

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION 6 NPSPAC
REVIEW AND REVISION COMMITTEE**

To: All Interested Parties
From: Art McDole, Chair
Subject: Information on Re-packing and Re-banding
Date: May 9, 2006

IMPORTANT MEETING NOTICE

Date: May 25, 2006, 10:30 AM
Location: California OES –
Address and Directions: 3650 Schriver Avenue, Mather CA 95655
(See attached map)

PURPOSE OF MEETING AND DISCUSSION

As you are all aware, the Federal Communications Commission has adopted rules requiring all licensees in the NPSPAC portion of the spectrum to change their frequencies to clear up interference problems. This consists of moving all existing assignments 15 MHz lower. This would normally be a straight move for all incumbents. However, the Region 6 assignments had over the years grown in a fashion dictated by the users and this necessitated modifying the Region 6 Plan on five separate occasions. This appeared to be an excellent opportunity to re-examine the assignments and modify them to accommodate new users and to offer the potential for existing users to gain more channels. Accordingly, the Committee agreed to attempt to modify the Plan.

Several meetings were held. Notice of these meetings was posted on the Northern California web site and it was discussed for three months at the monthly meetings of the Committee. A majority of the users were present at these meetings

Concurrent with this action two of the major counties in the San Francisco Bay area contracted with Motorola to perform an engineering study to determine what improvements were needed and how this could be accomplished. This study indicated that these two counties could improve their systems and gain more channels by acquiring new equipment that would be P25 configured. This configuration is an improvement over the existing NPSPAC requirements and is capable of operating on less band width and be closer spaced without interference.

The study also indicated that some channels presently assigned could be moved to benefit the over all configuration. The criteria used in this study were even more stringent than the existing criteria. The mandate was that the potential for interference to co-channel or adjacent channel users would, as a minimum, equal, or improve over, the existing assignments. It must be recognized that the study and subsequent allotments were based on the existing licenses for current users with operating systems and that there would be no changes in locations or other changes that would affect coverage contours.

A new frequency assignment table was developed and reviewed at meetings over the course of four months. Notice of these meetings was posted on the Region 6 web site and numerous representatives of users were present. Among other actions, the Plan was modified to provide for a "Pool" concept that enables the Committee to make changes in the table without the necessity of modifying the Plan. This will greatly facilitate future changes, such as expansion, adding new sites and changing system parameters. In all, there appears to be a total of 29 separate agencies presently licensed and operating systems that are immediately affected by this change in assignments and allotments.

The modified Plan was approved by the Committee and forwarded to the Federal Communications Commission for their approval. The Commission placed this on Public Notice for over 30 days and no adverse comments were filed. Accordingly, the Commission approved the new Plan in March 2006.

It is the belief of the Committee that if these new frequency assignments are made at the same time as the re-banding changes are made that there should be little, if any cost or disruption. The Committee has approved the assignments and it will not be necessary to submit the engineering studies as outlined in the Plan. This is based on making no changes in parameters. This would include changes in power output, antenna height or direction and changes or additions in sites etc. Any subsequent request to change parameters would be submitted after the re-banding is accomplished in the manner stipulated in the Plan.

We are requesting clarification from the Commission to ascertain if they will approve the applications for the modified licenses in the same manner as they have indicated they would on existing channels. They have indicated that it would not be necessary to go through the frequency coordination process for a direct 15 MHz move required by the re-banding. We are not certain at this time if any approval or other action by the Committee will be required in those instances when it is combined with a simple exchange of an existing channel for a new channel.

Of course, any request for additional channels, or other changes such as adding new locations, after re-banding would require the Committee to be involved as explained in the Plan. It is certainly the option of any licensee to conduct engineering studies to verify the results of the Motorola repacking, with the understanding that this will be at their expense. If there are discrepancies they should be reported to the Committee.

It is imperative that you send an authorized representative to the meeting with the following material: Licensees whose frequencies are changing under the amended Region 6 Plan should prepare this information with a list of the "from and to" frequencies by call sign and each licensed location on the call sign. It should include:

The call sign

The location number

The address and coordinates

The currently licensed frequency

The frequency to which it will be changing according to the modified Plan.

For licensees receiving some new channels under the Plan, clearly there will be no “from” channel.

The success of this re-banding and re-packing effort will depend upon unanimous understanding and cooperation by all involved parties. It must be recognized that the re-banding is mandated by the Commission and every licensee presently occupying NPSPAC frequencies must move in accordance with an established schedule. If this is not accomplished as a one-time coordinated move, severe interference will occur, and there will be additional expense.

Copies of the entire Regional Plan may be downloaded from the Northern California web page at: <http://www.rgn6rpc.org/>. This not only includes the new frequency list (listed under the old frequencies as requested by the Commission) but other pertinent changes.

If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please call Art McDole, Chair, at (831) 442-9981.