

STAC RF Awareness Sub-Committee Notes

Meeting: March 28, 2017; 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Structure, Tower &
Antenna Council
Conseil des structures,
pylônes et antennes

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 14 – 1:30 p.m. EST

DIAL IN INFO: Toll-free: 1-866-234-0247; Local (Toronto): 416-443-4589

Conference ID: 612392

Action Items:

- Nick says he will include updated index for this project document with the meeting notes for this meeting (see index on final page of these notes)
- Nick to draft survey to ask STAC members which companies/consultants they have used for RF Awareness training and which ones they have used for RF Surveys (if any)
- Nick to reach out to carriers to ask whether they would like STAC to develop a one-page document to help educate landlords about RF and RF precautions
- Nick to follow up with QETE about potential dates for a STAC RF Chamber Test

Attendees:

- Nick Kyonka (STAC)
- Clay Parchewsky (WesTower)
- Dan Renaud (Telecon)
- Deanna Spring (WSP)
- Greg Gasbarre (Titan AEX)
- Jeanne Piercey (P-SEC)
- Jill Cairns (Titan AEX)
- Lindsay Tomalik (Tridon)
- Mathew Koziell (Stantec)
- Neill Harlen (Interfax Systems)
- Ofir Smadja (COMsolve)
- Tom Lee (Rogers)

Meeting Notes:

1. Review of Committee Projects

- Monitor Calibration Verification: Nick notes that STAC launched just as the new Safety Code 6 requirements were coming into effect, and was informed at the time that there was a fair bit of confusion as to which monitors were compliant with the new standard
 - This led STAC to launch a team to take steps to verify that monitors were calibrated to the SC6 2015 limits by ensuring that manufacturers/distributors of monitors provide written verification that their monitors will function properly under those limits and that they are willing to provide a calibration verification notice with each monitor
 - Initially, only Narda S3 was on the list of monitors we had verified, though we have since added the FieldSENSE 2.0 and MVG-EME Guard XS-SC6 monitors as well
 - MVG monitor just added this month: Nick notes that it must be the SC6 model to be compliant with SC6-15
 - Nick notes that all three of these monitors will be demoed at the conference in the RF Monitor Usage Demonstration
 - Notes that this will be focused on use of the monitors, and not on comparing them to each other
 - Nick notes that we will continue to add monitors as appropriate, though adds that no other company has claimed to have a product that should be added
- Personal RF Monitor Best Practices: this project is completed and the related document was released earlier this month (available here: <http://members.stacouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/STAC-Personal-RF-Monitor-Best-Practices.pdf>)
 - Nick notes that this document is designed to be a refresher for people who have already completed RF Awareness training and is not designed to replace that training

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- Notes that the document contains information on what workers need to know about RF monitors: why they're important, how they work, how to hold them, troubleshooting advice, calibration, etc ...
- Nick thanks Neill Harlen from Interfax Systems, who was the primary author on this document, as well as all other volunteers: Sam Fadlallah (Rogers), Dan Renaud (Telecon), Dave Ramdeane (Bell), Deanna Spring (WSP), Gregory Gasbarre (Titan AEX), Keith Ranney (Bell) and Mathew Koziell (Stantec)
- Nick says printed copies of this document will be available at the RF Monitor Usage Demonstration at the conference
- Best Practices for Identifying RF Hot Zones: Nick says that this project was first identified last spring, but didn't start moving until the fall as this committee had other projects; project slowed last two months due to conference planning
 - Idea is to produce a best practices document to help individuals know how to identify RF hot zones, including by identifying visual indicators that could suggest the presence of a hot zone
 - Nick notes that project team is meeting every three weeks to discuss each section of the report and to provide points for Nick to write about in the draft document
 - Nick says he will include updated index for this project document with the meeting notes for this meeting (see index on final page of these notes)
 - Nick notes that anyone else who would like to get involved in this project should contact him to let him know
- 2. Review of Other Related Activities**
- RF Chamber Test: Nick says he was in touch with DND and QETE earlier this year to discuss when STAC might be able to gain access to an RF Chamber, likely near Ottawa
 - Nick has not yet heard back from them with a time that might work
 - Nick says he plans to reach out to QETE again following the conference
 - Nick notes that some of the questions we wanted to have answered through the Chamber Test include:
 - Whether monitors perform as expected in a controlled environment
 - Whether holding a monitor in a certain way can affect its readings and accuracy;
 - Whether a monitor's performance is affected by proximity to metal clasps
 - Nick notes that anyone who has any additional questions that STAC could potentially answer through an RF Chamber Test should contact him to discuss
 - Committee member asks whether participants will need to have security clearance to attend
 - Nick says he has not been informed of any such requirements as of yet
 - Committee member says he has been in the QETE chamber and it does not require security clearance from the government
- Best Practices for Responding to RF Hot Zones: Nick says this is another project that they have tabled until after completion of the other best practices document focused on identifying RF hot zones
 - Says this document would provide more detailed information on what to do if a hot zone exists
 - Nick says he thinks the first best practices document will be through the draft process by this fall, so this project will likely start in fall or in early 2018

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- STAC Radiofrequencies and Microwaves Guidelines: STAC worked to modify and re-publish a document submitted by a STAC Member company that relates to safe work guidelines for working around RF and microwaves
 - This document was published last fall and can be found here:
<http://members.stacouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/STAC-Radio-Frequencies-Microwaves.pdf>
- Committee member says the RF Monitor project was very helpful to her company
- 3. Identification of Potential Future Projects**
- Committee member asks whether STAC can create a list of companies that are capable of conducting RF surveys; says this could be included in the Identifying RF Hot Zones document
 - Nick says he believes it would be of value for STAC to develop this list either way
 - Committee member says she believes that the list should be posted to the STAC Members website instead of the document, and cautions that it must be “as agnostic as possible” in not recommending one company over another
 - Committee member says it would be a useful tool for now members – may be a good idea to post it on the main STAC website instead of the Members website
 - Committee member says this should actually be two lists: one for companies that do measured surveys and one for companies that only do calculated surveys
 - General agreement
 - Nick asks that anyone who has used a consultant to complete an RF Survey to please email him to identify the company that completed the survey
 - Nick asks whether it is useful to re-publish companies’ internal documents more frequently, or if we should be more careful to only produce documents that focus on specific topics without duplicating points too much
 - General agreement to avoid duplication as much as possible
 - Committee member suggests that we also try to better categorize the documents we post so individuals can find specific information more quickly
 - Nick to work on cleaning up committee resources posted on STAC Members website
 - Committee member suggests that STAC should also start a list of companies that offer Safety Code 6 (2015) training
 - Committee member notes that many people get online RF training, and that this is often training under FCC guidelines and limits, not Safety Code 6
 - General agreement this is a good idea
 - Committee member notes there are two levels of training: RF Awareness (training for people who work around RF in the field) and RF Surveying (training for people who complete surveying or design antennas)
 - Committee member says the only companies he is aware of that offer RF Awareness training in Canada are Interfax Systems and YRH
 - Nick asks if anyone else is aware of any additional trainers
 - Ofir says that COMsolve has also started offering RF Awareness training after modifying their in-house training for a third party
 - Committee member suggests that we send out a survey to ask who people are using for RF Training

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- Says the survey should just ask about a few specific items to confirm that they are teaching those topics, without getting into measuring or grading each training course too much
- Some questions could include:
 - Are they teaching about the shaped nature of the SC6-15 standard vs. the 2009 limits?
 - Are they instructing on controlled vs. uncontrolled environment?
 - Are they instructing on signage?
- Committee member says that many industries and companies are still not yet aware that the limits were changed
 - Nick asks whether there are any additional industries that STAC should be educating about this in order to benefit STAC Members
 - General agreement: no, because educating members of the public is difficult and will detract from STAC's ability to educate its members on other topics
 - Committee member suggests we could develop a general overview document to post on the public website
 - Nick notes that CWTA is hesitant to post any RF-related documents on public-facing website due concerns that it can be misunderstood
 - Nick asks whether it might be worth asking carriers if they would like STAC to develop a document that they could share with landlords to explain RF safety (one-pager document)
 - General agreement

4. Planning and Priorities for 2017

- Nick notes that we are about 15% done the Identifying RF Hot Zones best practices document, and that this committee can only really work on one of these big projects at a time
 - General agreement that this is the priority
 - Nick estimates it will take approximately 6 months to finish this project, notes that we can move on to the Responding to RF Hot Zones document afterwards
- Nick says he will follow-up with QETE to inquire about the Chamber Test
- Nick notes that we have also identified a few other projects that can be worked on in the background, including:
 - List of RF Awareness training providers
 - List of RF survey providers
 - One-pager for carriers to give to landlords
- Nick suggests that we prioritize the RF survey providers list first
 - Would be able to ask for input in advance of next meeting and discuss list at next meeting before posting to website
- Nick says he would follow with the list of companies providing training
 - Would be included in the same survey with the RF survey providers question
- One-pager for carriers to provide to landlords is lower priority
 - General agreement



STAC – Best Practices for Identifying RF Hot Zones
Working Index

Section	Sub-Section
Introduction	Purpose and scope of document
	Identification of equipment being discussed
	Resources
Intro to RF	What is RF
	Biological effects
	Safety Code 6
Working with RF	Exposure levels
	Precautionary approach
	Standard precautions before entering job site
Protective Measures	Personal RF monitors
	Additional or alternative protective measures
Identifying Hot Zones	Identifying RF emitting equipment
	Identifying damage to equipment
	Installing new equipment
	Working on existing installations
	Exposure warning signs
Responding to Hot Zones	Post-exposure response (time and distance)
	Reporting
	Signage
FAQs	Frequently asked questions
References	References