

THREE YEARS AND COUNTING

BY DICK WOOLF, NSP TELECOM ADVISOR



On Dec. 11, 2009, the FCC issued a Public Notice reminding the radio user community of the Jan. 1, 2013 deadline for conversion to narrowband radio technology. Barring legal challenges, the FCC is requiring that radio licensees (including NSP) modify, reprogram or replace their existing wideband equipment on or before that date.

What does this mean for my patrol? Programable radio equipment that can be changed to narrowband operation must be reprogrammed by that date. Wideband equipment that cannot be made narrowband must be replaced, even if the equipment is fully functional.

What is wideband/narrowband? It is the amount of “space” in the radio spectrum occupied by one radio channel. By reducing the amount of “space” the radio channel occupies, more channels can be made available. Years ago, crystal-controlled radios were not precise enough for narrowband operation. Since most modern equipment is microprocessor-controlled, switching from wideband to narrowband operation is as simple as reprogramming. All commercial radio equipment approved for sale in the United States since 1997 has included a narrowband mode.

How do I confirm whether my radios are wideband or narrowband? Check with your radio vendor.

When do I have to make the change? Whenever you want but, again, no later than Jan. 1, 2013. Keep in mind that if you interoperate (communicate) with other radio users (e.g. ski area management, public safety dispatch center, local EMS provider), your patrol and those other entities must coordinate their

wideband/narrowband operation, so you can maintain communications with them).

What happens if some of my patrol’s equipment is narrowband and some is wideband? Can they still communicate with each other? This depends on several factors, but in general, the wideband users may hear less volume, and the narrowband users may hear only partial (“clipped”) audio.

Can some channels in my radio be narrowband and others wideband? That depends on your radio model. Some radios require a “global” change; others can be reprogrammed on a per-channel basis.

What if our patrol doesn’t make the change to narrowband? The FCC can impose administrative sanctions, including fines, for failure to comply with its regulations. The NSP wants to make sure that all its patrols are in compliance.

What will happen to our license on Jan. 1, 2013? The FCC will modify all licenses to reflect narrowband operation. The assigned frequencies will remain the same.

What if we have additional questions? Too bad! Actually, send an email to rwoolf@xtechsystems.com. +

Have Your People Call Our People

Have you ever wanted to talk to someone at the national office but didn’t know who to call? Here’s a list of all NSP staff extensions. Call NSP at **303.988.1111** and dial:

Ext.	Employee	Title/Department
2645	Tim White	Executive Director
2620	Wayne Block	Finance Director
2600	Jeri Boswell	Member Services Specialist
2626	Cathy Boudreau	Member Services Specialist
2621	Christine Bourne	Corporate Sponsorship/Events Manager
2624	Joanne Galko	Accounting Assistant
2623	Joyce Harrington	Administrative Assistant
2637	Carol Hudson	Education Assistant
2629	Josh Jacobson	Marketing Assistant
2646	Cheri Overton	Director of Member Registration
2640	Scott Spakes	IT Director
2638	Drew Whitam	Assistant Warehouse/Purchasing Manager