

BEFORE THE  
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

DOCKET NO. 110013-TP

REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION OF  
PROPOSALS FOR RELAY SERVICE,  
BEGINNING IN JUNE 2012, FOR  
THE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING,  
DEAF/BLIND, OR SPEECH IMPAIRED,  
AND OTHER IMPLEMENTATION MATTERS  
IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FLORIDA  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS SYSTEM  
ACT OF 1991.

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PROCEEDINGS: TASA ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TAKEN AT THE  
INSTANCE OF: The Staff of the Florida  
Public Service Commission

DATE: Friday, October 25, 2013

TIME: Commenced at 1:32 p.m.  
Concluded at 3:28 p.m.

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center  
Room 148  
4075 Esplanade Way  
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: JANE FAUROT, RPR  
Official FPSC Reporter  
(850) 413-6732

1 APPEARANCES:

2 Curtis Williams, PSC Staff

3 Bob Casey, PSC Staff

4 Cindy Miller, Esquire, PSC Staff

5 Carl Vincent, PSC Staff

6 Maryrose Sirianni, AT&T

7 James Forstall, FTRI

8 Greg Denes, Channel Manager, AT&T Relay

9 Greg Follensbee, AT&T

10  
11 APPEARANCES (via phone):

12 Kim Schur, AuD, Director, Center for Hearing  
13 and Communication

14 Cheryl Rhodes, Florida Deaf/Blind Association

15 Becki Edmonston, Verizon

16 Sidney Minnick, Florida Relay Contract Manager,  
17 AT&T Relay

18 Chris Littlewood, Florida Coordinating Council  
19 for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**P R O C E E D I N G S**

1  
2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Good afternoon, everyone. I  
3 think we can go ahead and get started.

4 My name is Curtis Williams, and I will be  
5 chairing today's meeting.

6 For those of you on the telephone, I just want  
7 to ask that you please mute your telephone so that we  
8 don't get any feedback noise here. Just please mute it  
9 until you're ready to talk.

10 The first thing we would like to do this  
11 afternoon is have our attorney, Cindy Miller, read the  
12 notice.

13 **MS. MILLER:** Welcome. Pursuant to notice  
14 issued, this time, date, and place were set for this  
15 meeting in the Telecommunications Access System Advisory  
16 Committee in Docket 110013-TP.

17 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Cindy.

18 Just for some housekeeping matters, I'll do  
19 the introductions today, and then would like the  
20 participants to introduce themselves and who they  
21 represent. First we'll do the participants here, and  
22 then we'll go to the participants on the telephone.

23 Bob Casey will do some FCC and PSC updates,  
24 followed by Carl Vinson who will do an overview of the  
25 PSC's recent review of FTRI's operations. Then FTRI

1 will do a presentation of their annual report. Then  
2 we'll take a fifteen-minute break and come back with  
3 AT&T Relay's presentation.

4 After that, we'll discuss any matters anyone  
5 would like to bring up, and then conclude the meeting  
6 this afternoon. For the initial meeting notes, TASA  
7 Committee Members Kim Schur, Cheryl Rhodes, Chris  
8 Littlewood, and Becki Edmonston will be participating by  
9 phone during today's meeting. We also have Sid Minnick  
10 representing AT&T on the phone.

11 A transcript will be made available of today's  
12 meeting and provided to all TASA members. Please make  
13 sure your microphone is on when speaking, and we'll ask  
14 everyone to please silence your cell phone calls during  
15 today's meeting.

16 For introductions, I'd like to go ahead and  
17 introduce PSC staff members again. That's Bob Casey to  
18 my left, Cindy Miller -- I mean, Bob Casey to my left  
19 here, Cindy Miller to my right here, and Carl Vinson to  
20 my far right representing our audit staff. Carl is with  
21 the Office of Auditing and policy Analysis, as stated  
22 earlier.

23 At this time, I'd like to go ahead and take  
24 appearances from those who are in attendance.

25 **MS. SIRIANNI:** Maryrose Sirianni, AT&T.

1           **MR. FORSTALL:** James Forstall with FTRI.

2           **MR. DENES:** Greg Denes with AT&T.

3           **MR. FOLLENSBEE:** Greg Follensbee with AT&T.

4           **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you.

5           At this time we'll go ahead and take  
6           appearances from those members who are participating by  
7           telephone.

8           **MS. SCHUR:** Kim Schur, Deaf Service Center.

9           **MS. RHODES:** Cheryl Rhodes, Florida Deaf-Blind  
10          Agency.

11          Hello.

12          **MS. EDMONSTON:** Becki Edmonston representing  
13          Verizon.

14          **MR. MINNICK:** Sid Minnick representing AT&T.

15          **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Are there any other  
16          members or any individuals participating by telephone  
17          this afternoon?

18          **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Good afternoon. This is  
19          Chris Littlewood representing the Florida Coordinating  
20          Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, also St.  
21          Petersburg College CCSI (phonetic).

22          I'm only using a CapTel phone, so I have got a  
23          significant delay before I am able to read what  
24          everybody is saying, so bear with me for that.

25          **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay, Chris. That didn't

1 appear to be a problem. There was a slight delay, but  
2 it didn't seem to be a problem. But, if possible, I  
3 think we will need you to speak a little louder or  
4 increase your volume. It was a little difficult hearing  
5 you.

6 With that, if there are no other participants  
7 on the telephone, I think we are ready to get started.  
8 So at this time, I'll ask Mr. Bob Casey to present PSC  
9 technical staff's presentation.

10 **MR. CASEY:** Okay. Thank you, Curtis.

11 What I'd like to do is go over FCC orders and  
12 give you some PSC updates since our last TASA meeting.

13 I always put this slide up to remind people if  
14 they see an FCC order, if it -- if the prefix is FCC, it  
15 means that it has been approved by the whole Federal  
16 Communications Commission, all Commissioners. If it's a  
17 DA number which precedes the number, it means it's  
18 issued by a bureau or office of the FCC by delegated  
19 authority. That's what the DA means, delegated  
20 authority.

21 The first order I want to go over was released  
22 June 10th of this year. This order was adopted to make  
23 comprehensive reforms to the VRS program. And the  
24 measures to reform the program include promoting  
25 interoperability and portability standards, creating a

1 centralized TRS user registration database, encouraging  
2 competition and innovation in VRS call-handling  
3 services, and spurring research and development in VRS  
4 services by entering into an MOU, or memo of  
5 understanding with the National Science Foundation.

6 The next order was released July 2nd, 2013,  
7 and this was for the deaf-blind program. The FCC  
8 announced the allocation of \$9.5 million in 2013/2014  
9 funding for programs in each state. The certified  
10 program in each state as well as the District of  
11 Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands  
12 receive a base amount of \$50,000 plus a portion of the  
13 remaining amount proportionate to the population of the  
14 state.

15 Now, for the 2012/2013 year, Florida received  
16 a grant of \$463,782. For the 2013/2014 year, they upped  
17 it a little bit to \$466,527. And, of course, this is  
18 part of the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution  
19 Program which was started in 2011.

20 (Telephone interference.)

21 Too much static?

22 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes. We'd like to make just  
23 one announcement. I think someone that's participating  
24 on the line, there's significant static, and it's having  
25 some effect on the court reporters. I'm not sure who it

1 is, but if everyone on the line can just check your  
2 phone or check your environment and make that  
3 adjustment, we would appreciate it. Thank you.

4 **MS. SCHUR:** This is Kim Schur. I have some  
5 construction going on. Can you tell me how to mute so  
6 you can't hear me?

7 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Well, if you can just, on your  
8 actual device, if you can just locate the mute button,  
9 and press that button. And we can give you feedback or  
10 we can respond and let you know whether or not you're  
11 the cause of the problem.

12 **MS. SCHUR:** Okay.

13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Just let me know if you're able  
14 to locate it.

15 That's much better. I think we identified the  
16 issue. Okay. Thank you, Cheryl.

17 **MR. CASEY:** Okay. Back to the orders. The  
18 next order was released July 8th, it was DA13-1530.  
19 And, of course, DA means that it was released by  
20 delegated authority of the office. And this granted a  
21 five-year certification to the Florida TRS program  
22 pursuant to Title IV of the ADA, or Americans for  
23 Disabilities Act. The FCC determined that the Florida  
24 TRS program meets or exceeds all operational, technical,  
25 and functional minimum standards contained in Section



1 64-604 of the Commission's rules.

2 The Florida TRS program makes available  
3 adequate procedures and remedies for enforcing the  
4 requirements of their program and the Florida TRS  
5 program in no way conflicts with federal law. Those  
6 were the determinations that the FCC made.

7 The next order was issued July 19th, and this  
8 was for speech-to-speech relay services. By this order  
9 the FCC's action improves the STS user's experience on a  
10 call by increasing the time a communications assistant  
11 must stay with a call from 15 minutes to 20 minutes,  
12 allowing STS users the option to mute their voices  
13 during an STS call, and ensuring that STS users who dial  
14 711 have the same ease of reaching an STS communications  
15 assistant as users of other types of TRS.

16 Now, in addition to the order, they asked for  
17 comment on their further notice of proposed rulemaking,  
18 and they asked for comment on these three items:  
19 Whether to contract for a national STS outreach  
20 coordinator to conduct all STS outreach; whether to  
21 adopt consumer registration for STS; and whether to  
22 adopt other recommendations made by consumers to improve  
23 STS, such as the use of caller profiles that provide  
24 communications assistance with information about the  
25 communication preferences of STS users in advance of the

1 calls. As most of you know, the primary person on these  
2 dockets is Doctor Bob Segalman. He's a nationally known  
3 STS advocate.

4 The next order is the IP captioned telephone  
5 service order, which may have a great effect on the  
6 State of Florida. The three big things that came out of  
7 it I included here, which is Paragraph 96, and these are  
8 the words of the FCC.

9 "We continue to believe that given the unusual  
10 characteristics of IP CTS relative to other relay  
11 services, it is reasonable and prudent to require that  
12 equipment, software, and mobile applications used in  
13 conjunction with IP CTS have a default setting of  
14 'captions off' at the beginning of each call, so that  
15 the consumer must make an affirmative step to turn on  
16 the captions each time the consumer wishes to use IP  
17 CTS."

18 Now, FTRI doesn't distribute IP CTS at this  
19 time. We do, of course, do the captioned telephone for  
20 landline, and that does have a captions off switch on it  
21 already, and James has already made arrangements for  
22 that. And that has been for a few years, as a matter of  
23 fact.

24 Paragraph 137, this is the one that will have  
25 a great effect on Florida. "Given the original reasons

1 for having the fund provide compensation for these calls  
2 may no longer exist, we believe that the FCC should  
3 reconsider its prior decision to treat IP CTS as an  
4 entirely interstate service and propose instead that the  
5 service be treated like traditional captioned telephone  
6 service, wherein state relay programs would be required  
7 to compensate providers for intrastate IP CTS calls."

8 Now we had one problem with this, and we don't  
9 know how many minutes would be charged to the State of  
10 Florida. And you'll see a little later, we made  
11 comments to the FCC asking them to provide the states  
12 how many minutes are in use right now for IP CTS so we  
13 can calculate what the amount of money would be that  
14 Florida would have to pay. I did do a rough estimate  
15 based on the VRS and IP-Relay minutes used for the State  
16 of Florida. And based on those, we are guessing about  
17 \$5 million a year would be charged to the State of  
18 Florida.

19 Paragraph 138 of the order. "Mandating CTS and  
20 IP CTS. While every state voluntarily offers captioned  
21 telephone service, the Commission currently does not  
22 mandate the provision of either captioned telephone  
23 service or IP captioned telephone service. Given that  
24 we are now proposing to shift some of the financial  
25 obligations associated with IP CTS to the state

1 programs, we seek comment on whether a mandate is needed  
2 to ensure that all states will participate in the  
3 provision of these services." And when I get to the PSC  
4 comments, you'll see some comments that we have  
5 submitted to the FCC on this order.

6 The next order is FCC 13-127, and it was  
7 released September 30th. This order clarified the  
8 text-to-911 bounce-back requirement when consumers are  
9 roaming; in other words, traveling outside of the  
10 consumer's home wireless service network.

11 In the previous May 2013 bounce-back order,  
12 the FCC required providers of messaging services to  
13 provide an automatic bounce-back text message when a  
14 consumer attempts to send a text message to 911 in a  
15 location where text-to-911 is not available.

16 The bounce-back requirement has been amended  
17 to specify that when a consumer attempts to send a  
18 text-to-911 while roaming, the provider offering roaming  
19 service satisfies its bounce-back obligation if it does  
20 not impede the ability of a consumer's text to reach the  
21 consumer's home network provider or impede any  
22 bounce-back message generated by the home provider from  
23 going back to the consumer.

24 Over to the PSC updates. The PSC issued an  
25 order on June 3rd, 2013, approving FTRI's 2013/2014

1 fiscal year budget. The PSC approved operating revenue  
2 of \$8,771,408 and expenses of \$10,110,295. And I won't  
3 go through the whole graph, but you can see how it's  
4 broken down there, operating expenses and revenues.

5 The next thing I'd like to go over is the IP  
6 captioned telephone service comments filed by the PSC on  
7 September 27th. In these comments, the FPSC encouraged  
8 the FCC to consider the following:

9 The FCC should provide Internet Protocol  
10 Captioned Telephone Service minutes and number of  
11 Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service units by  
12 state as soon as possible so states can make an informed  
13 decision on possible migration of Internet Protocol  
14 Captioned Telephone Service to state relay programs.

15 If state funding of intrastate Internet  
16 Protocol Captioned Telephone Service is mandated, it  
17 should not occur until the FCC is assured that problems  
18 noted in the Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone  
19 Service interim order are corrected.

20 If you remember from the last meeting, we went  
21 over that. An order was issued in January, and  
22 basically they found some problems with IP CTS.  
23 Providers were giving commissions, a few other things  
24 for people to use it. They were promoting people who  
25 weren't even deaf or hard-of-hearing or didn't need the

1 service to go ahead and use it just to run up the  
2 minutes.

3 The third thing the FPSC encouraged was the  
4 jurisdictional separation issues in Docket WC 04-36 must  
5 be resolved before determining the jurisdiction and  
6 associated funding of Internet Protocol Captioned  
7 Telephone Service. This goes way back to 2004. They  
8 have still not decided whether Internet is a data  
9 service or a telecommunications service. If it's a data  
10 service, it will be covered by the FCC. If it's a  
11 telecommunication service, it will probably be covered  
12 by the states. And they haven't made that decision yet.  
13 We are saying they should make that decision.

14 If a decision is made to require states to  
15 assume intrastate Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone  
16 Service costs, the FCC must allow time for states to  
17 make legislative changes. We'd have to make a few.  
18 Right now we can only have one provider of relay service  
19 in the State of Florida. The IP CTS users have their  
20 pick right now of which provider to use. I believe  
21 there's three or four right now.

22 We also have to look at the costs. The costs  
23 may run us over 25 cents, which is the cap we can have  
24 by statute. And, of course, the other thing is does the  
25 PSC have jurisdiction over Internet Protocol Captioned

1 Telephone Service. The legislature would have to make a  
2 determination of that.

3 Another thing we recommended is mandating  
4 Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service as part of  
5 the TRS program may eliminate competition for these  
6 services since, by statute, Florida can only have one  
7 relay service provider. And if you'd like to look at  
8 the full comments, I put the link there at the bottom.

9 Review of FTRI by the PSC. In September of  
10 2013, the PSC Office of Auditing and Performance  
11 Analysis released its review of Florida  
12 Telecommunications Relay, Incorporated, and Mr. Carl  
13 Vinson will be presenting an overview of the report  
14 after my presentation.

15 The next thing we are working on right now is  
16 the 2013 relay report. I should say Curtis is working  
17 on. I'm handing over as much as I can to Curtis. I  
18 would like to go over this one section of the statute,  
19 it's Section 427.704(9). It reads, "The Commission  
20 shall prepare an annual report on the operation of the  
21 telecommunications access system, which shall be  
22 available on the Commission's Internet website. Reports  
23 must be prepared in consultation with the administrator  
24 and the advisory committee appointed pursuant to  
25 Section 427.706. The reports must, at a minimum,

1 briefly outline the status of developments in the  
2 telecommunications access system, the number of persons  
3 served, the call volume, revenues and expenditures, the  
4 allocation of the revenues, and expenditures between  
5 provision of specialized telecommunications devices to  
6 individuals and operation of statewide relay service,  
7 other major policy or operational issues, and proposals  
8 for improvements or changes to the telecommunications  
9 access system."

10 So if anyone on the committee believes that  
11 there should be something in the relay report, please  
12 let Curtis know.

13 Next is a brief legislative update. I've had  
14 a few questions on this from people on the committee.  
15 As you recall, last year there was a House Bill 1135 and  
16 a Senate Bill 1688 companion bill, and basically what it  
17 did was -- well, I can read it. "Revises powers and  
18 duties of the PSC; requires the Commission to establish  
19 a recovery mechanism requiring commercial mobile radio  
20 service providers, in other words, wireless providers,  
21 to impose a monthly surcharge on their subscribers;  
22 revises provisions relating to administration; provides  
23 for distribution of wireless mobile devices; revises  
24 membership of the advisory committee that assists the  
25 Commission; requires the Commission ensure that public



1 safety and health care providers are complying with  
2 requirements to purchase and operate telecommunications  
3 devices." And it was proposed to be effective July 1st  
4 of 2013.

5 In the Last Event in the House, it died in the  
6 Energy and Utility Subcommittee on May 3rd. In the Last  
7 Action in the senate, it died in the Communications  
8 Energy and Public Utilities Committee on May 3rd.

9 Does anyone have any questions or comments  
10 before we move on?

11 **MS. EDMONSTON:** Yes. This is Becki Edmonston.

12 **MR. CASEY:** Yes, Becki.

13 **MS. EDMONSTON:** With regards to the proposed  
14 legislation last year, did the sponsors file that on  
15 behalf of the Public Service Commission?

16 **MR. CASEY:** The Public Service Commission  
17 wasn't involved in the filing of that legislation.

18 **MS. EDMONSTON:** Okay. Nor the drafting?

19 **MR. CASEY:** Nor the drafting.

20 **MS. EDMONSTON:** Okay.

21 **MR. CASEY:** Any other questions or comments?

22 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** This is Chris Littlewood. I  
23 have a comment.

24 **MR. CASEY:** Sure. Go ahead, Chris.

25 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. Back on July 12th,

1 with Paragraph 96 you talked about the requirement of  
2 having the default of caption off for IP CTS users, and  
3 it says that we believe that due to the unusual  
4 characteristics that that is something that should  
5 continue to happen. And we believe, that's the PSC,  
6 correct?

7 **MR. CASEY:** No, that's the FCC speaking.  
8 Those were quotes out of the FCC order.

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. I just wanted to  
10 clarify that. Okay.

11 **MR. CASEY:** Yes, those were quotes out of the  
12 FCC orders. And you can get a waiver of that for  
13 medical needs, but you would have to file for it and  
14 request it.

15 Any other questions or comments? Okay. We  
16 can go on to the report on the review of FTRI by  
17 Mr. Carl Vinson.

18 **MR. VINSON:** Thank you, Bob.

19 Good afternoon to all of those here in  
20 Tallahassee and those listening in by phone.

21 As Bob said earlier, I am part of our  
22 Commission staff's Audit and Performance Analysis  
23 Office. And to quickly explain our role, we are in a  
24 separate division from Bob and Curtis' division. We  
25 perform reviews of operations; sometimes we investigate

1 suspected or known problems that exist within the  
2 utilities and companies regulated by the Public Service  
3 Commission.

4 In this case, we are operating in the review  
5 of operations mode, and we are reviewing FTRI for the  
6 first time since 2003. We did a similar review ten  
7 years ago. So I'm going to give you a recap of the  
8 findings themselves, the findings and recommendations  
9 from our report. It's a longer written narrative  
10 report, and I'll show you where to obtain the full  
11 report later.

12 I just wanted to explain a little bit. In our  
13 role we observed the company's, or in this case FTRI's  
14 operations, and note significant findings or  
15 observations and we make recommendations. They are not  
16 the recommendations in the form that you might see at a  
17 Commission agenda where they are recommendations for  
18 action.

19 These are recommendations directly to FTRI or  
20 whatever company we are studying; of course, not ordered  
21 by the Commission, but they are brought to the attention  
22 of management. And before I get started, I want to  
23 thank James Forstall and his staff. They were very  
24 helpful. We were very pleased and impressed with the  
25 professionalism of James's staff. And they made doing

1 the work easy, and were very cooperative. And we hadn't  
2 met with James in ten years, so it was nice to renew an  
3 old acquaintance.

4 Page 2 of the slides shows the address for the  
5 full report. You see that it ends with  
6 telecom-relay-2013, the url. If you are looking at a  
7 prior version of these slides that was sent out  
8 yesterday, it may have something about a gas company.  
9 So make sure you use the -- you select, when you go on  
10 our website, the telecom-relay-2013, and you'll be  
11 looking at the entire report that I'm describing today.

12 The scope of our review or audit -- we use  
13 those terms simultaneously, equally -- were three  
14 objectives: One was to evaluate FTRI's operational  
15 internal controls, looking at all areas of their  
16 operations which, of course, includes purchasing and  
17 storing equipment, maintaining the equipment, and  
18 providing outreach and training.

19 The second key area of our objectives was to  
20 review FTRI's marketing and education outreach efforts.

21 And the third was to assess FTRI's method of  
22 developing its annual budget. So we had a keen eye on  
23 the costs of the FTRI program, and you'll see that in  
24 the findings was a major focus of our effort.

25 The seven findings begin with one that was

1 positive, and just merely an observation that FTRI has  
2 improved its operational effectiveness and efficiency  
3 through the AIMS, the Applied Information Management  
4 System. I believe James was beginning to envision this  
5 back in 2003. They have implemented it. They have also  
6 had the opportunity to upgrade it. It's an excellent  
7 tool.

8 In fact, I agree with James, I think,  
9 characterized it as state of the art. And in other  
10 states FTRI-type organizations are envious of what James  
11 has developed, and I think he's going to be able to  
12 answer their questions about how they can get a similar  
13 database tool like this that would serve their state  
14 well, also. So there's no -- being a positive finding,  
15 there's no recommendation to go with finding one.

16 Finding 2 notes, perhaps the obvious, that  
17 FTRI's situation is made difficult by recent  
18 developments in the telecom industry related to  
19 technological advancements, and the finding is that  
20 competition from cellular and Internet Protocol  
21 technologies combined with declines in telecom relay  
22 service minute usage present major budget challenges.

23 It's no surprise to anyone that today texting  
24 is ubiquitous among the hearing and hearing-impaired  
25 communities alike, and the increased use of IP

1 technology also challenges James and his organization in  
2 providing a product that meets people's needs. They  
3 have other choices, let's say it that way.

4 One recommendation that we made in regard to  
5 this finding is that FTRI should limit outreach and  
6 equipment distribution events by regional distribution  
7 centers to those FTRI believes to be the most effective  
8 for educating and generating new clients and serving  
9 existing ones. And here we recognize how important the  
10 RDCs are as a part of the overall program, and  
11 acknowledge that James and FTRI do not have direct  
12 control over what the RDCs do.

13 So the word limit there may have some limits.  
14 It may be that we are recommending that they influence  
15 how the RDCs deploy their resources, and believe that  
16 targeted deployment and working smart will at least, to  
17 some extent, work to offset the decline in number of  
18 users, people that are giving up their landline, the  
19 increased use of texting or other technologies as a  
20 replacement for normal FTRI services.

21 The second recommendation related to this  
22 finding is that FTRI should carefully target its  
23 marketing and outreach efforts using regional  
24 distribution centers to input -- using regional  
25 distribution center input in the selection of media

1 options to customize local marketing efforts.

2 So, again, the marketing would be targeted, it  
3 would be carefully selected so that it would be most  
4 productive. And different markets and different  
5 demographic groups may require different strategies. So  
6 we are urging, again, that FTRI focus and streamline its  
7 efforts in order to counter the trends that are working,  
8 in effect, against FTRI's purposes of having landline  
9 users use the specialized equipment that it dispenses.

10 Finding 3 is related, in large part, to  
11 Finding 2, an outgrowth of it of sorts. It says FTRI's  
12 cost of serving each client continues to grow over time  
13 despite past budget reduction efforts. On Pages, I  
14 believe it's 9 through 13 of the report, the entire  
15 report, we discuss in great detail some of the past  
16 cost-cutting measures that James has implemented and  
17 others that FTRI envisions for the near future and on  
18 into, beyond that.

19 However, one of the charts in the report which  
20 is on the next slide indicates that the -- well, if you  
21 look at the bottom line, that there has been an excess  
22 of expenses over revenues. And if you take into  
23 consideration the fact that expenses did decline in  
24 fiscal year 2012/'13, if you see the 8.8 million rounded  
25 total expenditures, next year's budget would represent a

1 substantial increase. And, therefore, if new clients  
2 reached -- marches on at about the same pace, it's going  
3 to be a continuing increasing proposition of the costs  
4 per individual customer served.

5 Let me move ahead to a slide that might  
6 illustrate this better. You see on this slide the four  
7 years of data, the core expenditures, and that's  
8 excluding the billings from AT&T and excluding the cost  
9 of the NDBEDP program divided by the total new clients,  
10 we have calculated a cost of expenditures per new  
11 client.

12 So you can see that in 2010, roughly  
13 5.8 million divided by 24,000 new clients, it was  
14 costing about \$241 per new client. Looking over to the  
15 extreme right, projected in '13/'14, 5.8 million divided  
16 by the declining number of new clients would result in a  
17 much higher number of \$385 per customer. So you see  
18 over that period it would be a 60 percent increase from  
19 2010 to 2013.

20 And that red rectangle highlights the fact  
21 that we have just assumed last year's number of new  
22 clients. It has been on a sharp decline, but rather  
23 than project a number, we just plugged in the last year  
24 actual. So the number 385 could go up a good bit higher  
25 if fewer new clients are reached this year as has been



1 the case in the last two years.

2 So back to the finding, we have the  
3 recommendation in response to the observation that the  
4 cost per -- the costs are growing, is that FTRI should  
5 increase efforts to reduce expenditures in the areas of  
6 personnel, equipment, and outreach. And those are large  
7 cost categories over which the FTRI has some degree of  
8 control. And as I said, on Pages 9 through 13 of the  
9 report there is a discussion of what FTRI has planned.

10 I wanted to point out one of the cost  
11 categories which you see in red there. Over to the  
12 left-hand column it says Category II, equipment/repairs.  
13 A very large portion of the increased budget projected  
14 for 2013/'14 came in the category of equipment and  
15 repairs, Category II. And you see that going from last  
16 year's 1.637 million projected to 2.543 million. And  
17 that budget increase was based upon expected outreach  
18 activities and also increasing costs of equipment, but  
19 largely from more equipment being placed.

20 And so whether that projection comes true or  
21 not will have a large bearing on whether or not the  
22 10.1 million total expenditures is reached. If there's  
23 an extreme shortfall below that budgeted expenditure, it  
24 will be more positive towards having a balanced revenues  
25 equal to expenditures.

1           Moving on to Finding 4. FTRI does not  
2 currently set specific quantitative outreach goals for  
3 itself and does not encourage quantitative goal-setting  
4 for regional distribution centers. And the  
5 recommendation is that FTRI should establish statewide  
6 quantitative outreach goals and work with RDCs to  
7 encourage them to set their own individual quantitative  
8 outreach goals.

9           Here again, recognizing that RDCs are a big  
10 part of the total program, and while acknowledging that  
11 James and FTRI do not have total control over their  
12 activities, he would need to encourage, maybe lead by  
13 example on saying we are going to, for our own self set  
14 goals and manage to a goal of trying to get more  
15 customers, more equipment placed, and the  
16 recommendations made under the belief that what you set  
17 out to do and measure you attain.

18           So it's merely an outgrowth of the idea that  
19 was mentioned in earlier findings that the company needs  
20 to market and target its efforts towards those that will  
21 reach the most customers and particularly new customers.

22           Finding 5 is fairly similar in some ways.  
23 Presently no comprehensive methods exist for evaluating  
24 regional distribution centers. And the recommendation  
25 we made is that FTRI should consider establishing a set

1 of evaluative measures to assess performance, identify  
2 best practices, and seek to raise the level of regional  
3 distribution center performance. Again, with the idea  
4 of what you measure and what you manage to -- will tend  
5 to follow what you attempt to attain.

6 And one of the thoughts that spurred this  
7 recommendation is that the AIMS system that I mentioned  
8 earlier makes such good data available, and James and  
9 FTRI are currently making use of it, but there are other  
10 uses that could be made of that data. And I have just  
11 put a couple of examples of metrics or measurement  
12 ratios or indicators that could be used.

13 One might be time spent per customer in an  
14 effort, in an outreach effort or equipment distribution  
15 effort that brings a new customer on board as an FTRI  
16 user, or outreach dollars spent per new client. And  
17 there are many, many other possible metrics that could  
18 be devised to help James and the RDCs themselves see  
19 where they are going and what activities are the most  
20 productive towards their goals.

21 Finding 6 relates to one area of FTRI's  
22 operations, the National Deaf-Blind Equipment  
23 Distribution Program. And FTRI's participation is  
24 just -- in June passed the one-year point. It was the  
25 first year of the pilot program. And in talking to

1 James and the staff, FTRI believes that continuing the  
2 administration of the National Deaf-Blind Equipment  
3 Distribution Program by FTRI may not be cost-effective.

4 In other words, there is a compensation of the  
5 costs, and under the budget amounts that Bob Casey  
6 mentioned earlier that are allocated by population to  
7 each state, however, that schema may not be fully  
8 compensating FTRI.

9 I believe it's 15 percent beyond your actual  
10 costs are compensated, but the program does take up a  
11 significant amount of time of one of his key managers,  
12 and so this is a noteworthy concern. And, therefore, we  
13 have just recommended that FTRI should gather data and  
14 perform necessary analysis to support a reassessment of  
15 the efficiency and effectiveness of its continued  
16 administration of the National Deaf-Blind Equipment  
17 Distribution Program.

18 And at a future point, should James be able to  
19 calculate or gather data that firms up this belief, he  
20 would help staff, Commission staff, be in a position to  
21 understand whether continued participation by FTRI as  
22 the administrator would be advisable. And in light of  
23 the other budget comments, the constraints, the squeezes  
24 that FTRI is under, the significance of this is doubled.

25 Although I would say that the budgeted amounts

1 aren't -- the program has spent less than it would have  
2 been anticipated to spend. It has not spent the full  
3 allocated amount. So that's a future analysis that we  
4 would recommend be done.

5 And then the final finding recommends to the  
6 Sarbanes-Oxley Act, some of the constraints it places.  
7 And that finding reads, "FTRI has used the same  
8 accounting firm to complete its audits for five years."  
9 And there are some Sarbanes-Oxley constraints that vary  
10 from five to seven years on the lifespan or the  
11 continued use of an accounting firm. And it's  
12 debatable, we did not even seek to determine whether or  
13 not FTRI would be subject to Sarbanes-Oxley as a  
14 nonprofit. It may or may not be. However, we believe  
15 that FTRI should consider rotation of audit firms and  
16 partners as outlined in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

17 One of the ways to be able to use an auditing  
18 firm longer is that they may rotate the personnel that  
19 are in charge of the auditing engagement, and that's  
20 mentioned in the little addition at the bottom from a  
21 textbook on Sarbanes-Oxley. So that's something that  
22 James is taking a look at and heeding.

23 All of these findings have been discussed with  
24 James and the FTRI staff. I think they have a good  
25 understanding of them, and their comments are published

1 as part of our written report. So if you go obtain that  
2 from the url that I provided back at the beginning,  
3 you'll be able to see James's thoughts on behalf of FTRI  
4 about these various findings.

5 I'd be glad to take any questions on anything  
6 that I have presented or anything about our review that  
7 I haven't presented.

8 No questions?

9 Again, I want to thank James Forstall and the  
10 FTRI staff. And with that, I'll turn it back over to  
11 Curtis.

12 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Carl.

13 Are there any questions from any of the  
14 participants on the phone?

15 Hearing none, we will go ahead and proceed  
16 with James Forstall who will give --

17 **MS. RHODES:** I have a question.

18 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Can you identify  
19 yourself?

20 **MS. RHODES:** My name is Cheryl Rhodes  
21 speaking.

22 I just wanted to let you know about -- Carl, I  
23 understand what he was saying about the National  
24 Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program. Are they  
25 supposed to change their name to ICC?

1           **MR. VINSON:** I didn't hear the very last part  
2 of the question.

3           **MR. WILLIAMS:** Could you repeat the question?

4           **MS. RHODES:** Okay. (Inaudible) -- I Connect.

5           **MR. VINSON:** I'm still not understanding.

6           **MR. WILLIAMS:** Cheryl, this is Curtis  
7 Williams. Can you just, once again, repeat the question  
8 for Carl?

9           **MS. RHODES:** Okay. Yes; sure.

10           It's Cheryl speaking. I was just informed by  
11 someone else that the National Deaf-Blind Equipment  
12 Distribution Program will be changing. It's not going  
13 to be called NDBEDP anymore. They are going to get a  
14 new name, ICC, which means I Can Connect Center for the  
15 deaf-blind. It's too complicated, that long name. They  
16 are supposed to change to ICC. Maybe James knows.

17           **MR. VINSON:** Thank you. Yes. I would welcome  
18 a shorter acronym. We struggled with that during the  
19 whole audit. I hadn't heard that, though.

20           **MS. RHODES:** Yes. Yes.

21           **MR. CASEY:** Nothing formal has come out yet.

22           **MR. FORSTALL:** My understanding of the I Can  
23 Connect is more of a brand name to identify the overall  
24 program. The rules related to the program will remain  
25 the same. It's just a campaign branding of the National

1 Deaf-Blind Program.

2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Does that answer your question,  
3 Cheryl?

4 **MS. RHODES:** Thank you. Yes, thank you.

5 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any other questions  
6 from any of the participants on the line?

7 If not, we will go ahead and hear from James.

8 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** This is Chris Littlewood. I  
9 do have a quick comment or question. Let me know when  
10 that's okay. My caption is running a little bit behind  
11 here.

12 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You can go ahead. (Pause.)

13 You can go ahead and ask your question, Chris.

14 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. This is Chris, again.

15 Again, my apologies to the delay with captions  
16 on my end. I'm going to assume by the silence that I'm  
17 getting, with what little I can hear, that it's okay to  
18 speak. But my question is regarding to Finding Number 4  
19 where the recommendation is that FTRI should establish  
20 statewide quantitative outreach goals.

21 And I'm just curious to the fact that the  
22 population of the RDC that's being served is being  
23 considered, and also the number of landlines in use in  
24 that area when establishing the goals, if that's going  
25 to be the recommendation, that that should also be part



1 of the recommendation. Does that make sense?

2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Chris, let me just clarify.  
3 That's a question for Carl Vinson on the previous  
4 presentation?

5 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I'm sorry, there's a delay on  
6 my captioning. I'm not going to be able to see what you  
7 are asking me back. Let me e-mail the question after  
8 the meeting, and we can get some clarification  
9 thereafter.

10 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Will do.

11 I think we did hear some of your question, so  
12 at this time we'll allow -- we'll ask Carl to go ahead  
13 and take a shot at it. And then you can send the e-mail  
14 and we'll follow-up, also, on the question.

15 **MR. VINSON:** Yes, Chris. This is Carl Vinson.

16 I think your question basically dealt with if  
17 FTRI were to implement the recommendation or act upon  
18 the recommendation of establishing or encouraging RDCs  
19 to set individual quantitative outreach goals, would  
20 that process take into consideration differences in  
21 population, or subscriber numbers, or that type of  
22 thing.

23 And if I'm understanding your question  
24 correctly, I would say by all means yes, that it would  
25 be, you know, on the order of potentially stated as an

1 increase over last year, which will be proportionate  
2 regardless of the number of users or the population of  
3 the area served by that RDC.

4 So I think the answer would be yes, that all  
5 should be taken into consideration and customized to the  
6 situation. One of the things James and the team talked  
7 about frequently were the different sizes of the staffs  
8 that serve each RDC. Every situation is kind of a one  
9 of a kind. And so -- and, again, this would be the RDC  
10 setting its goals along with some guidance or input from  
11 James.

12 I mean, it's a collaborative effort. It  
13 wouldn't be, as I would envision it, as we recommended  
14 it here, a unilateral imposition by James of something  
15 onto the RDCs. Because the RDCs and FTRI work together  
16 as partners and it would be in that vein.

17 I hope that answers your question, and we'll  
18 follow-up later through the e-mail.

19 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thanks, Carl.

20 Chris, since there's a delay, we'll give it  
21 just a few seconds to see if you have any follow-up.

22 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** This is Chris. That mostly  
23 answered the question, yes. Thank you very much.

24 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any other questions  
25 from any of the participants on line?

1           Okay. At this time we will proceed with  
2 James's presentation.

3           **MR. FORSTALL:** Good afternoon, and thank  
4 everyone for participating in the meeting this  
5 afternoon.

6           What I have is a review of our annual report  
7 for fiscal year 2012 and 2013. The first slide is the  
8 number of client services that FTRI provided throughout  
9 the state. We have provided a total of 36,480 different  
10 services. As you can see on the chart, the different  
11 types of services that were provided. It does average  
12 to about 3,040 different services a month.

13           The next slide shows the scale or chart of the  
14 client services over the last five years. As you can  
15 see, that in the fiscal year ending 2013, we did have a  
16 decline from the previous year. And, of course, in 2011  
17 we had the very, very peak, and that is when we started  
18 advertising in the newspaper heavily. So we have seen a  
19 decrease over the last two years. And this is the total  
20 client services.

21           New client eligibility. FTRI served 15,078  
22 new clients during the reporting period. Clients  
23 certified as eligible for the FTRI program are  
24 classified into four distinct groups. You have the  
25 deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech-impaired, and dual-sensory

1       impaired.

2                   And, again, the next chart is the number of  
3       new clients served over the last five years. Again, you  
4       can see there has been a decrease over the last two  
5       years. However, the past year is probably one of the  
6       lowest that we have ever experienced in my 18 years at  
7       FTRI, and that's due to several different factors.

8                   As was mentioned in the audit review, people  
9       are using different technology. Also, the Internet  
10      Protocol telephone, there is a -- it has been brought to  
11      my attention just recently that captioned calls have  
12      been heavily involved in distributing their equipment in  
13      the State of Florida, so that has a possibility of  
14      impacting the FTRI services.

15                  And we will continue to do newspaper ads;  
16      however, this year we are going to go back to the  
17      particular ad that we had used in 2012 which we thought  
18      was more effective. So we do plan to use that similar  
19      ad with the hopes of increasing the number of new  
20      clients.

21                  The new client certification on the next slide  
22      is professionals involved with the certification of  
23      client application. And as you can see at the top, the  
24      deaf service center director, this is when a client goes  
25      to a center, an RDC to get served, the director is able

1 to certify the application for the client.

2 The second number is -- the second higher  
3 number is the audiologist. We do get quite a bit of  
4 referrals from the audiologists, so we are working  
5 closely with them to continue to promote the FTRI  
6 program.

7 The next slide is new client age groups. The  
8 2012/2013 breakdown of new recipients by age group is as  
9 follows: You can see more people in the 80 to 89 age  
10 group received equipment than those of any other  
11 specific age group. Over 81 percent of all recipients  
12 served in this fiscal year were 70 years or older, so  
13 that pretty much narrows down our demographics.

14 New client county of residence. FTRI is a  
15 statewide program serving all 67 counties. RDC  
16 contracts do not assign counties to specific contracted  
17 entities in order to assure that clients receive the  
18 best and most convenient service available. What that  
19 means is that clients may go to any particular RDC to  
20 get served no matter what county they live in.

21 Below are some of the counties where new  
22 clients were served, and you will see Broward is at the  
23 top with 1,629, and the (2) behind that number indicates  
24 that there are two RDCs in that particular county. We  
25 have two RDCs located in Dade County, as well.

1           Okay. The next slide, distributed equipment.  
2 FTRI distributes both new and refurbished equipment.  
3 Equipment distributed during fiscal year 2012/2013 were  
4 31,726 units, and that's a monthly average of 2,643. As  
5 you can see from the pie chart, the VCPH amplified  
6 telephone is the number one piece of equipment that is  
7 distributed.

8           The next slide shows the total number of  
9 equipment distributed over the last five years. And,  
10 again, the decrease is due to the number of clients  
11 served, new clients and existing clients that may need  
12 to exchange a piece of equipment.

13           Some of the other services provided through  
14 the last fiscal year. FTRI processed 23,495 customer  
15 service calls in its Tallahassee office. We also mailed  
16 out 1,534 applications to individuals requesting them.  
17 And when an individual requests an application, we  
18 always refer them to the nearest RDC so they can receive  
19 services from the local centers, but we will mail them  
20 an application.

21           We processed more than 101,576 EDP forms.  
22 However, that will be decreasing over the years as we  
23 have the new AIMS technology which allows us to use less  
24 and less forms. That is part of the process.

25           We also conducted over -- I'm sorry. We

1 conducted 1,977 offsite distributions, and that's when  
2 an RDC will go to a particular community to offer their  
3 services in that particular area rather than have the  
4 client drive to the RDC office.

5 This has proven to be a very, very effective  
6 method to reach out to the clients in the community. We  
7 are finding this to be very effective. And, of course,  
8 the centers when they go to provide a service at an  
9 offsite distribution, whether it be a library or a  
10 senior center service provider, the centers will be  
11 compensated for the distribution of the equipment.

12 Other important facts are continued extensive  
13 education, training, and support for the RDCs, continue  
14 to place a high priority on protecting the integrity of  
15 the client information by making security enhancements  
16 to the system which is otherwise known as AIMS, and  
17 operate within the budget requirements.

18 The next slide is quality assurance postcard.  
19 FTRI maintains a quality assurance system to monitor the  
20 services, training, and equipment provided by contracted  
21 agencies. Questionnaires are sent to a random selection  
22 of clients served by each regional distribution center  
23 or the FTRI office. FTRI also contacts clients by  
24 telephone for quality assurance.

25 Of the approximately 4,469 questionnaires sent

1 during this fiscal year, this past fiscal year, FTRI  
2 received 1,058 responses for nearly a 24 percent return  
3 rate, and 95 percent of the responses were positive.  
4 All negative responses are resolved by either contacting  
5 the client directly or referring to the RDC for  
6 follow-up.

7           Quality assurance e-mail. FTRI's new  
8 automated e-mail system which was introduced in the  
9 latter part of fiscal year ending 2012, the system  
10 automatically sends a quality assurance survey to  
11 clients who receive services and have provided us with  
12 e-mail addresses. And what we have found, the  
13 difference is that clients are able to respond to a  
14 survey much quicker when it is received soon after the  
15 service is provided. So we do do that automatically the  
16 next day, where the clients will receive the survey and  
17 respond accordingly.

18           We sent out 7,672 -- clients received e-mail  
19 survey, and we got a response of 2,006 for a 26 percent  
20 response rate. And, once again, clients requesting  
21 follow-up services are contacted by the FTRI customer  
22 care.

23           And also, in addition to the quality assurance  
24 e-mail, we do a second e-mail survey to each of the  
25 people who respond to the original e-mail survey asking



1       them to evaluate the particular equipment they have  
2       received to see if it a good fit for them and is working  
3       well for them. And so we are excited about that, too.

4               The next slide is outreach. The regional  
5       distribution centers continue to provide outreach  
6       services to their respective communities to disseminate  
7       information about FTRI's programs and the Florida Relay  
8       Service. Below are just some of the different  
9       activities that were conducted.

10              The FTRI and RDCs conducted 838 different  
11       outreach activities throughout the state. That's in  
12       addition to the offsite distribution. We mailed out new  
13       location postcards assisting clients in the Port  
14       Charlotte area because they relocated their office.

15              We did a statewide print media campaign using  
16       customized RDC ads that covered ten major markets with a  
17       combined circulation of over 50 million. We distributed  
18       a monthly e-newsletter to the RDC staff for update of  
19       information about anything that's going on within the  
20       community, the state, as well as new ideas and updates  
21       to the system, the program.

22              We continue to post to the FTRI Facebook, and  
23       we also coordinate with AT&T on the creation of a bill  
24       insert targeting AT&T customers throughout the state.  
25       There are much more, and they are included in our annual

1 report, but that's just a few of them.

2 Customer care postcards; the next slide. FTRI  
3 published and mailed 11,243 customer care postcards in  
4 January to clients residing in the Pensacola area. And  
5 in May we did another mail-out to some of the clients  
6 residing in the Tampa area.

7 What this customer care postcard does is we  
8 like to keep in touch with our clients, assisting  
9 clients to let them know that we are still available to  
10 assist them with any type services. Now, we do publish  
11 a newsletter; however, that is on our website, and we  
12 will be sending those out to clients with e-mail  
13 addresses. But because of the cost of printing the  
14 newsletter, FTRI has decided to do a postcard mailing  
15 instead just to keep in touch with the clients. And  
16 this reminds the clients that we are available. Should  
17 you have any trouble with your telephone or need  
18 assistance, to contact FTRI directly.

19 And as you can see on the slide there is a  
20 little magnet that peels off, the postcard that they can  
21 put on their refrigerator to serve as a reminder. And  
22 it has been very effective, and we are pleased with some  
23 of the results, the customer care as a result of this.  
24 People are contacting FTRI, and we are able to  
25 troubleshoot some of the problems over the phone rather

1 than having them to go to a center.

2 So what we are doing is if, indeed, the phone  
3 needs to be exchanged, we will make the referral to the  
4 RDC. But if we can resolve it over the phone, that's  
5 what we'd like to do.

6 The next slide is FTRI aired some 711 PSAs  
7 throughout the major media markets, and this is an  
8 example of the PSAs on the left of the slide, and on the  
9 right is where we see a banner ad -- I can't think of  
10 what they call it -- it's an ad that goes on the  
11 website, a website ad, and it's the 711 relay.

12 The next slide is samples of the newspaper ads  
13 that were used last year. And as you can see, the  
14 center-specific information is located on the ad so that  
15 when a client sees it they can go call that particular  
16 center in their area for services to get a new phone, to  
17 get qualified for a phone.

18 The next slide is the map of where the  
19 regional distribution centers are located. It has been  
20 pretty much the same for the last few years. We did  
21 have a changeover in Number 12. RDC Number 12 used to  
22 be the Deaf and Hearing Connection of Tampa Bay. They  
23 are now known as the Family Center on Deafness, which is  
24 Number 27.

25 Even though we have 27 on the list, that

1 doesn't mean that we have 27 centers. When a center  
2 originally -- for instance, Number 1 is not up there  
3 because we had that designated to another center. And  
4 when they closed, for whatever reason, we do not  
5 reassign that number so we can track the data with that  
6 particular center.

7           The next slide is the National Deaf-Blind  
8 Equipment Distribution Program. FTRI was selected by  
9 FCC to distribute equipment to qualified deaf-blind  
10 residents in the State of Florida. During this  
11 reporting period, 18 individuals qualified for the  
12 program and were provided equipment and training.  
13 Another 12 are currently in the process of being  
14 assessed to receive equipment and training. And for  
15 whatever other reason, 37 individuals requested an  
16 application and we sent them to them, but we have not  
17 heard back from them, and it could be very well that  
18 they might not qualify for the program.

19           One of the biggest qualifying criteria is  
20 household income, and that plays a major role. It is  
21 not individual, it's household incomes. So that has  
22 eliminated quite a few people from being able to  
23 qualify.

24           A closing statement. FTRI continues to  
25 maintain its status as an administrative center

1 concentrating on oversight of the regional distribution  
2 center contractors and equipment vendors. The FTRI  
3 administrative office directly serves approximately  
4 20 percent of the Florida residents statewide. Since  
5 the inception of the equipment distribution program in  
6 1986, over 489,000 residents have been provided with  
7 telecommunications equipment and support services.

8 And I'll be happy to answer any questions  
9 anyone may have.

10 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any questions from  
11 individuals on the phone?

12 Okay. We do have a few.

13 **MR. CASEY:** This is Bob Casey.

14 James, I've noticed a lot of TV commercials  
15 for IP captioned telephone service. Has that in any way  
16 caused problems for FTRI? Have people seeing those TV  
17 ads called you and wanted IP captioned telephones?

18 **MR. FORSTALL:** Not this year. In the past  
19 years it did, but we are not getting any calls from that  
20 or anybody saying they are receiving them, at least in  
21 my office. Now, whether they go to an RDC and ask for  
22 it, that might be a question Kim Schur can answer. But  
23 we do get -- in the past we have gotten requests for IP  
24 equipment.

25 **MS. SCHUR:** This is Kim.

1           We haven't seen any issues with it. I mean,  
2           it may be that someone will choose, you know, an  
3           Internet CapTel versus the line that CapTel -- that FTRI  
4           provides, but it is more because there is no in-between  
5           telephone number, which is very hard for some of the  
6           seniors.

7           **MR. CASEY:** Thank you, Kim.

8           I have one other question, James.

9           The audit indicated that there may be some  
10          problems or you are running into problems with the  
11          National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program.  
12          What kinds of problems are you seeing; and is there  
13          anything the PSC or maybe Cheryl with her deaf-blind  
14          group can do to help you out?

15          **MR. FORSTALL:** Well, I think what was  
16          mentioned was the financial cost to provide the  
17          administrative services. We are getting the word out  
18          with the program. Other than trying to identify more  
19          trainers, qualified trainers may be an area that we can  
20          look into. But the primary reason is we don't feel like  
21          we are being reimbursed enough based on the  
22          administrative cap that has been put on the program.

23          **MR. CASEY:** So the FCC, correct me if I'm  
24          wrong, they allow you 15 percent administrative fee over  
25          and above the cost of the equipment?

1           **MR. FORSTALL:** Yes, that's correct; 15  
2 percent. And that's based on the expenses that's paid  
3 for the training and the equipment.

4           **MR. CASEY:** Right. And, of course, it costs  
5 probably a lot of money to send a specialist to train  
6 these people. What do you believe is the percentage  
7 that you would need to cover the costs? If it's not 15,  
8 would it be 20 or 25 percent?

9           **MR. FORSTALL:** It's actually closer to  
10 30 percent.

11           **MR. CASEY:** About 30 percent. Okay. Thank  
12 you.

13           **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any other questions  
14 or comments?

15           Okay. At this time we are scheduled to take a  
16 break. We'll take about a fifteen-minute break, and we  
17 will start back at 3:00 o'clock.

18           (Recess.)

19           **MR. WILLIAMS:** At this time we are going to go  
20 ahead and start back up. On the schedule we have next  
21 for presentation is Greg Denes. He's Channel Manager  
22 with AT&T.

23           **MR. DENES:** Good afternoon, everyone. My name  
24 is Greg Denes, and I'm the Channel Manager with AT&T.  
25 I'll be giving the Florida Relay and CapTel Report. On

1 the agenda I'm going to cover TRS and CapTel traffic, as  
2 well as outreach performed and some other updates.

3 So for the TRS traffic, we have got a chart  
4 here that goes from April 2013 to September 2013 with  
5 minutes of use. And, again, the minutes are in session  
6 minutes.

7 In April, we had approximately 97,600 minutes  
8 of use; May, 94,700; June, 91,600; July, 90,700; in  
9 August, 93,100; and just last month, September, 91,900.

10 As you can see, both June and July had the  
11 lowest minutes of use of this time frame. The reason  
12 being, a lot of the snowbirds leave the state and also  
13 family comes to visit, so there's fewer calls being  
14 placed.

15 On the next slide, TRS trend, the minutes of  
16 use from June 2012 until September 2013. Since AT&T has  
17 had the contract, there's been a total year-to-date  
18 decline of TRS minutes of 16.97 percent since we have  
19 taken over the contract. And the average month-to-month  
20 decline has been 1.13 percent. And, again, the reasons  
21 being new technologies have been introduced such as  
22 videophones, VRS, and text messaging. And I have also  
23 found that a lot of the customers are unsubscribing from  
24 traditional telephone services and only having an  
25 Internet service in their home.



1           On the next slide here we have TRS call type  
2 comparison. Of the calls being placed, 60.4 percent are  
3 TTY; 4.9 percent are Spanish; 0.5 percent are  
4 speech-to-speech; and we are trying to do more outreach  
5 to grow those numbers. The voice carryover is  
6 18.3 percent, 0.5 percent is hearing carryover, and  
7 15.5 percent of the calls are voice initiated.

8           On the next slide we have the center  
9 distribution of Florida Relay traffic for second quarter  
10 which goes from April to June 2013. The total number of  
11 calls that were placed through Florida Relay was  
12 219,572. Of that number, 184,158 were handled in the  
13 Miami call center. So, in other words, 83.9 percent of  
14 the calls that were initiated in Florida stayed here.

15           On the next slide we have third quarter  
16 distribution traffic. The total number of relay calls  
17 that were placed were 244,407. Of that number, 222,084  
18 were received in the Miami Call Center. So there was an  
19 increase in the percentage of calls that were handled in  
20 Miami for third quarter, that being 90.9 percent.

21           Okay. On the next slide we have the number of  
22 Florida Relay customer contacts. Some of the reasons  
23 why people contact customer care is to provide  
24 accommodations to provide feedback that they enjoyed  
25 their service. And some of the comments that we

1 received on accommodations are that the CAs, or  
2 communication assistants, are professional and helpful,  
3 efficient, and also patient.

4 We do also receive some complaints. In  
5 September you'll see that the numbers were high, and  
6 that's largely in part due to an issue that an inmate  
7 was experiencing. He was trying to place a call to a  
8 certain number that we could not dial either because  
9 that number was blocked, it didn't accept collect calls,  
10 and the CAs, or communications assistants, explained to  
11 him that we weren't able to place a call to that number,  
12 but he continued to call back a few different times.  
13 So, again, that's the reason for the increase in  
14 September.

15 And the last category we have are inquiries  
16 and questions. This is when someone dials 711 and  
17 inquires where they can go to get different equipment.  
18 They have questions about the 711 Florida Relay Service,  
19 and our CAs do an excellent job of explaining or  
20 directing them in the right direction.

21 Okay. Next I'm going to cover the CapTel  
22 traffic. And, again, these numbers are for April 2013  
23 through September 2013. In April, we had 167,800  
24 minutes of use; in May, 164,000; in June, 156,992; in  
25 July, 162,773; in August, 161,556; in September,

1 160,415.

2 And, again, you can see a slight decline in  
3 the minutes of use, and that is in large part due to the  
4 other technologies that are available such as IP CapTel.  
5 As Cheryl mentioned earlier, with that customers don't  
6 need to dial a third-party number to connect to an  
7 individual that they are trying to call. They can dial  
8 them directly when using IP services.

9 On this slide we show the captioned telephone  
10 service trend. Again, since AT&T has taken over the  
11 contract in June, the total year-to-date decline has  
12 been 26.58 percent, with an average month-to-month  
13 decline of 1.9 percent.

14 Next, I'm going to cover the outreach that was  
15 performed from May up until just last month. Here we  
16 have a list of the events that we attended and also  
17 sponsored. Again, one of my goals is to touch on all  
18 the different parts of the state, since Florida is very  
19 spread out. And also I'd like to mention that in a lot  
20 of these events when either someone from FTRI  
21 headquarters or one of the RDCs is attending, we try to  
22 contact the event coordinators to see if we can get our  
23 booths placed side-by-side, so we have been  
24 collaborating with FTRI.

25 Here is a list of the upcoming events that we

1 have planned for the rest of the year. All of these are  
2 confirmed. There are still a few more tentative events  
3 that we may need to add to this list. Also, I have  
4 included some of the outreach photos from the events  
5 that we have attended. This one was from the  
6 DisAbilities Expo that was held at Nova Southeastern in  
7 Davie, Florida.

8           There was a really good mix of different types  
9 of people that attended this, so I was really able to  
10 explain all the different services that Florida Relay  
11 offers. And there are actually two FTRI RDCs that were  
12 present at this event. There was an approximate turnout  
13 of about 1,200 people.

14           The next event was the Florida Conference on  
15 Aging. I included some pictures from that event, as  
16 well. At this event there were 545 registrants, and  
17 another great opportunity to explain the Florida Relay  
18 Service.

19           Here's a few pictures from an event that I  
20 attended just last week in Tampa, the Florida  
21 Association of the Deaf 2013 conference. And, lastly,  
22 here's a few other photos. We attended BACES Central in  
23 Orlando. Again, we've got a picture with one of the  
24 FTRI outreach specialists.

25           And late last year we received the new Florida

1 Relay banner stand. And this has been really helpful in  
2 drawing traffic to our table when we are attending  
3 different events.

4 In July, as James mentioned, I worked on  
5 creating a bill insert that went out to Florida  
6 residents that had traditional landline service. And  
7 this insert was inserted in July bills which were mailed  
8 in August, but the total number that was mailed out  
9 almost reached a million.

10 And also customers who elect to have their  
11 bills sent electronically received a link that they  
12 could click on, and they could view this bill insert  
13 which explains the Florida Relay Service and CapTel,  
14 FTRI's equipment distribution program, and there is also  
15 a reminder for TRS users and CapTel users to always dial  
16 911 directly instead of placing a call through Florida  
17 Relay.

18 And one of the last updates is the "It Can  
19 Wait" campaign. AT&T, along with the other major  
20 wireless carriers, continues to invest in the "It Can  
21 Wait" campaign. This is a nationwide campaign that  
22 promotes no texting while driving. So at all of our  
23 events they have different promotional items that people  
24 can take with them to remind them not to text and drive.  
25 Already 1.2 million people have pledged not to text and

1 drive. And if any of you would like to take the pledge,  
2 you can visit [itcanwait.org](http://itcanwait.org), and also make the pledge  
3 not to text and drive.

4 And, lastly, I'd like to end my presentation  
5 with a couple of interesting facts that may encourage  
6 you to visit [itcanwait.org](http://itcanwait.org) today. Over 100,000  
7 accidents a year involve drivers who are texting. And  
8 those who read and send text messages while driving are  
9 23 times more likely to be in a crash.

10 That concludes my presentation for today.  
11 Does anyone have any questions?

12 And also, Sid Minnick, my supervisor, is on  
13 the line to answer any questions that I may not have the  
14 answers for.

15 **MR. CASEY:** This is Bob Casey. You had  
16 indicated that more and more calls are going to the  
17 Miami Call Center. Do you know how many positions you  
18 have now at the Miami Call Center?

19 **MR. DENES:** Yes.

20 **MR. CASEY:** Which is a great thing, we love  
21 that.

22 **MR. MINNICK:** This is Sid, Bob.

23 **MR. CASEY:** Go ahead, Sid.

24 **MR. MINNICK:** Yes. Bob, I can go ahead and  
25 address that. Bob, this is Sid. Right now, as you

1 know, we have two (inaudible) in Miami. We have an  
2 English center and we have a (inaudible). And in the  
3 English center we currently have 36 CAs on staff, and we  
4 have nine (inaudible) that started training on  
5 October 7. And then in the Spanish center we have 14  
6 employees on staff; we have three new employees in  
7 training who also started on Oct -- (inaudible).

8 And we are going to be bringing in another new  
9 hire (inaudible) training in November that speaks both  
10 English and Spanish. So we continue to (inaudible) that  
11 center, very proud of it, of the accomplishments that  
12 they have been made, and we have a great management team  
13 supporting those CAs there.

14 **MR. CASEY:** Now, are you taking all the  
15 Spanish TRS calls in Miami, or are you still sending  
16 some to Texas?

17 **MR. MINNICK:** We are only sending Spanish  
18 calls to San (inaudible) any that might not be able to  
19 be handled because of an influx in traffic.

20 **MR. CASEY:** So they would handle the overload?

21 **MR. MINNICK:** Yes.

22 **MR. CASEY:** Okay. I have another question on  
23 CapTel. Do you know -- I know you subcontract this --  
24 but are the CapTel calls going through the new Orlando  
25 CapTel center, or are they going up to Wisconsin?

1           **MR. MINNICK:** This is Sid. It's my  
2 understanding, Bob, that traffic is still going through  
3 the Madison and Milwaukee Call Centers.

4           **MR. CASEY:** Are they going to be transitioning  
5 to Orlando?

6           **MR. MINNICK:** I don't know that. Let me find  
7 out, and then I can get you -- furnish everybody an  
8 update.

9           **MR. CASEY:** I appreciate it.

10          **MR. MINNICK:** Got it.

11          **MR. CASEY:** That's the only questions I had.  
12 Curtis.

13          **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any additional  
14 questions?

15                 I have one question, or maybe just, you know,  
16 bring up a topic for discussion, and that is on the  
17 actual minutes of use, both the TRS and the CapTel  
18 minutes of use. Of course, as we discussed earlier and  
19 as Carl presented in his presentation, we're seeing a  
20 declining trend. I think this is the first year we've  
21 actually seen a decline in CapTel minutes, also. I know  
22 last year CapTel was a slight increase, so CapTel is  
23 beginning to show a declining trend, consistent with  
24 traditional relay service.

25                 One question is have you -- has AT&T performed



1 any projections or analysis on what that trend may look  
2 like going forward? Do we expect for both to continue  
3 to decline, or more of a leveling off at some point?  
4 Just any feedback that you may have on that.

5 **MR. DENES:** From my personal experience in  
6 interacting with the customers, I see the decline rates  
7 to continue as a lot of customers are transitioning to  
8 the IP-based services. Again, for CapTel, they don't  
9 have to dial a third-party before they are connected to  
10 the CapTel user. And more and more people are having  
11 Internet services in their home. And with that the  
12 captions are much more realtime than what they are going  
13 through the analogue version. But this is definitely  
14 something that we can look into, providing the PSC with  
15 a more detailed report of the expected decline in the  
16 future.

17 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I think that's something that  
18 we -- that may be useful, may be helpful, you know, if  
19 you are aware of any reports that are being done looking  
20 at that.

21 **MR. FOLLENSBEE:** Curtis, this is Greg  
22 Follensbee. Let me follow up on that.

23 We, along with the other incumbent local  
24 exchange companies, are continuing to experience line  
25 losses. We see the trend to continue, which means that

1 as line losses occur, customers are moving to either  
2 wireless or Voice Over Internet Protocol, so we see  
3 nothing but a downward trend to continue.

4 We don't experience any flattening that will  
5 ever occur, because eventually it will go to zero. In  
6 fact, AT&T has announced its plans that it would like to  
7 exit the TDM network provisioning by 2020, which means  
8 if we achieve our goal, we would have no POTS lines left  
9 by 2020, which means there would be none of these  
10 minutes occurring from AT&T customers. They'd all be  
11 either Voice Over IP or wireless. And I think the other  
12 companies have similar plans in mind.

13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Thank you very much.

14 **MR. FOLLENSBEE:** You're welcome.

15 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any additional  
16 questions or comments regarding Greg Denes with AT&T's  
17 presentation? If not, we'll go ahead and at this point  
18 just open up the discussion to any thoughts, any  
19 concluding points that anyone would like to make. We  
20 can go ahead and do that at this time.

21 **MS. SCHUR:** This is Kim Schur.

22 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Go ahead, Kim.

23 **MS. SCHUR:** I guess, you know, in light of  
24 what was just said regarding people going wireless and  
25 not using landlines any more, and we see, let's say,

1 within five years time, are we preparing for that?

2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Kim, is that a specific  
3 question to someone, or you just wanted to just kind of  
4 open -- use that as an open discussion?

5 **MS. SCHUR:** Well, I guess it's a question for  
6 FTRI, it's a question for, you know, the providers, but  
7 an open question.

8 **MR. CASEY:** Kim, this is Bob Casey.  
9 We have to live by the law which is in the  
10 statute, and as of right now we are confined to use land  
11 lines.

12 Now, at some point in the future the  
13 legislature may make a change. We can't forecast or  
14 predict what they are going to do. We're an agency of  
15 the legislature, so we actually implement what they  
16 want. So we'll just have to wait and see.

17 **MS. SCHUR:** This is Kim, again. So there's  
18 not a strategic plan that we're looking at to see what  
19 do we do as time goes by?

20 **MR. CASEY:** Not at this point. We're not in a  
21 situation where the PSC can lobby the legislature, since  
22 we are part of the body itself. I know like last year,  
23 I believe it was the Florida Deaf Association went to  
24 some legislators and got that bill started. But we  
25 don't lobby the legislature at all; we just carry out

1 their wishes.

2 **MS. SCHUR:** Okay. Thanks, Bob.

3 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any more comments in  
4 response to Kim's point?

5 Okay. Well, if there aren't --

6 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** This is Chris Littlewood  
7 speaking.

8 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay, Chris, go ahead.

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I just wanted to share a  
10 closing comment, if I could.

11 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You can proceed, Chris.

12 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay, thank you. If anyone  
13 on the committee or listening in was not aware, the  
14 Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and  
15 Hard-of-Hearing has been transferred to another division  
16 under the Department of Health. They are no longer a  
17 part of minority health and now are part of the Division  
18 of Community Health Promotion. The new contact for that  
19 division, the new contacts for that division are Darcy  
20 Abbott, Bureau Chief, and Thom Delilla, Program  
21 Administrator. This is somewhat of a work in progress.  
22 There is an executive committee meeting that is  
23 occurring between council membership and the Division of  
24 Community Health Promotion, and more information will  
25 become available soon. For questions relating to the

1 council, they can contact Darcy at 850-245-4365.

2 I don't know if that's new information to  
3 everybody or not, but I thought it might be worth  
4 mentioning as the council representative.

5 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Chris. We  
6 appreciate it. That's good information. And, in fact,  
7 we'll ask if you can e-mail us those names also. That  
8 would be appreciated.

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Sure.

10 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you.

11 Are there any other comments?

12 If not, I think we are prepared to close out  
13 the meeting, if there are no more comments or concluding  
14 statements.

15 Just a couple of points that I would like to  
16 point out. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled  
17 for April 2014, and we'll provide more details on that  
18 date via our PSC website, the TASA section, so you can  
19 be on the lookout for that.

20 And I just want to thank everyone for  
21 participating, and thank everyone for attending, and  
22 we'll go ahead and conclude the meeting.

23 Thank you.

24 (The meeting concluded at 3:28 p.m.)

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STATE OF FLORIDA )

: CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

COUNTY OF LEON )

I, JANE FAUROT, RPR, Chief, Hearing Reporter Services Section, FPSC Division of Commission Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the same has been transcribed under my direct supervision; and that this transcript constitutes a true transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

DATED THIS 22nd day of November, 2013.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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