

NEW ENGLAND REGION 19 700 MHZ PLAN INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The New England 700 MHz, Region 19 Committee was established on December 7, 2000 in response to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) announcement of the allocation of 24 MHz in the 700 MHz radio spectrum. The allocation of spectrum was a result of the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee (PSWAC) report that established need requirements throughout the country. Interoperability within and among public safety and public service providers was identified in the PSWAC report as a basic minimum essential requirement.

In response to the mandate to develop plans for the allocation of 700MHz spectrum, the FCC established a Federal Advisory Committee called the National Coordination Committee (NCC). The NCC was created to address interoperability, technology and implementation issues to be considered in the development of plans for 700MHz spectrum. The FCC required that a Regional Plan outlining the use of public safety radio frequencies be completed and approved by the FCC before any agency within a region would receive channels for the newly allocated spectrum.

The New England 700 MHz -Region 19 Plan utilized the NCC Planning Guidelines in many of the Plans sections. The New England Region 19 – 700MHz Committee represents a cross section of all public safety services and public service users from the six New England states. No other region covers as many states as the New England Region. The challenges to ensuring that all states are represented and that all state members have an equal opportunity to attend meetings in their respective states have been met. Quarterly meetings are rotated from state to state. Membership has been solicited from each member state. The challenges to finding an equitable process for the distribution of spectrum across a 62,810 square mile region (an area greater than all but 23 single states) with diverse topography and demographics is daunting.

The guidelines established by the NCC for interoperability have been adopted with the New England Regional Plan. The ability to standardize interoperability frequency usage for all New England States as well as adjoining regions is an achievement in of its self.

The purpose of the New England Region 19 – 700 MHz Plan is to provide the maximum utilization and public benefit from the 700 MHz spectrum by eligible entities. The plan serves as a guide book to those eligible entities who apply for 700MHz spectrum and provides for a means of settling disputes concerning frequency allocations should they arise. Eligible agency users are defined by the PSWAC and NCC as follows: Public Safety - the public's right, exercised through Federal, State, or Local government as prescribed by law, to protect and preserve life, property, natural resources and to serve the public welfare. Public safety services – those services rendered by or through Federal, State or Local governmental entities in support of public safety duties. Public safety services providers – governmental and public entities or those non-government, private organizations, which are properly authorized by the appropriate government whose primary mission is providing public safety duties. Public services – those services provided by non-public safety entities that furnish, maintain, and protect the nation's basic infrastructures which are required to promote the public's safety and welfare.

Priority is given to those public safety and public service agencies that are primarily responsible for the protection of life and property. Assignment of frequencies is based upon the mandate that the utilization of the spectrum be in the most efficient manner possible through advanced technology.

Adjacent regions (Region 8 and Region 30) are developing 700 MHz plans. It is anticipated that as their Plans are developed, Region 19 will participate in joint discussions to ensure continued coordination, cooperation and concurrence.

All meetings of the New England 700 MHz Committee are open to the general public. Notification of meetings is accomplished by mail, email, fax and posting on the FCC and New England 700MHz Committee web sites (www.NER700MHz.org).

A plan amendment was developed for compliance in accordance with the provisions of WT Docket Number 07-132, Second Report and Order, paragraph reference;

346. Discussion. We recognize that our decisions to prohibit wideband operations (outside of the waiver process described elsewhere in this Second Report and Order) and to consolidate the narrowband channels will impact existing and pending RPC plans. Nevertheless, as a result, RPC plans already approved or on file with the Commission will require amendment. We find that the substantial benefits resulting from accommodating broadband communications and consolidating the narrowband channels outweigh the near-term concerns of RPCs. Indeed, the fact that the narrowband consolidation will optimize the 700 MHz public safety band plan as a whole, and promote the deployment of new technologies and broadband services, will be to the advantage of the very RPCs whose current plans will be impacted. Accordingly, we require all RPCs with approved plans or plans on file to submit amended plans consistent with the decisions herein **within 30 days of the effective date of this Second Report and Order**.

And, excerpt from the text of the decision published in the Federal Register on August 24, 2007, paragraph reference;

76. The Commission requires all Regional Planning Committees with approved plans or plans on file to submit amended plans consistent with the decisions herein by November 23, 2007.

And, released on November 9, 2007, “Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Announces An Extension of the Deadline for 700MHz Regional Planning Committees to Amend 700MHz Narrowband Plans from November 23, 2007 to January 31, 2008”. The announcement provided an attached appendix provisioning additional guidance for filing amendments to RPC Plans.

This amended plan conforms to the FCC requirements for the assignment of licenses for General Use spectrum.