



the REACTer

Official Publication of REACT (Radio Emergency Associated Citizens Teams)



Vol. 18, No. 6

EXTRA EDITION

November, 1984

PRCS Is Coming???

Valuable New Personal Radio Service is Threatened — FCC Must Be Turned Around!

Washington, DC — After conferring with officials at the Federal Communications Commission, members of the REACT FCC Comment Committee cannot be confident that the Personal Radio Communication Service (PRCS) will be authorized by the Federal Communications Commission.

Once again, personal radio users are being outshouted by the commercial interests whose products and services cost more and are less available to the majority of the American public.

Relatively few people are aware that they may be "ripped off" by actions of the Federal Communication Commission which will award valuable radio spectrum allocations to those people who will resell it to the business users who can afford it, thus restricting the general public from access to these facilities.

PRCS offers the average citizen greater access to current communications technology than any other radio service previously available. There is still time . . . If REACT members and others interested in access to high-technology, and usable radio frequencies, make this information known to the proper authorities. With your help, we may be able to turn this situation around.

Most REACT members are experienced in Citizens Band Radio and a growing number of REACT members are using General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) to fulfill personal and



WASHINGTON, DC — Gerald H. Reese, Executive Director of REACT International, shown using experimental model of Personal Radio Communications Service equipment in automobile. Communications direct from the vehicle to another vehicle, and to anywhere via telephone inter-connect was demonstrated. Reese said, "PRCS is the Personal Radio System we've always wanted."

organizational communications needs. CB radio has the advantage of providing contact with everyone who has Citizens Band Radio. GMRS permits effective, relatively private, organizational communications, at a higher cost level.

PRCS combines the privacy and quality of communication available through GMRS with the public access of CB while adding the benefits of direct telephone interconnect. The cost will be approximately one-half the cost of GMRS!

If you consider yourself to be a loyal REACT member, and have an interest in the future of communications in the United States and Canada, you will be highly interested in reviewing the entire contents of this special issue of *The REACTer*, cover-to-cover.

Your knowledgeable understanding of the situation, and your thoughtful response, as suggested herein, may make it possible for all of North America to enjoy a more effective and responsive personal radio service in the future.

Notes from Northbrook

by Executive Director Gerald H. Reese

Special To Every REACT Member:

I am excited! I have just experienced the hands-on use of a new Personal Communications Radio Service mobile unit.

I talked from an automobile through a telephone, to a third party using a PRCS radio operating on an Experimental License. This also can be used as a direct person-to-person communications via a selective call on a telephone-like handset to another radio user.

The system includes two party-line channels for vehicle-to-vehicle use or calling to any station.

This is all possible if the Personal Communications Radio Service is adopted as proposed in FCC docket no. 83-26.

We reported on this in the September-October 1984 issue of *The REACTer* (page 1, at the bottom of the page above the picture of the Daytona Beach convention group). You should have received that publication before you received this Special Issue.

During my recent visit to Washington, I was given a demonstration of this new radio system. I thought of every REACT member that I've talked to who has complained of all the problems they have in monitoring CB Channel 9. Noise! Harrassment! Skip! Profanity! I believe that this system can solve many, if not all of the problems.

PRCS provides a system that is inherently quieter due to the frequency and its FM mode.

It is also quieter because the system has full selective call using a telephone-type touch pad. You tell your friends your optional call number (it could be your telephone number), and you call others whose call signals are known to you. The PRCS radio automatically selects an unused channel . . . a completely private communications channel.

Other significant advantages of this system and how REACT would utilize them are detailed in this special issue of *The REACTer*. This is another reason why we ask you to read it cover-to-cover.

After you have read this, if you agree that PRCS is the greatest innovation available to personal radio users, ever, then please help everyone in REACT and all personal radio users.

Here's what we hope you'll do. Write a letter describing your own interests and reasons for wanting to have PRCS. Address that letter to the Honorable Timothy Wirth, Chairman, House Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Rayburn House Office Building, Room B-331, Washington, DC 20515.

In addition, send a copy of that letter to REACT Headquarters. Please tell Congressman Wirth *why* he should relay information to Chairman Mark Fowler of the Federal Communication Commission asking for the Personal Radio Communication Service as described in FCC docket 83-26, to be adopted by the Federal Communications Commission.

As we said, send this to Congressman Wirth with a copy to REACT headquarters. In addition, contact all of the organizations with whom you work on a local basis, such as March of Dimes, Special Olympics, AAA, MADD, Red Cross, Salvation Army, police, fire and other local government agencies. Explain to them how the adoption of PRCS will help you provide greater public service communications to your community and stress the urgency of their reply.

If you need additional copies of this publication to circulate to other organizations in your area, or to the important agencies that may help in any way, please let us know and we will send them to you, or directly to them, immediately.

Your help in this project is vital to the REACT organization and every individual who wants to enjoy better personal radio communications in the future. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and assistance!

Questions and Answers about PRCS

Q. How will PRCS affect my communications on CB and GMRS?

A. The issue before the FCC is a "proposal for a new personal radio service. This is neither intended nor is it expected to replace CB or GMRS. You will be able to use your present radios even if PRCS is adopted.

Q. What will we lose if PRCS is turned down?

A. PRCS offers the only opportunity for many years, if ever again, to get this kind of high quality personal radio service at an affordable price. Remember that PRCS offers high quality communications, with private line capability, repeater extension of range, interconnect to the telephone system, and party line channels for applications similar to CB Channel 9. This is all available at an affordable cost. If PRCS is not adopted at this time, it means that the frequencies will be assigned to another radio service and will no longer be available for a PRCS. We will then have to wait until additional frequencies are available sometime later on in the future if we are ever to get a similar quality radio service.

Q. How will my letter influence the FCC?

A. Your letter to Congressman Wirth, Chairman of the Communications Subcommittee in the House will have great influence on the FCC. The Congress provides oversight of the FCC and controls appropriations of operating funds to the Commission. Copies sent to REACT Headquarters will also be made available to key individuals at the Commission to ensure that they are aware of your support as an individual and as a member of REACT. We need the strength of numbers on this issue from REACT members and other consumers to offset the heavyweight lobbying conducted by business interests competing for the frequencies we want and need for PRCS! Write today!

GENERAL ELECTRIC
 RADIO ELECTRONICS PRODUCTS DEPARTMENT
 GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY • ELECTRONICS PARK • DANBURG, NEW YORK 12821
 October 20, 1984

Dear REACTer:

We are on the brink of a new era of personal radio communication. All of you can help determine whether it becomes a reality.

In mid-November, the FCC will vote on General Electric's proposal to allocate a small part of the 900 MHz band for PRCS, the first truly consumer-oriented, private mobile communications service in history.

This is the last chance the FCC has to provide such a service. If this opportunity is lost, it will mean all available frequencies have permanently been given to business users.

Let me tell you a bit about PRCS. I think you'll be as excited about it as we are — and so Jerry Breen is.

First, PRCS is private and addressable. It's safe for drivers to use in roadside emergencies. It's safe for neighborhood watch groups. It's safe for the elderly waiting for transportation. It's safe for parents calling children at home alone.

Second, it's high quality. The 900 MHz FM transmission eliminates most man-made interference.

Third, it automatically ties into the phone system through a base station in the users' home. Users can make or receive calls to and from any place in the world. Importantly, car-to-car and car-to-base transmission is independent of the phone network and is usable in emergencies where cellular systems may fail.

Fourth, it is affordable. PRCS equipment — mobile and base units combined — will cost \$450 - \$500 compared to \$2,500 for cellular. Local service (whose mobile and base units are normally 1 - 5 miles apart) will cost nothing. Extending the range up to 15 miles from home will cost about \$10 per month for a subscription to a repeater service. By contrast, cellular service costs over \$50 a month plus added expense for each call.

Fifth, consumers want PRCS. Three separate market research studies show a substantial unmet need for private, affordable mobile communications. Millions of drivers are expected to purchase and use PRCS units.

Unfortunately, there are those who believe that additional or expanded business communications services should take precedence over this unique consumer service. Only consumers like you can turn the tide. If you are as excited about PRCS as we are, please write Representative Tim Wirth, Chairman of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee. Mr. Wirth will let the FCC know that consumers like you support PRCS.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Wallis
 Robert A. Wallis
 Marketing Manager - PRCS

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

that is most comparable to CB where people are sharing the same frequency.

How would PRCS work for REACT?

1. Users can talk to other users on the Party Line Channels when traveling away from home operating area for travel information, road assistance, accident reports, etc. This is the open channel type of operations that REACT Teams can monitor. We have suggested to the FCC that instead of two such channels, four channels may be required. We also suggested designating one channel for "calling and emergencies." This is the channel the REACT Teams would monitor, and we would encourage police, and other official agencies to monitor as well.

2. Motorists could report Impaired Driver Alert of erratic driving behavior, and REACT Teams could help police intercept drunk drivers or ill drivers as we do now under this program. Enhanced communications capabilities of PRCS, coupled with the privacy of selective calling, makes the whole application of the Impaired Driver Alert program more useable, more practical and more effective.

3. REACT Teams could work with local authorities to assure contact through PRCS by having REACT volunteers monitor the Party Line Channels. Where dialing 9-1-1 is not possible through PRCS-telephone interconnect this could be vital. The development of a national protocol for emergency calls is entirely feasible. This could be something like the 0911 we used with the prefix of the state and K (two letter state ID) — 0911 for CB contacts to state police and highway patrol agency. Development of such a protocol in PRCS is totally feasible, appropriate and natural. This would permit law enforcement and REACT Teams to work together to monitor PRCS channels to insure intercept of emergency calls reporting accidents, crimes in progress, Impaired Driver Alert, and all other calls now handled on CB Channel 9.

4. REACT Teams can monitor "party line" PRCS channels for fire or accident emergency calls, promptly relaying the information to police, fire or ambulance services (where those authorities do not monitor the frequencies themselves) as they have been doing for more than 20 years.

(Continued on page 4)

Features of PRCS for REACT Members

The proposed Personal Radio Communication Service offers a number of features which will be of particular interest to REACT members.

1. At 900 MHz in the FM mode, communications will be truly short range (no skip) and it will be quieter, and cleaner sounding. As good, or better than GMRS.

2. 133 channels are proposed within this service. Five channels are designated for control channels and authorized only for the transmission of digitally encoded signals necessary to establish communications with another channel, including automatic transmitter identification of the originating radio.

3. 30 channels are designated as Local Talk Channels or LTC's and are

authorized only for transmissions directly from one user station to another unit user station using duplex mode on these frequencies. This is where you will have the code call of the other radio user (or unit of your station) and will call them directly from your radio to their radio. 96 channels are designated Repeater Talk Channels or RTC's and are authorized only for transmissions from a user station to a repeater station (on the low channel frequency only) or from a repeater station to a user station (on the high channel frequency) to conduct user-station to user-station communications.

4. Two simplex frequencies are designated Party Line Channels or "PLC" and are authorized only for transmissions from one user station to one or more user stations. This is the area

5. Establish procedures to assist law enforcement agencies using a local "talk channel" on PRCS in conjunction with patrol activities in local "neighborhood watch" programs.

6. Use the trunking capabilities of PRCS to aid disaster relief activities when regular telephone lines are not available. This is something that is unique with PRCS. A trunked (selective call) radio system available to all citizens that will not be affected by the telephone system when a disaster makes telephones inoperative. Specific call signals can be used for each agency involved . . . police, fire, EOC, Red Cross, REACT, Salvation Army, etc.

7. Continue to support local civil activities such as: Charity Fund drives of March of Dimes, American Cancer Society and others; provide public safety communications at fairs, parades, children's sports, tournaments, special olympics competitions, etc. with high quality communications that the technology of PRCS will permit with greater reliability and quality than are available in a Citizen Band Radio Service — or GMRS.

In summation, PRCS fulfills the objective of a cost effective personal radio service that we have all sought for many years.

The simple fact is, that the technology to put this system in effect has been thoroughly developed and proven in field tests. The details of regulations, rule-making and operational instructions have already been published by the FCC in proposed rule making under

General Docket no. 83-26. REACT officials and leaders have used the equipment and know that it will work. All that is needed is the "stamp of approval" of the Federal Communications Commission.

Your help is needed to put the pressure behind that stamp of approval to make it so that it may appear legibly, and clearly on that proposal and that you, and I, and all REACT members and others interested in effective personal communications can be using the system sometime between now and 1986.

If You Are Uncertain What To Do About PRCS, Please Read This . . .

REACT members have been dreaming of a better, more useful personal radio service for many years. If adopted, PRCS will provide more effective communications for personal, business and emergency applications at affordable costs. Adoption of PRCS will in no way change your present ability to use your CB and/or GMRS radio.

It will be of great importance to the American people, to REACT and perhaps to your children and grandchildren!

You don't have to send any money (we mean it)! Only your *voice* in the form of a letter is needed, but time is of the essence! This matter is on the FCC agenda for November 21, 1984. **Your letter must arrive in Washington no later than November 14th!** Even if you sent a letter to your own congressman,

We can't guarantee that your action now will assure that we will get PRCS. However, your inaction now will ensure that we will **never** get PRCS!

Won't you help to make PRCS the new, effective, user communication system that we all have been looking for since REACT was started in 1962! Write to Congressman Tim Wirth and send a copy to REACT International.

Honorable Timothy Wirth
Chairman, House Committee on
Telecommunications
Rayburn House Office Building,
Room B-331
Washington, DC 20515

please send another letter to Chairman Wirth — now!

Please write today and ask your fellow REACTers, friends and neighbors to write as well. Get on your favorite CB channel and ask for support. Thank you for helping, on behalf of all REACT members.

REACT FCC Comment Committee
Ron Mayes, Chairman
Sedgwick County REACT
Member of REACT International
Board of Directors;
Tom Bowling,
National Capitol REACT;
Nat Maryn,
National Capitol REACT;
Robert Stone,
REACT International Board
of Directors

REACT Teams Have Option... if PRCS Is Adopted

Assuming PRCS becomes a reality, you will not be obligated to purchase the equipment to remain active in REACT. It will be some time before a great number of users have the equipment and CB and GMRS will continue to be useful.

As PRCS grows in popularity, it will be natural for many REACTers to add that equipment. Under recently adopted policy of the REACT Board of Directors, Teams have the option of conducting volunteer public service communication in any one or all services — CB, GMRS, Amateur or others, such as PRCS, that may become available in the future.

REACT International

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NOTE: This publication is made possible by special additional funding. This activity has the full backing of the REACT International Board of Directors and Forum Officers.