



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH

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DAVID R. CAREY
BOROUGH MAYOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gary Knopp, Assembly President
Members of the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

FROM: David R. Carey, Borough Mayor *DR Carey*

DATE: August 25, 2011

SUBJECT: Resolution 2011-093, Standardization of Communication Equipment
Borough-Wide

While working on the narrow-banding project, Chiefs of the respective service areas within the borough brought to my attention that it would be in the best interest of the Kenai Peninsula Borough to standardize all emergency response communication equipment. The narrow-banding project included a comprehensive gathering information about radios used throughout the Kenai Peninsula Borough. The majority of communication equipment used is by Motorola, which has demonstrated its durability, reliability and overall ease of programming and service. The project was on a strict time frame for completion and we had two bidders who could complete the project in the timeframe identified. The lowest bid was awarded to ProComm, Motorola's Alaska authorized representative. ProComm is already a major contributor to the service areas in providing maintenance and advice on communications. It is an excellent fit for the task that was to be accomplished.

In order to fully understand the impacts and needs of the service areas a comprehensive study was conducted in which we identified the licensing across the borough and the equipment that was not narrow-banding capable that needed to be replaced. We were on a very tight schedule to accomplish this in order to adequately use the grant funding that was available from the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Project.

The final components of the project were to purchase radios and equipment from the Western States Contracting Alliance, which is a government-based cooperative purchasing group. In order to get the equipment here and programmed in the time frame identified, the choice for purchase was to buy Motorola communication equipment, as we had an approved vendor that we worked with already, who could provide the speedy radio programming training and

assistance that was need to complete this link with the new licensure requirements by the set deadline.

Standardization at this point in time makes sense in that 95 percent of all communication equipment across the borough is Motorola, and we have a local service provider that currently provides maintenance/programming when there are issues.

All pagers issued to career and on-call personnel are Motorola. The Motorola pager has been the fire industry standard nationwide and with Nikiski Fire Service Area (NFSA), Central Emergency Services (CES), Bear Creek Fire Service Area (BCFSA), Kachemak Emergency Service Area (KESA), and Anchor Point Fire and Emergency Service Area (APFESA) for over a decade.

- All the portable radios and programming software that CES received from the State of Alaska through the ALMR program was Motorola. CES personnel have been trained to program their radios.
- All of the radio hardware and software utilized by 9-1-1 dispatch is Motorola. This has allowed for a seamless interoperability solution for repair and maintenance issues. As an example, the CES dispatch radio used by 9-1-1 became inoperable. We were able to take a base station radio from an out station and have the system fully operational in less than two hours because it was the same manufacturer. This is a critical item for continuity of operations.
- Local service technicians (Soldotna) that can trouble-shoot major radio issues on the same day. Only Motorola has certified technicians on the Kenai Peninsula.
- Soldotna Police Department, Kenai Police Department and Kenai Fire Department have standardized to Motorola. Nikiski Fire has sole-sourced Motorola radio work through its Alaska authorized representative Procomm, as approved by the KPB Assembly, due to its needs with existing equipment.
- We have been able to maintain a spare parts inventory and complete most repairs in-house.
- Radio equipment familiarity for our personnel is a safety issue on the fire ground. Our personnel need to be able to operate their radios in dark or smoky conditions by feel only. Having numerous brands operating at an emergency incident is a safety consideration.

In the FY2012 capital budget CES is adding additional repeater sites, which have been identified as Motorola, for continuity of operations and replacing all vehicle and portable radios that are not narrow-band compliant. The only exception would be Bendix-King hand-held radios. These

are used exclusively by U.S. Forest Service and Alaska State Division of Forestry. We will maintain a cache of these radios to be used on forestry incidents only.

All service area chiefs recognize that the standardization of the manufacturer in no way foregoes the borough's purchasing ordinances that are designed to address the criteria for competitive quotes and bids from manufacturer's authorized vendors.

I respectfully request your approval of this resolution to provide for standardization across the Kenai Peninsula Borough, as it will mean continuity of operations for all service areas in a manner that is consistent and acceptable.