

FCC- TETRA decision widens US communications user choice

FCC- TETRA decision widens US communications user choice The TETRA Association has announced that the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has granted its approval for products conforming to the TETRA (Terrestrial Trunked Radio) voice and data communications standard to be available in the US for business, industrial and transport sectors. Users requiring mission-critical communications can now consider TETRA technology as a potential option.

The TETRA Association and its members have been working for the last 18 months to ensure TETRA technology meets the stringent requirements of the FCC. As a result of these efforts, the FCC has granted a waiver of its part 90 rules* to allow equipment conforming to the ETSI TETRA standard to be type accepted in the US. The waiver covers equipment operating in the 450-470 MHz and 817-824/862-869 MHz bands. The FCC announcement also proposes to follow the waiver with a Rulemaking process that will allow TETRA and similar equipment to be permissible on a permanent basis.

The waiver means there are no technical or spectrum-related issues preventing the use of TETRA in the US. TETRA is one of the most efficient PMR technologies available in the world today, operating in 25kHz channels but offering 6.25 kHz efficiency by providing four voice channels in a 25kHz carrier. In its notice, the FCC made reference to the narrowbanding requirements that will apply to new systems operating in the 150-174 MHz and 421-512 MHz bands from 2011 and existing systems from 2013. The FCC commented: "Because TETRA equipment operates with the required efficiency, we believe it is in the public interest to authorize this option [TETRA] for licensees that are subject to these narrowbanding deadlines." Currently, TETRA is not available in the VHF bands.

TETRA has been adopted by 114 countries to date. It is the most established and advanced standard for critical communications, and is the technology of choice for professional users in the public safety, military, air, road and rail transport, utilities and many other market sectors.

TETRA systems have been in use for over ten years. The rich functionality delivers unparalleled communications services for airports, overground and underground rail, bus, tram and taxi operators, fuel, power, water and petrochemical industries, and is the first choice for the coordination of major events such as the Olympic Games. The FCC decision gives US users in all these areas a globally proven technology to consider.

"We applaud the FCC's decision to allow the use of existing, internationally accepted TETRA technology in North America," said William R. Moroney, President/CEO of the US-based Utilities Telecom Council global trade association,

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adding "it's an opportunity that is long overdue. TETRA Association CEO Phil Kidner said: "Choice brings healthy competition, drives innovation and ensures competitive pricing. Members of the TETRA Association are ready to ensure that US users have the opportunity to enjoy these benefits."

"The Association is delighted by the FCC's decision, and grateful to PowerTrunk and Sepura for providing the technical advice and information to assist the FCC in its consideration of our waiver application. We would also like to thank RCC Consultants for providing their expertise and knowledge of the US market and its procedures."

The Full FCC announcement text can be found here:

http://www.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2011/db0426/FCC-11-63A1.pdf
[1]

For further information please visit www.tetra-association.com [2]

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