



National Search and
Rescue Secretariat

Executive
Director

Secrétariat national
Recherche et sauvetage

Directeur
exécutif

28 February, 2011

Mr. Adrian Florea
Manager, Mobile Technology and Services,
DGEPS, Industry Canada,
300 Slater Street, Ottawa
Ontario K1A 0C8

Dear Mr. Florea;

On behalf of the Interdepartmental Committee for Search and Rescue (ICSAR) and the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS), thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Industry Canada *Consultation on a Policy and Technical Framework for the 700 MHz Band and Aspects Related to Commercial Mobile Spectrum (Notice No. SMSE-018-10)*.

One of the key success factors in responding to an emergency, whether a search and rescue (SAR) incident or natural disaster, is effective communications. The existing telecommunications networks in Canada pose significant challenges to the Canadian public safety community, including SAR first responders. The 20 MHz allocation would allow SAR first responders to exchange prompt and adequate information when they need it most while ensuring surge capacity to meet the information demands of large scale emergency situations. Existing public safety wireless networks are incapable of passing real-time multimedia data and commercial networks are unable to support next generation, mission-critical broadband technologies. Officials in the United States have mitigated these challenges already by allocating a portion of the 700 MHz band for public safety purposes.

Anticipating and establishing a robust dedicated capability is critical. Appreciation of the need for commercial investment must be balanced with consideration of the public interest and the safety of Canadians. The ICSAR and the NSS recommend that a portion of the 700 MHz band be reserved for public safety purposes and support Public Safety Canada's response to Industry Canada's consultation.

Sincerely,

Geraldine Underdown
Chair, ICSAR
Executive Director, NSS

The Interdepartmental Committee on Search and Rescue is comprised of the Departments of National Defence, Fisheries & Oceans, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Parks Canada, Environment Canada and Transport Canada.

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