered, Meeker is talking technology and getting the budget in place as is Todd County. In Todd, at least one of the ambulances were uncomfortable as they were not included in the study, this will be updated. Meeker and Todd plans were completed a long time ago and things have changed, Geo-Comm is done with the plans although need to make some changes so Motorola can get the project quoted.

### Douglas, Grant, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Wadena and Wilkin:

Pope and Stevens County plans are in their hands, met this week for updates, and changes. Tom Larson plans on bringing the report to their committee as a whole to move forward,

Todd County is in the same situation and Bob stated they will meet with their County Board in approximately in July, although Geo-Comm needs to include the missing ambulance services before they move forward.

### Benton County:

Mike stated they met with Benton dispatchers and provided 101 training and their plan will be complete shortly.

### Regional Plan Update:

Mike stated most of the reports are complete and the regional plan will be updated.

Chair Myers stated at last RAC there was a lot of dissatisfaction from the counties and the studies were not accurate and the need to be accurate and updated accordingly. Mark Englund stated yesterday Otter Tail spent three hours with Lex and Mike, feel the corrections have been made and are moving forward. Mike stated the same is true with Judy with Stevens, she stated they went through some of the plan due to time available. Mike stated the same thing for Pope County, went through all of it, he thanked Dave Sisser and Brandon Communications as they helped clarify a lot of the information that was sketching in the data collection process. Looking at more detail with agencies that are crossing county borders to ensure they are not included in multiple county plans. Chair Myers asked if Geo-Comm can clarify the location of the tower sites and where they will go, Mike stated some counties such as Pope that has a white spot that is eager to work with the state to find a tower site. He stated some of the counties also have to finalize tower sites such as in Starbuck. Tim Lee stated they are trying to stay within the search-eye area to finalize the towers for the 95% county-by-county coverage.

### District 742 Planning Efforts:

N/A

Lex stated he has been working with Otter Tail, Wadena, Morrison, and Grant. He stated they have the most work to do with Otter Tail, working to get the data accurately put into the plans.

Wadena – not present

Stevens – Judy Diehl Chair Myers asked where they are at with the study and if they are comfortable where their study is at. Judy stated she just received the first draft and has not had a chance to review it.

Wilkin – Dawn they met with Lex and had corrections for talk groups and channels and waiting for corrections. Chair Myers asked if they were comfortable with the communication, she stated they met just once.

### **Updates from Partners on Current Projects: (Continued)**

Grant – Troy stated they met last week and made significant progress and need to work out some technical things. He should have the plan in his hands next week.

Morrison – Jeff stated he met with Lex several times and made numerous changes to the plan, and would like to look at in-building coverage. He anticipates the plan in two weeks.

Douglas – Tom Egan stated he met with Rick last week and things went well, made numerous changes to the draft and Rick is in the process of final draft, GeoComm should have the 30<sup>th</sup> of May and he should receive it soon after. They made very good progress with it.

Traverse – waiting to set up a kick off date, Todd Pieper stated there was a change of project managers at Traverse, working on getting Trevor to do a conference call and explain the project to date, the next steps, etc.

Swift and Big Stone – Chair Myers stated they have multiple studies. John Haukos stated Rey Freeman was out on the 13<sup>th</sup> and went through a draft, with minimal changes as they were already submitted to Geo-Comm. They are now working up a plan to submit to the County Board. The consolidated plan, not much to update, Rey was going to see if the information should be included in the PSAP. Scott Mattison asked for clarification of what is the anticipation of the plan. He stated Swift County has concerns with the cost with the upcoming fiscal year, Scott stated the PSAP study has been dated as now with some changes such as merging and a different solution of tying the three PSAPS together, it will affect a current plan and will affect the regional plan.

Todd Pieper stated the next step for the plans is to follow the approval plan such as the approval by the County Plan, the RAC, the RRB, the OTC, and finally the SRB. The state is eager to complete the three-county PSAP study and move forward.

Ace stated the Kandi study is done, moving ahead, Micah stated if the County board approved the plan, then it needs to be approved by the RAC and if Rey can present it at the next RRB. Todd stated the participation plan document needs to be finalized. Chair Myers clarified he wants to be sure the plan is accurate and complete prior to approval and the RRB will be meeting again in July.

#### District 742 planning:

Mike M. stated Jamie is conducting some tests on his own and Geo-Comm did not hear back. Mike will contact Jamie on Monday and follow up on the status.

#### Grant Money for Studies:

Chair Myers asked if anyone received reimbursements from Stearns County, he will check on the timetable for the issuance. The County Auditor is checking into Otter Tail's submittals. Chair Myers stated the process is the request comes to Micah and he verifies, it goes to the county, and they submit the request to the state. He stated if you have not received anything by June 7<sup>th</sup> from the county, contact Micah.

#### Items of Interest:

Mike M. stated there has been a lot of talk from outstate agencies about interference from the air pack alarm equipment that fire responders use and is hearing a lot of outstate agencies. He wasn't sure if was because when they come on site, they switch to a scene of action channel. Tim Lee stated MnDOT did a lot of work to change the settings on background noise and made corrections to minimize this. Mike stated he heard that by careful setting of the radios has made an improvement. Chair Myers stated there were articles about power equipment was making some distortion also. He stated vendors, fire agencies and the makers of the scuba packs are all looking into this issue.

## **Updates from Partners on Current Projects: (Continued)**

### Items of Interest: (Continued)

Jay stated at the User Committee, users wanted a map of the tower sites, copies are available and asked RAC members to share with their users. Orange is part of the phase III and is to be implemented by the end of next year.

Tim Lee stated the flow chart for the approval process is the contract to be on the ARMER system needs to be in place, there is a contracting process that needs to be in place and will be discussed in the near future.

## **General Discussion and New Business:**

### Standard 4.10 Follow-up Discussion:

Chair Myers stated he would like to recommend to the group, he would like to see the standard in tack and utilize an appendix to move forward to using NGO's to work on the system. He stated there is a title change and the management piece needs clarification, he feels it is ready to move forward to the RRB for approval. Make these changes in the appendix and move forward to the RRB approval, Mark Englund, moved, Ace second, upon a vote motion carried.

### Plan Approval Process:

See above.

### User Committee (Compensation for Time):

See above.

### PSAP Contact Information:

See above.

### Other Items of Interest:

Scott Mattison asked Bob and Judy if they are aware of a study by the State regarding PSAPS. Judy stated not yet, he stated they will be coming out, Scott Wiggins stated through the sheriff's departments will be a survey asking how they currently utilize the 911 fees. Chair Myers asked if this is in reference to the certification of the 911 fees and what the funds can be utilized for. Scott stated he thought it was as some counties utilize the funds less discretionary than others. Scott will forward the study to Debbie to put on the website.

## **Upcoming Meeting, Set Date, and Location:**

### June:

Next meeting will be Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in Wadena County.

### July:

July meeting will be in Traverse County on July 11<sup>th</sup> moved Bob, second Jeff Jelinski, upon that we will be going alphabetically.

*Troy Langlie moved, second Troy Heck to adjourn at 1:40 p.m.*

Minutes recorded by Debbie Backes, Recording Secretary.