

Alaska Interoperable Communications Committee
AKICC

June 17, 2009

Next Meeting: July 15, 2009
Location: AST Headquarters, Anchorage
9:30-12:00

AST Headquarters

Major Leveque-Co-Chair
Ted Smith, DHSS
Peter Murphy, ALMR User's Council
John Dickens, ASET
Jim Larsen, ARRL/ARES
Tom Smayda, Mat-Su Borough
Carl Hereford, Mat-Su Borough
Del Smith, ALMR
Jim King, DHS&EM

At Large Telephonic

Jim Kohler, DOA
Kathryn Pyne, DOF
Jeff Tucker, North Star VFD
Rusty Lassell, Rural LEPC
Michael Pascall, Rural LEPC

Call to Order: 0930

Roll Call and Introductions

Acceptance of Minutes from April 15, 2009

Motion made to approve minutes from April 15, 2009 and seconded. Passed without objection.

Guest Speaker: Jim King, Grants Administrator III, DHS&EM

Jim spoke about the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) reviews that every state had to go through for PSIC projects. When the PSIC grant

was first rolled out by the Department of Commerce, NEPA guidelines were not addressed. As a result, in May of 2009, contractors were assigned to each state in order to review every PSIC project for NEPA compliance. Jim was required to submit all local jurisdiction equipment projects first and later all state managed projects. All of the projects were then reviewed and it is Jim's understanding that in the next few weeks Alaska should get approval for all equipment purchases, even for those that were previously identified for additional NEPA paperwork. The other state managed programs should be approved sometime in July 2009. That means that no additional steps will be needed and all projects can be started without further environmental complications.

Rusty Lasell asked a question about the Denali Borough's project that was identified as coming under NEPA compliance. Jim thought that there should be a blanket approval for all the Denali Borough's projects since paperwork was already submitted for their jurisdiction.

IECGP 09 Grant

Jim also spoke about the 2009 IECGP grant and the local applications that will be submitted to AKICC committee members for review. An effort was made to make the application as simple as possible and DHS&EM names were identified on the application for technical assistance pertaining to; the application process, equipment and NIMSCAST. Jim added that he received many calls about the grant but only "unserved and under-served" jurisdictions would be funded, ruling out anyone who received Homeland Security grants in the past. So far a number of applications have been received and the deadline was extended until June 26, 2009. There is only \$114,000.00 allocated in total for equipment but everyone is being encouraged to request what they need so that those projects that are not funded can be reconsidered for reallocation or other grant funding. Jim stated that some of the people who were calling also were asking about satellite phones. Doug Schoenwald of the Division of Administrative Services has satellite phones he is distributing to jurisdictions at no cost. It was determined that Doug would be asked to attend the next meeting as a guest speaker to talk about this program.

Pete Murphy asked a question about repeaters for this grant. Jim thought they probably would not be allowed because repeaters would be considered "new construction" which was not allowed for this grant. Rusty then spoke about a project that he was working on that may require a new repeater. Jim

thought that for any new projects for items like repeaters, the entire NEPA process would need to be initiated again. He recommended that paperwork for any new projects be started as soon as possible.

Jim also said that he was part of a Homeland Security Grant working group for environmental impact issues. He stated that there will be a proposed central receiving center set up for projects involving NEPA issues whereby all paperwork would be reviewed and appropriate approvals would be granted within six weeks.

Excess Radio Acquisition/Caching

Kathy Day asked the committee for feedback on an issue that came up with one jurisdiction's PSIC grant funding. She asked the committee to help determine what should be done in cases where jurisdictions completed their particular equipment purchases and had money left over. Should they be allowed to use the money to purchase additional equipment that may be additional, cached or used as spares, or should they be required to reallocate the money? There was some debate from various committee members about this issue from a local, state and grant management perspective.

There was also the discussion about what the process should be and how involved will the committee get in such issues. If the committee is to be authorizing expenditures, what would be their role?

Major Leveque thought maybe there should be a scripted format for such issues, and Ted Smith added it needed to be timely for situations when there are upcoming deadlines. It was determined that Kathy be in charge of scripting a process to bring forward at the next meeting. There should also be a way to look at alternatives as to where the money should go if it's reallocated and have a timeline for such decisions. The question of spares vs. caches would also need to be addressed.

COML Training

Kathy brought up the subject of COML training. Alaska, through DHS&EM, has a class scheduled for July 21, 22 and 23, 2009 in Anchorage and there have been some problems filling up the class. There also was an email sent out on June 10, 2009 from OEC recruiting for students to attend the COML Train the Trainer classes that are being offered in various parts of the country in July and August of 2009. The COML training in general was discussed and it was unclear to some members what benefit the COML position would serve the state. Some members thought the position only

pertained to fire. Tom Smayda spoke about how there should be a COML position in the EOC but added that the state didn't need a lot of COMLS. It was determined that Alaska was about one year out from sending folks to a train the trainer class. The first goal would be to fill the classes we were offering. We would also have to figure out how to target audiences and figure determine the best use of the position. Kathy stated she would get the committee more information about the COML position and program in general for a future meeting

Homeland Security Grant Program

Kathy informed the committee that DHS&EM was in the process of going through the grant applications they received for the HSGP. The DHS&EM grants staff were in the process of going through all the applications and culling all the communications equipment requests. For the July 2009 AKICC meeting the committee members would have a chance to review the requests. The AKICC committee could make recommendations but there would be a separate external review committee that would actually make the grant allocations.

SICTEP

Kathy gave the committee members an update on the SICTEP. The contract was awarded to 5 Star and a kickoff meeting was already conducted. Committee members were given handouts from that meeting.

SWIC Meeting in San Diego

Kathy updated the committee on the upcoming SWIC meeting in San Diego that will be on July 24, 25 and 26, 2009. The OEC was offering invitational travel to Kathy the SWIC as well as two other people. Major Leveque was attending as co-chair of the AKICC. Dean Brown from Forestry would also be attending but DMVA was trying to find a legislator to also attend (a preference of OEC). Senator Dyson was going to attend but had a scheduling conflict, and at the time of this writing it is unclear who will attend.

New Business

Kathy spoke briefly about the Cross-Border Workshop she attended in Niagara, New York in May of 2009. At that meeting there was a good deal of information given pertaining to the cooperation between Washington state and Vancouver, B.C. for the upcoming 2010 Olympics. In the spirit of that meeting and after being in contact with emergency managers in the

Yukon Territory, some stated she would like some of the of the PSIC funding to be used for a conference and/or exercise involving Alaska and the Yukon Territory. The event would probably be held in the spring of 2010 and currently the event is in the very early planning stage.

Jim Larsen wanted to encourage committee members to get the word out to their jurisdictions to use HAM radio operators for emergency situations. The week of June 22, 2009 is annual American Amateur Relay League (AARL) Week and there will be several events throughout Alaska primarily in Anchorage, Mat-Su and on the Kenai. He appreciates being on the AKICC and believes it's a good start towards including amateur radio in emergency communications.

Major Leveque spoke about the recent RECCWG meeting he attended in Washington State in May of 2009. He felt it was positive and there were a lot of good things discussed at the meeting. He wanted to commend Kathy for networking with the other representatives from other states as they all had good things to say about her.

Major Leveque also wanted to put 911 issues on as a future agenda item because there are issues percolating over cell phone usage and 911. He thought it was something the committee should address especially in terms of where signals go, who receives them and to look at 911 issues in a broader sense. He also questioned whether the topic of 911 belongs in the SCIP since it is a living document. He felt this will become a larger issue as GCI continues to expand into the interior of Alaska. He felt we need to know where towers are as the technology evolves with tower triangulation. He also added at the state level DPA and DOA are working on these issues. Kathy brought up that APCO Alaska also recognizes this problem and is working on legislation for these issues.

Tom Smayda wanted to share a document he came across a "Fire Service Guide to Incident Command". He thought that it had a lot of good information. Kathy also commented on K.T. Pyne's publication put out for Forestry. Kathy said she would get digital copies and pass them to committee members.

Tom also wanted to introduce Carl Hereford to the committee members. Carl was hired on as the new Communications and Technology Manager.

He will be working with the new 911 system and handling all communications issues in the Mat-Su Borough.

Major Leveque then spoke about an exercise he observed at the Mat-Su Hospital and the communications problems that occurred. He encouraged others to include communications in exercise events.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15.