Evidence to the Parliamentary Public Works Committee

Proposed

Government Radio Network Contract

(GRNC)

Government Radio Network Contract

A project by the Department for Administrative and Information Services

February 1999

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THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed that a new, single integrated State owned Government Radio Network (GRN) be established for South Australia.

The necessity for such a network is driven by community needs, technical and legislative reforms in radio communications across Australia, recommendations from the Coroner's Ash Wednesday Bushfires Report and Year 2000 compliance issues.

Essential services agencies and the community in general will benefit from an integrated, reliable, effective and up-to-date voice, mobile data and paging communications infrastructure for Government throughout the greater settled areas of South Australia. This will enable effective and efficient communication between these agencies.

It is critically important that when inevitable emergencies such as wildfires, floods and major chemical spillages occur, all emergency services are able to communicate effectively with each other. Replacement of the 28 current non-integrated and technically out dated Government networks with the purpose-built GRN will, for the first time, enable these essential cross-agency communications to take place.

As well as meeting radio communication needs, the GRN will provide a platform for a range of other valuable radio communication applications including Computer Aided Dispatch, data enquiry and vehicle location systems.

BACKGROUND

Current South Australian Government radio network arrangements consist of 40,000-45,000 users operating on 28 separate networks across 17 government agencies, utilising 1200 communication sites, 12,000 radios and 8,000 pagers.

In the main these disparate systems use out-dated technology and ageing equipment resulting in significant inter-agency communication and operational difficulties. (This is partly due to agencies holding off on radio communications development pending the implementation of the GRN. A recent review by Ernst & Young has identified that agency recurrent expenditure in relation to radio communications has declined by 44% since 1991/92).

After extensive investigations and enquiries, including advice obtained from expert consultants on the issues associated with:

- independent solutions by each agency; or
- an integrated network available to all agencies

the definitive conclusion was that the maintenance of the current arrangements was not a realistic option, and that the most cost-effective and operationally efficient approach was to move to an integrated network.

This advice was based on the proposition that, fundamentally, agencies need radio coverage in the same geographical areas.

To proceed with individual replacement programs would involve equipment duplication in most areas, especially in the provision of multiple backbone networks, which are used to connect individual radio transmission sites.

Individual replacement programs would also continue the proliferation of radio transmission sites, already in excess of 1000, as well as the poor use of radio frequency spectrum with associated licensing costs and the duplicated costs associated with maintaining up to twenty eight (28) discrete radio networks.

Most importantly, the opportunity for agencies to communicate with each other effectively, a need highlighted following the Ash Wednesday fires, would be essentially lost.

Studies by Amos Aked and Swift and Gibson Quai & Associates have endorsed the use of Astro SmartZone™ (mixed mode solution) as the technology most suitable to provide the mixed analog and digital operation required by the State and the most effective method of managing the States' encrypted voice needs.

In 1996 the State entered into an agreement with Motorola to use Motorola Astro SmartZone™, an integrated solution for voice radio equipment.

A Request For Proposal (RFP) was issued in March 1997, seeking proposals from the marketplace for an integrated whole of government network for voice, paging and data services.

As a result of this process, Telstra Corporation has been selected to design, construct, operate and manage the proposed network infrastructure.

Experience in other jurisdictions

The New South Wales, Victorian and Tasmanian Governments have integrated networks in place and Queensland and Western Australia are considering this method. In the USA, a number of states have proceeded with this approach. The UK Home Office is planning a major network, to be available in 2005, and several European countries have similar plans.

KEY AIMS

The aims of the GRN are to:

- improve services to the community particularly through faster and more accurate responses to emergencies, improved law enforcement and improved privacy of information for the community;

- improve agency and inter-agency communications;

- provide greater reliability and availability of services;

- provide greater privacy, flexibility and security through use of trunking, digital technologies and encryption;

- achieve necessary compliance with Australian Communication Authority spectrum regulations;

- provide common equipment across Government;

- facilitate the re-engineering of agencies' business operations;

- provide improved efficiency and productivity from improved telecommunications services;

- reduce the number of sites required for radio communications from the current 1200 to approximately 160; and

- meet agencies current and future operational requirements.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Improved communication

The proposed GRN will provide a purpose-built network, replacing the current networks and will enable Public Sector Agencies and emergency service organisations to communicate with each other. Advantages of this network will be seen in a variety of emergency conditions such as wildfires, floods and major chemical spillages, enabling all emergency services to communicate much more efficiently and effectively.

This will lead to improved services to the community particularly in the emergency service area.

Presently agencies operate their own networks with differing frequencies and coverage capabilities. They are unable to communicate via radio without multiple terminal equipment. For example some SES vehicles currently require short term patching arrangements or a number of radios to enable communication with other agencies.

The advantages of the integrated solution proposed include:

- the ability for agencies to communicate with each other effectively as it will be possible to have group conversation comprising operatives across Government agencies;

- the ability for agencies staff to operate on one network across the settled areas of the State without changing networks, frequencies, or equipment.

An improved level of confidentiality of communications with respect to law enforcement agencies will result from the use of trunking and digital technologies combined with encryption capabilities.

This confidentiality will also assist in improving privacy for the wider community (ie: the transmission of medical information by SA Ambulance personnel).

Compliance with ACA requirements regarding Spectrum

The majority of South Australian Government agency networks currently operate utilising VHF radio spectrum. The Commonwealth Government, which administers the allocation of radio frequencies through the *1992 Radio Communication Act*, has changed the system of VHF frequency allocation and licensing.

This policy was driven by the need to more effectively manage finite radio frequency resources as demand for radio based services increased.

It is not practicable to obtain licenses for existing South Australian Government agency networks under the new arrangements, as frequency allocations would change thereby necessitating the purchase of all new equipment.

Staying on VHF frequencies will also mean that emergency service networks are subject to increasing interference by other legitimate users, with no recourse available to the State. Agencies such as Police, SES, and CFS are currently experiencing interference problems and the likelihood of this increasing and other agencies also suffering interference will increase if the State continues to utilise VHF frequencies.

This situation is untenable for emergency service users who are dependent on unimpeded communications.

Agencies and networks effected by this situation include:

- South Australia Police – country networks;
- SA Ambulance - metropolitan and country networks;
- Country Fire Service – metropolitan and country networks;
- State Emergency Services – metropolitan and country networks;
- ETSA – metropolitan and country networks;
- SA Water – metropolitan and country networks;
- DEHAA – metropolitan and country networks;
- Forestry – metropolitan and country networks;
- SAMFS – metropolitan and country networks; and

- Human Services (Family and Youth Services) – metropolitan and country networks.

By contrast, the GRN will operate in the UHF band. The proposal includes the arrangements necessary to license the State as a Primary (priority) User. As a result, these interference problems will be effectively eliminated under the GRN.

Common equipment across Government

Operations of the State vary from time to time through portfolio reorganisations and other changes. A common radio communications platform will greatly reduce potential problems resulting from these changes, allowing agency staff to operate across organisational boundaries. Volunteers supporting the CFS and the SES will also have a common communications platform.

Training common and simplified

Competency based training will ensure a consistent approach across agencies. It will be possible to apply common training solutions, as the integrated network will eliminate the need for a broad range of terminal types.

Improved Coverage

The proposed coverage area comprising some 226,000 square kilometres of the State (see map attached) will provide all agencies with substantially improved service. Agencies will now be able to operate in areas where their individual current systems do not operate as a result of coverage inadequacies. The majority of agencies will have a significantly improved coverage area.

No agency will have a reduced coverage area.

Streamline Operations

A number of agencies are currently operationally constrained as a result of their radio communications networks coverage and technical abilities.

For example, SA Police has operational requirements to work across geographic and organisational boundaries. Current procedures require operatives to carry either multiple radios or to switch frequencies/channels to operate and communicate effectively.

SA Police utilises a UHF network in the metropolitan area and a VHF network in country regions thus causing duplication of equipment and operational arrangements. There is an opportunity to eliminate these inefficiencies under the GRN through streamlining of operational procedures and practices.

The ability to communicate across agencies will also provide opportunities for improved agency operations.

Operational Requirements

A key requirement of an integrated solution is that it meets the needs of all agencies in terms of coverage and service levels. As the proposed solution operates in a mixed (analog and digital) mode, the varying needs of agencies can be met as they can choose to operate in the mode that best meets their requirements.

Mixed mode operation means that the State is not locked into a particular mode across all user groups. Terminal Equipment operating in the digital mode is currently more expensive than analog Terminal Equipment ($1,500 as opposed to $3,000). Currently, approximately 2/3 of States users operate with analog equipment and functionality.

Building a network with full digital capability would exceed current user requirements and increase the total cost of terminal equipment significantly. There will be an opportunity for agencies to increase their terminal numbers, depending on their operational needs in the future.

The integrated mixed mode solution also resolves the SAPOL Mobile Data Network Year 2000 compliance issue.

STATE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed contract with Telstra for the GRN includes 24 Industry Development initiatives, with 18 being delivered by Telstra, and 6 by Link Telecommunications (the provider of paging network services as a sub-contractor to Telstra).

- Telstra will commit to invest in the order of $89 million and create 64 new jobs over the seven years of the GRN Contract.

- Link will commit to invest $7.8 million and create 202 new jobs over the first five years of the contract.

The Information Economy Policy Office and the Department of Industry and Trade will closely manage these initiatives. In summary, the areas in which these initiatives will focus include:

- **Call, Billing and Processing Centre Initiatives**

  These initiatives will establish three centres, further expanding South Australia's presence in this industry sector. The centres will create 241 jobs over a five year period.

- **Technology Initiatives**

  Technology based initiatives will address high speed, distance independent network solutions; software development; and two-way messaging and data services via low earth orbit satellite technology.

These initiatives will create 7 regional jobs, and provide high quality Internet access for regional and rural schools.

- **Commercial Initiatives**

  These initiatives will provide opportunities for South Australian businesses to adopt electronic commerce services at a reduced cost, and introduce multi media pay phone technology to the South Australian community.

REGIONAL IMPACT

The implementation of the GRN will improve public services across South Australia, however significant benefits are expected to be available to communities in regional South Australia. This includes:

- faster response to emergencies by SA Police and SA Ambulance Service;
- improved communications for Country Fire Service brigades;
- the ability for improved communication with other States organisations eg; CFA (Victoria) along the States borders during emergencies; and
- improved coordination among all Agencies particularly during major emergencies such as State disasters.

As a direct result of the GRN Contract it is expected that some $3.3 million of the industry development commitment by Link will be spent in a yet to be selected regional area.

Telstra will invest up to $39.8 million across all regional areas. This is primarily as the result of the provision of a high-speed data network and access arrangement for schools. This will provide particular benefit for the education of regional and rural South Australians.

The current inability of many Agencies to communicate with each other using radio, particularly during times of major emergencies, will be eliminated through the use of one integrated network. This aspect is particularly important in regional South Australia where speed of response to life threatening situations is extremely important.

SITE DETAILS

Tower site selection and subsequently site ownership is a matter that will be determined by the design work to be undertaken by Telstra during the initial stage of the contract.

The majority of the proposed sites for the GRN are owned by third parties but are either controlled by the State or Telstra through lease or licensing

agreements. Access and licence arrangements for State sites are to be managed by the Department for Administrative and Information Services in conjunction with the Crown Solicitor.

The proposed contract provides for licenses for Telstra owned sites to be granted to the State for a period of ten years (greater than the seven-year term of the proposed contract).

The proposed GRN Network Operations Control Centre is expected to be located within the State Administration Centre.

OWNERSHIP DETAILS

The Government Radio Network will be owned by the State.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Telstra will be responsible under the proposed Contract for the design of the network, site selection and site works, equipment ordering and installation, testing, acceptance and documentation of the GRN.

The GRN will operate from approximately 160 sites and provide services to an estimated 5000 portable (hand held), 8200 mobile (vehicle mounted) voice radios, 7500 pagers and 300 mobile data terminals.

The GRN will provide Mobile Radio and Paging Services to up to 45,000 users across the State.

Dedicated High Speed Mobile Data Services will also be provided for the greater Metropolitan area. The attached map outlines the extent of coverage and the Business Regions identified in this document.

Voice Services Network

Following investigation and consultants' reports into the comparison of available technology platforms, it was determined that Trunking technology provided the best overall solution for the State.

Trunked mobile radio platforms are built to enable analog, digital and a mix of analog and digital equipment to be used. These systems are able to operate both one to one style communications similar to mobile telephones, and one to many style communications as required for operational communications by the Emergency Services and Police.

Trunked platforms also provide service functionality across the full coverage area without the need to be tied to geographical areas.

The proposed Voice Services Network is to be implemented using the Motorola ASTRO™ SmartZone™ platform with OmniLink™. The platform technology is SmartZone™ which provides analog trunking. ASTRO™ adds digital functionality with OmniLink™ providing very wide area coverage capability.

Gibson Quai & Associates have confirmed that: *"……SmartZone OmniLink is the most suitable technology for use in the GRN…"*

Its suitability was assessed against the key requirements of:

- capability;
- functionality;
- mixed analog and digital network;
- terminal equipment range; and
- quantity and terminal equipment compliance.

The Motorola ASTRO™ SmartZone™ platform with OmniLink™ enables a balance between user functionality and cost to be achieved as it supports both analog and digital equipment.

Gibson Quai also provided comment on the role of other emerging technologies (such as Iridium), concluding that while satellite services provide one to one communications, unlike radio they are as yet unable to provide one to many communications. As a consequence, services delivered by satellite are currently unable to replace dispatch radio services.

If in the future, telephony services such as Global System for Mobile communication (GSM) are developed to provide one to many services, the proposed GRNC does allow the use of these services.

The Motorola ASTRO™ SmartZone™ platform with OmniLink™ also provides users low speed (9.6 KBPS) data capability for use throughout the GRN Voice Service coverage area. High speed data capability will also be provided by GRN.

Paging Services Network

The proposed Paging Services Network is to be implemented using the FLEX™ Paging protocol. Under contract to Telstra, Link Telecommunications will build and provide this service. The Paging Services Network will be purpose built to meet the needs of the Emergency Services and Police.

Mobile Data Services Network

The proposed Mobile Data Services network is to be implemented using the RDLap™ protocol with a transmission speed of 19.2 KBPS. Under contract to the State, Telstra will build and provide this service.

This network will be purpose built to meet the needs of Police, the Emergency Services and other business users. The network will solve the problems associated with non Year 2000 compliance of the existing SAPOL mobile data network, and provide a platform for mobile data applications for the Emergency Services Organisations and State commitments for the 2000 Olympic Games.

The coverage area for the Mobile Data network is designed to cover the greater metropolitan area and ranges from Two Wells, through Mt Barker, Kangarilla, to Sellicks Beach.

Network Operations Control Centre

The Network Operations Control Centre (NOCC) will manage and monitor the operation of the three (3) sub networks. This centre will be constructed on an existing State owned site (State Administration Centre).

Under the proposed GRN Contract, Telstra will provide the design and construction of all of its component parts. Under the Designated Supplier Agreement Motorola, has been designated as the voice network equipment supplier to Telstra.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

It is presently estimated that the provision, operation and use of the GRN will cost $247.7 million over the 7-year contract period. This will comprise of the flowing:

1. Contract Costs With Telstra

Contracted Capital Costs

Capital cost of the Design and Construction component of the GRN Contract is a fixed cost of $109.4 million payable over the first 4 years of the contract period.

Contracted Operating Costs

The fixed recurrent costs of operating the GRN are approximately $50.9 million over the 7-year life of the Contract.

Approximate Sub-Total $160.3 million

2. State Operation Costs

Estimated Terminal Equipment Purchase costs

The estimated cost of purchasing Terminal Equipment for use on the GRN over the 7-year life of the Contract is $38.5 million.

Other Terminal Equipment Services costs

The cost of Terminal Equipment programming, registration, installation and repair is approximately $14.1 million over the 7-year life of the Contract.

Site costs

Estimated costs associated with site works over the 7-year life of the Contract is $5.6 million.

Training costs

Provisions have been made for training of approximately 45,000 users amounting to approximately $1.9 million over the 7-year life of the Contract.

Other costs

Including Foreign Exchange hedging costs, transmission systems and billing to agencies amount to approximately $4.8 million over the contract period.

Approximate Sub-Total $64.9 million

3. Contingency Costs

Contingency Provision

The total estimated cost includes provision made for contingencies such as higher than forecast costs of interfacing Agencies' equipment with the GRN, agency transition costs, contract variations, native title disputes in relation to State sites etc have been made. This amounts to approximately $22.5 million over the period of the contract.

Approximate Sub-Total $22.5 million.

4. Impact on Consolidated Account

The total impact on the consolidated account over the seven years of the proposed Telstra contract is $225.2 million plus a contingency allowance of $22.5 million.

ECONOMIC EVALUATION

The GRN Project will provide a range of benefits to the community. These have been described in detail in the Expected Outcomes section of this submission and include:

- improved radio services particularly for the organisations in the emergency services area;
- the ability to achieve more effective radio communication between Government agencies; and
- a reduction in the duplication of equipment and operational arrangements.

These benefits are difficult to measure in economic terms. Accordingly, the economic justification for the GRN is based on identifying the lowest cost option to provide radio services within Government.

In every economic evaluation there is a need to consider the 'do nothing' option. There are several reasons why the 'do nothing' option is not justified:

- the changes in arrangements for allocation of radio frequencies by the Commonwealth Government will result in changes of frequency for State Government agencies, necessitating the purchase of new equipment;
- agencies using overlay paging services (CFS, SES and SA Ambulance) need to replace these systems to be compliant with bandplan changes;
- a large portion of equipment in existing networks is nearing technical obsolescence; and
- the SA Police mobile data network is nearing obsolescence, with replacement terminals no longer available. In addition the network is not Y2K compliant.

For these reasons there is not a “do nothing” option. There is a need for a major re-equipment program for a significant number of agencies requiring radio communications services.

The options left available are:

- Independent solutions by each agency

  The advice of both Amos Aked and Swift and Gibson Quai & Associates was that, fundamentally, agencies need radio coverage of the same geographical areas. To proceed with individual replacement programs would involve duplication of network equipment, in most areas, particularly the provision of multiple backbone networks.

  The backbone is used to connect individual radio transmission sites. It would also continue the proliferation of radio transmission sites, already in excess of 1000, as well as the poor use of radio frequency spectrum with associated licensing costs and the duplicated costs elements of maintaining up to twenty eight (28) discrete radio networks.

- An integrated network available to all agencies

  The investigations by Amos Aked and Swift and Gibson Quai & Associates have identified the use of Astro SmartZone™ as the technology most suitable to provide the mixed analogue and digital operation required by the State and the most effective method of managing the States’ encrypted voice needs.

  Their advice concluded that the most cost-effective and operationally efficient approach was to move to an integrated network.

  It is difficult to provide concise information on savings in the voice component of the GRN, however savings via the integrated approach over the individual approach can be clearly illustrated in the area of mobile data services.

Currently Police has a Mobile Data Network. The MFS has a much more limited Mobile Data Service. The SA Ambulance and SES have no mobile data network. It is well demonstrated that a Mobile Data Network significantly enhances the provision of emergency services.

- The cost of providing the replacement network for the Police alone is estimated to be approximately $4 million.

- To provide an integrated Mobile Data Network to MFS, SES, Ambulance and Police using the GRN will cost $4.6 million.

- To provide Mobile Data Networks on an individual basis would cost up to an estimated $20 million.

The MFS, CFS, Ambulance and SES require paging services. Each requires wide area paging services for call-out purposes. Commercial operators cannot provide paging due to the coverage needed and response time requirements. For each to construct a paging network to meet the stated requirements is estimated to cost up to a total of $46 million. Using the GRN backbone network this service will involve a network construction cost of an estimated $9 million in total.

Savings in network costs for mobile data and paging services using the integrated approach proposed are estimated to be in the region of $52 million over individual solutions.

In Net Present Value (NPV) terms the total cost of the project including forecast spend plus a 10% contingency allowance equates to $221.41 million discounted at 7%, and inflated in accordance with Australian Bureau of Statistics forecasts.

Although network access is not being considered for commercial users, there are a number of potential users who, for operational reasons, could be given access to the GRN. These include Local Government, Defence, Federal Police, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Royal District Nursing Society and the Surf Life Saving Association.

As highlighted in the Coroner's report and other studies the State will be best served by an integrated network that can result in a reduction of property damage and loss of life resulting from improved emergency services communications.

PROJECT PROGRAM

Schedule of Key Dates to Completion of the Project

The broad Project Program is for Construction of the GRN to be staged over a three-year period.

It is proposed (given a contract signing in first quarter 1999) that the Metropolitan area (part of Business Region 1) will be completed during the third quarter of 1999. The remainder of Business Region 1 (Fleurieu Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide Hills) and the other 4 Business Regions (South East, Yorke Peninsula and Flinders Ranges, Riverland and Mallee, Eyre Peninsula and West Coast) will then be commissioned at six monthly intervals in that order.

Telstra is contracted for network design, site selection and works, equipment ordering and installation, testing, acceptance and documentation of the GRN during the construction period prior to hand over to the State.

In tabular form the contracted network construction time lines are as follows:

Contract Signing	Month 0
Construction Commences	Month 1
Business Region 1(a) *Metro* • delivery and installation (including testing) of the major base network infrastructure • completion of the Network Operations Control Centre (NOCC) and installation of Management Systems	Month 6*
Business Region 1(b) *Fleurieu Peninsula*	Month 9*
Business Region 2 *South East*	Month 15*
Business Region 4 *Yorke Peninsula and Flinders Ranges (including the townships of Leigh Creek, Woomera, Roxby Downs, Coober Pedy, Oodnadatta, Marla and Mintabie)*	Month 21*
Business Region 3 *Riverland and Mallee*	Month 27*
Business Region 5 *Eyre Peninsula and West Coast*	Month 33 *

*Services become available at that time

Agencies will be transferred to the Network as services become available. This transfer time will vary from agency to agency depending on their scale of operations and specific operational requirements.

PROJECT PROCUREMENT

Telstra was selected as the preferred bidder as the result of a competitive tender process.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The GRNC Unit within the Department for Administrative and Information Services has responsibility for managing the Contract with Telstra Corporation. The GRNC Unit consists of 3 sub teams, being:

- Construction;
- Agency Support/Transition; and
- Commercial Support

The Department has appointed an Executive Director, who is accountable to the Deputy Chief Executive for the efficient, effective and prudent delivery of the GRN. The Executive Director has prior experience in the implementation of a GRN and has extensive skills and experience in the management of large and complex projects within both the private and public sectors.

Agency Steering Committee

It is proposed that an advisory Government Radio Network Steering Committee be established to provide ongoing, non-executive monitoring, oversight and supervision of the GRNC and the GRN Unit. The Committee will:

- consist of a Chairperson, to be appointed by Cabinet on the advice of the Minister for Administrative Services, and senior representatives of a number of the participating agencies, to be appointed by the Minister for Administrative Services on the Advice of the Chairperson; and
- report regularly to the Minister for Administrative Services who will in turn report to Cabinet annually on the performance of the GRNC.

Project Management Methodology

The Department will ensure that the management of the Project will be carried out in accordance with appropriate project management and best practice principles.

Project Expertise

Over the course of the Project the Department has engaged the services of various experts to help ensure process and outcomes are of the highest standard. Advice on Legal, financial, currency exchange and technical issues has been sought from experts as needed, including;

- Crown Solicitors Office on legal matters;
- Ernst and Young on financial issues including the completion of a quality check on the financial modelling;
- SAFA on foreign exchange issues;
- SAICORP on contract liability, including contingent liability;

- external probity auditor from PSI Consulting Pty Ltd in respect of the evaluation and negotiation processes;
- Gibson Quai and Associates on technical matters; and
- the Departments Principal Risk Adviser has been involved in assessing and managing the risks of the Project.

HERITAGE STATUS AND ABORIGINAL LAND OR SACRED SITES

The majority of sites for the GRN will utilise existing site and building infrastructure.

Under the proposed contract Telstra will be responsible for site selection and site works along with associated planning and development approvals. The Crown Solicitor's Office will also be reviewing sites nominated by Telstra and advising on any issues that may arise at each site.

The selection of sites to be used by the proposed GRN will be subject to Telstra's detailed network design.

CONSULTATION AND APPROVALS

The consultation process in relation to the GRN has been extensive.

Agencies

The views and involvement of Agencies has been sought including:

- extensive consultation with officers of the Department of Treasury and Finance on many issues including the principles for the GRNC;
- the Crown Solicitor has been involved with the GRNC since the inception of the Project providing advice on a wide range of issues; and
- the Department of Justice, being the Portfolio responsible for the Emergency Services, has been closely involved with the GRN project.

Over the last two years regular consultations have been held with each of the participating agencies, with Transition Coordinators (Account Managers) from the GRNC Unit assigned to support this process. In particular:

- The Emergency Service Agencies, the SA Police and TransAdelaide were extensively involved in the GRNC evaluation process;
- The Project Director, GRNC Unit, met with the GRNC Emergency Service Organisation (GESOC) (a group of senior representatives of the Emergency Service organisations) on a regular basis over the last 18 months; and
- Consultations have been held with the State Disaster Committee.

In addition GRNC Unit staff participated in about 50 briefing sessions (including briefing sessions in regional and rural areas). These briefings were

consultative and issues/suggestions raised at the briefings by participants were incorporated into negotiations with Telstra.

Review Bodies

- The Prudential Management Group has been briefed and has considered the GRN on a number of occasions. The Industrial Claims Coordination Committee (ICCC) has provided advice in identifying and resolving Human Resource management and industrial issues potentially arising from the implementation of the GRN. The ICCC has indicated its support for the adopted Human Resource Management approach, which is consistent with the established Outsourcing: Human Resources Management Principles.

- A Probity Auditor has been engaged throughout the evaluation and negotiation phases of the Project. The Probity Auditor has reported:

  "…….that the processes and practices leading to the development of an agreed contractual position for presentation to Cabinet were consistent with the current guidelines and good procurement practice……."

Other

The Project Director, GRNC Unit, has met with and briefed the Executive Director, Local Government Association, who is supportive of the aims of the project.

Regular discussions have been held with the unions and associations representing the staff potentially affected by the GRN.

It is anticipated that a number of community organisations will be impacted by the GRN project. In the main, consultation with these community organisations has occurred indirectly, through the agency with which the organisation has an operational relationship. For example, the views of St John Volunteer Service have been expressed through discussions with the SA Ambulance Service and the views of the SA Volunteer Coast Guard have been expressed through discussions with the State Emergency Service.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The GRN will provide Emergency Service organisations the capacity to provide a higher degree of coordinated response and control of emergency situations.

This will be aided by their ability to effectively communicate with other organisations such as Forestry SA, DEHAA, Primary Industries and Resources SA and Transport SA to manage more effectively emergency environmental threats such as wildfires, fuel spills, floods and accidents.

There is an opportunity to reduce the number of communication sites, (which generally occupy hilltops). The requirement for radio communication sites under the GRN will reduce from 1200 currently in use to approximately 160 sites. The associated reduction in the number of structures such as towers and the number and use of access roads will improve both the ecological and the visual amenity of some areas.

ACQUITTALS

The Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Crown Solicitor have reviewed this submission and considered that the proposal has been developed in accordance with the legal requirements, accepted procedures and guidelines. No outstanding issues have been identified.

CABINET APPROVAL

On 1 February 1999 Cabinet considered and approved the GRN Project and this submission to the Public Works Committee.