



**The Collective Voice of
Public Safety
Communications**

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

American Association of State Highway
and Transportation Officials

American Radio Relay League

American Red Cross

Association of Fish and Wildlife
Agencies

Association of Public Safety
Communications Officials -
International

Forestry Conservation Communications
Association

International Association of
Chiefs of Police

International Association of
Emergency Managers

International Association of Fire Chiefs

International Municipal Signal
Association

National Association of State
Emergency Medical Services Officials

National Association of State Foresters

National Association of State
Telecommunications Directors

LIAISON ORGANIZATIONS

Federal Communications Commission

Federal Partnership for Interoperable
Communications

National Telecommunications and
Information Administration

Telecommunications Industry
Association

US Department of Agriculture

US Department of Justice

NIJ CommTech Program

US Department of Homeland Security

FEMA

SAFECOM Program

US Department of Interior

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March 14, 2007

Mr. Fred Campbell
Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: *Ex Parte* Submission
Broadband Optimization Plan
WT Dockets Nos. 06-169, 96-86, 06-150
PS Docket 06-229

Dear Mr. Campbell:

On behalf of the fourteen member associations comprising the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC), this letter addresses the disagreement between interests supporting and those opposing the Broadband Optimization Plan. NPSTC urges the Commission to embrace the Broadband Optimization Plan; it alone provides additional spectrum and flexibility to public safety while promoting the coexistence across services that is critical to effective use of broadband technologies in the 700 MHz band.

The Broadband Optimization Plan restructures the current spectrum segments between public safety and commercial operations. Public safety would receive additional channels and the increased flexibility of pursuing wideband or broadband operations. It will provide commercial services more compatible channels. The Broadband Optimization Plan promotes broadband technologies across both services. It resolves the logistic and operational challenges associated with relocating the public safety narrowband voice channels, particularly for border agency communications along the Canadian border where an agreement is already negotiated. The Broadband Optimization Plan has been endorsed by the guard band licensees, public safety and several commercial interests.

The Broadband Optimization Plan is opposed by cellular carriers Verizon Wireless and AT&T and equipment manufacturer Alcatel-Lucent. Instead, these interests propose a "6 + 6" plan that relocates and consolidates the public safety narrowband voice channels. This change would result in a public safety segment where 6 MHz is dedicated to narrowband and 6 MHz is dedicated to broadband only operations. This plan creates severe problems in the Canadian Border area. The access for agencies in the border will be more limited than with the current band plan. This 6 + 6 plan does not allow the flexibility to use wideband technologies to meet rural needs. Spectrum for public safety must meet the needs of all citizens not just citizens in easy to serve urban areas. Public safety receives no additional channels, flexibility is reduced immeasurably, guard band licensees remain subject to current technical restrictions and the technical and logistic challenges of relocating the narrowband channels are left unresolved. NPSTC's critique of this opposition to the Broadband Optimization Plan is contained in its February 23, 2007 *ex parte* letter analyzing Verizon Wireless' position.

The coalition of public safety organizations, the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, International, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Major Cities Chiefs' Association, Major County Sheriffs' Association and the National Sheriffs' Association, in their letter of March 8, 2007 reiterate the viability and importance of the Broadband Optimization Plan and the detriments that accrue from the 6 + 6 plan. The coalition states well the legal reasoning supporting the Broadband Optimization Plan and why the Commission should reject the narrow constricts presented by the 6 + 6 proponents.

NPSTC and its member organizations are emphatic in their support of the Broadband Optimization Plan. The record reflects that the issues involved go to the core of the Commission's authority and responsibility to administer the radio spectrum. What the Broadband Optimization Plan presents is a tangible and meaningful commitment that will make a difference to public safety communications. The 6 + 6 plan will not. The Broadband Optimization presents the foundation for promoting the coexistence of broadband technologies across public safety and commercial broadband services within the 700 MHz band. It is the starting point for any serious commitment to provide public safety broadband while critically promoting the efficiencies that can accrue through similar technologies across services. In contrast, the 6 + 6 plan isolates public safety.

Parsing the Commission's authority, as the 6 + 6 proponents advocate, blocks the path to providing public safety meaningful spectrum resources. The Commission's authority, if not obligation, to manage the spectrum is deservedly broad. Spectrum's inherent character and the rapid pace of innovation that promotes its efficient use are embedded in that authority. When combined with the Commission's responsibility in Section 1 of the Communications Act to promote public safety, there is a well founded basis to implement the Broadband Optimization Plan.

The goal of the Commission's proceedings to assist public safety should not be lost. As it moves forward in structuring not only the public safety segment but the entire 700 MHz band, the Broadband Optimization Plan should be the starting point. It will assist public safety communications and promote the coexistence of broadband across all services. The Commission should not fail to embrace this opportunity.

Respectfully,

Vincent R. Stile

Vincent R. Stile, Chair
NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

Copy to:

Mr. Kenneth Moran, Acting Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau
Mr. Julius Knapp, Chief, Office of Engineering and Technology
Ms. Dana Shaffer, Deputy Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau