

RNUG Meeting Minutes 10/26/06

President Ken Runde opened the meeting at 9:35 briefly explaining how Dubuque County's search for an affordable communication system lead to the RACOM network.

THE FUTURE OF VOICE AND DATA COMMUNICATIONS:

ISIRS:

Les Fish of ISIRS, gave a presentation in regard to the Iowa State Patrol's needs for a new communication system. ISP currently has a VHF system that works well for mobile coverage, but lacks data capabilities and portable coverage is sparse.

The state needs a system with state-wide coverage that includes several features (ie: P-25 compliance, GPS, GIS, CAD, AVL, voice and data capabilities). Currently ISP has 270 cars are equipped with computers.

A task force was formed in 2004 and the recommendations of the committee were approved by LEATAC on 10/26/05. The recommendations included forming a new board to research the system needed for a state-of-the-art, state-wide communication system. DPS and Iowa DOT would jointly run the day to day operation of the Board. The board will consist of 15 members (2 police chiefs, 2 fire chiefs, 2 sheriff, 1 DOC, 1 DNR, 2 Iowa Communication, 1 HS/EMO, 1 DPH, 1 at-large and the 2 chairs from DPS and Iowa DOT).

Les stated there are many challenges ahead. The first segment will be the selection of a consultant by the state to investigate the needs of each county and put together a plan. The goal is have this completed in 6 months. The Iowa National Guard stated they will not be changing their system. They believe they have a good FM band radio system.

The Board needs to stay focused on their task as the current radio system will not be supported in a number of years.

Cyren Call

Jay Paull, Cyren Call, talked about their endeavor to have 30MHz of spectrum in the 700 MHz band allocated for public safety purposes. Cyren Call has filed a proposal with the FCC. The licenses would be held by a Public Safety Broadband Trust that would be formed with the leadership on the national level with input given by the local agencies. The capital to fund the venture would come from the private sector and would provide a public/private network (similar to RACOM's network). The proposed network would have 99% population coverage with 65% terrestrial coverage and satellite overlay. The satellites would be used for redundancy and coverage outside the 99%.

Television is vacating spectrum in the 700 MHz band. FCC mandated that 60 MHz will be auctioned in early 2008. 24 MHz has already been allocated to public safety for early 2009. Cyren Call proposes that 30 MHz more be allocated.

The 700 band is ideally suited because fewer towers will be needed to be constructed, signals penetrate buildings and foliage and you can TX/RX without direct line of site.

Cyren Call's plans would be to build a RACOM-type model blown out nationwide that would also provide broadband data and video applications in addition to interoperable voice. Public Safety would be given a choice to sign up (the system will not be mandated). The Public Safety trust formed would consist of nationwide public safety leadership with local feed back from local agencies. A network manager position would be competitively fulfilled by an organization like a Cyren Call.

What makes this work? Public Safety controls the network and excess capacity will be available for use by commercial operators. Different levels of priority would be established to meet public safety standards and needs. Commercial users would have the lowest level to ensure public safety access during crisis.

The 30 MHz needs federal legislation and FCC approval to be allocated to public safety. A change in federal law needs to be introduced. Cyren Call is currently working with a lobbying firm to get the mandated legislature in place.

A proposal was filed by Cyren Call on 4/27/06. The last 8 months they have been all over the country talking with public safety agencies to get support for the plan. They are currently working with senators to gain their support.

Verizon Wireless is adamantly against the proposal because they have the largest network and they will otherwise be able to purchase most of the 60 MHz spectrum when it goes out to bid.

The National Sheriff's association is backing the plan.

RACOM

Mike Miller, stated the RACOM supports visions for next generation networks that will integrate voice, broadband data and video. He encouraged each participant to file a comment with the FCC to encourage them to award the 30 MHz proposed to public safety.

Mike shared RACOM's vision for voice and data networks and public safety data and video applications.

RACOM Voice

We will continually focus on providing interoperable solutions. RACOM Network users today already experience the most advanced capabilities available – pure analog voice, digital voice, secure voice, Caller-ID, Private Calls, unlimited roaming, etc. New voice technologies don't provide the substantial benefits in cost, ergonomics or functionality that users want. EDACS and P25 both came out about the same time and are "old enough to vote". A Cyren-Call plan offers the best chance of a leap forward in technology and would give current radio investments a shorter life-cycle.

Meanwhile, RACOM is offering the best of what's available today – statewide interoperability with the EDACS protocol and P25 in the same radio. Users can be assured that their investments in radio replacements are secure. The radios work on the complete network today, and if a new P25 state-wide system comes to fruition, they'll work on that too.

The RACOM Network continues to be expanded with many new user-agencies, like EMA's, CAP, ISP SWAT, LEIN/Fusion Centers, IDALS, IDPH, etc.

Ownership models on the Network have also evolved to enable completely owned and partially owned infrastructure providing agencies the level of network control and ownership they desire.

Interoperability is further enhanced by the RACOM Network's unique ability to link to VHF and UHF. to support rural fire and fire ground operations, as well as migrations to the Network.

For agencies that want to build and own a new P25 network, we can uniquely provide the P25 radio system and the radios that not only will work on your new system, but also provide you interoperability and state-wide coverage with all the existing agencies on the RACOM Network.

RACOM Data

RACOM has investigated all technology to give the customers the best choices for the communication needs. Currently, 900MHz has proven to work the best for cost, coverage and speed that can be delivered, and the Alvarion equipment has performed better than all others in RACOM testing. It delivers a LAN-like experience to the car, which enables users to run Email, access the internet, access RMS and submit reports, even to access or deliver video.

A town like Marshalltown can be completely covered with 6 sites. Bettendorf will probably end up being 12 sites. These are very manageable numbers compared to the very large numbers required for Wi-Fi and MESH networks.

MESH Networks are also available, like the one installed in downtown Marshalltown. For extremely large coverage (like counties), RACOM has other technologies available that have lower speed, but greater coverage.

RACOM Applications

Mike introduced some of the other facets of RACOM that are delivering public safety applications more conveniently and at less cost to agencies:

- racomvideo.com – video recording and remote access to live and recorded video
- racomgps.com – vehicle location and tracking with access from any web browser
- racomradioam – seamlessly roam from wireless network to wireless network without intervention by the user
- racomradioip – improved performance of applications across a wireless network
- accesIOWA – convenient and inexpensive mobile data or desktop access to the I.O.W.A system and/or other databases

INFO-COP

Diana Richardson, INFO-COP, gave a brief synopsis of what her company can do to aid in the access of information. The product has been certified with NCIC since 2001, and recently received IOWA certification. Their program works on windows or blackberry systems. The difference they have to offer is that information can be entered once and hit an unlimited number of databases – NCIC, NLETS, DOT/DMV, Multiple RMS, Regional and National Shared Databases, Intelligence Databases, Internet databases, etc. How the information is displayed, and how “hits” are summarized is a big advantage making the application very easy to use.

They, also, offer a scanner that accepts licenses from all states.

REBANDING:

Over 3 hours was allocated to discuss the rebanding issue and what the impact it will have on the RACOM network and all the users. Matthew Plache with Catalano & Plache gave a synopsis for the reason for the rebanding and the role that Nextel/Sprint will play in the process.

Over 4000 licenses will be affected nationwide (12 license holders on the RACOM network). The rebanding will separate cell systems from public safety systems.

Every public safety radio on the RACOM Network will need to be touched during this process (maybe several times each), because all public safety radios are using frequencies being impacted. He also warned against losing radio functionality when the change occurs. We need to push to avoid such loss.

Although only a fraction of the users on the network are license holders, all public safety agencies must be involved. The entire RACOM network is a client, and *all agencies without licenses will fall under a single FRA (Frequency Rebanding Agreement). Therefore, it's important that everyone is involved and everyone develops a cost estimate.*

The attorney fees will be paid directly by Nextel/Sprint.

The TA and Nextel:

Don Brooks with Transition Authority gave an overview of the deadlines that need to be met to get funding for the rebanding. George Webb was introduced as the representative that would service the RACOM network users for Transition Authority. Scott Peabody and George Webb represented Nextel/Sprint.

Voluntary negotiations with Nextel was from 8/1/06 through 11/1/06. Mandatory negotiations begin 11/1 and will expire on 2/1/06. The negotiations cannot begin until a cost figure is established by each agency. An agreement should be signed by the end of January 2007 and reconfiguring should be complete by April 2008.

Per the TA, the following steps should be followed by license holders to reach a signed contract with Nextel/Sprint: determine cost, prepare cost estimate, present cost estimate to Nextel/Sprint, contract

for signature will be written with costs, TA will review. If approved, a contract will be executed. The costs should be broken down into the following categories: describe system, retune, reprogram, replacement. This presentation, which includes recommendations for establishing a cost estimate and Statement of Work (SOW) is available on the RACOM website at <http://www.racom.net/resources.htm> - under the “Interoperability” heading.

All licenses are frozen at this time. Sprint/ Nextel has offered to help agencies with filing for the modified license.

The TA will approve every contract before Sprint/Nextel signs it. The TA is not binding, but makes recommendations to the FCC.

The agency is entitled to a system comparable to the one that exists today. It was suggested that a test for coverage be made with the system in place and then a comparable test be made after the new system is operational.

Seventy percent of Wave 1 is going into mediation for contract.

The meeting ended with discussion of how the member of RNUG should proceed with their part in the rebanding. Matthew Plache was available to answer questions and contracts were presented to those in attendance to consider retaining Matthew Plache as the attorney of record.

RACOM advises that agencies – license holders and all public safety users - work with RACOM to identify these costs, and that correspondence to the TA and Nextel be directed through legal counsel. For starters, all users should identify billing rates for all individuals that will be working on the rebanding – users, managers, legal counsel, etc. Agencies should also be tracking all time spent on rebanding – who, what, when, etc.

Attendee List

Bob Ralph	Aquila
Thomas Holladay	Bettendorf Police Department
Kent Smock	Black Hawk County Sheriff's Department
Tony Crandell	Civil Air Patrol
Jeff White	Des Moines County Sheriff
Ken Runde	Dubuque County Sheriff
Paula Geiseman	Dubuque Police Department
Scott Crabill	Dubuque Police Department
Rob DeFrance	East Moline Fire Department
Victor Moreno	East Moline Police Department
Bill DeVrieze	East Moline Police Department
Mike Dreke	Fort Dodge Correctional Facility
Mike Banwart	Fort Dodge Correctional Facility
Rick Penning	Grundy County Sheriff
Tom Wolthoff	Grundy County Sheriff's Department
Randy Goddard	HLSEM
Mark Shearer	IDALS
Jeffrey W. Gauthier	IDPH

Tom Boeckmann	IDPH / H.A.N. Chief	
Kerry Northway	Intell Bureau - DPS	
Jim Baker	Iowa City Police Dept	
Steve Godwin	Iowa Correctional Institution for Women	
Alan Kakac	Iowa Counter Drug - Aviation	
Chris Doyle	Iowa Counter Drug - Aviation	
Brock Bockenstedt	Iowa National Guard	
Mark Banta	Iowa National Guard / Military Support	
Les Fish	Iowa State Patrol	
Adam Buck	Iowa State Patrol	
Lynn Aswegan	Johnston Police Department	
Todd Wilson	L.E.I.N. Region 2	
Jim Bartlett	L.E.I.N. Region 2	
Phil Fordyce	L.E.I.N. Region 3	
Bill Gaspar	L.E.I.N. Region 5	
Michael E. Brogly	L.E.I.N. Region 6	
Teresa Lang	Marshall - Marshalltown Communication Center	
Kim Elder	Marshall County EMA	
Ted Kamatchus	Marshall County Sheriff	
Jack McAllister	Marshalltown Police Department	
Jerry Williams	MEDIC EMS	
Burke Miller	Microwave Data Systems	
Kasey Regan	MidAmerican Energy Company	
Wayne Rude	MidAmerican Energy Company	
Bob Eastwood	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency	
Lee Hart	Polk County Sheriff Office	
Mary Ann Perkins	Polk County Sheriff Office	
Dennis Conard	Scott County Sheriff	
Gloria Isham	Scott County Sheriff's Department	
Pam Bennett	Scott County Sheriff's Department	
Joe Hammes	Scott County Sheriff's Department	
Jeff Rose	US Army Corps of Engineers-Saylorville Lake	
Brian Giachino	USAR - Task Force One	
Curtis Walser	USAR - Task Force One	
Ned DeBerg	Waterloo Fire Department	
Thomas Jennings	Waterloo Police Chief	
Wendy Drinovsky	Waterloo Police Department	
Len Koehnen	Wireless Telecommunications	
Jay Paull	Cyren Call	***Guest Speaker
Michael Flaherty	Cyren Call	***Guest Speaker
Matthew Plache	Catalano & Plache	***Guest Speaker
Scott Peabody	Nextel	***Guest Speaker
Don Brooks	Transition Authority	***Guest Speaker
Joe Blair	Transition Authority	***Guest Speaker
George Webb	Fleet Talk USA	***Guest Speaker
Diana Richardson	INFO-COP	***Guest Speaker
Bill McLain	RACOM	
Brian Krumm	RACOM	
Carrie Loney	RACOM	
Dave Smith	RACOM	
Debi Estabrook	RACOM	
Duane Vos	RACOM	
Jim Erwin	RACOM	

Karen Hilleman	RACOM
Mary Wertzberger	RACOM
Mike Miller	RACOM
Nick Loney	RACOM
Phil Gould	RACOM
Rick Carlund	RACOM
Ryan Butler	RACOM
Sam Fleege	RACOM
Steve Holmes	RACOM
Terry Brennan	RACOM
Vic Endress	RACOM