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## CANADIAN RESPONDER ASSOCIATIONS UNITE TO MOVE FORWARD ON 700 MHz BROADBAND FOR MISSION CRITICAL PUBLIC SAFETY DATA



(Victoria) — On Wednesday, December 8, 2010 during the Fourth Canadian Public Safety Interoperability Workshop, the presidents of Canada's three major associations representing police, fire and emergency medical services announced the creation of the Tri-Services Special Purpose Committee on 700 MHz Broadband for Mission Critical Public Safety Data. The creation of the Committee is in direct response to Industry Canada's recent announcement of public consultations on the use of the 700 MHz band by commercial mobile services.

"With advances in technology, public safety providers like emergency medical services, fire and police will have an increasing need to access data and video networks during all emergency incidents," stated Chief Michael Nolan, President, Emergency Medical Services Chiefs of Canada (EMSCC). "The allocation of 700MHz broadband spectrum represents a significant opportunity that, if done correctly, will enable mission critical data communications and improved interoperability for public safety providers for years to come. With our colleagues representing police and fire, EMS chiefs want to ensure that the needs of responders and public safety in general are considered and accounted for during Industry Canada consultations on 700MHz broadband spectrum allocations."

Some 700 MHz narrow and wide band spectrum is already dedicated to public safety in Canada for voice and some lower speed data use. However, securing dedicated spectrum for broadband applications for public safety will ensure wireless broadband networks can be built with the needs of public safety in mind moving forward. Availability of such networks responds directly to the Canadian tri-services identified priorities of improved interoperability and integrated emergency management. Spectrum allocations are a key enabler for the creation of such networks.

"Canadian fire, police, paramedics and other emergency professionals must have access to modern and reliable communications capabilities, including high speed data and video, to communicate with each other across agencies and jurisdictions during emergencies and during day-to-day operations," remarked Chief Rob Simonds, President, Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC). "Having this capacity improves the tri-services ability to protect and save lives. It also directly impacts community and responder safety, innovation and the health of Canada's digital economy."

The Associations have appointed three representatives to strike the Tri-Services Special Purpose Committee on 700 MHz Broadband for Mission Critical Public Safety Data. They are: Superintendent Bill Moore, Halifax Regional Police; Superintendent Pascal Rodier, British Columbia Ambulance Service; and Division Chief Mike Sullivan, Ottawa Fire Service. Together, the three representatives will set in motion a mechanism to monitor and advise on the issue, inform stakeholders and identify responder spectrum needs and potential opportunities.

“Our responder organizations are advocating a whole-of-government approach to 700MHz broadband spectrum allocations,” commented Chief William Blair, President, Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP). “The needs of Canadian responder agencies and the broader public safety community must be considered during the spectrum allocation process with a vision to build a robust system of networks that will benefit urban, suburban and rural responder agencies, as well as meet mission critical requirements. Above all, this issue will have a direct impact on the tri-services ability to protect and save lives well into the future.”

For more information on 700 MHz Broadband for Mission Critical Public Safety Data, visit [www.action700.ca](http://www.action700.ca).

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A background documents is attached.

For further information, media representatives may contact [action700broadband@gmail.com](mailto:action700broadband@gmail.com).

## BACKGROUND

### 700 MHz Broadband for Mission Critical Public Safety Data

- August 30, 2011 marks the transition from analog television to digital in Canada, freeing up spectrum for potential use by public safety. Many private and public agencies are vying for the additional (and very valuable) spectrum, and Industry Canada (our nation's spectrum regulator) recently opened consultations on the 700 MHz broadband allocations which close February 28, 2011.
- In the U.S., a similar digital TV transition was accomplished on June 12, 2009. The U.S. spectrum regulator, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), has already dedicated 10 MHz to the Public Safety Spectrum Trust. Collectively, U.S. public safety agencies are now fighting for a second 10 MHz block in the critical band of 700 MHz spectrum known as the D Block. The FCC recently announced that the D Block may be sold at auction for commercial purposes instead of being allocated to public safety (currently under consideration by U.S. Congress). This move has caused U.S. counterparts to mobilize quickly on what is arguably the most important issue U.S. law enforcement, fire, and EMS officials have faced in decades. Canadian responders may be faced with the same challenge.
- Canadian agencies will have an increasing need to access data and video networks during all emergency incidents:
  - law enforcement agencies will need access to streaming video, surveillance networks capable of identifying known terrorists through the use of video analytics, criminal records, automated license plate recognition and biometric technologies including mobile fingerprint and iris identification to prevent and respond to criminal activities;
  - fire services will need access to building blue prints, health-monitoring sensors and GPS tracking systems in order to save lives;
  - emergency medical services will need access to telemedicine, high-resolution video and patient records to reduce the time it takes to deliver medical services at the scene of an incident such as a car crash on a highway;
  - critical-infrastructure service providers will need to be able to coordinate their responses to restore power and telecommunications services during large-scale incidents; and
  - the government of Canada and various other federal agencies will need to access data networks during large-scale incidents to coordinate Federal assistance with Provincial/Territorial and local response and recovery operations.
- All the above mentioned applications and services depend greatly on the amount of spectrum that is available for public safety broadband services — they require considerable bandwidth and speed that is currently not available. Future networks must be built with public safety requirements in mind.
- the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP), the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) and Emergency Medical Services Chiefs of Canada (EMSCC) are advocating a whole-of-government approach (i.e., all levels of government federal/provincial/territorial/municipal, similar to the National Strategy on Communications

Interoperability) to 700MHz broadband spectrum allocations to ensure the needs of responders and public safety in general are considered and accounted for during Industry Canada consultations.

- The leaders of police, fire and emergency medical service agencies across the country are joining together to develop a common position on the issue. A Tri-Services Special Purpose Committee on 700 MHz Broadband for Mission Critical Public Safety Data is being created to monitor and advise on the issue. Jointly, the EMSCC, CAFC and CACP are working to raise awareness about the issue and initiate a call to action to all levels of government and industry to join in this effort.