

**Northeast Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 20, 2010
10:00 a.m., McGregor Community Center**

Proceedings:

Chair Marcus Bruning called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Attendees who signed in or who were recognized are as follows:

1. Bill Bernhjelm, DPS/ARMER
2. Brian Belich, Carlton County Sheriff's Office
3. Brian Snyder, DSC Communications
4. Bruce Grotberg, Koochiching County Sheriff's Office
5. Chris Lentz, Motorola
6. Cynthia Suess, Minnesota State Patrol
7. Dewayne Kvande, Roger's Two-Way Radio
8. Dewey Johnson, St. Louis County 911
9. Erik Jankila, Hibbing Fire Department
10. Harry Algyer, Shetak Consulting
11. Jarry Keppers, Duluth Fire Department
12. Jerry Jensen, International Falls EMS
13. Jim Wiinanen, Cook County Emergency Management
14. John Bowen, Crow Wing County Emergency Management
15. John Drahota, Aitkin County Sheriff's Office
16. Karla White, Aitkin County Sheriff's Office
17. Kevin Throop, U.S. Forest Service
18. Kerry Swenson, Cass County Sheriff's Office
19. Larry Cuffe, City of Virginia
20. Marcus Bruning, St. Louis County Sheriff's Office
21. Mark Smith, DSC Communications
22. Mark Stansberry, North Memorial Ambulance
23. Mike Fink, Motorola
24. Monte Fronk, Mille Lacs Reservation/ DPS/EM
25. Nell Hoey, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
26. Nick Schatz, Mn/DOT
27. Pat Coughlin, Minnesota DNR
28. Pat Lee, Arrowhead EMS
29. Pat Medure, Itasca County Sheriff's Office
30. Patrice Nelson, Minnesota State Patrol/Brainerd District
31. Rey Freeman, GeoComm
32. Robert Jensen, Kanabec Sheriff's Office
33. Scott Heide, Crow Wing County
34. Steve Ovick, Pine County Sheriff's Office
35. Steve VanKekerix, Lake County Sheriff's Office
36. Tim Lee, Mn/DOT Electronic Communications
37. Tom Hannon, Governance Consultant
38. Tony Pogorels, Hibbing Fire Department

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions are made by those in attendance.

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II. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

MOTION made by Monte Fronk to accept last month's minutes as submitted. Dewey Johnson seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

III. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Training Advisory Group

The T.A.G. has been suspended for the time being.

B. Policy (Pat Medure)

Pat states that there is nothing to report at this time.

C. Technical and Operations (Steve Ovick)

Steve states that there is nothing to report.

D. SRB Operations and Technical (Bruce Hegrenes)

Bruce is absent. There is no report.

E. SRB Interop Standing Committee (Scott Camps)

Scott is absent and sent information with Marcus. SRB will be sending a letter to all FCC license holders, reminding them of the upcoming FCC narrowbanding requirement. The SRB will be establishing a 60-day transition period, beginning October 1, 2012, through December 31, 2012, for converting the primary VHF mutual aid channels in Minnesota. Wideband operations will cease on 12-31-12.

F. Regional CASM (Karla White)

Karla states there is nothing new to report.

G. NERAC Interoperability Committee (Scott Camps/Tim Thomas)

Both Tim and Scott are absent. No report.

H. User Committee (Monte Fronk/Erik Jankila)

Erik states that they are plugging along and should have some policy for the RAC to approve next month. They are thinking they may try some evening meetings and alternate day with evenings every other month. The March meeting will be in the evening. Meetings are always the first Wednesday of the month. Attendance runs around 20+.

IV. Old Business

A. PSAP Consolidation

Pat Medure states there is nothing new from the last time. Marcus adds that a number of counties (St. Louis, Pine, Carlton, Lake, Cook, Koochiching) put out RFPs. They have approximately three weeks to respond.

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B. 2008 SHSP Grant (Pat Medure)

Pat reports that there was a request for 61 portables and there is funding for around 48 portables. Pat states that they have been ordered, they have not arrived, and when they do arrive, Scott Camps and Pat will get together to plan allocation.

C. ARMER Update (Bill Bernhjelm)

- RIC meeting was yesterday in St. Paul. Discussion included NECP goals and milestones and there may be things to discuss at the User Committee level regarding interop channels.
- Number of meetings regarding interop with Manitoba and Ontario. The next meeting with Ontario will be at 8:00 a.m. on February 3, 2010, in International Falls. Manitoba meeting is tomorrow with the NW Region in Roseau. There is a push with border issues due to a federal grant that is coming. The grant is for border interop projects and includes \$15 million for the northern border and \$15 million for the southern border. Bill asks the border counties to think of ways to participate in a border interop project.
- The guidance for the 2010 SHSP grant will be coming out next week. There is \$5.3 million dedicated to interop communications. Bill states that the State's perspective is that it will be largely directed toward ARMER participation because of the demand for subscriber units. Bill adds that there are 65 counties that have now committed to coming onto the ARMER system or are to the participation plan level. Bill states that this will be a competitive grant.
- Save the date: April 28-30, 2010, there will be a statewide interop conference. Tom Hannon adds more insight and states that it will be held somewhere in central Minnesota. Some concepts hoped for by the group putting it together are: Workshops in the 2-4 hour range; high-powered speakers; break-out sessions; NECP, national goals and what that means in Minnesota, regions, and local governments; vendors; high tech items; complex and more basic points to meet everyone's needs. Registration fee: \$125.00; however, there will be a discount of \$75.00 for those individuals sponsored by their RACs, RRBs, or committees. So the actual cost would be \$50.00 and registration would be eligible for grant monies for training. They hope to build the program so POST and EMS credits would be available for some sessions.
- Bill Bernhjelm stated that there are two Gateway Workshops planned. Nell sent the flyer info out earlier. It is a 3 Module presentation designed for dispatchers, supervisors, etc. Bill states that it is not specifically related to mobile gateways, but to console patches and that type of equipment. See flyers for further details. One meeting is in Rochester on February 25, 2010; one meeting is at the Mn/DOT building in St. Cloud on February 23, 2010. Bill asks interested parties to sign up in advance.
- Bill states that the T.A.G. got rolling and participation faded and, in some cases, the mission got lost in the weeds. They are looking at how to develop and deliver training for the system and looking at education

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through a higher educational institution. Some of the training may be electronic (DVD, online) and then hands-on.

D. Website (Nell Hoey)

Nothing new to report.

E. 2010 Grants (Marcus Bruning)

Marcus states that Minnesota has been allocated to receive \$10,789,000.00 in 2010, State Homeland Security Program grant funds. Looks like Minnesota HSEM is likely to make about half of that available for interop communications projects. Marcus reports that last year, DECN received \$2.6 million for local participation plans, ARMER infrastructure enhancements. The NE HSEM Region II requested \$937,000.00 and received \$515,000.00. The proposal was to fund the PSAP link to the nearest ARMER tower (approximate cost per PSAP is \$130,000). Marcus reports that Scott Camps believes that the Region II reps should motion to request the remainder of that funding (\$450,000) to complete the PSAP to ARMER link for the remaining counties in Region II. Pat Medure asks if it would get done by the State if we did not motion to do it. Rey Freeman adds that it is the responsibility of the county to establish the link from the PSAP to the ARMER site. Rey adds that some of the counties have already received a grant for the border communications initiative (Koochiching, St. Louis, Lake, and Cook). Marcus adds that is true and the idea is to fund the rest of the entities.

MOTION made by Pat Medure for the remaining counties in Region II to request the remainder of the funding (\$450,000.00) to complete the PSAP to ARMER link. Jim Wiinanen seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

F. 2009 IECGP Grant (Marcus)

Interoperability Emergency Communications Grant Program. Minnesota is allocated to receive \$645,000.00 in 2009 IECGP funds. The NEMNRRB submitted an application for \$226,000.00 to fund ARMER participation plans for the seven counties in the NE Region that have not completed those plans to date. The recommendation from the SRB Interoperability Committee Grant Workshop was to fund the NEMNRRB in the amount of \$175,000.00 for ARMER participation plan funding. The next step is approval by the SRB Operations and Technical Committee, the SRB Finance Committee, the SRB Interoperability Committee, and then the SRB itself. Yesterday it was passed in the Interoperability Committee.

G. PSIC (Pat Medure)

Pat states that Itasca County is paying the invoices right away and then he asks for reimbursement from the State. Marcus asks for an update at the next meeting regarding what dollars are left and what has been spent to the Owners and Operators Committee for approval at their first meeting in January. Erik Jankila seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

* There was a departure from the agenda here where Marcus asked Tom Hannon to explain the order of the Owners and Operators Committee at 1:00 today. Tom

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stated that he forwarded a draft agenda to the leadership; the meeting will be convened; there will be a presentation explaining the JPA and the O&O's responsibility within the structure; bylaws will be covered; Bill Bernhjelm will do a current ARMER status update; the convener will oversee the election of the chairperson; the chairperson will assume his/her duties; there will be an election for vice-chair; RAC chair will present current issues of the NE Region, current grant initiatives, etc. New business will be discussed, including meeting dates, times, and future agendas. Time: Estimated 1 to 1.5 hours to do this.

- * Addition to agenda is that Pat Coughlin wants to clarify that the DNR supports the 800 MHz system and does use it; however, they are **NOT** going to abandon the VHF system they now use. Pat states that there is some misunderstanding circulating regarding this matter. He adds that they are **NOT** going totally to the 800 ARMER system. He states that they have been using it for the last five years, starting in Cambridge and now Itasca County. He states he and his bosses have been getting many phone calls regarding this matter. He states that they have narrowbanded all their frequencies to all the fire departments and the only one they left wideband until 2013 is DNR TAC 1.

V. New Business

A. Tribal Issues (Marcus Bruning)

Marcus read a letter from Terry O'Connor, director of Leech Lake EMS and First Responders, requesting a letter from the RAC stating that the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe is part of the NE RAC. Marcus states that Terry is working on a grant to acquire some 800 MHz radios. Marcus states that this is for the DECN grant. Marcus reminds the group who voting members are and that the tribes are included in being a partner but not voting members. Marcus asks the group if he could write a letter explaining what "part of the RAC" means--that they have a voice and are included, but not voting members. Regarding the letter of support to seek funding through the DECN grant, Marcus states that this is a bad idea because many people in the room applied for the same grant, and he feels he does not want to write a letter of support regarding a grant that we are competing for. Monte adds that they should know they have a voice and states that there are so many people involved in trying to figure out things. He adds that they do not come to meetings. Pat Medure adds that Chief Garr Pemberton is the representative on the RAC. Pat states that he received a letter from a lady who was putting a DECN grant together, which we applied for as well. Pat declined to do the letter because of this reason. Pat believes that because the RRB has to sign off on the application of the grant, the tribes are not a member of the RRB and perhaps they are seeking support out of confusion and are approaching the RAC. Bruce Grotberg asks if the NW RAC is receiving letters as well. Monte suggests writing a letter stating that they are a part of the RAC and invited to attend meetings and to not get too political. Pat Medure states that the P.D. used to be members of the NW RAC and chose to come to the NE because of the areas they work with. Letters were also received in Hubbard and Beltrami for letters of support for the grant. Bruce Grotberg points out that if they are a member of our

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RAC, they should not be saying they are a member of another area, unless there are two different entities and they are not on the same page. He states that they may need clarification. Marcus asks if a letter should be sent stating that the area they operate in is in Cass and Itasca, and Cass and Itasca represent their interests regarding interoperability (NE RAC). Pat asks Marcus to mention Chief Pemberton as the representative to the RAC in his letter. The group agrees that a letter to that effect is good to send.

B. Presentation of ARMER Participation Plans for Aitkin, Cass, and Crow Wing Counties (Rey Freeman/GeoComm)

- Rey does a power point presentation regarding the ARMER Participation plans for Aitkin, Cass, and Crow Wing Counties. Plans were sent to all yesterday. Rey walked through some of the details of the process including, but not limited to, history of the areas, list of agencies using the system, number of mobiles and portables, channels needed; ARMER standards, budget/funding; project in general. Rey states that the participation plans are the first step in the process; the plan is then submitted to the RAC and RRB; and ultimately it goes before the SRB. Rey states that on behalf of the three counties, they are asking for approval of the three plans. Rey will do a presentation to the RRB next week and the State Radio OTC on February 9, 2010. Rey asks who should make the official request for approval. Marcus states it would be the entities asking for the RAC's support and approval to move the plans on to the RRB.

MOTION by Karla White (Aitkin County) requesting RAC approval to move the Aitkin County Participation Plan to the RRB for approval. Pat Medure seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

MOTION by Kerry Swenson (Cass County) requesting RAC approval to move the Cass County Participation Plan to the RRB for approval. Erik Jankila seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

MOTION by John Bowen (Crow Wing County) requesting RAC approval to move the Crow Wing County Participation Plan to the RRB for approval. Steve Ovick seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

C. 2009 Homeland Security Grant (St. Louis Co. Participation Plan)

Marcus states that St. Louis County is looking for a motion to be able to apply to the State for funding for a participation plan. Pat Medure makes that motion. Eric Jankila seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

D. Regional TIC Plan Update (Harry Algyers)

Harry stated that he sent out a request for additional information to four counties and heard from two. He states that the week of February 4, he will be making site visits to Lake, Cook, St. Louis, and Leech Lake Tribal agencies. Harry asks if members got the TIC plan template, as there is language that needs to be reviewed in the first 20 pages as it relates to the powers of the RRB and decisions that they can make on everyone's behalf. He will send the template to Nell to forward to

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everyone so they can review it. Harry will be attending a CASM meeting. Part of the discussion will be who can look at the plan and who can update or adjust it. Harry feels every EOC and PSAP should be able to look at it, but entries are a whole different discussion. No one offers any thoughts or ideas when he asks regarding this topic.

E. Canadian Interop Meetings (Marcus Bruning)

Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2010, 10:00 a.m. at Koochiching Law Enforcement Center in International Falls. St. Louis County will be sending a couple reps to the meeting.

*** Additional Items (Marcus Bruning and Tom Hannon)**

Marcus then introduces Larry Cuffe, who will be sitting on the RRB in place of Jeff Damm for the City of Virginia. He will also be involved in the Owners and Operators Committee.

Marcus goes through the list of entities and if they will have representation at the O&O Committee meeting. The Owners and Operators meeting follows this meeting and will commence at 1:00 p.m.

Tom Hannon later reminds the group that there will be the leadership group meeting on Monday, January 25, 2010, in St. Cloud, at the Mn/DOT offices. The Metro Region will be represented at this meeting. John Anderson, a recognized expert from Mn/DOT, will be the featured presenter talking about system administration.

Bill Bernhjelm adds that there is an issue coming down the line regarding naming of the regional tactical channels as it relates to programming. Bill will bring the details of what was decided at the Interop Committee meeting, he will bring it forward. Pat Medure stated that he believes we followed the Central Region's plan.

VI. Future Meetings

- February 17, 2010, 10:00 a.m., St. Louis County EOC in Pike Lake
- March 17, 2010, 10:00 a.m., Pine County LEC. **It was later realized that this date would conflict with the Governor's Conference.**

MOTION is made by Monte Front to move the March meeting to March 24, 2010, 10:00 a.m., in Pine County. Kerry Swenson seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries.

VII. Adjourn

A motion is made by Pat Lee to adjourn. Bruce Grotberg seconds the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carries. The meeting adjourns around 11:50 a.m.