

**Joint Meeting of  
Northeast Regional Users Committee  
&  
Northeast Regional Owners & Operators Committee  
Fond du Lac Community College  
September 5, 2012 10:00 A.M.**

1.0 Meeting called to order by Dewey Johnson

2.0 Roll Call. Present were:

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mark Stansberry | Dewey Johnson   |
| Steve Olson     | Dave Gilmore    |
| Judy Sivertson  | Mike Keyport    |
| John Hyde       | Mark Smith      |
| Tom Fread       | B J Kohlstedt   |
| Bruce Hegrenes  | Bill Bernhjelm  |
| Nate Gens       | Mike Fink       |
| Jayme Carlson   | Bryan Bushey    |
| Mark Lallak     | Paul Provinzino |
| Kerry Swenson   | Dylan Bridges   |
| Doug Rotta      | Mike Sullivan   |
| Dan Sathre      |                 |

3.0 Adopt minutes from 8/1/2012. Dan Sathre said under 8.0 in the 8/1/2012 minutes, Lake County, Snowbank should be referred to as Lake One. Bruce Hegrenes said in those minutes, St Louis County, Cloquet Water Tank Tower should be removed and replaced with Orphanage. With those corrections, Bruce moved to accept the minutes and Steve seconded.

4.1 Bill Bernhjelm – System is over 80% constructed now, unsure how many came on last month. The SRB is looking to fund Status Board phase 2 which means a vendor has been selected and that should be moving forward.

Steve Olson – At the SRB, the Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Agency requested radios and IDs. Per Bill, it was approved.

Mayo Clinic request was tabled this month per Bruce.

Central MN logger – went with Varint. Per Bruce, that was approved.

Sanford Air Ambulance request. Per Bruce, Sanford is now based out of Sioux Falls SD so that's where their dispatching will be from. They're proposing a base station in Sioux Falls. At this point they had questions on the control station and they have not yet been to the NW region. Their closest helicopter will be based in Bemidji. They're going to be equipped with ARMER and VHF radios and are going through Train the Trainer now. Bill is working with them at this time.

MN State University in Mankato has requested a participation plan. Per Bruce, they're planning on about ten portables at this time. Their goal is to eventually have their security and maintenance first.

Bruce – Change Management is currently looking at the S Tacs and the L Tacs. The process is going much slower than anticipated. One reason is the Interop Committee at the last two meetings has not had a quorum. Dan asked if items discussed at the Interop Committee eventually funnel down to the Owners & Operators and Users Committees. Per Bill, the information is sent back to the regions via the representation of each region on the Interop Committee. Bruce is the NE Region representative. Decisions made at the Interop Committee do not require approval from the RRB.

Bill – The SRB voted not to do the software upgrade. Motorola came back with a different proposal and there is a great deal of interest in doing this upgrade which gives the opportunity to expand the number of gateways available at each zone in the system. Currently in the Central and SE they are bumping up against that limit so they'll either have to pull back some gateways or if the upgrade goes through, the additional gateways will solve the problem. Jackie is going to the RAC meeting in Duluth next week. She and Tim Lee are visiting each of the regions this month to explain the different options, the SUA which is the system upgrade and then the SMA which is the maintenance agreement. Maintenance costs will be based on number of console positions. Channel enhancements or site additions will probably add some additional costs. That doesn't cover the system update.

Bill – Upgrades will be coming down the line. 7.15, 16 & 17 are probably already on the books for Motorola. At 7.15, that will be another major decision because when that happens, all the current Gold Elite consoles will have to be updated to the 7500 consoles.

Mike, Motorola – Right now the state has ARMER scheduled for the 7.13 upgrade in May 2013. This offer would be for 2013, 2014 and 2015, and it would include the 7.15 upgrade around 2015-2016. We gave the state a 10-year SUA price that was requested by Jackie and others. It's a pretty flat price until 2022.

Bill had some MNFOG books if anyone wanted them.

Pine County is looking for dispatch procedures from those who have already migrated to the 7500.

Best Practices Guide folks are down to final draft on EM and Public Health and Public Works. Law Enforcement and Dispatch are already done and waiting for final approval.

Bill – Jackie went back through all the expiring grants and spent the funds on 2500 portables. The plan is to distribute them to agencies needing them, looking at agencies with a need based on their migration and need based on failed applications for fire grants, thinks there are about 200 or 250 radios statewide that will be distributed.

Bill – In the NW, some of the counties who have been saying they're fine with the narrow band aren't so fine now. Hubbard is still on the migration path. Polk County has been given a grant for a participation plan and has hired Geocom. Their intention is to migrate as soon as possible, at least the sheriff's office. A couple of the other counties are looking at doing the law portion. The grant money is out there for a participation plan. Bill said he's been in contact with the new Koochiching County Emergency Management director and has sent him the material for a participation plan.

Regarding the NW possible dependence on VHF Overlay for interop with Manitoba, Bill said it won't be on the VHF side, it will be through the Moto Bridge, and it will be ARMER to Fleetnet connection. Fleetnet is a UHF trunking system, Motorola product, analog. Through the Moto Bridge, we will be able to tie a control station on their system that's tied to a talk group and a control station on our system that's tied to a talk group and be able to patch those two systems together. Field operations should be able to talk seamlessly back

and forth. We're doing the same thing with Ontario but waiting on a tower at International Falls.

Tom Hannon's funding was through a grant that is now expiring. He will not be as available as in the past but does have some projects that are still funded.

Bill said they now have a grants person in place, Ernie Matilla, who came from the State Patrol.

Interop conference has reserved two, possibly three days in April.

MCIT issue in SE – MCIT made some adjustments to the insurance policy in the SE that the SE wasn't happy with and they're having discussion about dropping MCIT as the insurance provider.

4.2 Owners & Operators Chair D. Johnson – nothing new.

4.3 User Chair D. Sathre – nothing new.

4.4.d. VHF Overlay. Bill – routers in at 90 of the 109 sites. MNDOT says first priority is ARMER construction and will do the overlay as they can.

4.4.e. EMS. Bruce – Hospitals have had a couple meetings, they're attending the RAC meetings. There are proposed naming conventions for those in St Louis and Carlton. Mike Sullivan with St Mary's said they're getting ready to go, getting their consolette radios programmed.

Mark S – Naming for the region is completed, most hospitals are on the county participation plan. NW hospital group has done their own participation plan.

Steve O – St Louis, Carlton, Lake & Cook counties are involved in purchasing a regional logger. If other counties are interested in joining, talk to Marcus Bruning. Per Bruce, grant money has been applied. So far, with four agencies, it is coming to about \$20,000 per agency.

Mark and Kerry noted that Itasca and Cass purchased a logger a year ago.

5.0 Steve O and Judy attended the NIFOG review. The training went through the book from front to back and also covered the MNFOG.

6.0 Old Business

Still waiting on the Fond du Lac regarding use of the ITV system.

BJ – was someone going to look back on the standards to see where we are as far as updated standards that was to be posted on the regional website. Judy and Dewey volunteered to look through the old minutes for standards that have been changed or added for the NE.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Bruce introduced a proposed standard 3.19.0 for NE Regional Encrypted Interoperability Talk Groups. This would be in addition to the current talk groups. We

currently have NE Call and NE Tac 2 through 12. Currently in the system we have four more talk groups that were originally done by Itasca County when they came on that we could re-designate as these encrypted talk groups. The requirement in here is to have them strapped meaning if you go to that talk group, it is encrypted. They can be patched to other law enforcement encrypted talk groups only. There was discussion on naming the talk group. Dan expressed concern that different task force groups not tie up the regional talk group on a day-to-day basis. The final talk group name was determined to be NE LENC 1-4. Mark made a motion to accept the standard with the name change, Jayme seconded, carried.

7.2 Console Resource Feature – Bill said this is the ability of an ARMER radio console to go in and turn off the repeater on the regional or statewide talk groups. Turning off the repeater basically makes it a one-way conversation between a field radio and the dispatch center, and nobody else hears the conversation, which is a bad thing. This is a console programming issue and recommendation is to not program that feature into your console.

## 8.0 Jurisdictional Updates

Crow Wing – Mark said he thinks will be going on the latter part of September.

Cass – Kerry said things are going well with some training issues involving mostly state agencies like where to find talk groups on the radios, etc. Still waiting for their far north tower site.

Kanabec – per Bill, they're on.

Carlton – Dylan said they're installing dispatch consoles and will start training tomorrow. They'll be doing a slow migration starting with portables and then work into the mobiles.

Itasca – Mark said they had a problem with one of the air conditioners at one tower building, they were getting some warning signs through the state's monitoring system. They discovered the temperature had gone up to 140 degrees and was actually the thermostat. Different things are being noticed after five to six years, routine checks are necessary.

Mark said at the National APCO Conference he participated in the Interop round table discussion. They said 46% of the dispatch centers have standards they have to follow, breaking that down means that 23 states in this country have standards set for dispatchers. Minnesota has a pretty complex radio system for people to know and we do not have standards for dispatchers. Mark feels there has to be some push, maybe by the NE Region for communications. Our dispatchers are in charge of those radios, they're the ones the officers are going to come to and say, "how do I do this". If they're not trained properly, we're going to have a mess. If it comes down to an emergency situation and they don't know how to do it, we're in trouble. Mark feels that as a NE Region, we start looking at training our dispatchers, training our officers, have a quarterly training, and that the radio is more dangerous than a hand gun and if you don't know how to use it properly, you're in trouble. We can all sit here and say a 2 ½ hour training is good enough every couple years, but we all know the turnover rate with our ambulances and fire departments, especially the

part time ones. 23 states in this country have dispatchers who have to go through certain courses and follow up. Dispatchers are essential people. If they're not trained properly, you'll get into a mess. This is the first line for public safety. Calls come in to dispatch and dispatchers have to do their job and be held accountable, and the sad part is dispatchers are held accountable and there are no standards.

Cook – Judy said three consolettes are installed, and they're running into a lot of coverage issues for officers. They still need some towers installed.

Lake – Dan said they have a couple fire departments with equipment sitting in a garage waiting for install. Steve said they need to be setting up the STR trailer once in a while for practice. Steve also said there are emails sent on the different outages in the state. Towers get taken down for maintenance or other things.

Kerry said he's surprised at how much fog affects the connectivity. Bruce said Duluth isn't affected as much because they have towers closer together.

St Louis – Bruce said they've been working at Carlton and helping them get ready to transition. St Louis's consoles are ready to be re-installed for the second time. Dewey has a robust training schedule. They're going to train 146 agencies in a four month period and are starting on the 20<sup>th</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> fire agency will be transitioned on to the system on 20<sup>th</sup>. Patches are in place, one at the main site in Virginia, fire and EMS, and one in Duluth. Duluth PD 1 and 2 are patched right now and one is waiting for Duluth Fire. They're looking at a rolling start. For the first time ever, all of St Louis County will be on the same fleet map with the same naming conventions, same operations, and the same procedures.

Grand Portage – Mike said not enough radios there to go full 800 yet. GP Forestry plans to narrow band.

Meetings will be upstairs in Room 221 the next few months.

Judy made a motion to adjourn, Steve seconded.