

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)
)
Improving Public Safety Communications)
in the 800 MHz Band)
) **WT Docket No. 02-55**
Consolidating the 900 MHz Industrial/Land)
Transportation and Business Pool Channels)

To: The Commission

REPLY COMMENTS OF CENTRAL MAINE POWER COMPANY
REGARDING THE DECEMBER 24, 2002
“SUPPLEMENTAL COMMENTS OF THE CONSENSUS PARTIES”

Central Maine Power Company (“CMP”) files its reply comments regarding the “Supplemental Comments of the Consensus Parties” (“Consensus Plan Supplement” or “Supplement”) submitted by the The Industrial Telecommunications Association, Inc. (“ITA”) and other parties (“Consensus Plan Proponents”) on December 24, 2002 in the captioned proceeding. CMP is filing these reply comments to indicate its endorsement of the joint comments filed by the United Telecom Council (“UTC”) and the Edison Electric Institute (EEI”) and the comments filed by the Boarder Area Coalition (“Border Coalition”) on February 10, 2003.

I. Background

CMP is an electric utility that serves more than 545 thousand electric customers in 13 counties covering approximately 11,000 square miles in the state of Maine. Much of CMP’s service area is rural and sparsely populated, and approximately half of its service area is above Line A. CMP utilizes an 800 MHz system in the Industrial/Land

Transportation Pool that covers its entire electrical service area. CMP operates on 141 frequencies ranging from 806-820 MHz/ 851-865 MHz at 31 locations. Further information on the critical importance of CMP's 800 MHz system to the reliable delivery of electricity and the life and safety of its personnel was included with CMP's reply comments filed on August 7, 2002.

II. Discussion

Approximately 56 sets of comments were filed in response to the "Consensus Plan" Supplement. Of these parties, approximately two-thirds opposed the "Consensus Plan." Although some of the remaining comments endorsed the "Consensus Plan," most of the remaining comments endorsed it subject to modifications. In short, the "Consensus Plan" does not represent a consensus of 800 MHz band users. Rather, it represents at best a consensus of those who signed onto the plan.

The joint comments filed by UTC and EEI explain many of the reasons why the "Consensus Plan" should not be adopted by the Commission and propose ways to reduce the interference caused by Nextel without the need for expensive, complicated and disruptive rebanding. CMP agrees that Nextel should spend the proposed \$850 million to modify Nextel's system so as to alleviate interference instead of causing inconvenience to the many other 800 MHz users.

The comments of the Border Coalition explain how rebanding in the areas near the Canadian and Mexican borders will result in considerable spectrum loss and increased interference to Business and Industrial/Land Transportation ("B/ILT") users in the border regions. Although their comments focus on the area near the Mexican border and Regions 3 and 5 near the Canadian border, the same issues apply to Region 1 near the

Canadian border. The area within 100 km of the Canadian border within the State of Maine is part of Region 1.

In its Comments filed on February 10, 2003, CMP expressed concern that in Canadian border Region 1, operations within the 817.25-818.9 MHz / 862.25-863.9 MHz band would be subject to considerable interference from adjacent cellularized SMR operations and that CMP would not be permitted to relocate to the 806-809.75 MHz / 851-854.75 MHz band or there would be insufficient spectrum available for CMP relocation to that band. In its comments, the Border Coalition included studies showing that as a result of the reduction in the number of B/ILT frequencies, there would be an insufficient number of frequencies available for B/ILT relocation in Canadian border Regions 3 and 5. CMP is concerned that this is the case in Canadian border Region 1 as well. CMP is also concerned about the potential interference resulting from the “double border” problem discussed in the Border Coalition comments.

