

**BEFORE THE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554**

RM-11433

Petition for Rulemaking to allow
Aircraft voice operations on Secondary
Trunking Channels in the 700 MHz band

National Regional Planning Council

The National Regional planning Council (NRPC) is an advocacy body formed in 2007 that supports public safety communications spectrum management by Regional Planning Committees (RPC) in the 700 MHz and 800 MHz NPSPAC public safety spectrum as required by the Federal Communications Commission. We liaison with FCC certified frequency coordinators, licensees, applicants, vendors, adjacent regions as well as the Commission on a regular basis to ensure our planning responsibilities and the goals of those first responder agencies we serve are met. These Regional Planning Committees consist of public safety volunteer spectrum planners and members that dedicate their time, in addition to the time spent on their regular positions, to coordinate spectrum efficiently and effectively for the purpose of making it available to public safety agency applicants in their respective region. Members of the NRPC participated in the National Coordination Committee (NCC)

process where the rules for 700 MHz public safety spectrum were developed and in the PSWAC process that defined future public safety spectrum needs.

The work these regional planning committee members do each day reflects their dedication to public safety communications and to ensuring local public safety agencies and the user needs *in the communities they serve* are acknowledged and met.

As a body that advocates the *voice* of regional planning committees and one that does not attempt to consolidate and centralize that voice into a single message put forth by its association, we encourage each region planning committee to voice their own positions and provide their perspective to the Commission in filings and comments as best they can with the intimate knowledge they have as to the topics being addressed and how these issues impact public safety communications within each region. Subsequently, the NRPC does not in these Comments speak for each individual regional planning committee but rather offer a position for consideration by regional planning committees on these important issues. We are hopeful that each regional planning committee will respond to the NRPC filing of this petition in a manner that best represents their position on these important issues. We encourage each region to do so.

COMMENTS OF THE NATIONAL REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

The Commission Should Initiate a Rulemaking Proceeding

The Commission should initiate a rulemaking proceeding to consider the NPSTC proposal as well as any other flexible, coordinated use of Narrowband Secondary Trunked 700 MHz Public Safety Channels. Their rulemaking should also request comment and consider similar use for Narrowband Reserve 700 MHz Public Safety Channels. In these times of dramatic technology advancements combined with a desire for greater public safety capabilities and performance, the NRPC feels that periodically revisiting rules and scope associated with existing public safety spectrum allocations, in this case the public safety 700 MHz band, offers the best opportunities for spectrum efficiencies and effectiveness. The NRPC looks forward to working with our public safety colleagues and the Commission to arrive at the best solutions for public safety and most effective use of these resources that best support the first responder community and users in completing their mission.

The NRPC supports the NPSTC petition and flexible, regionally coordinated use of the 700 MHz narrowband allocation.

The National Regional Planning Council supports the use of the designated Secondary Trunking Channels in the 700 MHz public safety band for aircraft operations as proposed in the NPSTC Petition for Rulemaking. Regional Planning Committees are familiar with how

all types of 700 MHz spectrum is utilized within their region, above and beyond the General Use Channel allocation that they are responsible for coordinating for public safety use. The use of other categories of 700 MHz public safety spectrum such as Geographic State License Channels, dedicated Interoperability Spectrum and Reserve channels are specific to each community and region and that flexibility can be increased with rules that allow flexible use, coordinated within and between regions, of other narrowband 700 MHz assets that the current rules do not provide flexibility for.

We agree that Secondary Trunked Channels are more often than not “lightly used” throughout the country and that sharing arrangements between and within states for the use of these channels for this and other regionally coordinated applications are an appropriate method for ensuring their overall effectiveness. We urge the Commission to initiate a rulemaking proceeding on the NPSTC request. The NRPC looks forward to 700 and 800 MHz regional planning committees providing their comments and perspective in such a proceeding. The NRPC feels that the concept of regional coordination of flexible public safety applications on the Secondary Trunked Channels can support their use in the secondary trunked mode up to 25 KHz, as needed, as well as their use in applications independent of trunked operations within a region, including applications such as those identified herein.

NRPC supports inter and intra-regional/state coordination techniques enabling disparate spectrum use of 700 MHz narrowband assets.

The NRPC supports regional coordination of Secondary Trunked 700 MHz narrowband channels, as well as other 700 MHz channels outside the General Use category, for use within each region. Secondary Trunked Channels, along with Reserve channels, should be coordinated within each region to enable the applications necessary within that region. The use of these channels in a region needs to be published on the CAPRAD database for review by neighboring regions and states to ensure usage of the channels on an inter-regional basis remains effective. The nature of the applications that each of these channels are used for in each region will vary and the flexible of channel use will only work if the use in each region is documented on CAPRAD. We look forward to working with the Commission to enable this type of effective, flexible use of these important spectrum allocations.

Summary

In addition to the aircraft use proposed by NPSTC in their Petition, the National Regional Planning Council also supports a coordinated, flexible approach to the use of Secondary Trunking Channels in each Region. While the use of such channels to support aircraft operations, secondary to the conventional primary interoperable use of channels adjacent to these as outlined in the Commission's rules is viable, we acknowledge that other applications in addition to aircraft operations may benefit from the same availability and use of these and other sparsely used 700 MHz public safety channels in the overall allocation (such as Narrowband Reserve Channels) for specific operations such as vehicular repeater operations (MO3).

700 MHz spectrum is utilized in vehicular repeater operations extensively throughout the Nation in many digital and analog wide area trunked systems in 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 450 MHz and 150 MHz. Some wide area systems today operating in the analog mode in the 800 MHz band want to utilize 700 MHz spectrum for MO3 operations but cannot utilize the 700 MHz State License and General Use spectrum for their operation as those allocations require digital emissions and the few 700 MHz channels that permit analog emissions are utilized for statewide purposes in their regional 700 MHz plan. The flexible use of 700 MHz Narrowband Secondary Trunked or Reserve Channels for this purpose with relaxed analog emissions, coordinated with surrounding states and regions and documented on the CAPRAD database, may be one of several flexible applications deserving consideration and one that would benefit from the Commission initiating a rulemaking proceeding on.

The National Regional Planning Council looks forward to a continued dialogue with the commission, regional planning committees and the public safety communications community on this important topic.

Respectfully,

Stephen T. Devine, Chairperson

National Regional Planning Council

July 15, 2011

