



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION DIVISION

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Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Docket 02-55

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Orange County Public Safety Communications would like to express our support for the “Consensus Plan” filed by public safety organizations, private wireless organizations, and Nextel, in the above-reference proceeding regarding interference to 800 MHz public safety systems.

The Orange County 800 MHz radio system is a Motorola Smartzone, trunked radio system. There are eight (8) nodes on the Smartzone system. The main node is the Orange County twenty-eight (28) channel, eight (8)-site simulcast system. The other major node is the City of Orlando’s five (5) site, twenty-two (22) channel simulcast system. The other six (6) nodes are single site intelligent repeater sites ranging from four (4) to ten (10) frequencies per site. There are just over 6,000 Orange County users on the system with approximately 16,000 active ID’s system wide. The system supports 89 console positions located in seven (11) different locations. The sheer number of active ID’s, number of frequencies, and the number of user entities makes this one of the largest public safety Smartzone radio systems in the country.

Managing such a large radio system in a rapidly growing urban area requires constant monitoring of coverage as large buildings are being built in areas that were cow pastures when the system was designed. This daunting task is further complicated by the fact that we are being interfered with on a daily basis. The worst part of this interference is that we do not know we are being interfered with until a user complains. Since our users are public safety, first responders, this is a dangerous situation.

We have reviewed the various proposals for addressing this interference problem and concluded that the consensus plan is the only one that truly solves the problem. Although it will require a large-scale reprogramming effort and reconfiguration for most systems, the proactive approach outlined in the consensus plan is the only one that solves the problem. The “wait until the problem surfaces” approach offered by other plans continues to jeopardize the safety of first responders.

Orange County strongly encourages the FCC to adopt the consensus plan and to do so quickly. With the current interference problems, it is only a matter of time until a first responder is critically injured or killed because their radio failed to function when needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Orange County Public Safety Communications

By:
Tom Sorley
Radio Services Supervisor

July 30, 2003
