

## REVIEW

The first of any year is always a good time to look back and take stock. There comes that inevitable feeling of freshness, renewed determination and resolution to do things better and differently. Humans being just that, it is also inevitable that as time passes the high ideals and lofty goals tend to level out a bit as we strike out down the new year.

APCO has had a good year. It has completed Phase Two of Project Three and is now well into Phase Three. As a result of that, it made the foremost presentation before the FCC in the matters of Dockets 18261 and 18262. The APCO Frequency Coordinators Manual will be out in a few months. President Flood has his committees working hard on other projects, among which is the beginning of an audio visual operating procedures package. The supplement of the Operating Manual, a compilation of the individual Operating Point articles in the BULLETIN, will be out before 1971 has ended.

There are still many large issues to be met, included in which are those relating to larger revenue sources for the Association as a means of supporting the assistance of permanent office personnel. It is always interesting to learn what others think about matters in which we ourselves are so deeply involved that we sometimes don't feel that we have the objectiveness necessary for making good decisions.

In looking over past files we ran across a section from the Science and Technology Task Force of the Report to the President's Crime Commission. In it we found issues already treated, some under treatment and still others yet to come. It was also interesting to note a comment on coordinated communications which relates to our recent issue on 911 and the feature article in this issue. We quote the Task Force's Procedures For Development of Quantitative Projections of Needs:

"With the exception of the Associated Public Safety Communication Officers (APCO), the organizations which provide guidance to the FCC in police communications matters do so from the overall viewpoint of the land-mobile users. Further, industry is well represented in these other organizations which include the Land Mobile Advisory Committee of the FCC and the Land Mobile Section of the Electronics Industries Association. While there is no fundamental objections to industry working in support of public safety—and indeed the technical personnel supplied by industry have made some outstanding contributions—the industry sales base in police communications is small compared to its sales base in commercial and industrial mobile communications.

"The only organization, then, that represents the police communications community directly is APCO. APCO, however, is a professional organization composed mainly of public safety communications personnel who pay their own dues to provide operating funds. There are some State, county, and municipal memberships (governmental) in Illinois, Arizona, and

California, but for the most part the local governments provide no formal support. While a greatly strengthened FCC field organization would relieve APCO of many of its radio spectrum user coordination responsibilities, such a development would represent outside monitoring rather than voluntary user cooperation and would represent a more expensive and probably less effective means of effecting an FCC user interface. APCO, presuming it can obtain the financial support to carry out the duties involved, is probably the most logical organization to provide the FCC with continued projections of police needs and to guide the police community toward a unified approach to their radio-spectrum problems. In spite of these handicaps, APCO has provided leadership in publicizing to the FCC the communications problems of public safety and the police. The organization supports a Washington-based attorney to represent public safety interests to the FCC. APCO has neither the financial resources nor the personnel, however, to prepare the detailed engineering analysis or economics studies which are so often required to provide effective evidence in FCC dockets. While the service that APCO has been performing has been of unique value and should be encouraged, there is room for further steps to enable the public safety users to effectively present their needs. Accordingly, the following two recommendations are made.

"It is recommended that the FCC seek to develop long-range predictions, with justifications, of the communications needs of the police.

"It is recommended that the FCC inform the various States and the heads of local governments in the large metropolitan areas that they will, in the future, be expected to provide justification for their radio frequency needs in the form of overall projected public safety requirements for the next decade.

"The problem in seeking to provide a single unified spokesman for the public safety community is twofold in nature. On the one hand, there is the division into departments of police, fire, highways, forestry, and conservation which tends to make coordination more difficult. On the other hand, the concept of coordinated public safety activities inevitably carries with it the overtones of excessive governmental control. The recommendations developed here have been made with these considerations in mind.

"The projections of police and public safety user needs as made at the national level will necessarily be nationwide in scope. The congestion in the mobile bands is, however, very much a function of geography, being particularly intense in metropolitan areas. Thus, the projected needs derived at the national level should be amplified and detailed by local projections. Further, the existence of a body of documentation detailing the public safety, and in particular the police, requirements will serve to a large extent as a single voice for the public safety community. While the industrial and commercial users of the spectrum will continue to have very vocal representation before the FCC of their interests, the public safety requirements are such that they are very difficult to deny when justified."

From: Science and Technology Task Force  
Report to President's Crime Commission.

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