Spectrum Breakout Session Notes
WBIWG Meeting – Kalispell, Montana
November 15, 2013

Spectrum Issues along the Border:

- Traditional bands used by public safety (VHF and lower UHF) are congested and very little available spectrum remains available on both sides of the border.
- There are band utilization differences between the two countries. The public safety band in the U.S. corresponds in some cases with the business band in Canada. Canadian public safety allotments are intertwined though out the band, and difficult to identify due to the fact most are not visible on the Industry Canada public portal.
- VHF channels in Canada are 30 kHz in width with no narrowband requirement. U.S. frequencies are 25 kHz wide band, and 12.5 kHz narrowband. Centers are not the same.
- It is difficult to get protected information for Canadian public safety licenses and U.S. NTIA spectrum.
- Interference is often encountered on each side of the border. Noting often that U.S. agencies receive what often is truck to truck traffic from over the road sources, Canadian represented that Industry Canada has channels set aside in Appendix B-1, known as the 'Basic Ten', that are general use frequencies that likely truckers end up using near the border or in the U.S. They include the following frequencies that may impact U.S. public safety:
    - 151.1750 MHz
    - 153.0500 MHz
    - 154.1000 MHz
    - 158.7000 MHz
    - 158.9400 MHz
    - 173.3700 MHz
- It was also noted that some U.S. frequencies could have the same impact on the Canada side, such as the logging channel 151.9250. The 14 FRS channels are the same on both sides of the border.
- Knowing who to call with questions is a concern. When a frequency application is made on both sides of the border, then the request goes to the respective agencies and they coordinate with the other country. If the answer is 'no', a general reason is made known but options and specifics are not discussed. Internal contacts are available but cross border contacts are not known.

Spectrum Goals Moving Forward:

- Coordinate Montana Frequency Advisory Committee discussions and plans with spectrum representatives from Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan, along with Industry Canada. This should be done on a frequent basis. Notify Canadian partners when information in this working group will impact border regions. Canadian partners will be notified of the next meeting.
- The group recommended that regional interoperability use of frequency pair 151.1375 MHz (FB2) and 158.7375 MHz (MO) in north central Montana and southern Alberta/Saskatchewan. This interoperability channel is underutilized and has great reach in the region. Scott Bradford will research the possibilities of doing this.

- The group recommended more tactical resources for border responses. Potential resources include:
    - 153.9050 MHz (Montana GOLD)
    - 157.4250 MHz (Montana NEON and part of the Montana Marine Channel licenses)
    - 154.2874 MHz (VFIRE25)
    - 155.4825 MHz (VLAW32)

  Spectrum in the 154-155 range may be difficult to clear across Canada due to RCMP and other uses. The group highlighted 157.4250 MHz as a possibility. The only know use is a business mobile only use near Coutts, Alberta. The group recommended finding ways to work with the business owner to replace this frequency in Canada, and replacing the mobile frequency in Roosevelt County to provide another resource for multiple agency use.
- There is a significant desire to continue active discussions regarding ways to integrate communications in various spectrum bands (VHF to 700 MHz) or different systems, included connection through ISSI and other patched options.
- Look at PS Broadband and how that will impact the future of border communications.