

ALMR INSIDER

Volume 1, Issue 1

July 15, 2007

Coming in Future Issues:

- ✓ Progress in Fairbanks
- ✓ Service Release Notes
- ✓ 2012 Countdown Clock
- ✓ Trends in Technology

ALMR User Council Annual Meeting

September 18 - 19, 2007

Anchorage Sheraton

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Welcome | 2 |
| Governance | 2 |
| Community Outreach | 2 |
| The State's 2007 Roadmap | 3 |
| Funding Update | 3 |
| Municipality of Anchorage | 3 |
| Transportable Deployment | 4 |

Introducing the ALMR Team...

The idea for an Alaska land mobile radio (LMR) system had its origins in discussions that began in 1995. Everyone agreed that a system providing interoperable communications using disparate radios and infrastructure was desirable. The need was emphasized by the Big Lake fire and further underscored by the events of 9/11. Most LMR programs are partnerships between the state agencies and local municipalities. ALMR takes that concept a step further, including the Department of Defense as a partner. A special waiver by the FCC was required to allow DOD to share the System spectrum.

The Operations Management Office (OMO), headed by Del Smith handles the day-to-day operations of the System. Casey Borg leads the System Management Office (SMO) which is responsible for maintenance and customer services.

The State of Alaska, a key partner in this effort, is now headed by a relative newcomer, Jim Kohler. Jim is the Program Manager for Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) and manages the State's portion of ALMR with the help of the ETS staff. Tim Woodall leads the Department of Defense Project Team

Trygve Erickson, Director of Wireless Communica-

The ALMR Help Desk is the single point of contact for ALMR Operations Management and Maintenance services. The Help Desk provides customers with problem, issue and complaint resolution. Services include account set up and update, radio checks, lost or stolen radio services,

and general troubleshooting. Regular Business Hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

After Hours (includes Federal Holidays): Call the Help Desk and follow the prompts to notify Motorola. An on-call technician will



A helo drops ALMR Batteries on Saddle Mountain near Juneau

tions for the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) represents MOA at ALMR planning meetings. MOA is preparing a radio system upgrade in the near future.

...And the Help Desk

be notified. For issues that do not require immediate assistance, leave a message. You will be contacted the next business day.

Help Desk In Anchorage:
334-2567

Toll Free within Alaska:
888-334-2567

E-mail: almr-helpdesk@inuitservices.com



Del Smith
ALMR Operations
Manager

Welcome to the *ALMR Insider*

Hi, my name is Del Smith. I am the Operations Manager for the Alaska Land Mobile Radio System. We will publish this newsletter on a quarterly basis and may occasionally publish special editions to ensure ALMR users are kept informed about important issues related to ALMR.

Our goal is to provide useful information about the many issues that are

unique to an IP-based, P25-compliant, VHF radio system shared by first responder agencies.

The newsletter will be distributed by e-mail and will be available on the ALMR website (under construction).

We welcome your comments and suggestions for future newsletter content. Send your suggestions to:

Help Desk In Anchorage:
334-2567

Toll Free within Alaska:
888-334-2567

E-mail: almr-helpdesk@inuitservices.com,

FACTOID
72 ALMR sites
completed
(as of 6/19/07)

FACTOID

Average
voice call
duration:
10.75
Seconds
(two-way)

Governance: ALMR User Council

The ALMR User Council (UC) provides direction to the Operations Manager and staff. There are twelve User Council members representing each of the four major stakeholders in the partnership: the Department of Defense, the State of Alaska, local municipalities and other federal agencies. The UC is governed by a Charter that was approved by

the ALMR Executive Council. The UC elects three leadership positions annually. The current Chair is Major Matt Leveque of the Alaska State Troopers. The Vice Chair is Brad Johnson, Deputy Chief for the Fairbanks Police Department. The Secretary position is currently unfilled.

The User Council meets

the first Wednesday of the month at 1:30 at the NLECTC offices (6400 A Street in Anchorage). More information is available at http://www.ak-prepared.com/almr/user_council.htm

Information about the ALMR Executive Council will be highlighted in the next issue of the *ALMR Insider*.

Community Outreach Report



On June 13, 2007, staff from the ALMR Operations Management Office (OMO) and System Management Office (SMO) visited Glennallen in the first of several planned visits with local emergency responders and agency employees. The purpose of the visit was to provide updated information regarding ALMR status and System information. Brochures describing the various makes and models of radios (subscriber units)

and a glossary containing ALMR/trunked radio system definitions and acronyms were provided and new user requirements were reviewed and discussed.

Del Smith and Casey Borg answered questions and the OMO/SMO staff distributed questionnaires. The questionnaires, once completed, will document the current snapshot of an agency's communications assets, as well as projected

equipment needs.

If any agencies/organizations are interested in a questionnaire, a presentation by OMO/SMO, or a new user information packet, please contact the ALMR Office.

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Funding Update: "Where's the Money?"

First, an update. Many Alaska jurisdictions will apply for the 2007 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP). Funds will be used for planning, equipment, training, and other activities that build and sustain the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) goals. Awards will be announced in September. To view information on the grant programs visit www.dhs.gov/xopnbiz/grants, or the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management web site www.ak-prepared.com

Looking for available funding? To find out if you are eligible for federal grant opportunities, visit www.grants.gov, a government-wide system used by Federal agencies for posting grant announcements and online grant submissions. FEMA oversees the distribution of these grants. See more information on these and other grants at www.fema.gov.

Submitted by Michelle Heun, DHS&EM
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FACTOID
12,160
active
subscribers
are now on
the ALMR
System



The State's 2007 Roadmap

The State of Alaska Department of Administration, Enterprise Technology Services Division recently welcomed Jim Kohler as the new Program Manager for ALMR/SATS.

Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) is currently working on power solutions for its remote sites where commercial power is not available along the highway. In the future, the solution will be roadside power.

ETS developed a preliminary design using new technology for automation that includes high efficiency solar panels. The four ALMR sites affected by this new design include Byers Creek and Honolulu on the Parks Highway, Tsina (near Valdez) on the Richardson Highway and Independent Ridge (near Gerstle River) on the Alaska Highway. The design is being tested at

Byers Creek and success there will lead to the completion of the ALMR build out along these highways.

Coverage along the Glenn Highway is complete. All sites on the Kenai Peninsula are now operational.

Other planned work in 2007 includes microwave upgrades from Palmer to Glennallen, Kodiak Island site upgrades, five backbone sites instrumental to



ALMR connectivity from Homer to Kodiak, and the Southeast "Marine Highway" sites at Haines, Skagway, Juneau Courthouse and Ketchikan.

Submitted by
ETS Director,
Mike Callahan

Municipality of Anchorage (MOA): AWARN (Anchorage Wide Area Radio Network)

The goal of MOA's AWARN project is to develop a single radio system that provides increased coverage, better clarity and complete interoperability for Anchorage first responders and municipal agencies. Per Federal Communications Commission mandate, Anchorage Police are required to abandon their current frequencies by 2009. The Police and Fire radio systems are old, difficult to maintain and near the end of their lifecycles. Police and Fire Departments currently use two different radio systems and cannot talk to each other during daily, or

extraordinary, operations.

Tentative Timeline

- 2006 – Equipment purchases
- 2007 – Equipment installation
- 2008 – AFD transitions to AWARN
- 2009 – APD and all other municipal agencies transition to AARN
- 2009 – FCC eliminate APD frequencies
- 2010 – Old systems are taken off line

For more information, contact Trygve Erickson at 907 343-7910



Heather Handyside, MOA
Director of Homeland Security

Transportable Deployment Support in North Pole

The ALMR Operations Management Office deployed the Transportable North (TAN) to North Pole Fire Department on June 25, 2007 to conduct an Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E).

The System Management Office continues to monitor the system for busies and the call volume, and is working with the users to identify the impacts in the area.

The transportable system was developed to:

- ✓ Augment available coverage
- ✓ Add resource capacity
- ✓ Replace an existing site
- ✓ Provide coverage in an area that currently does not have coverage.

The results of the evaluation will be presented at a future User Council meeting.



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FACTOID

**Average daily voice calls
(system wide) 31,641**

**Average daily busies
(system wide) 88 (0.278%)**

**Alaska Land Mobile Radio
Operations Management Office
5900 E. Tudor Road, Suite 121
Anchorage, AK 99507-1245**

