

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Municipalities (AS 37.05.315)****Grant Recipient: Craig****Federal Tax ID: 926000139****Project Title:****Project Type: Equipment and Materials**

Craig - Prince of Wales Emergency Communications

State Funding Requested: \$450,000**House District: 34 / Q**

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

Expand Radio Communications on Prince of Wales Island for Emergency Responders

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$450,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2015 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$450,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

Currently on Prince of Wales Island Emergency Radio Communications is limited to communications within communities or within the area of the Sunnahae Mountain Repeater. This leaves significant roaded areas of Prince of Wales without radio communications during emergencies. This hampers response and endangers the lives of victims and responders. The US Forest Service maintains a system of towers and repeaters on the island that have significant coverage of the entire roaded area and coverage of many areas off of the road system. Current responder equipment is compatible with the USFS repeaters but regular use of the seven repeaters for routine USFS traffic makes effective monitoring by Ketchikan AST dispatch or Craig Police dispatch impossible.

In order to increase coverage a working group has been formed by the Southern Southeast Local Emergency Planning Committee. The working group has proposed an interim (short term) solution and a long term solution. The short term solution can be implemented fairly quickly with little or no capital investment. The long term solution would require capital funding to install equipment on existing repeater sites.

The short term solution would consist of getting permission to use the USFS or AP&T backbone for emergency purposes. Responders would notify the dispatch center from the community or by satellite phone and tell the dispatcher their location or the repeater that they will be in range of. The dispatch center would then tune in to the correct frequency for that repeater and provide dispatch support services for the duration of the incident. This solution can be implemented relatively quickly and at little or no capital cost. This would provide wide coverage to responders and would work with most equipment currently used by response agencies. There would be little or no operations and maintenance costs associated with the short term solution. However, the short term solution would share the existing frequency with the USFS or AP&T employees for the duration of the incident, dispatch centers could not monitor all repeater frequencies 24/7 (which would require the call from the responder) and could only be used for emergencies (would preclude routine law enforcement communication or officer safety checks). There would also be a number of administrative tasks and processes that would have to be completed to allow access.

A longer term solution would be to install equipment on the USFS or AP&T repeater towers and communication shelters that would create a "clear" channel that would only be used by emergency responders. This project would provide funding for installation of this equipment and upgrades to existing dispatch center and responder radio equipment. This equipment would work with most existing radio equipment and would provide island wide coverage. More importantly, this system would allow 24/7 monitoring of the clear channel by Ketchikan AST and/or Craig Police dispatch centers. This system would also allow other emergency responder use (i.e. law enforcement communications or officer safety checks).

This project would allow for the purchase and installation of equipment on the existing repeater sites that would allow for a clear channel that could be monitored by emergency dispatch centers and used for emergency traffic across the island. This system would support emergency fire, medical and law enforcement (particularly Alaska State Troopers). Project funding will also be used to conduct an equipment gap analysis with existing responder equipment and upgrades if necessary to increase radio capacity to handle the USFS radio frequencies.

Partial funding of this project would allow some repeater sites to be upgraded. The emergency communications working group would work with responders to determine the priority of upgrades.

Project Timeline:

If funding is approved the project would be bid out by December 31, 2014 for installation in 2015.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Prince of Wales Island Communities

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Jon Bolling
 Title: City Administrator
 Address: 500 3rd Street
 Craig, Alaska 99921
 Phone Number: (907)826-3275
 Email: jbolling@aptalaska.net

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No



SSLEPC
PO Box 725
Craig, AK 99921

907-826-3275
www.craigak.com

February 5, 2014

Senator Bert Stedman
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau AK, 99801

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
State Capitol Room 426
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Peggy Wilson
State Capitol Room 406
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Stedman and Representatives Kreiss-Tomkins and Wilson,

As you know communications between emergency responders and a dispatch center capable of requesting resources or providing information is critical to effective response. Much of Prince of Wales Island is in areas where law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services have no effective communications. While the number of incidents in these locations is not high effective response is critical. In just the past two years emergency responders have faced flooding and landslides; major earthquakes with Tsunami warnings; vehicle accidents resulting in major injury and fatalities; airplane crashes; and multiple search and rescue operations in addition to other routine responses. In addition to responders being able to request resources from the dispatcher this situation creates an officer safety issue for law enforcement making routine traffic stops or wildlife enforcement in areas where they have no means of communicating with dispatchers.

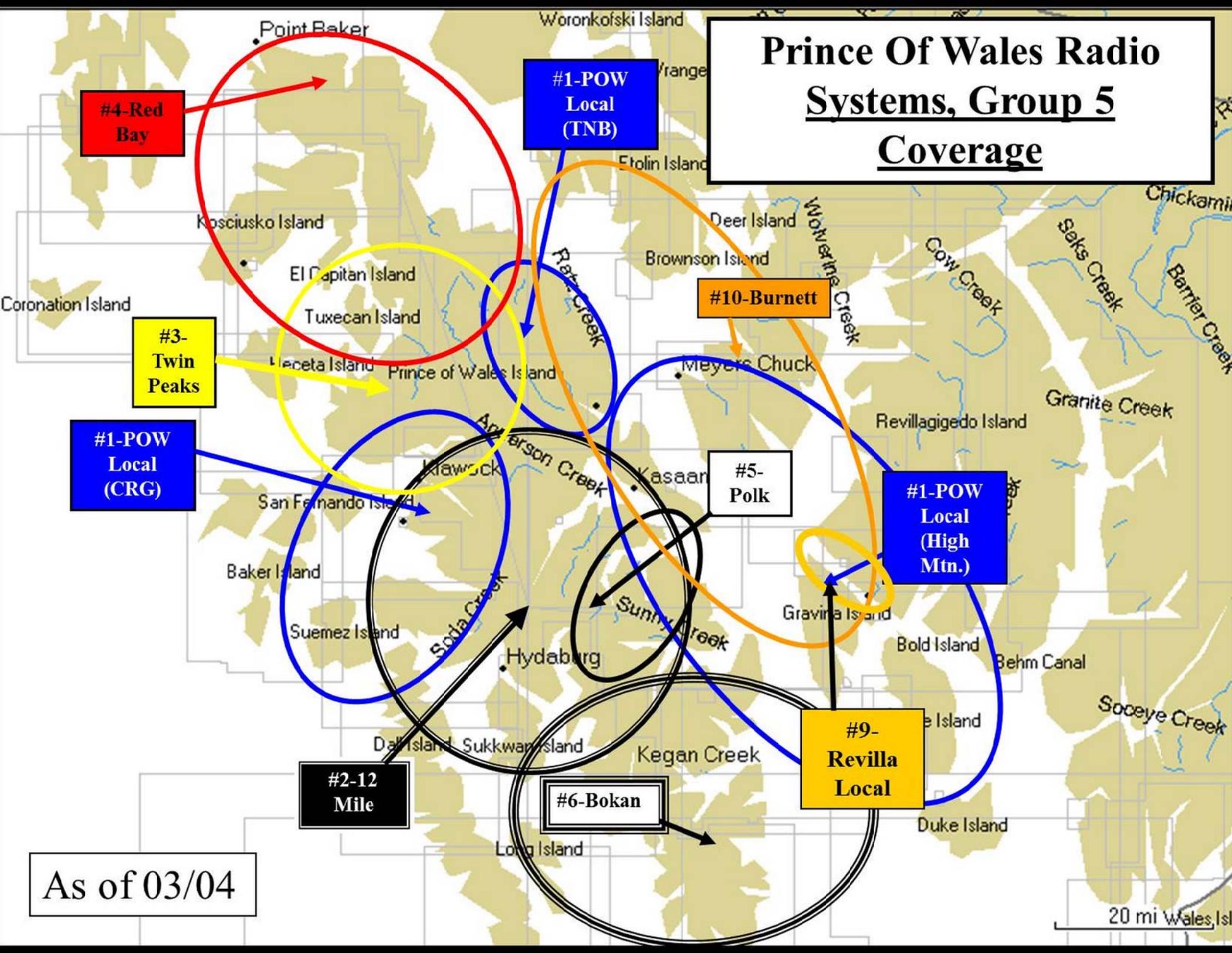
Increased radio coverage will allow for responders to request critical resources directly from the scene, saving time and improving the response. Improved coverage will also improve responder safety by allowing dispatch centers to be in communication with responders. The proposed project will significantly improve communications in dead zones on Prince of Wales Island. Please support this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian Templin".

Brian Templin
Chairman, Southern Southeast Local Emergency Planning Committee
Co-Chair, Alaska Local Emergency Planning Committee Association
Rural LEPC Representative State Emergency Response Commission
City of Craig Emergency Programs Manager

Prince Of Wales Radio Systems, Group 5 Coverage



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Minutes for the
SSLEPC Monthly Meeting
December 17, 1:00 pm
Craig City Council Chambers
Teleconference: 1-800-315-6338, Code 3275#

Present were Brian Templin (City of Craig), Chief RJ Ely (Craig PD), Sgt. Grant Miller (AST), Frank Peratrovich (Klawock FD/EMS), Mike Peratrovich (Klawock FD/EMS), Linda Arrant (Craig PD), Colleen Watson (Public Health), John Skan (Klawock IRA), Jimmy Williams (Klawock IRA), Matt Anderson (USFS), Katie Rooks (USFS), Stacey Mank (Public Health), Jerry Kiffer (Ketchikan Volunteer Rescue Squad), Robert Omstead (Craig EMS) and Butch Brigham.

Present by teleconference were Del Smith (ALMR), Cindy Edenfield (Thorne Bay), Roxy Wilson (Coffman Cove), Chaundell Piburn (Craig EMS), Zach West (VPSO), Karen Petersen (Thorne Bay), Keturah Sadler (SEREMS), Brandy Prefontaine (Naukati Bay), James Smith (VPSO), Dr. Ballard (PeaceHealth), Dennis Nickerson (Kasaan IRA), Michelle Edenshaw (Kasaan IRA), Bobbi Leichty (SEREMS), David Aragon (DHS&EM)

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the current state of radio communications across Prince of Wales Island; hear from dispatch centers, system owners and system users about different radio systems on POW; discuss alternative solutions to increase communications to dead zones on the island; and form a working group to continue working on the issue through some resolution.

Meeting Agenda:

1. Introduction and Opening Comments. After short introductions Brian explained to the group that the SSLEPC had been asked by POWCAC to work on the issue of communications dead zones on the island and to try and develop a solution.
2. Presentations and Open Discussion on Current Status, Capabilities and Capacity on Prince of Wales Island
 - a. Chief Ely talked about the Craig dispatch center's capabilities and capacity. He said that currently they have the ability to monitor USFS frequencies for all repeaters but he felt that full time monitoring of all repeaters would be too distracting for dispatchers because of the amount of normal USFS traffic. He said that CPD could dispatch through the USFS network if they had a way of limiting when and how many frequencies had to be monitored.
 - b. Sgt. Grant Miller talked about AST Ketchikan's dispatch capabilities and capacity. He said that they are currently configured to use

ALMR. Sgt. Miller talked about the geographic limitations of the current ALMR setup and that they had many of the same problem areas as everyone else even with ALMR. He said that it was likely that Ketchikan AST dispatch would provide some level of dispatch services for a system that was set up. Sgt. Miller talked about how 911 calls were routed from communities on POW.

- c. Del Smith (ALMR Operations Manager) discussed the current state of ALMR on Prince of Wales and in the southern southeast region. Presently there are two ALMR sites (Sunnahae and High Mountain) with no plans for building out any more sites in southeast Alaska. He was asked what the cost would be for buildouts of additional sites on POW. He said that he didn't have that information but a buildout in North Pole cost approximately \$750,000.

There was some discussion about ALMR equipment needs. Currently AST is using ALMR on POW and there is a small number of ALMR compatible radios by other agencies but using ALMR on a larger scale would require purchase of new radios for users. It was pointed out that not everyone would need a new radio but each responding agency would need at least one to use ALMR.

Sgt. Grant Miller talked about the range and the dead spots based on the current ALMR sites. The current ALMR sites have much of the same dead zones that conventional radio systems do. ALMR would be useful for some communities, like Hollis but would not solve any issues for the north end of the island.

Del commented that currently there are no user fees because the legislature appropriated \$500,000 last year to cover operations. It was noted that there have been user fees in the past and may be again in the future.

- d. Matt Anderson from the USFS (along with Katie Rooks and Butch Brigham) talked about the current USFS system on POW. Matt said that they are currently working with at least one POW community to provide access to the network during emergencies. One of the issues that Matt mentioned that had to be solved was the dispatch issue. The USFS does not maintain 24/7/365 dispatch and does not want to dispatch for emergency services. Part of the memorandum with communities to use the network would be a commitment by another party or that community to provide dispatch during those emergencies.

Matt mentioned that part of the agreement would be that the USFS could use community frequencies as well. There was a great deal

of discussion about the type of system the USFS had set up and how it might be used.

There was some discussion about using the USFS sites to add capacity that could be used for emergency services and would not interfere with USFS radio traffic. It was noted that this might also solve the dispatch monitoring issue since the additional repeaters would not carry routine USFS traffic but emergency traffic only.

- e. Bobbi Leichty from SEREMS talked about the history of emergency communications on the island and where EMS is today in terms of their capabilities. Bobbi would also like to explore the use of satellite phones as an option. Bobbi talked about the state's legacy system as another route to take as well.
- f. AP&T were not available to talk about their network on the island.
- g. There was additional discussion from the user's standpoint about what the capabilities were for various systems in the communities.

3. Desired Outcome

- a. Allowing communications from responders to a dispatch center from areas that currently don't have radio communications.
- b. The system should be usable by responders, tie to an existing dispatch center and be affordable for communities.

4. Potential Solutions

- a. Add one or more ALMR towers and use ALMR
 - i. Would be very expensive
 - ii. Would require additional equipment for agencies
 - iii. Currently user fees are being paid by the state (legislative appropriation) but future conditions may require user fees to be paid by communities
- b. Use Satellite Phones
 - i. State has a stock of Globalstar and may cover use fees for emergency use
 - ii. Phone communication not as operationally good as radio communication for responders
 - iii. Many have had poor experience with Globalstar phones
 - iv. A test run would be helpful*
 - v. Iridium phones have traditionally worked better on POW but would require purchase and monthly fees
- c. Use existing USFS radio network
 - i. May require some equipment at Ketchikan AST
 - ii. CPD currently has capability to tune in to repeater frequencies

- iii. Possibility of adding link/repeater for future use
- iv. Will work with most equipment (narrow band VHF) that agencies have
- v. Requires reciprocal agreement to use community frequencies
- vi. USFS dispatch not 24/7 and won't do emergency services dispatch – dispatch center must be identified in the agreement to use the system
- vii. Memorandum of Understanding must be prepared and signed for each community participating
- viii. Partial solution would be to notify dispatch centers of what repeater/frequency to tune in to by:
 - 1. Telephone prior to leaving community for response
 - 2. USFS dispatch (if available)
 - 3. Marine VHF Channel 16 – Coast Guard
 - 4. Satellite phone

d. Use AP&T Network

- i. No AP&T representative was there to discuss their network.
- ii. Working group should get additional information from AP&T

e. Use State of Alaska legacy network

- i. No representative was there to discuss State of Alaska legacy networks or prior systems on the Island
- ii. Working group should get additional information from the State of Alaska

5. Working Group. A smaller working group volunteered to continue to meet and work through some of the proposed solutions and make recommendations to POWCAC/SSLEPC to propose to communities

a. Members

- i. Craig/SSLEPC – Brian Templin
- ii. US Forest Service – Matt Anderson
- iii. AST – Sgt. Grant Miller
- iv. CPD – Chief RJ Ely
- v. AP&T – John Moots (to be invited)
- vi. Public – Johnny Rice (to be invited)
- vii. EMS – Roxy Wilson, Coffman Cove
- viii. Fire/EMS – Frank Peratrovich, Klawock
- ix. Public – Brandy Prefontaine, Naukati Bay
- x. KQRS – Jerry Kiffer
- xi. AK DHS&EM – David Aragon
- xii. AK DHS&EM – Greg Eubank**
- xiii. PHN – Stacey Mank
- xiv. SEREMS – Bobbi Leichthy

- xv. Fire/EMS – Mike Peratrovich, Klawock
- xvi. SEREMS – Keturah Sadler

6. The working group will meet at least monthly starting in January.

The meeting adjourned about 4:30

* In a telephone discussion with David Aragon on 12/18/2013 the state will send some Globalstar satellite phones to Prince of Wales for a test run. Bobbi Leichy agreed that SEREMS would take responsibility for the phones and would send them to some EMS units on Prince of Wales for testing. The results will be forwarded to the working group.

** In a telephone discussion with David Aragon on 12/18/2013 Greg Eubank was added to the working group. Greg will provide technical assistance on communications equipment and issues.

SSLEPC Monthly Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2014, 1:00 pm
Craig City Council Chambers

Present were Sgt. Grant Miller (AST), Ben Mank (AST), Roxy Wilson (Coffman Cove), Katie Rooks (USFS), Kim Baxter, Keturah Sadler (SEREMS), Stacey Mank (PHN), Zach West (Kasaan VPSO), Brian Templin (Craig) and Johnny Rice (telecon).

1. Point of Dispensing Plan/Strategic National Stockpile – Stacey Mank gave a short presentation on the Strategic National Stockpile and point of dispensing (POD) planning in general. There was some discussion about how this would affect Prince of Wales. Stacey said that there was a Mass Prophylaxis Annex that was written for POW about ten years ago and that it was time to update the plan. There was some discussion about whether closed, open or mobile PODs would work best. It was decided that some combination of open and mobile PODs would work best for POW. Stacey said she will start the rewrite of the plan and that anyone interested in helping was welcome to. Brian commented that the LEPC should help go over parts of the plan as it is getting rewritten. Stacey also commented that she intends to bring a draft plan to POWCAC to get input from community leaders.
2. Subcommittees/Working Groups
 - a. Emergency Communications Working Group. Brian reported that the working group meeting for January happened the same day that the island was hit with major flooding and landslides. One of the things that the slides caused was communications problems and there was low turnout for the meeting. The working group plans to meet at the conclusion of the LEPC meeting.
 - b. Preparedness Month Subcommittee. Stacey sent out an email to some of the people interested in helping with preparedness month. Stacey had an opportunity recently to meet with a number of DHSS and DHS&EM staff in Anchorage where she talked about the upcoming fair/expo. The committee would still like to see the state's quake cabin brought to POW for the expo in September. The tentative date for the expo would be the second weekend in September. Stacey is still looking for volunteers to be on the subcommittee to help.
 - c. POW Workshop Subcommittee. Brian reported that there was no update since the teleconference. He said he had received an email from the state outlining the potential agenda. He will forward that to the LEPC. Brian also said that he was going to ask for a breakout Hazmat awareness session for law enforcement while the group was here. If there is any other particular topics please forward them to Brian.

3. Congratulations to our own Stacey Mank for receiving the Barbara Berger Excellence in Public Health Award for her work on the Small Community Emergency Response Plans (SCERP) and preparedness on POW!

The LEPC meeting adjourned about 1:55 pm.

SSLEPC Emergency Communications Working Group Minutes
January 14, 2014, 2:00 pm
Craig City Council Chambers

Present were Roxy Wilson (Coffman Cove), Katie Rooks (USFS), Keturah Sadler (SEREMS), Bobbi Leichty (SEREMS - telephone), Brian Templin (Craig), Johnny Rice (telephone) and Stacey Griffith (USFS – telephone)

1. Globalstar Phone Testing – Bobbi Leichty reported that four Globalstar satellite phones have been deployed on POW for testing. Phones were sent to Colleen Watson (Hollis), Keturah Sadler (Thorne Bay), Port Protection and Chaundell Piburn (Craig). Bobbi has asked everyone to travel around and make 10-15 calls each on different days, at different times of day and in different places. After this round of testing is finished Bobbi intends to send the phones to four other communities (considering Whale Pass, Edna Bay, Hydaburg and another community). Bobbi anticipates that it will be another month or so of testing. So far the results have been very good, much better than anticipated. Keturah reported going to the spot where there was a fatal accident near Coffman Cove last year. At the time of the accident there was no method of communication that worked from that location and someone had to drive to a community to request resources. She reported that the satellite phone worked perfectly. Johnny rice reported that Globalstar is getting ready to deploy data capabilities with the newer phones which could increase usefulness by creating a mobile hot spot with the satellite phone. Johnny also commented that users could get GPS coordinates while making a phone call with the current phones.
2. Additional Information
 - a. USFS Coverage Map. Brian reported that Matt Anderson had provided him with a coverage map of the USFS repeaters on Prince of Wales. Brian shared copies of the map and asked Katie to add any comments that she had. Katie commented that the map was pretty accurate but really showed the potential range of each repeater. In reality, topographic conditions created dead spots within each coverage area still. She commented that any place that two or three repeaters overlapped was almost guaranteed coverage. She also said that she has posted a map of the island at the USFS district office in Craig and has asked all users to mark the map with spots that they were not able to reach a repeater. Right now she has 10-12 locations mapped but expects that when the

summer season starts that she will be able to gather a lot more information about coverage gaps and dead zones.

- b. AP&T Coverage Map and System Discussion. Brian commented that he had invited John Moots to come and talk about the AP&T repeaters but he had not heard back from John. Brian said that he would continue to invite AP&T to the meetings so they could discuss the AP&T backbone as another potential solution.
3. Proposed Working Solution. Brian said that he had been considering the solutions discussed and proposes that we concentrate on an immediate low/no cost solution and work on a longer term solution.
- a. Short Term - The short term solution would consist of getting permission to use the USFS or AP&T backbone for emergency purposes. Responders would notify the dispatch center from the community or by satellite phone and tell the dispatcher their location or the repeater that they will be in range of. The dispatch center would then tune in to the correct frequency for that repeater and provide dispatch support services for the duration of the incident.
 - i. Pros:
 1. Could be implemented quickly and at low or no cost.
 2. Would provide island wide coverage (equal to the backbone used).
 3. Would work with existing radio equipment for most responder agencies.
 4. No O&M costs.
 - ii. Cons/Issues
 1. Would share the existing frequency with the USFS employees for the duration of the incident.
 2. Dispatch centers could not monitor all repeaters 24/7.
 3. Could only be used for emergencies.
 4. Some response agencies may not have adequate radio equipment.
 - iii. Associated Tasks
 1. Memorandum or use agreement with system owner.
 2. Analysis of current equipment.
 3. Setting policies and procedures.
 4. Satellite phone testing/deployment.
 5. Analysis of dispatch center equipment.
 6. Training users.
 - b. Longer Term – The longer term solution could be to install “piggyback” repeaters on the USFS or AP&T repeater towers that would create a “clear” channel that would only be used by emergency responders. This is the system that Jerry Kiffer talked about using in the Ketchikan area for KVRS.

- i. Pros:
 - 1. Would work with existing radio equipment for most response agencies.
 - 2. Would provide island wide coverage (equal to the backbone used).
 - 3. Could be monitored 24/7 by dispatch centers since there would be no associated routine radio traffic.
 - 4. Could be used for responder/non-emergency use (i.e. law enforcement traffic or officer safety checks).
 - 5. Would not interfere with system owner routine radio traffic.
- ii. Cons/Issues
 - 1. High capital cost to implement.
 - 2. Potentially O&M costs.
 - 3. Some response agencies may not have adequate radio equipment.
- iii. Associated Tasks
 - 1. Agreement with system owner to install equipment on repeaters/towers/comm. shelters.
 - 2. Analysis of current equipment.
 - 3. Funding requests.
 - 4. Policies and procedures to cover O&M costs.
 - 5. Gap analysis of responder radio equipment and dispatch center equipment.
 - 6. Gap analysis of availability of power, space, etc. at existing repeater sites.
 - 7. Procurement of equipment and installation.
 - 8. Training users.

There was discussion on the proposed solutions. Stacey Griffith shared some of the policy thresholds that would have to be met in order to use the existing USFS backbone. These included benefit to the USFS, not interfering with USFS radio traffic and not requiring the USFS to incur additional costs. There was some additional discussion about needing to look at equipment, power availability and space at the existing sites. Stacey shared that the best place to start with the USFS would be to submit a request to the district ranger for immediate use and a separate request with the ranger regarding longer term piggyback use of the repeater sites.

Brian shared that there was a possibility that the state legislature may have a funding focus on emergency communications during the current legislative session. He was working with Rep. Peggy Wilson's office to see if there was available funding and the process to apply.

Johnny Rice mentioned that expanded cellular service would solve most of the issues and suggested working with cellular service providers to

place equipment at the repeater sites that would expand the cell phone coverage. Brian said that this would be a great ultimate solution but that he felt there were too many variables to get this done within a reasonable timeframe until the cellular providers saw some benefits to the increased cost of their operations.

The group decided that the best move forward was to begin discussions with the USFS regarding both the short term and longer term use of the existing backbone system. Brian said that he would discuss with Jon Bolling whether the LEPC, POWCAC or one or more communities should make the requests to the district ranger. Brian also said that he would continue to work with the legislators on potential funding for improvements to the system. Bobbi shared that she was currently in Juneau and had appointments with the three legislators representing POW and would talk about the issue with them as well this week.

4. Next Meeting. The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for 2:00 pm on March 4th at Craig city hall or by teleconference.

The meeting adjourned at about 3:00 pm.