

LDIR#169
SATELLITE
COMMUNI-
CATIONS
IN ALASKA

COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE
September 25-26, 1968
Registration

LEGISLATIVE AGENCY
16

Thomas C. Harris	Comm. Engineering Inc.	3350 Mt. View Dr.
John Richards	Comm. Engineering Inc.	3350 Mr. View Dr.
Kent M. Woodman	Air National Guard	6000 Air Guard Rd.
Paul T. Dixon	Village Council Chiefs	800 L Street
Joseph FitzGerald	Fed. Field Comm.	632 6th Ave.
Gary R. Lane	Cook Inlet Pipeline Co.	Box 4xx, Anchorage
Kiefer Fobes	Northern Radio Co.	Seattle
George Acosta	Northern Radio Co.	Seattle
Dave Zehrung	Alaska Airlines	Seattle
Alan Hanson	Wein-Consolidated Airlines	Box 6247, Anchorage
Bob Huff	Wein-Consolidated Airlines	Box 6247, Anchorage
Dave Fulton	State Div. of Comm.	Anchorage
Wayne Gilbert	US Bureau of Land Mgt.	Anchorage
Charles L. Buck	State Div. of Comm.	Juneau
Jack G. Cornelius	M.U.S. City of Fairbanks	Fairbanks
Tom Acord	U.S. Forest Service	Juneau
Don Stitchler	U.S. B.I.A.	Juneau
B. N. Evans	Union oil of Calif.	507 W. No. Lights Anchorage
Jose' M. Romano	CAP-Communications	1451 Rich Vista Rd. Anchorage
Wayne L. Gilbert	U.S. Bureau of Land Mgt.	555 Cordova St.
Dr. Martin	Grumman Aircraft Eng. Corp.	Bethpage, New York
Frank H. Murkowski	Comm. of Economic Development	Pouch E, Juneau
R. G. Rennie	Grumman Aircraft	Bethpage, New York
R. W. Wilke	U.S. Forest Service	Juneau

COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

1:40 p.m. September 25, 1968

MAXIMUM UTILIZATION OF EXISTING FACILITIES

Moderator:

Lawrence A. Dinneen, Director, Industrial Development Division

Panel:

A. G. Hiebert, Chairman, Satellite Communications Task Force
Robert Briskman, Manager, Domestic Satellite Project Office, COMSAT
Colonel Jack C. O'Dell, Commander, 1929th Comm. GP., ACS
Charles Buck, Director, Division of Communications, Alaska Department of Public Works
James H. Isbell, Director, Alaska Disaster Office
Donald Stitchler, Superintendent of Communications, Bureau of Indian Affairs
John Flynn, Superintendent of Communications, Reeve Aleutian Airways
Jerry Nichols, Interior Airways
Dave Zehrunge, Alaska Airlines

LAWRENCE A. DINNEEN:

First of all, I would like to thank every one of you for coming, especially those who have come from far distances. Representing COMSAT is Mr. Robert Briskman and Mr. David Lipke, and representing Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, who will give us an insight into the development of satellites from a broad point of view tomorrow, Mr. Robert Rennie and Dr. Martin Golinski.

An Alaska State Senate Resolution prompted and caused this meeting. The resolution was Senate Concurrent Resolution Number One. To begin the meeting, I would like to read that resolution.

"Relating to a State conference on communications for remote areas: Be it resolved by the Legislature of the State of Alaska: whereas the Alaska Communication System may be sold; and this poses many questions in the areas of communications, especially as the sale of ACS may adversely effect remote communities of Alaska; and whereas great advances in communications have been such that there is no genuine excuse why VHF and UHF radio phones have not been established in every remote community of Alaska; be it resolved that the Commissioner of Economic Development is directed to call a State-wide communications conference to be held in Anchorage, Alaska; and be it further resolved that the Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development shall extend formal invitations to all air carriers operating in Alaska, all commercial radio broadcasting media, all educational broadcasting media, the Air Force, the Army Signal Corps, the United States Navy, the United States Coast Guard, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Division of Communications of the Department of Public Works, the Department of Highways, Fish and Game, and Public Safety, all municipal and independent companies, the Alaska Public Service Commission, and the Federal Communications Commission, in order that plans for a suitable remote area communications system may be formulated and implemented at the earliest possible date."

I am Larry Dinneen. I am Director of the Industrial Development Division in the Department of Economic Development. My Commissioner, Frank H. Murkowski gave me the task of putting the conference together in response to the legislative action.

I would like to first report for the record that all agencies and groups that the Legislature wished us to contact have been contacted, plus many other people. They all have responded very well. Prior to this gathering we have met with many of you to determine how much homework has been done, and we've found

COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

3:15 p.m. September 25, 1968

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

PAUL DIXON, CONSULTANT TO VILLAGE COUNCIL, PRESIDENTS ASSN.:

My name is Paul Dixon. We have a firm of private practice of management consultants. For the past four years our firm has been serving villages in Western Alaska, helping in the development and management of economic development programs. The latest assignment is to aid the Association of Village Council Presidents to incorporate a 55,000 square mile area as a quasi-government unit and establish a Master Economic Development Program. Around 10,000 people will be affected, divided into about 47 communities. Less than half of these communities now have no legal status of any kind. The Village Council presidents expect to act in a positive way to help fill the bill. For the sake of this discussion and as an example and also in deference to Senator Blodgett, who will be representing his area, I will look at things through the eyes of the Village Council Presidents Association and point out at the same time what their situation is and that it is in most ways identical with the problems of people in the rest of the State's unorganized borough areas.

Practically the first fact encountered by anyone trying to do business in rural Alaska is that there is a terrific problem in communications. At the same time the tundra is not silent. Most villages have mail service, but the universal complaint is that it is slow, erratic and never satisfactory in trying to conduct normal business activities. Bethel and Aniak are on the White Alice System and Bethel is the only community on any kind of reasonable telephone system. A couple villages, like St. Mary's, has put in a few surplus military field phones to try solving an emergency type need between primary points. These systems have all the problems and limitations of those units.

The ACS has a radio center at Bethel, serving at least 25 communities on a once-a-day call basis. This leaves roughly half of the area without this important means of communication. There are several public agencies and private radio systems in existence that are generously carrying out a major share of the communications burden. If it were not for these systems, life on the tundra would indeed be brought to a standstill. The scheduled airline charter operators, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Public Health Service Hospital are important examples. Add to this the equipment and facilities provided by the State Division of Communications, the Federal Aviation Agency and the State Department of Military Affairs through the National Guard units. In recent months there has been a rapid increase in the use of citizens band walkie-talkie type of radios. Good use of this kind of equipment is rapidly becoming important to hunters, fishermen and even villages that are closely tied to each other. Finally we must take special note of our HAM operators! Without the service provided by these generous, dedicated men and women, a most important link with the outside world would indeed be lost. Through these examples, you can see that the tundra is not silent, but it crackles with an incessant din.

Radio, however, is only an emergency means of communication. There are many problems. The variety of pieces of equipment imposes a corresponding problem of matching frequencies. How frustrating it is to hear the party you want to talk to but be unable to talk to him because you don't have the right frequency. Often messages have to be relayed by a variety of transmission methods in order to solve the problem of life and death. When Bethel ACS has an equipment breakdown at that important pivot point, it completely stops all commercial communication. Sometimes this lasts for days at a time. Our enemy, the sun spots, blacks out things for additional days at a time. With predictions of periods of maximum interference like for next year, before we really get

COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

9:00 a.m. September 26, 1968

AIRLINES COMMUNICATIONS

LAWRENCE A. DINNEEN, Director Industrial Development Division

As we discussed yesterday, we wanted to determine the total requirement for a communications system. I think you can anticipate in the near future the type of questionnaire that was discussed yesterday being sent to you. We certainly will appreciate your expediting that very quickly.

We have had another offer. Pete Shoup, from the Association of Pacific Fisheries, said he would discuss with his board to have all canneries equipped with this emergency "beeper" that we were talking about yesterday, an emergency alarm. They have a watchmen all the time at the canneries and someone to man a radio. This is another place where you have fifty to sixty more warning areas. So I think by the time we get various people together that have these ideas, we're going to have quite a system.

I will discuss with Joe Fitzgerald of the Federal Field Committee, and with the Governor getting this questionnaire and keeping an up to-date inventory. We will discuss how to keep current with Mr. Devoe of FCC and we do have assistants in the State who will discuss with Dr. Buswell and maybe the University can put it on their system.

This morning we will follow pretty much the same format, the airlines describing what's involved -- try to answer briefly the questions that are on the agenda -- what problems and what parts of interrelation or coordination might be realized.

DAVE ZEHRUNG, ALASKA AIRLINES:

The type of communications that an airlines such as Alaska has is primarily a leased teletype circuit. Our circuits are mostly standardized at 100 words per minute circuits. The machinery on this circuit is capable of printing out the weather sequences. The circuit carries both messages concerning passenger traffic and the operation of aircraft. Now in comparison to our total communications load, emergency and welfare traffic is small, and yet I think there is a significant amount of this type of thing, particularly with respect to relief for people in the Nome-Kotzebue-Unalakleet area and the Cordova-Yakutat area.

Yesterday I mentioned briefly the condition of long lines and while I recognize that these committee meetings haven't been primarily designed for discussion of long line circuitry, our long line problem does have a bearing, as I see it, on the specific problem of communication in rural areas. In our particular case, we have found a need with the present system to run an additional circuit out to Nome. Now through our inquiry with ACS, we are told that you can't get another circuit to Nome -- the circuitry to Nome is filled up. If we are being told that, I'm sure that other users are also being told the same thing. The funny thing about Nome-Kotzebue-Unalakleet is that both Alaska Airlines and Wien Consolidated Airlines have separate circuits to Nome and Kotzebue, and neither one of us really needs one circuit out there. We don't have enough traffic out to that part of the State to own on a combined basis actually one whole circuit. The major stumbling block to the best utilization of this communication resource seems to be that the present structure is such that there is no provision for a cooperative to lease this line as is done in the lower '48 for industry use on a share-cost basis. Those of you who are familiar with aeronautical radio in the lower '48 know that airlines share circuits all over the United States. with the exception of Alaska. If such a structure were available

COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

10:30 a.m. September 26, 1968

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

LAWRENCE A. DINNEEN: Director, Industrial Development Division.

This is really our capsule meeting. We will cover the Emergency Communications, the subject that we have covered in several other sessions briefly. Let's get into: What really is the emergency? What can we do with the offers of service that we have heard from so many. I'm very pleased that Father Pool, John Flynn and several others in the audience that work closely with the people in the remote areas are here so that they can give us that information that we so critically need in order to evaluate how we can answer some of the problems.

DON STITCHLER, BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS:

As I mentioned yesterday, we have some eighty stations in the bush, combined with working with Public Health Service hospitals in Alaska. We are extremely interested in getting emergency communications through. This is not easy from an economic standpoint, or hasn't been up to this point. With the coming of the single sideband, it's going to help the situation inasmuch as it gives us twice as many frequencies actually as what we now have. With the installation of single sideband into the Public Health Service hospitals, we will be able to cover seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day, emergencies that might arise in the villages in which we are located. This doesn't really do anything for the other villages that are left out there.

I think really, we should strive for some common frequencies, that is, distress type frequencies of the land type. We have 2182 that we can use for marine use, but we have nothing in Alaska that can be used for the land services, as such. We have a big division mark between IRAC and FCC license frequencies and I think that we could work together to get a common frequency or frequencies to give us the emergency thing that we are asking for. Charles Buck, of State Division of Communications and I have worked on this for a period of three years or better, trying to come up with some solution to give us better communications in the bush, and to date we haven't really gotten too far with this. I think it is a matter for everyone here concerned to take part in. So I am hoping that the outcome of this meeting is that we will be able to form committees to see this thing through. We have found out what we need and what our problems are. Now we need some solutions. We have heard some pretty good possibilities here. I think we need now a group to follow up on this, to put this thing in a package, get this thing off the ground.

CHARLES CULP, PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE, ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH SERVICE:

I don't know whether this would be as appropriate at this time, but we feel there are some things that need to be said, to clarify what we are doing in radio communications or tele-communications in the State. The goal of the Public Health Service is to raise the present health status of the Alaskan Native to the highest possible level. To accomplish this mission, a communications link is desperately needed in contacting our villages. It makes it mandatory that we have some sort of communications link to these people. In order to go on record as to the reason, or the justification, of why we operate radios, it is simply because there are no other means of communications, many times, to these villages. We are willing to buy communications from a State agency, or from a Federal agency, or a commercial enterprise if the communications are reasonably dependable. We heard a discussion about the economies of providing communications into these various isolated stations or villages. We are experiencing an expense of maintaining a radio system. Other people...

PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission ■ 1919 M Street, NW. ■ Washington, D.C. 20554



REPORT NO. 655

26557
January 13, 1969 - G

PETITIONS FOR RULE MAKING FILED

File No.	Rule No.	Petitioner	Date Rec'd.	Nature of Petition
RM-1384	Sec. 73.202	Southern Wisconsin Company, Inc. Radio Station WMIR Lake Geneva, Wisconsin	11-4-68	Request institution of rule making proceeding looking toward the alloca- tion of Channel 269A to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

Filed by Paul Mueller, General Manager.

RM-1385	Part 85	State of Alaska Department of Public Works Juneau, Alaska	12-27-68	Request amendment of the rules so as to assign a common fre- quency for emergency use purposes, and the establishment of an integrated emergency radio network for stations in the State of Alaska.
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Filed by C. L. Buck, Director, Division of Communications.

RM-1386	Sec. 1.526	National Association of Broadcasters Washington, D. C.	12-27-68	Request amendment of the rules and regulations to pre- scribe a three- year retention period for the station public inspection file.
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Filed by Douglas A. Anello and John B. Summers, Counsel.

STATE OF ALASKA

WALTER J. HICKEL, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

Pouch Z

~~BOX 1367~~ JUNEAU 99801

December 23, 1968

Honorable Ben Waple, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20036

Re: Emergency Frequency for Alaska

Dear Mr. Waple:

On November 20, 1968 I conferred with several members of the Commission staff, including Messrs. McNaughton, Beale and Finch, concerning a request made by letter dated May 21, 1968 for the assignment of a frequency for emergency use purposes in Alaska.

My letter of May 21 had suggested the possible use of 2494 kc. Although this was indicated as illustrative only and not as an exclusive possibility, it is now understood that this could conflict with the reservation for the astro band (2495-2505 kc) and accordingly would not be available. Our discussions indicated, however, that 2726 kc was not being utilized in Alaska and that this might be available for the use we seek. We wish to make clear, however, that if 2726 kc is not available we hope that one frequency in the range between 2.5 mhz and 3.5 mhz will be allocated.

As you know, Alaska includes within its great land mass many remote villages and camps which are totally dependent upon radio for ready communication. The increase in activity in these remote areas during the past year has emphasized the real lack of adequate communication in the State beyond the relatively few major centers of population. With the exception of one or two radio schedules per working day, many construction camps, field crews and even sizeable villages have no contact whatsoever with the rest of the world. After office hours or on Sundays and holidays it is virtually impossible for the residents of these remote areas to summon medical aid, call for emergency transportation, or even talk with a medical officer who might be able to suggest emergency steps. The major reason is that there is no predictable way to contact help because there is no frequency common to the many radio stations which do exist on which assistance could be sought with some certainty. When an emergency does occur at an outlying station, a radio operator will make every effort to contact another station by calling in the blind on whatever frequency is available. All too frequently his efforts are unsuccessful.

The Commission is of course aware that there are a great many stations in Alaska licensed to individuals, companies and governmental agencies but

ALASKA EDUCATIONAL-PUBLIC BROADCAST NEWSLETTER

MISC
Committee

VOLUME I NUMBER II

COLLEGE, ALASKA FEBRUARY 1968

Editor: Charles M. Northrip

Compiled at the University of Alaska

A. THIS SECOND EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER GOES IN THE MAIL, ALASKA'S LEGISLATURE is meeting in Juneau. Important decisions related to educational broadcasting may be made during this session. On a matter of special importance to the coming legislative session, please see the editorial on page 2. It is hoped that the *Newsletter* will serve as a unifying influence in Alaska educational broadcasting. Please send the names and addresses of anyone who should receive each edition to the editor.

DEVELOPMENTS IN ALASKA

JOHN BUCHHOLDT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GREATER ANCHORAGE COMMUNITY ACTION

Agency has taken issue with a December 13, memorandum from Commissioner of Education Clifford Hartman. Commissioner Hartman's memo had set forth reasons why Alaska's educational broadcasting authority should be administered by the State Department of Education. In summarizing his six page letter to the Commissioner, Buchholdt stated: "I feel the goals of the dozens of agencies that can be served and promoted by public service television in Alaska are not the same goals shared by the Alaska Department of Education. I believe that no one existing educational or public service agency has the capability or the potential to administer a public service television program in a manner that it so desperately needed throughout the interior of Alaska and also in its urban areas (sic.) What is needed is the objective view that will permit quality coordination, admit fresh ideas, and permit an enthusiastic responsiveness to the needs of the people of Alaska as seen by the people of Alaska. Public service television should never be allowed to become a hand maiden primarily aimed at complementing the limited objectives of public school administration." Buchholdt's letter was sent to all those who received Commissioner Hartman's December 13, memo.

IN AN EDITORIAL ON DECEMBER 30, 1967, THE ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS ALSO DISAGREED

with Commissioner Hartman's December 13 memorandum. The editorial stated in part "...There is no question that the Department of Education should have an important role in public radio and television. But we question the wisdom of permitting any conventional agency of government to deal in so delicate a matter as the control of radio and television facilities ... There are two apparent dangers in placing control of broadcasting facilities with an operating department of government: the fear that it could be used politically and the possibility that it would not realize its full potential. The second danger is probably the more real ..."

DR. CHARLES LAFFERTY, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL

District responded on January 3, 1968, to John Buchholdt's letter to Commissioner Hartman (see lead story). In his reply, which was sent to all those who received Dr. Hartman's original memo and Buchholdt's answer, Dr. Lafferty expressed confidence in the State Department of Education to handle educational and instructional broadcasting. He referred to Buchholdt's letter as a "general attack" on public education and public school administration.