

Interstate TRS Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes for April 6th, 2018

Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania

ATTENDEES

Mark Tauscher, Chair, TRS Providers
Ron Bibler, Vice Chair, TRS users
Linda Vandeloop, Secretary, Interstate Telecommunications Providers/Contributors
Tim Schram, State Representative
Al Sonnenstrahl, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community
Mike Strecker for Jeff Rosen, TRS Providers
Shannon Smith, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community
Brenda Kelly-Frey, State Relay Administration
Phillip Hupf, Interstate Telecommunications Providers/Contributors
Zainab Alkebsi, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community
Steve Peck, NASRA
B. J. Gallagher, Individuals with Speech Disabilities

RLSA

Dave Rolka
Joy McGrath
Kelly Kearn
Bob Loube

FCC

Eliot Greenwald
Michael Scott

CONVENE

Chairperson Tauscher greeted audience and called to order the Spring meeting of the iTRS Advisory Council at 9:01 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

The chair noted that the Fall 2017 minutes needed review, revision and/or approval. Eliot Greenwald had one correction on page 2. In the fifth bullet point down, the second word says 'but' but it should be 'for.'" Correction was accepted. Vice-Chairperson Bibler motioned to approve. Minutes passed as corrected unanimously.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Zainab Alkebsi combined the two subcommittee reports into one presentation. Ms. Alkebsi stated one subcommittee continues to look at Video Relay Service (VRS) data trends. As for the other subcommittee that was examining the contribution base erosion, Zainab elaborated that the erosion issue is not a topic the iTRS Advisory Council has any impact on.

Ron Bibler presented on the IPCTS subcommittee. The subcommittee was hoping to get an update from the FCC on the pending NPRM, and a potential release date. The subcommittee has not taken any action pending the release of the NPRM.

FCC PRESENTATION

Eliot Greenwald provided several updates:

- State TRS Program Certification Renewal
 - By July 25, 2018, CGB must reauthorize the certifications for states and territories wishing to continue operating their own TRS programs.
- Interstate TRS Advisory Council Petition for Reconsideration
 - On September 1, 2017, the TRS Advisory Council filed a petition for reconsideration.
- VRS Improvements Order
 - On October 17, 2017, the FCC published in the Federal Register the effective date of October 17, 2017, for rules adopted in the VRS Improvements Order.
- VRS At-Home Call Handling Pilot Program
 - On October 31, 2017, the FCC released a public notice authorizing ZVRS and Purple to participate in the VRS at-home call handling pilot program.
- TRS User Registration Database
 - On December 29, 2017, CGB and OMD released a Public Notice announcing that the TRS User Registration Database was ready to accept registration information for VRS users
 - On February 28, 2018, CGB and OMD issues an Order extending the deadline for VRS providers to submit registration data through March 31, 2018
 - On March 30, 2018, CGB and OMD extended this deadline to April 30th, 2018

Michael Scott provided several updates:

- Enforcement Bureau Action.
 - On June 6, 2016, Sorenson's website domain was temporarily deactivated, and as a result VRS calls made through the domain failed to connect, thereby resulting in a service outage between June 6, 2016 and June 8, 2016
- Hearing Aid Compatibility
 - On September 27, 2017, the FCC released a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeking comment on its proposal.
 - On October 24, 2017 the FCC released a Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration adopting rules on hearing aid compatibility and volume control on wireline and wireless telephones.

- Emergency Communications
 - On September 26, 2017 the Commission released a Notice of Inquiry seeking comment on improving 911 access by enterprise communications systems serving businesses, hotels, educational institutions and government entities.
 - On November 3, 2017, CGB and PSHSB granted the petition of T-Mobile USA, Inc. for clarification of the FCC's December 2016 RTT Report and Order
 - On January 31, 2018, the Commission released a Second Report and Order and Second Order on Reconsideration.
- Accessibility Innovations Expo
 - The FCC held an Accessibility Innovations Expo on October 23, 2017
- ASL Video Library
 - On February 9, 2018 DRO launched a new ASL Video Library webpage
- RTT/Refreshable Braille Roundtable
 - On Monday, April 9, 2018, the Technology Transitions Subcommittee of the Disability Advisory Committee will be holding an invitation only roundtable at the FCC

The FCC fielded questions from the iTRS Advisory Council. Discussion included improving accuracy as PSAPs across the country migrate from legacy networks to IP networks; the WEA test completed in the DC metro area; requests for reimbursement for skills-based routing; and the lack of participation in the FCC's VRS pilots being related to the rate; and the status of the FCC's order on IP CTS.

In addition, there was discussion related to providers (new and existing) applying to the FCC to provide IP CTS using automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology. This discussion included whether or not the FCC intended to establish quality standards for ASR to make sure the service and accuracy was equivalent to IP CTS with live communication assistants.

Lastly, the discussion focused on the communication and technology needs of the DeafBlind community, such as communication facilitators.

The FCC fielded questions from the audience.

Greg Hlibok of ZVRS commented that the ZVRS and Purple At-Home Call Handling Pilot was progressing well. There is great parity in the services provided from home compared to services from a call center. A question was raised from Zainab Alkebsi regarding security and privacy of call handling. Mr. Hlibok responded that the work stations are the same that you would see used in a call center. The home workstation appears to the consumer the same as the call center work station. In addition, the room itself is subject to on-site inspections and is certified as an at-home work station. The room itself has to be locked down where only the interpreter has access to the key code to enter that area of the home. Lastly, the broadband internet is encrypted, and is a separate business line run into the home, provided by ZVRS and Purple.

The Council had a break at 10:05am and reconvened at 10:20am.

TRS ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Bob Loube provided the TRS Administrator update. It needed to be noted that because there is currently only one IP Relay Provider, IP Relay would not be covered in depth, and would not have its own slide on the presentation.

Bob's presentation continued to outline how MARS rates are calculated. RolkaLoube requests data from all 50 states and a couple of territories, and approximately 49 states respond and 1 territory. States provide their rate, payment basis (conversation minutes versus session minutes), and number of interstate minutes. One item of note is the migration of states to a flat rate. In the past there was no states doing a flat rate, and now there are 8 states.

In the presentation, it was highlighted that IP CTS continues to have an explosion in minutes. Last year's forecast was 400 million minutes; this year's forecast is 521 million minutes. This is the major item in the budget at a billion dollars. The remainder of the services (\$8 million) are the traditional services that the states provide, and the federal and state both provide those services, but the IP CTS is the one that's the huge money.

Discussion continued regarding the growing cost of IP CTS, and its impact on U.S. residents' phone bills. RL has estimated the contribution factor to be 2%. Additional comments focused on the TRS surcharge versus the Universal Service Fund charges and what, if any, consumers complaints were regarding paying these line items on phone bills.

In reference to IP CTS, variation in Cost and Operating Margin for the calendar years 2016 to 2019, providers' cost estimated ranged from \$2.0285 to \$0.8859. For the Tariff Year 2018-2019 based on a MARS rate of \$2.0007 per-minute providers' operating margins ranged from 12% to 53%. These estimates are based on the providers' reported actual and projected costs and minutes.

In reference to Video Relay Service, Operating Margins for the Tariff Year 2018-2019 include the industry average operating margin is projected to be 22.0%, and the highest operating margin is projected to be 37.48%. The operating margins are based on the authorized rates and the providers' projected costs and minutes.

The Council broke for lunch at 12:00pm and reconvened at 1:00pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Fall 2018 Meeting

The Fall 2018 meeting was initially scheduled for Saturday, September 8th and Sunday, September 9th, 2018 in Minnesota – to coincide with the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) conference and the National

Association of State Relay Administrators (NASRA) conference. Due to a scheduling conflict that would prohibit multiple RolkaLoube staff members, iTRS Council members and FCC staff members from attending the meeting is rescheduled to Wednesday, September 12th, 2018 and Thursday, September 13th, 2018.

The schedule change was motioned by Tim Schram, seconded by Brenda Kelly-Frey and was passed unanimously.

Ron Bibler was tasked with coordinating the Stakeholder Presentations. BJ Gallagher requested a stakeholder presentation regarding Speech to Speech (STS) Relay. Ron Bibler also stated he would like a demonstration on Real Time Text (RTT) by Linda Vandeloop.

Fall 2019 Meeting

The iTRS Council tasked Joy McGrath of RolkaLoube to coordinate with NASRA and TEDPA on a date and location for the Fall 2019 meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, to coincide with the NASRA and TEDPA conferences.

Officer Elections

A discussion was had regarding adding a second Vice-Chair position to the officers to assist in coordinating subcommittee work. After the discussion, a motion was made to add a second Vice-Chair by Shannon Smith, seconded by Linda Vandeloop, and passed unanimously.

A discussion was had regarding changing the number of terms individuals serve on the Council from 2 to 3 four-year terms. A motion was made by Zainab Alkebsi, seconded by Al Sonnenstrahl, and passed unanimously.

Elections were conducted with the following results:

Chair – Ron Bibler by acclamation

1st Vice-Chair – Zainab Alkebsi by acclamation

2nd Vice-Chair – Brenda Kelly-Frey by acclamation

Secretary – Shannon Smith by acclamation

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURN

Friday, April 6th, 2018 at 1:55pm