

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Chief Technology Officer



ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia

Case 01-02
Date 120

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MEMORANDUM

TO: D.C. Zoning Commission

FROM: Peter Roy, Deputy Chief Technology Officer

DATE: 08 November 2002

SUBJECT: Public Safety Wireless Communications – Further Justification For Adoption of Requested Alternate Language In Proposed Case #01-02 (Text Amendment-Regulation of Antennas, Antenna Towers, and Monopoles.) Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia.

EXISTING NETWORK

The police department currently has a network operating in the 460 Mhz range of frequencies that has been in existence for 30+ years. Consisting of eight (8) transmit sites and 42 receive sites, this network is reaching the end of it's useful life. We anticipate that in the next one to two (1-2) years part or all of this network will be dismantled and the traffic transferred to the networks being deployed now or anticipated to be built in the next two to three (2-3) years. The net result will be a reduction in the number of antennas and tower locations required to directly support MPD.

CURRENT PROJECT

OCTO is currently engineering an eleven-node network operating in the 800 Mhz range of frequencies that will be used exclusively for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness (PS/EP). Of the eleven sites, four (4) of these are reuse of existing sites and seven (7) of the remaining sites already have one or more antenna installations of other commercial entities. The typical installation at the eleven sites will consist of ten (10) antennas characterized as whip type approximately six (6) meters tall. At seven (7) of the sites, these whip antennas will be roof mounted. At two (2) of the sites, these antennas will be mounted n existing towers. At one (1) of the remaining sites we will have to replace an existing monopole while at the last site we will replace an existing self-supporting tower with a similar type tower. The replacement at this facility should allow us to remove two (2) existing monopoles. The useful life of these installations is estimated to be ten to fifteen years.

THE FUTURE

OCTO is preparing to trial a 700 Mhz network. Beginning with two to four (2-4) sites, if successful this implementation will be expanded to up to 10 sites. It is very likely that most or all of these 700 Mhz installations will be performed at the sites chosen for the 800 Mhz network. This 700 Mhz network, also exclusively for PS/EP purposes, will support communication of data for firefighters, police officers and emergency services workers. The antennas used for the 700 Mhz network will be of the flat panel type and will be mounted on the sides of buildings (or on the existing towers). At the conclusion of the build-out of this network, it is unlikely that the District will have to construct additional PS/EP networks in the near term.

CONCLUSION

It is OCTO's intention to design and implement state-of-the-art communications networks to support the vital work of our emergency services works. The ultimate objective of these networks is to protect the lives and property of the citizens of the District of Columbia, and our F/EMS, MPD and EMA workers on whom we depend. The requested alternative language supporting District of Columbia Public Safety initiatives balances the commission's objectives to provide the tools to protect our city; it's citizens and their property while maintaining the aesthetic integrity of our capitol city.