

# Strategic Plan for Meeting Transit Industry Wireless Communications Needs

*June 30, 2009*

## Preamble

This strategic plan is built on the wireless communications needs of the transit industry. It describes the vision, mission, and strategic goals for the next five years to effectively support the communication needs of the transit industry.

The rapid evolution of communications technologies is evident in the increasing variety of wireless services, and accompanying greater usage of the radio spectrum. To maintain its critical communications capabilities, and to take advantage of the growing opportunities offered by the wireless communication system (e.g., enhanced passenger services, real-time video and vehicle operation data, voice and data transfer among varied technologies, etc.), **the transit industry must monitor, respond, and adapt to:**

- **Changes in FCC regulations affecting spectrum licensed to transit agencies.**
- **Changes in commercial services that affect expectations for communications, and hence change the needs for communications.**

The transit industry must build partnerships with other radio spectrum user-groups and emergency response organizations to the benefit of public transportation communications. The future of public transportation communications depends on our collective voice, our commitment to action, and our adaptability to shifts in the environment impacting our industry. The vision and mission of this industry-wide strategic plan support our commitment.

**Vision**     ***Be the collective voice committed to addressing transit industry wireless communications needs.***

**Mission**    ***To assure that the transit industry wireless communications needs are continuously met through information sharing.***

Defining our strategic goals, as presented below, is a first step in translating this vision into action. The transit industry will use this plan to develop an implementation plan that will guide our actions, establish priorities, and align our resources. For each strategic goal listed below, the implementation plan will include specific objectives that are measurable, actionable, relevant, and time-based.

## Strategic Goal 1: PRIVATE RADIO SYSTEMS

Our first strategic goal is to ***promote and implement standards and regulations affecting the private communication systems in a manner that assures uninterrupted communications, and optimizes spectrum usage.***

Specific regulation-based goals to be addressed within this heading include:

1. **UHF/VHF Spectrum** – Assure uninterrupted communications as private radio licensees operating in this spectrum implement mandated, phased-in efficiency standards by January 1, 2013.
2. **800 MHz Band** – Optimize band use recognizing that some channels in this band have recently been designated for Public Safety use, and further recognizing that if these bands are not used, they will later be re-assigned for broader use.
3. **700 MHz Band** -- Optimize use of this band recognizing that a portion of this spectrum vacated by analog television on June 12, 2009 will become a primary interoperability band between various emergency responders, including transit.
4. **Spectrum for private broadband application** – Optimize use.

Activities to meet these goals include, but are not limited to:

- **Expand Knowledge** -- Facilitate industry-wide knowledge of spectrum availability and licensing changes, equipment needs, funding and purchasing timeline needs, and recognition of soon-to-be obsolete equipment (both in-use, and on the market).
- **Pool Resources** -- Facilitate mechanisms for obtaining large-group purchase prices, with emphasis on small transit agencies.
- **Liaison Functions** – Provide responses to FCC requests for information and notices of proposed rulemaking.

## Strategic Goal 2: COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Recognizing that more than 70% of the transit industry purchases commercial communication services (e.g., cell phone), our second strategic goal is to ***facilitate transit industry knowledge of relevant commercial communications advances to promote more informed decision-making for new equipment, system, and service purchases.*** Activities to meet this goal include, but are not limited to:

- Tracking of commercial voice and data services including prioritization capabilities, and means of interoperability with other communication technologies.
- Periodic summarization of the potential applicability of various commercial services to the transit industry, including advantages and disadvantages.

- Identification and development of means for obtaining reduced rates for commercial services (e.g., pooled purchasing groups).

### **Strategic Goal 3: INDUSTRY REPRESENTATION**

Our third strategic goal is to ***represent transit industry needs in communications standards development and rulemaking to assure considerations of public transportation needs***. Activities to meet this goal include, but are no limited to:

- Tracking and responding to congressional legislation, FCC notices, requests for information, and rulemaking
- Tracking transit industry wireless communications
- Solicitation of funding for industry wireless communication needs
- Participation in standards development for wireless technologies.

### **Strategic Goal 4: JOINT COUNCIL**

Our fourth strategic goal is to ***establish a joint council to implement the Transit Wireless Communications Strategic Plan***. Activities to meet this goal include, but are not limited to:

- Identification of transit organizations interested in participating on the Joint Council
- Identification of other transit communication stakeholders that are interested in participating on the Joint Council (e.g., government agencies and other spectrum user groups)
- Development of the Joint Council structure and charter.