

1 APPEARANCES:

2 CURTIS WILLIAMS, PSC Staff
JEFF BATES, PSC Staff
3 PAMELA PAGE, PSC Staff
BETH SALAK, PSC Staff
4 GREG FOGLEMAN, PSC Staff
MARK LONG, PSC Staff
5 LISA HARVEY, PSC Staff
JAMES FORSTALL, Florida Telecommunication Relay, Inc.
6 CHRIS LITTLEWOOD, St. Petersburg College Center for
Public Safety Innovation, National
7 Terrorism Preparedness Institute
JEFF BRANCH, Sprint
8 ROBERT TELFER, FTRI
TIM WATA, Florida Association of the Deaf
9

10 TELEPHONIC APPEARANCES:

11 RICK KOTTLER, Deaf Service Center Association
THOMAS D'ANGELO, Florida Association of the Deaf
12 JULIE CHURCH, Deaf Service Center Association of Florida
and the Florida Coordinating Council for
13 the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
CHERYL RHODES, Florida Deaf/Blind Association
14

15 INTERPRETERS:

16 BRYAN CONRAD
ANGELA DEESE-THEOBALD
17
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P R O C E E D I N G S

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2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Good afternoon. I'm Curtis
3 Williams with the Office of Telecommunications, and I'll
4 be chairing today's meeting. Joining me is Jeff Bates,
5 who is also with the Office of Telecommunications, and
6 Pam Page with the Office of General Counsel.

7 Everyone should have received a copy of the
8 meeting agenda, so at this time we'll proceed with the
9 agenda as printed. The first thing we would like to do
10 is have Ms. Page read the notice.

11 **MS. PAGE:** Welcome, and good afternoon.

12 Pursuant to notice issued, this time, date,
13 and place was set for this meeting of the
14 Telecommunications Access System Act Advisory Committee
15 in Docket No. 140029-TP.

16 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Ms. Page. Before we
17 proceed, we would like to cover some preliminary
18 matters. A transcript will be made of today's meeting
19 and provided to all TASA Committee members. Please
20 state your name, when speaking, for the record for our
21 court reporter. We ask that everyone please silence
22 your cell phones during the meeting. And for those on
23 the phone, we ask that you please put your phone on mute
24 until you're ready to speak so we don't get interference
25 noise.

1 And at this time, if there are no questions,
2 we would like to go ahead and take appearances. We'll
3 start with the individuals here in the room and then
4 proceed with the participants on the phone. We could
5 start with you, Mr. Forstall.

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

7 **MR. BRANCH:** Good afternoon. I'm Jeff Branch
8 with Sprint.

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Good afternoon. Chris
10 Littlewood from St. Petersburg College, Center for
11 Public Safety Innovation. I represent the Florida
12 Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you.

14 For the phone participants, we ask that you
15 please state your name and who you're representing. I'm
16 not sure how many individuals we have on the phone, so
17 just jump in.

18 **MR. KOTTLER:** Hello, Curtis. It's Rick
19 Kottler, Deaf Service Center Association.

20 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Welcome, Rick.

21 **MR. D'ANGELO:** Hello. This is Thomas D'Angelo
22 with the Florida Association of the Deaf, and I'm happy
23 to join here, the meeting today.

24 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Welcome.

25 **MS. CHURCH:** Hello. This is Julie Church with

1 the Deaf Service Center Association of Florida and the
2 Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of
3 Hearing.

4 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Welcome. Are there anymore
5 participants on the phone?

6 **MS. RHODES:** Yes, I'm here. This is Cheryl
7 Rhodes, representing Florida Deaf/Blind Association.

8 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Cheryl.

9 Are there any other phone participants?

10 Okay. Here and now, we'll go ahead and
11 proceed. I would also like to just mention, for those
12 who are participating by phone, we do have several
13 individuals in the audience that are joining us. I'd
14 like to acknowledge Beth Salak, who is the Director of
15 the Office of Telecommunications; and Greg Fogleman,
16 who's a supervisor in the Office of Telecommunications
17 actually replacing Bob Casey. We have Mark Long, who is
18 also a supervisor in the Office of Telecommunications;
19 and we have Lisa Harvey, who is the Deputy Director here
20 at the Public Service Commission for the technical
21 staff. And we have one more individual.

22 **MR. TELFER:** My name is Robert Telfer, and I'm
23 with FTRI.

24 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes. Robert Telfer with FTRI.

25 **MR. BATES:** Tim Wata.

1 **MR. WILLIAMS:** And Tim Wata, who is with the
2 Florida Association of the Deaf.

3 So I think we have all the introductions and
4 all the preliminaries taken care of, so at this time
5 we'll proceed with the presentations.

6 Jeff Bates will provide an FCC update. And
7 following Jeff, I'll provide an update and overview of
8 the recent issues and matters addressed by the Florida
9 Public Service Commission.

10 **MR. BATES:** Good afternoon. Jeff Bates,
11 Florida PSC. The FCC -- for the FCC filings, we have an
12 FCC number versus a DA number on orders. Decisions are
13 issued in two different ways: either by the authority of
14 the entire Commission or by authority delegated to the
15 bureaus and offices of the Commission.

16 If the decision is decided by the Commission,
17 it is identified by an FCC number. The number is
18 comprised of two digits indicating the year and a number
19 of up to three digits indicating the sequence, such as
20 FCC 08-138.

21 If the decision is issued through authority
22 delegated to the FCC bureaus and offices, it is
23 identified by a DA number. The DA number is constructed
24 similarly to the FCC number with two initial digits
25 indicating the year and a number of up to four digits

1 indicating the sequence, such as DA 08-1476.

2 On October 30th, 2015, the FCC issued a Notice
3 of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 15-144. In this Notice of
4 Proposed Rulemaking, the FCC proposes to amend hearing
5 aid compatibility rules for wireline handsets; proposes
6 a rule on setting a standard for volume control for
7 wireless handsets; proposes requiring manufacturers to
8 use the 2011 standard developed by the American National
9 Standards Institute to certify future handsets as
10 hearing aid compatible; and to simplify the process for
11 all equipment, wireline and wireless, to achieve hearing
12 aid compatibility compliance prior to FCC approval of
13 those standards.

14 Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC
15 15-143 released November 3rd, 2015. In that Notice of
16 Proposed Rulemaking, the FCC proposed to modify the
17 four-year compensation rate plan for video relay service
18 by adopting a limited-duration compensation rate freeze
19 applicable to VRS providers with 500,000 or fewer
20 monthly minutes.

21 Under this modification, providers will
22 receive compensation of \$5.29 per minute for a maximum
23 of 16 months beginning July 1st, 2015.

24 In Order DA 15-1349 released November 23rd,
25 2015, in that order, the FCC waived sections of the

1 Commission's rules to permit VTSecure and the MITRE
2 Corporation to access the TRS Numbering Directory for
3 the development of a reference platform for VRS
4 number -- access technologies. Clarifying the entity's
5 eligibility to access the directory will allow them to
6 carry out their contracted duties.

7 Finally, Report and Order FCC 16-25 released
8 on March 3rd, 2016, in this order the FCC provides
9 limited compensation rate relief for VRS providers with
10 500,000 or fewer monthly minutes. Limited relief is
11 being provided to the smallest VRS providers on a
12 retrospective and going-forward basis.

13 The FCC directed the administrator of the
14 Interstate Telecommunications Relay Services Fund to pay
15 compensation at a rate of \$5.29 per minute for the
16 period from July 1, 2015, through October 31st, 2016.

17 For the period November 1st, 2016, to
18 April 30th, 2017, the FCC directs the administrator of
19 the TRS Fund to compensate providers at \$5.06 per
20 minute.

21 For the period from May 1st to June 30th,
22 2017, the FCC directs the administrator to compensate
23 providers at \$4.82 per minute.

24 And that's what -- that's the FCC updates
25 since October 29th.

1 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Jeff. Are there any
2 questions regarding the FCC update?

3 If not, we'll -- at this time I will present
4 on the issues before the Florida Public Service
5 Commission regarding the state relay program since the
6 TASA committee's last meeting in October of 2015.

7 In December 2015, the Public Service
8 Commission completed its annual report -- its annual
9 relay report and published that report on our website.
10 So if you haven't read the report or if you haven't been
11 on our website, please feel free to do so. And if you
12 have any questions, feel free to contact staff, and we
13 can address those questions as you review and read the
14 relay report.

15 On March 7th, 2016, the FTRI submitted its
16 proposed 2016/2017 fiscal year budget to the Commission
17 for the Florida Public Service Commission's
18 consideration.

19 On April 13th, 2016, which is, of course,
20 today, and after my presentation, James Forstall, who is
21 the Executive Director with FTRI, will make his annual
22 presentation on the budget.

23 On April 22nd, the Commission staff is
24 scheduled to file its recommendation for Commission
25 consideration of the proposed budget, and on May 5th,

1 staff will present to the Commission the recommendation.
2 And by statute, the budget and any changes in the
3 surcharge must be in effect by July 1st, 2016.

4 Also in this recommendation, and we've been --
5 we've heard from Mr. Tom D'Angelo and Mr. Wata, but in
6 this recommendation, both Mr. D'Angelo and Mr. Wata were
7 recommended for appointment to the Commission -- or to
8 the TASA Committee representing the Florida Association
9 of the Deaf. And so by statute, the Florida Public
10 Service Commission -- the Commissioners actually have to
11 take that under consideration and vote on their
12 appointment. So we welcome Mr. D'Angelo and Mr. Wata's
13 participation here today, and -- but recognizing that
14 their formal appointment to the TASA Committee will be
15 subject to the Commission's consideration and vote.

16 So at this time, we will go ahead and hear
17 from Mr. James Forstall on FTRI's budget, proposed
18 budget.

19 **MR. FORSTALL:** If we could get the slide
20 presentation mode. Okay. It's up.

21 Okay. Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you
22 for allowing me to be here to present on the FTRI
23 proposed fiscal year 2016 and 2017 budget.

24 Based on the best information available to us,
25 the FTRI board of directors has approved a

1 recommendation to maintain the current surcharge level
2 of 12 cents for the next fiscal year. The budget, as
3 approved by the board, projects total revenues to be
4 \$7,796,894 and total expenses to be \$7,505,109.

5 The proposed budget for fiscal year 2016/17.
6 As of February 2016, FTRI has over 507,000 individuals
7 in the client database. It is evident that FTRI and its
8 contracted regional distribution centers are reaching
9 out to meet the telecommunications access needs of
10 residents who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf/blind, or
11 speech disabled. Outreach continues to be a large part
12 of our efforts, and plans are underway to reach out to
13 the estimated 3 million potential clients with hearing
14 loss or speech disability in Florida by creating
15 awareness and telephone independence.

16 Operating revenue. The surcharge revenues for
17 fiscal year 2016 and '17 are based on over 4 percent
18 decrease in the total number of access lines reported
19 and estimated in fiscal year 2015 and '16.

20 The number of -- on the next slide is the
21 number of -- a graph showing the number of lines
22 decreasing over the last few years. And, of course, we
23 all know from past, previous meetings that the access
24 lines will continue to decline due to the fact that more
25 and more people are migrating away from landlines to

1 other types of technology. So we will continue to see
2 that decrease in the years to come.

3 And I wanted to remind everybody, especially
4 for those who are maybe new to the TASA Committee,
5 access lines are only landlines that do not make up cell
6 phones or internet or -- some internet, cell phones.
7 And, of course, the only -- access lines are only
8 classified as analog landlines.

9 Operating revenue. During the next fiscal
10 year budget, proposed budget, we're estimating that
11 there will be 65,342,642 total number of access lines.
12 And what that means is that includes the number of
13 access lines times 12 months. So the number of access
14 lines is actually lower than that.

15 At the current rate, 12-cents surcharge level,
16 should produce the revenues of \$7,841,117. Of course,
17 there's less administrative cost for the telephone
18 companies to submit, collect and submit to FTRI, leaving
19 a net operating revenue amount of \$7,762,706.

20 And the projected interest income is \$34,188,
21 with a total operating revenue of \$7,796,894.

22 Category I, Florida relay. The fiscal year
23 2016/17 budget for relay is based on projections
24 submitted by the relay provider, which is Sprint. The
25 contracted rate at \$1.09 per billable minute for

1 traditional relay service and \$1.63 per billable minute
2 for captioned telephone service.

3 Using the data submitted by the relay
4 provider, it is estimated year-end total of
5 2,293,988 billable minutes. So Category I expense is
6 \$3,192,039.

7 Category II, which is equipment and repairs,
8 this category consists of all equipment purchased as
9 well as repairs. FTRI is projecting the fiscal year end
10 revenue -- fiscal year end 2016/17 expenses to be
11 \$1,621,478.

12 The number of equipment has declined over the
13 last few years, equipment distributed, and, of course,
14 that's primarily due to less and less people having
15 access to the program due to not having an analog line
16 anymore. So we will continue to see a decline in the
17 years to come unless, of course, newer technology is
18 introduced into the program.

19 Category III, equipment distribution and
20 training. There are 25 RDCs that provide services in
21 multiple locations throughout the state. It is
22 estimated that the RDCs and FTRI will have provided over
23 27,783 services to clients during the current fiscal
24 year. The total fiscal year 2016/17 proposed budget for
25 Category III is \$950,403.

1 During the past year -- during the current
2 fiscal year, we've had two RDCs close. Actually we
3 actually had two RDCs close and one withdrew their
4 contract. So we have less centers out there working the
5 program.

6 Services provided during the last four to five
7 years. There's a graph that shows that the decline is
8 in line with the equipment and total number of services
9 as well. So we're estimating at the end of fiscal year
10 2016 to have provided again 27,783 services.

11 Now the services include clients who are new,
12 clients who might modify the equipment, exchanging a
13 broken unit for a working unit, return it, follow-up
14 services. So all those comprise the services that we
15 are providing.

16 Category IV is outreach. FTRI is proposing an
17 outreach budget of \$728,300, which is an increase of
18 \$153,674 for fiscal year 2016/17, to continue promoting
19 and creating awareness about both the FTRI equipment
20 distribution program and Florida relay program.

21 I do hope that everyone received an updated
22 copy, a revised copy of my presentation. I emailed it
23 this morning. I had informed Curtis that I was still in
24 the process of updating the information, so I was able
25 to capture data later this morning to update the

1 presentation.

2 The outreach, FTRI outreach rationale for
3 increased funding. The reason for the increase in the
4 outreach budget is FTRI plans to advertise the program
5 all year round using insert ads, otherwise known as a
6 flyer, as continuity and consistency are important with
7 any advertising campaign. FTRI has not previously
8 advertised in newspapers 12 months of the year. FTRI
9 collaborates with IMS, which stands for Intersect Media
10 Solutions, to strategically place insert ads in the
11 newspaper by identifying specific areas: For instance,
12 zoning by zip codes, which allows FTRI to advertise in a
13 cost-efficient manner.

14 Some facts. Scarborough, a Nielsen service,
15 released a report in March 2015 that 71.7 percent of the
16 U.S. population 65-plus still reads the daily or Sunday
17 newspaper. The same source also reported that
18 71.9 percent of the total top seven Florida markets read
19 a daily or Sunday paper. In an article published in
20 January of 2015 by Pew Research Center, 84 percent of
21 people 65-plus still have landlines.

22 And the next slide is -- shows the number of
23 people in Florida with hearing loss according to the
24 USA.com, which is a website that breaks down the
25 population by zip code. And we also use that as part of

1 our process to strategically place ads throughout the
2 state.

3 The 65 percent -- 65-plus population in
4 Florida is 3,518,560. And the HLAA's, which is the
5 Hearing Loss Association of America, website states that
6 one in three people 65-plus have a hearing loss. That
7 equates to over 1,172,853 in Florida alone. FTRI has
8 served 478,221 of 65-plus since the inception of the
9 program in 1991.

10 I would like to be able to share with you
11 information or data that we collect regarding the
12 newspaper campaign, and our database, the FTRI database
13 does track this data on every individual that is served
14 within FTRI -- through the FTRI program.

15 And what you'll see here is the last three
16 years we did the newspaper campaign. I was able to pull
17 the data from the website, from our database -- I'm
18 sorry -- from July 1st. On the first slides you'll see
19 the last 12 months of the campaign -- I'm sorry -- the
20 last three years over a period of 12 months, except for
21 this year, the current fiscal year. Since we still have
22 two and a half months to go, I've compiled the data from
23 July 1st to April 13th, which is this morning. It's
24 just a comparison.

25 You can see that this year our numbers are

1 pretty high for -- well, they're tracking pretty well
2 for newspaper ads this year. And with two and a half
3 months, we hope to exceed or bypass the last two years.

4 Here's a graph that shows the newspaper
5 campaign results for nine months and 13 days, which
6 allows the comparison from July 1st to April 13th. And
7 as you can see, this year the ads are -- the number of
8 clients that have been served through the campaign has
9 exceeded the last two years at this point in time. So
10 we're excited about that. We feel like the insert ads
11 that we're using right now are really, really producing.

12 And, of course, the last slide shows the
13 newspaper campaign results for three months and 13 days.
14 And I wanted to show you in comparison over the last two
15 years, three years by the spring campaign, which we're
16 operating right now, shows from January 1st to
17 April 13th. You can see over the last two years that
18 this current campaign is really producing better
19 results. So we are happy to see that the ads are
20 producing the number of clients served from the
21 newspaper -- who said they saw the newspaper ad and are
22 responding.

23 And the whole purpose of this outreach
24 presentation is to explain why we really believe having
25 a 12-month campaign will be beneficial for FTRI over the

1 next fiscal year. And that's the reason for the
2 increase in the budget, the outreach budget, is all that
3 increase will go towards newspapers.

4 Also the flyer newspaper campaign results. We
5 have what we see, an insert ad and a regular ad. And
6 what that means is the insert ad, which you'll see in a
7 minute, are an 8x11 back and front insert or flyer that
8 goes inside the newspaper, so when people see the ad,
9 they're able to pull it out and hang on to it. And it
10 really has a much bigger impact on people seeing our ad,
11 hanging on to the ad. And they may hang on to it for a
12 while before they actually go into a center to get
13 served.

14 And from July 1st to April 13th, the number of
15 services that were provided through the insert ad is
16 1,908, compared to the regular newspaper ad of 582. And
17 the regular newspaper ad would be an ad that goes in the
18 newspaper at the discretion of the newspaper to place it
19 wherever they have -- wherever the room is. We don't
20 always get to determine or dictate where they can place
21 the ad. But with an insert ad, we know for certain that
22 it will go in the middle of the newspaper with all the
23 other advertisements, so we know that they will get
24 looked at.

25 The fall insert ad, as you can see, was a blue

1 one, and we did that in the fall. And we worked with
2 the vendor to create the ads. ClearSound was the one
3 that created this one. And the other one, the one
4 that's currently running that we're having the most
5 success with is the spring insert ad, which is produced
6 by Clarity, and it's red, of course. And this one
7 really, really -- we've gotten a lot of positive
8 feedback on this ad. It tends to stand out and pop when
9 a person sees it. So they will hopefully get their
10 attention, grab their attention, and people will again
11 hang on to the ad. And, of course, we do list the --
12 the regional distribution center's contact information
13 on the bottom so they can either go to the center or
14 contact them directly, and we do that for each area
15 where we have an RDC. So they are listed on the ad.
16 And we also have our web address, which is
17 www.fttri.org/free, and we are getting some traffic from
18 that through our website. So we are getting people who
19 see the ad and go to our website, and we're able to
20 track that as well.

21 And let's see. Okay. And while I'm still
22 talking about the ads, the insert ad campaign results,
23 comparing the fall campaign to the spring, again, we're
24 seeing more spring campaign -- more people seeing the
25 spring -- responding from the spring insert ad as

1 opposed to the fall.

2 And the next slide shows a picture of the
3 CapTel insert ad that we have currently running right
4 now. We don't have data on it yet. We will be
5 collecting data on that the next two, three months. But
6 we have a blue insert and a red insert again. And we
7 did one for the month of April -- March, and we're doing
8 one for the month of April as well. So we are promoting
9 the CapTel equipment.

10 And what you see on the next slide is called
11 the April FSI Plan, which stands for the insert. That's
12 a terminology that IMS uses, and it's the insert plan or
13 schedule. And this is how we determine where the ads
14 are placed strategically. We will identify the center
15 that it's going to be placed in and the city, along with
16 the name of the newspaper, and also whether it will be a
17 full run or a zone run. And a zone run means that we
18 select certain zip codes in the area, and we are able to
19 determine where the majority of the 65-plus population
20 lives, so we target those particular areas. If it says
21 it's a full run, which means that everybody in that
22 particular area that gets that -- that subscribes to
23 that newspaper will get a copy, will get the newspaper.
24 So we don't have to break them down by zip codes in
25 those areas because it's a full run and you don't have

1 that option. Just everybody gets it.

2 But with the zip codes, a zoned area is the
3 larger metropolitan areas is where those work. It's
4 because it's more expensive to advertise in those areas,
5 so, therefore, we have to pick and choose which zip
6 codes. And our plan for the next fiscal year is to do
7 it by quarters and to rotate them around so we're not --
8 the ads are not going to the same people over and over
9 again. We want them to see the ads, but by the time we
10 get to the next quarter, we want to alternate to another
11 zip code. Because we do believe that if people really
12 want to respond to the ad, they will hang on to the ad.
13 And whether it takes two or three weeks or two or three
14 months later, they will bring the ad with them to the
15 center.

16 So this is one of the ways that we -- this is
17 the plan that I approved when -- IMS will put all the
18 data together, and it's also broken down by individual
19 RDCs on a tab, which you don't see here, and it lists
20 all the individuals. I might have a -- yes, here it is.

21 This is what a tab would look like. The next
22 slide shows you RDC No. 4. And these are the particular
23 zip codes that we will be targeting our insert ad in
24 that particular run. And you've got a sample of both of
25 them. You've got a sample of zoned and full run. The

1 top one is zoned because that is in a Daytona Beach
2 newspaper, which is a much -- a larger newspaper. And
3 then, of course, the other one underneath it is in a
4 different area but it's in the Daytona area. It's
5 called -- in the DeLand area, which is served by RDC
6 No. 4. And they list all the zip codes because those
7 are the run areas that it will cover.

8 And we like -- we use the zip codes to help us
9 determine the response, percentage response from the
10 people who are living in those zip codes. It helps us
11 to gauge how successful they are or not.

12 And this is the -- the next slide is the 2015
13 65-plus Nielsen data. This is what is used by IMS to
14 determine the percentage of people that are 65-plus in a
15 specific area. And so we will highlight the areas that
16 we want to work with. And we also -- I was able to add
17 the FTRI data in there to demonstrate the success or the
18 response to the ads advertising in those particular zip
19 codes. So -- and this is -- these are some of the tools
20 that we will be using going forward to determine how and
21 where to place the ads.

22 The next slide is the population 65-plus by
23 zip code. And this is the one that we also use to help
24 us in addition to the other data. Now if I go back to
25 the slide where it says the 65-plus Nielsen data slide,

1 that is a program that you can buy to assist you with
2 it. But FTRI doesn't buy it -- IMS owns it -- because
3 they said it costs anywhere upward to 50- or \$60,000 a
4 year to buy it. So they're using it to work with our
5 program, so we don't have to buy it. We have access to
6 it.

7 The next slide, of course, is just a sample
8 slide of the USA.com Volusia County population, and it
9 breaks it down by -- let me see on here -- it breaks it
10 down -- it's hard to see. You've got the basic
11 information, you've got the population breakdown, and
12 you've got the different groups. And, let's see, we do
13 have -- and this is an example of Volusia. It gives you
14 a picture of the area that we're targeting, and then, of
15 course, the zip codes are right below it. And next to
16 the zip codes, in some cases, you have the total
17 population, and so we will target those areas. And then
18 what we do next is we scroll down on the other tab that
19 breaks it down by age, and then we will go there and
20 choose, decide if this is -- if the 65-plus numbers are
21 worthwhile to advertise in those particular zip codes.
22 So we have some really -- tools available to help us
23 with determining the best places to place the ads.

24 Also that we use or have available -- excuse
25 me -- is the next slide, the FTRI client survey report.

1 This is how we track or where we track a person hears
2 about the program. And each center will -- excuse me --
3 is responsible for asking the client how they heard
4 about the program. And in some cases, the client will
5 bring an ad with them, so that makes it easier for a
6 center to know and identify, okay, this is how you saw
7 the ad.

8 And we -- specifically we call it a referral
9 source. We specifically identify an insert ad to
10 identify a specific run or campaign. This particular
11 one, the one that we have running right now, is called
12 the Spring 2015 insert ad -- insert ad, Spring 2015. So
13 we know, because of the -- we placed it and we know that
14 when a person selects that, it's identified that
15 specific ad is working. We only have two particular ads
16 running at the same time, so we can identify which one
17 of the two ads are really working.

18 For instance, if someone selects an incorrect
19 referral source, we know, because of where the ads are
20 placed, exactly which newspaper is being used. So
21 that's very helpful.

22 In addition to this report, you'll see the box
23 and the slide to my right is the ability to search by
24 zip codes. And when you click on that, you'll see on
25 the bottom of the slide just an example of one zip code

1 that tells you 55 people in that particular zip code
2 were served, and then you can look down and see exactly
3 what the referral source was or how they heard about the
4 program. So we have the data available. We're
5 collecting it and the centers are entering it into the
6 database. We review it, we analyze it, and we do
7 everything to make sure that when we do place ads going
8 forward, that we're using the best strategy available to
9 place them where we believe that people need to see and
10 hear about the program.

11 So we do have all these tools available.
12 These tools are also available to the centers so they
13 can also use the zip code -- excuse me -- the zip code
14 model to see where they need to do more outreach in the
15 areas that might be underserved, for instance, so they
16 can go do presentations, exhibits, and newspaper ads, et
17 cetera.

18 Okay. That completes the outreach portion of
19 my presentation.

20 Category V is the general and administrative.
21 The total proposed budget for Category V is \$1,012,889.
22 Right now, FTRI is budgeted for ten full-time staff.

23 And the next slide is a comparison for the
24 last -- a comparison for last year's budget -- excuse
25 me -- and what was approved and what's projected and

1 what we're proposing. As you can see, the proposed
2 budget is less than the approved budget last year.

3 I'm open for questions.

4 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Thank you, James. And
5 again, as Mr. Forstall mentioned, we posted all of the
6 presentations on the Commission's website on -- earlier
7 this week. And Mr. Forstall had revisions to his -- or
8 updates to his presentation, and we sent out an email
9 with that revised presentation, and we also replaced the
10 presentation on the Commission's website. So if you did
11 not receive the updated or revised presentation, it
12 should be on our website now, or you can contact me or
13 Jeff and we'll get you the latest and the greatest
14 presentation.

15 So at this time, we'll address or entertain --
16 let Mr. Forstall entertain any questions regarding his
17 presentation on FTRI's proposed budget.

18 **MR. KOTTLER:** Hey, Curtis, this is Rick
19 Kottler. Can I ask a question?

20 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, please, Rick.

21 **MR. KOTTLER:** Hey, James. How are you?

22 **MR. FORSTALL:** Hi. I'm doing good, Rick.

23 Thanks.

24 **MR. KOTTLER:** Actually this is more of a
25 statement than a question, I would suppose.

1 First of all, James, you've really done your
2 homework well, and I certainly appreciate that. Having
3 been -- well, the fact that I am an RDC, I've seen the
4 effect of these ads, and they are very effective. I
5 know our numbers are probably up 25, 30 percent easily
6 with these.

7 My question would be to Curtis. I know in the
8 past sometimes the Public Service Commission has had a
9 problem with high advertising budgets, but this is very
10 effective. If the other committee members would agree,
11 would a -- something like a vote of confidence be
12 appropriate to go with this; for us to say, you know,
13 this is effective, James is doing his homework, and we
14 really recommend that you go down this line to do this
15 advertising?

16 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Well, Rick, first I would say I
17 wouldn't necessarily -- I wouldn't necessarily state it
18 as the Commission has had a problem with FTRI's outreach
19 budget. We've questioned in the past some of the --
20 well, we've taken a thorough look at all expense items.
21 So it hasn't been one specific area. It's just been a
22 general thorough look at all expense items based on, as
23 James presented, a decrease in revenues and the number
24 of program participants.

25 If you -- also, secondly, if you look at

1 the -- several years ago, the Public Service Commission
2 auditing staff, we conducted an audit of FTRI, and we
3 actually complimented them on some of the outreach
4 things they're doing. So we are supportive of outreach.

5 But as far as, you know, endorsing this
6 particular budget or this particular initiative at this
7 time, that's something that staff is currently
8 reviewing, and it's something that we can't, you know,
9 we can't comment on specifically endorsing it or
10 supporting it at this time. It's just something that's
11 under review, and it will be included in our -- in
12 staff's recommendation to the Commission on FTRI's
13 budget.

14 **MR. KOTTLER:** I didn't mean to infer that
15 y'all didn't like advertising budgets. I understand
16 that. But I just wanted you to understand that this is
17 a real effective type approach that we've not seen
18 before out of FTRI, and it really is paying off.

19 **MR. WILLIAMS:** We thank you for your comment.
20 I'm sure FTRI and James thanks you also.

21 Rick, which RDC, just for the record, which
22 RDC do you represent?

23 **MR. KOTTLER:** Sixteen, Jensen Beach.

24 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Jensen Beach. Okay. Thank
25 you.

1 Are there any additional questions?

2 Chris has a question.

3 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I have a lot of things
4 formulating in my mind, but I guess I'm going to start
5 with a more general budget question, and that's related
6 to a surplus budget of FTRI. Historically, FTRI has had
7 quite a bit of surplus, and I wanted to know what the
8 status of that was.

9 **MR. FORSTALL:** Do you want me to go ahead and
10 address that?

11 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, you can.

12 **MR. FORSTALL:** From FTRI's standpoint, the
13 budget, the surplus budget is anywhere from 15-
14 \$16 million, and FTRI does not consider that to be part
15 of our operating budget.

16 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I guess my follow-up to that
17 is what's the long-term plan for -- to use with this
18 surplus budget? And I guess that's more a question for
19 PSC.

20 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Your question is what's the use
21 in terms of going forward?

22 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** What is the long-term plan
23 for the surplus budget that FTRI has?

24 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Currently the Commission has
25 not made a decision on exactly what the long-term use of

1 the surplus will be. That's something that we're
2 looking at on a going-forward basis.

3 **MS. SALAK:** And if I could add to that. I'm
4 Beth Salak with Telecommunications.

5 The surplus was created because the Commission
6 gave extra money to the budget for the specific purpose
7 of in case the FCC decides that video relay will be paid
8 for by the state. There's no way that we can collect
9 enough money -- based on our estimates, there's no way
10 we can collect enough money to pay for that in the
11 meanwhile while we talk to the legislature about it.
12 And so it was all about being able to have enough. Even
13 if we increase it to 25 cents, there's no way we can
14 create enough money to cover the video. So the surplus
15 is being created in case they -- FCC still talks about
16 sending that cost down to the states. And if they do,
17 we have to have a way to pay for it, and that's what the
18 surplus was created for initially

19 We still -- we are still hearing rumors from
20 the FCC that's that their plan, so we hesitate to take
21 that surplus away. The Commissioners have talked about
22 offsetting some of the surcharge with it, but that's the
23 only thing that I know that has been discussed otherwise
24 just during their conversation at agenda.

25 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. I'm reading your

1 caption so I know what everybody is saying.

2 **MS. SALAK:** That's fine.

3 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I suspected that. I know
4 it's been discussed a little bit in the past.

5 I'm a huge proponent of everything that FTRI
6 does, and I've used it myself personally since I was in
7 my early 20s.

8 **MS. SALAK:** I'm glad to hear that.

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** That's quite some time ago.
10 And FTRI is really not as useful to me as it was at one
11 time because of the continuation of me losing my
12 hearing.

13 I have not used a voice telephone without
14 visual assistance in almost ten years. And the only
15 visual assistance telephone that's distributed from FTRI
16 is the analog caption phone; is that correct?

17 **MR. FORSTALL:** Correct.

18 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. Analog technology is
19 very old technology. In my work office, I am working
20 with a caption phone that uses both digital and both
21 analog. One of the things that I recently learned is
22 the only reason that I'm able to do this is because we
23 have an elevator in our building and that's the only
24 other analog line in the whole building. And they went
25 off of that line so they could give me one analog line

1 and one digital line and make my caption phone work
2 properly, and that's been great for me. That's
3 purchased by my employer, a very supportive employer
4 that has a very good understanding of the ADA.

5 My concern is the nearly 3 million people that
6 are deaf or hard of hearing, that there's a portion of
7 that population that is -- that has a hearing loss that
8 has increased beyond the ability to use some of the
9 things that FTRI has the ability to distribute.

10 We have a lot of advanced technologies where
11 you have telephone equipment that uses Bluetooth, that
12 uses cellular and digital communications. And my
13 question is maybe in small increments is it possible to
14 maybe allow some of those things be distributed from
15 FTRI?

16 From the Florida Statute that establishes
17 FTRI, I do not see anything that's prohibitive of being
18 able to distribute equipment that is other than analog.

19 **MS. PAGE:** We appreciate your concerns. And
20 we recently relooked at -- revisited our statute,
21 Chapter 427, and we found that there are some
22 limitations on the Commission and on FTRI in terms of
23 what types of equipment FTRI can distribute.

24 The statute talks about specialized
25 telecommunications devices, and those are defined in the

1 statute as a TDD, volume control handset, or other
2 customer premises telephone equipment. They did not
3 include cellular or digital in the specialized
4 telecommunications devices definition.

5 Further, in the statute, FTRI is only allowed
6 to distribute specialized telecommunications devices
7 only. So that would go back to that definition, which
8 does not include the wireless and digital.

9 In terms of 427, also we looked at the
10 definition of telecommunications companies, and cellular
11 carriers are excluded from that definition. So they're
12 not even encompassed. And there's a specific reference
13 that, you know, exempts cellular.

14 So we appreciate your concerns, but at this
15 time we're limited by the law that we have and how we
16 can implement the statute under that law.

17 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** And the law states
18 specifically exclusion of digital and exclusion of
19 cellular?

20 **MS. PAGE:** It excludes cellular.

21 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** So, I mean, the addition of
22 digital technologies would allow things like the CapTel
23 840i, which is faster, more accurate, and easier to
24 connect. Where I live in Pinellas County, at home I
25 cannot use an analog CapTel phone because Bright House

1 won't support it for a broadband phone. So for me to
2 use analog, because we don't have an old analog line --
3 I don't even know that it's offered anymore. Only
4 Verizon, if anybody, offers it.

5 And that's not a problem that's just happening
6 singularly to me. There's been a lot of people across
7 the state that I've heard have had the same problem.
8 Also in places like hospitals and nursing homes where
9 you have people that are -- where they have
10 telecommunications set up where there's only digital
11 equipment, that means no caption telephones can be used
12 at all.

13 I have a very close friend that lives in a
14 skilled nursing home facility, and he cannot get access
15 to a broadband line to connect his caption telephone.
16 So if it's not -- I mean, when you're talking about that
17 it includes -- excludes cellular, okay. But if it
18 doesn't exclude digital, one of the things the statute
19 said specifically is the incorporation of and
20 developments of new technology. That's right in the
21 statute in 427.702. And I believe also the Deaf Service
22 Center Association sent a letter regarding the same
23 thing.

24 And so, I mean, to continue to hold back and
25 not allow these things to be used for -- to be

1 distributed by FTRI, it's holding back the people that
2 were intended to be provided telecommunications
3 throughout the state of Florida when the statute was
4 first written. And it's not supposed to be prohibited
5 as technology advances. I mean, there's specific things
6 in the statute that address this so that that wouldn't
7 happen.

8 And it's very concerning to me, as a person
9 that's late deafened and very hard of hearing, that
10 these things are not available to the people in the
11 state of Florida that might not have the same resources
12 that I do to get -- to receive them through other ways.

13 **MS. PAGE:** You know, we're aware of your
14 concerns. We did receive that letter. And we are in
15 the process of preparing a response to the letter that
16 you mentioned.

17 But we are a creature of statute. The
18 Commission is a creature of statute created by the
19 legislature, and only the legislature can give us the
20 authority that we would need to use digital and cellular
21 lines in the relay system. So at this time there's
22 really nothing that we can do. We understand that, you
23 know, relay is supposed to be taking advantage of
24 state-of-the-art technology, but that particular
25 provision is somewhat at odds with the other provisions

1 in the statute that say that we can't -- not that we
2 can't, but it defines what a specialized communications
3 device is. And in that definition, we don't find
4 cellular or digital. And FTRI is to distribute the
5 specialized telecommunications devices. So we're in a
6 position where we have language in the statute, but we
7 also have a situation where the statute doesn't enable
8 us to provide those services.

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** There are other specialized
10 telecommunications devices that are more advanced that
11 use digital. And my intent is not to continue to argue
12 the point, and I appreciate everything that's being
13 done.

14 So I guess I have a minor request. And when a
15 letter of response is sent to the Deaf Service Center
16 Association, if the members of the committee here could
17 also be given a copy of that letter. I would certainly
18 like to read that and see that as well as soon as it's
19 made available.

20 The other question that I have that maybe you
21 could elaborate a little bit on is you said that to some
22 degree it requires the act of legislation to amend being
23 able to use digital or cellular technology, and my
24 simple question to that is why?

25 **MS. PAGE:** I don't understand. What

1 legislation?

2 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** You said that legislation
3 is -- a legislative change is required to be able to use
4 digital technology. And the law as it stands right now
5 does not specifically exclude the use of digital
6 technology, so why does it require legislation to act?

7 **MS. PAGE:** Well, what I said was is the
8 Commission is a legislatively created body, but we have
9 to work within the limitations of the statute. And the
10 statute provides that FTRI is to distribute specialized
11 telecommunications devices. Digital or cellular are not
12 included in that definition.

13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes. This is Curtis Williams.
14 And just to follow up, Chris, I think there may be a
15 question in regards to interpretation of the statute and
16 that, you know, we have a -- we may have a different
17 interpretation than you have. And I think, as you
18 indicated, the letter that we're preparing in response
19 and continued dialogue would be a course of action.

20 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** And maybe you can provide
21 some clarity in that. I appreciate that.

22 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yeah.

23 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** And, understand, my concern
24 is only for the people that are not able to use the
25 service, which I believe the statute was designed to

1 serve that population. So thank you.

2 **MS. PAGE:** Thank you.

3 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, James.

4 **MR. FORSTALL:** This is James with FTRI. I'd
5 like to follow up on this same conversation. I guess
6 what I'm hearing, that the Commission is not opposed to
7 offering new technology or migrating to newer technology
8 if the law would allow it. Is that what I'm hearing?

9 **MR. WILLIAMS:** At this time, the Commission
10 has not established a position on that issue. In terms
11 of, you know, if there is a question of, you know
12 legislative intent or interpretation, we, as we've
13 indicated before, we would suggest and we would not
14 stand in the way of anyone seeking clarification or any
15 type of legislative action.

16 **MS. SALAK:** But you have to keep in mind that
17 the Commission does not set the policy. The policy is
18 set elsewhere. And so our job is to implement the law
19 as we understand it, and that's what we're doing.

20 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I'm cognizant of that.

21 Also, just a reminder that the discussion
22 started after my original question about the surplus and
23 the surplus being held, if the FCC acts and requires
24 that video phones be distributed through TRS. Video
25 phones use digital and voice over IP technology. So

1 it's anticipating the same thing, and it's just a
2 smaller piece of what could possibly happen.

3 **MS. SALAK:** Correct. However, my statement
4 was that we would use it while we went to the
5 legislature to find out what their desire was. Say it
6 happened in, you know, August and we needed to wait
7 until the legislative session to find out what the
8 legislature wanted to do, then we would have enough
9 money to carry us through to find out if that was the
10 mandate.

11 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Thank you. Thank you.

12 **MR. FORSTALL:** I've got one last question.
13 This is James with FTRI.

14 Beth, I need clarification. A little while
15 ago you said were you talking with the legislators? No?
16 I misunderstood.

17 **MS. SALAK:** No, no. I said that -- no, I did
18 not say that.

19 **MR. FORSTALL:** Earlier on I thought maybe you
20 had mentioned that you were in communication with the
21 legislature.

22 **MS. SALAK:** No.

23 **MR. FORSTALL:** I misunderstood. Okay. Thank
24 you.

25 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I have a few questions, kind of

1 getting back to the budget in a little more detail.

2 On the -- let me start with the National
3 Deaf/Blind Equipment Distribution Program. And the
4 Commission received a letter from your organization
5 indicating that you were not going to be going forward
6 with participation in the program.

7 I have two questions. Number one, if you
8 could just provide a little more explanation, and a
9 little explanation here on why you're not going to
10 continue to participate in the National Deaf/Blind
11 Equipment Distribution Program. What has been some of
12 the pros and what has been some of the concerns?

13 And then also I was looking at your
14 presentation, and just clarification on whether or not
15 the dollars that you originally had in your budget as
16 approved by your board, are those dollars actually
17 still -- were they still represented in your
18 presentation if you're proposing not to continue with
19 the National Deaf/Blind Distribution Program?

20 **MR. FORSTALL:** Okay. I think the last -- the
21 second question is probably easier to answer real quick.
22 At the time we developed the budget, it was included?

23 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, it was actually included
24 as a revenue item and an expense item. But after you
25 submitted your budget to the Commission, we received a

1 letter from you indicating that, on a going-forward
2 basis, you were proposing not to continue to participate
3 in the program.

4 So I was just asking on your presentation
5 today, in the actual presentation that you made, did you
6 include those dollars?

7 **MR. FORSTALL:** This is James. Yes, they are
8 still included, and only because I didn't make any
9 changes yet to the budget.

10 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay.

11 **MR. FORSTALL:** And the reason being is because
12 at this point we were kind of -- we're in a position,
13 we're waiting to hear back from the Commission, because
14 the last comment we received was that it was going to be
15 shared with the Commissioners and you didn't know what
16 the feedback was going to be. So we're kind of like in
17 a holding pattern until we hear back. We have not
18 notified the FCC yet of this until we hear further from
19 the Commission, the PSC staff.

20 The reason FTRI has decided not to continue
21 with the National Deaf/Blind Equipment Distribution
22 Program is because the last two quarters we have been
23 taking a loss. The reimbursement is not sufficient to
24 cover the total cost of the program.

25 And what has happened over time, especially in

1 the last couple of quarters, is what you'll find is
2 people -- the equipment that people are getting are less
3 expensive, and the administrative -- the administrative
4 allowable -- administrative reimbursable from the FCC
5 does not cover the -- for the expense that we do expend
6 to provide services to the program. And what we're also
7 seeing is a lot of repeated -- current customers
8 repeating additional training, et cetera. And so the
9 15 percent allowable reimbursable administrative cost is
10 not sufficient to cover, and so we're seeing that the
11 expense is going up -- are pretty much going up but not
12 having enough revenues to cover it from the FCC.

13 So the last couple of quarters we have taken a
14 loss, and we don't anticipate seeing that changing
15 because of the type of equipment consumers are getting,
16 which is less expensive than the Braille (phonetic)
17 units that were -- they're still being offered but
18 consumers were choosing them early on. So it makes
19 sense to do it at that point in time.

20 So that's where we stand. And we did submit a
21 letter letting you know that we were going to inform the
22 FCC that we were going to no longer -- FTRI was no
23 longer interested in providing the service, but there
24 will be another entity in Florida to pick it up.

25 **MR. WILLIAMS:** And what entity? Are you

1 aware?

2 **MR. FORSTALL:** That's the FCC's decision.

3 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay.

4 **MR. FORSTALL:** They haven't -- again, they
5 haven't been notified by FTRI because they're waiting to
6 hear back from the Commission. And once we get that,
7 whatever the response is, then we will move -- decide
8 our next step.

9 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. And in regards to the
10 regional distribution centers --

11 **MS. RHODES:** I have a question when you're
12 done.

13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. Yes. Who actually just
14 spoke?

15 **MR. FORSTALL:** I think that's Cheryl.

16 **MS. RHODES:** This is Cheryl.

17 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes. Cheryl, you can go ahead
18 and --

19 **MS. RHODES:** This is Cheryl Rhodes. Okay.
20 Thank you.

21 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You can go ahead and ask your
22 question.

23 **MS. RHODES:** Thank you. I'm deaf/blind. Can
24 I -- do you want to finish yours and then I'll go ahead
25 with my question, or do you want me to go ahead?

1 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You can go ahead.

2 **MS. RHODES:** Okay. Thank you. I'm trying to
3 understand -- with the Florida Deaf/Blind Association --
4 and that preferring not to move forward with that, but I
5 understand you're saying you have to wait for the
6 Commission to vote. Is that correct?

7 **MR. FORSTALL:** This is James with FTRI. We
8 submitted a letter because it was requested by the
9 Commission to notify them why we were releasing the
10 program, and we provided justification of the cost as to
11 why we were releasing -- or interested in releasing the
12 program, and we were waiting to receive a response.

13 **MS. RHODES:** Okay. So that means that if the
14 Commission agrees that FTRI can release that program,
15 then that means it will move to whoever -- so that will
16 stay here in Florida, though; right?

17 **MR. FORSTALL:** Correct. What we will know is
18 that when we notify the FCC of our intention, then they
19 will again review interested entities and award the
20 contract to whomever is interested in providing the
21 service. But there will be something in Florida.

22 **MS. RHODES:** Okay. Thank you.

23 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Cheryl.

24 James, in regards to the regional distribution
25 centers' account, the RDCs, you indicated that there

1 were two that are -- that were -- that are no longer
2 participating. And were there any additional RDCs
3 added?

4 **MR. FORSTALL:** Actually, since July 1st, three
5 centers have -- are no longer working with us. The
6 Center for Independent Living in Miami had a new
7 director, and they decided to not continue with the
8 program. But they wanted to review the overall services
9 to -- not just to the FTRI program but the overall.
10 They just decided not to -- to terminate the contract,
11 so to speak.

12 And RDC 3, which is in West Palm Beach, Deaf
13 Service Center, they dissolved. They went out of
14 business.

15 And the latest one is the Deaf Service Center
16 in -- I'm sorry -- Community Center for Deaf and Hard of
17 Hearing in Sarasota. At the end of April -- or actually
18 the end of March they discontinued the FTRI program.

19 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. And I have one final
20 question. In regards to your equipment repair account,
21 can you just explain in a little more detail on what you
22 take into consideration in terms of making the decision
23 to repair equipment or just totally replace the
24 equipment? Is there a dollar amount threshold or the
25 type of equipment that you consider, you know, worthy of

1 repair as opposed to replacing?

2 **MR. FORSTALL:** We have one-year warranties on
3 most of the amplified phones. If it's in warranty, we
4 will replace it -- I mean, I'm sorry, get it repaired.
5 And we either send it to the manufacturer or to a repair
6 facility if the manufacturer has an agreement with
7 another third party. And, of course, sometimes they'll
8 just replace the phone. But if it's broken, we will
9 either repair it, we will send it back to a third-party
10 company called Teltex, and they will repair it, and we
11 will recirculate it or put it back into the program.

12 At some point after one repair it's not
13 cost-effective to repairing, and in some cases, for
14 instance, there's some equipment we can no longer repair
15 because we don't get the parts anymore for them. And
16 what happened -- what's happening next year, and I
17 believe the question is pertaining to the increase in
18 that line item for next year, is because when we
19 introduced a new piece of equipment last year, we
20 introduced two, and they were still in warranty, so most
21 of the equipment were not coming back. And equipment
22 that we can no longer get parts for we have to discard,
23 take them out of the program. And that's what's
24 happened over the last couple of years when we were
25 repairing a certain piece of equipment that we couldn't

1 get the parts for. We were even salvaging them. They
2 were going back and they would take them apart and reuse
3 the parts. But at some point in time there's some parts
4 that cannot be supported because they're no longer
5 available. So that's how -- that's the program in place
6 to repair equipment.

7 So we anticipate next year, because of that
8 new -- the warranty will be expiring, so we'll have
9 probably more equipment coming back for repair. We hope
10 not, but that's -- we just need to prepare for it.

11 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes. Ms. Salak has a question.

12 **MS. SALAK:** I wanted to go back to the
13 outreach. I understood that the RDCs really like your
14 new newspaper inserts and that's great, but can you tell
15 me what percentage of your outreach is designated for
16 your -- the inserts versus the TV ads and -- or other
17 outreach?

18 **MR. FORSTALL:** Okay. This is James. The --
19 we don't do TV. We have -- we've done a little bit, but
20 TV has not produced the results. So we did just a
21 little bit this year and last year. In years past, we
22 did quite a bit. Of course, that's more -- that's
23 expensive as well.

24 The insert ads and the regular newspaper ads
25 have been the two primary media outreach methods that

1 we've used, and what we're finding is the insert ad
2 works so much better than the regular ad. And, of
3 course, I showed you the numbers. And so we are now
4 converting or switching everything to insert ads because
5 that's just more effective. And we'll probably
6 convert -- all media marketing dollars will go toward
7 insert ads through the whole state every month at least
8 once a month.

9 **MS. SALAK:** So it's basically a hundred
10 percent, I mean, based on the insert?

11 **MR. FORSTALL:** A hundred percent will be
12 inserts, but it doesn't mean that every newspaper in the
13 state of Florida will get the insert because --

14 **MS. SALAK:** No. I understand. I just was
15 asking per the budget.

16 **MR. FORSTALL:** We also -- that's part of the
17 budget. We also contract with the regional distribution
18 centers, and we will continue to do that.

19 **MS. SALAK:** Just one more quick question. If
20 you end up giving up the FCC program and someone else
21 takes it over, will the RDCs and your -- and FTRI still
22 guide people to that if they fit the criteria for it to
23 the grant?

24 **MR. FORSTALL:** Yes. We would definitely refer
25 them to whatever program assigned. Absolutely.

1 **MS. SALAK:** Okay.

2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any additional
3 questions for Mr. Forstall? If not, we are scheduled --
4 actually this, for this meeting we're a little behind
5 schedule. We're scheduled to take a break at -- we were
6 scheduled to take a break at 2:45. So for the benefit
7 of our interpreters and everyone here, our court
8 reporter, we are going to take a 15-minute break as
9 scheduled. So it is now 2:45. We will reconvene at
10 3:05 with the presentation by Sprint Relay, Jeff Branch
11 on the Florida relay service update. Thank you.

12 (Recess taken.)

13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes. This is Curtis Williams.
14 We are ready to reconvene at this time. We will have
15 Jeff Branch's presentation on the Sprint Florida relay
16 program.

17 **MR. BRANCH:** Thank you, Curtis. Good
18 afternoon, everyone. I'm Jeff Branch.

19 It's already been a year since we've had
20 services here. I can't believe how fast time has
21 gone -- in just the blink of an eye, it feels like.

22 But on the agenda, I'd like to discuss the
23 past year just to show the number of different services
24 that we do provide in the state of Florida.

25 The PowerPoint will show the numbers of RCC,

1 of French, Spanish, TRS, and CapTel usage, IP CapTel,
2 and the Quality Report as well.

3 This shows the number of RCC users on a
4 monthly basis. You can see the increase as we go along.

5 I'm trying to remember. Some of you may be
6 new. For 15,000 free minutes annually to use, and that
7 number has reduced and then it stops, the services will
8 stop. Over this past year we've had a total of
9 13,545 used, so we still have some minutes left.
10 There's been nothing to stop the service.

11 As of March 1st of this year, we've reset to
12 zero, so now we'll start the clock on that usage again.
13 And, again, it goes up to 15,000. So that's just some
14 general information of those numbers.

15 This shows the number of French Gate users,
16 incoming and outbound calls as well. The session
17 minutes is there. That shows you those totals. We also
18 have Spanish-to-English translation, a breakdown of
19 those minutes as well. And you can see the usage there
20 on the screen.

21 I went to Miami in order to meet some
22 customers, and they -- they really spoke praises about
23 having a Spanish service available to them. So it was
24 really good to hear their voice. It tends to be used a
25 lot in the Miami area. I'm sure, as well throughout the

1 state, other locations in Florida as well.

2 And this is the TRS usage. It shows you all
3 the utilization minutes month by month, starting with
4 March all the way until February because, again, March
5 is when we start the service. So that shows you that
6 full year from March of one year until February of the
7 next. And this is our report that we've got broke down
8 for you -- broken down for you.

9 TRS utilization tends to fluctuate on a
10 month-to-month basis. Pretty much it's pretty
11 consistent. There's a slight decline.

12 This chart shows you the CapTel usage minutes.
13 And, again, that's March to February. It's really
14 interesting to see the number of minutes decline there.
15 I mean, I'm sure there are a lot of different factors
16 involved: competition, open market competition, open
17 captioning on Sorenson, and I believe Purple has that
18 service as well. A lot of that has to do with the
19 transition from analog to IP.

20 This shows the Quality Report both -- for both
21 TRS and CapTel. That's all defined. It also shows
22 different tests that we've done monthly in order to make
23 sure that we are meeting requirements of the -- that
24 we're meeting the state's requirements. We do continue
25 to inform the Commission of those reports.

1 We've also followed up on any complaints that
2 we've had. We tend to follow up on those within 24
3 hours. There haven't been many. There have been a few,
4 but, again, we do try to follow up on those in a timely
5 manner.

6 This is our Outreach Report just showing you
7 some specific areas. We contributed a \$25,000 budget to
8 FTRI in order to do outreach for -- in regards to 711.
9 So we do have a list of the different activities that we
10 have conducted over the past year. And, again, on March
11 1st, we started a new budget of 25,000, and that'll run
12 through the next fiscal year.

13 And this is a breakdown of what we plan to be
14 doing with the 25,000 for this year in order to get some
15 information to people in Florida and, again, in regards
16 to 711.

17 I mean, basically that's -- that's our real
18 basic summary of the numbers that we have for the past
19 year. And does anybody have any questions?

20 **MR. BATES:** Yes, I do. I'm Jeff Bates,
21 Commission staff.

22 A couple of questions. The first one relates
23 to the remote call conferencing call and the number of
24 minutes used. Do any of the remaining minutes roll over
25 to the next contract year such as, say, in a data plan,

1 or can they? Has Sprint considered that?

2 **MR. BRANCH:** That is something that we can
3 consider. The contract -- the contracted agreement says
4 that it would reset to zero and everything would start
5 over. But, I mean, that is something that we can
6 discuss with regards to rollover. That's definitely
7 something that we're open to have discussion for.

8 **MR. BATES:** Okay. That answers --

9 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I was going to ask you the
10 same thing.

11 **MR. BATES:** Then a question with regard to the
12 quality report. The graph of the CapTel state report,
13 none of the months' captioning accuracy reached the
14 95 percent accuracy level. Is there a reason? And I
15 notice the December accuracy is down perhaps the lowest
16 of all of them, and --

17 **MR. BRANCH:** In March it was 86 percent.
18 Okay. We'll start with March. That 86 percent that's
19 listed, 95 percent or greater.

20 **MR. BATES:** Okay. All right. Thank you.

21 **MR. BRANCH:** So the percentage that's shown is
22 86 percent, and actually it consists of 95 percent
23 accuracy or higher.

24 **MR. BATES:** Okay. Thank you.

25 **MR. BRANCH:** That's how we broke those down on

1 a monthly basis.

2 **MR. BATES:** Thank you for that clarification.

3 Can you tell me about December? You had a
4 61.3 percent of the CapTel.

5 **MR. BRANCH:** 61 percent, yes. There are
6 different factors. One being that we started hiring --
7 we started a new -- we started hiring new operators that
8 month. There was a big hiring influx at that particular
9 moment. So a lot of the new employees were still going
10 through training, and that does take some time to
11 progress. So that's probably why that number was
12 slightly lower than others.

13 **MR. BATES:** Okay. Thank you. That answers my
14 question. Thank you.

15 **MR. BRANCH:** Sure.

16 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I don't understand because my
17 opinion is that caption phone is never 95 percent
18 accurate. So my question is what does that mean,
19 "95 percent"? Is it packets, the computer transfer of
20 the information? I don't understand what 95 percent
21 means.

22 **MR. BRANCH:** So 95 percent is how they test
23 what's being heard as in what's being -- what's being
24 spoken and then translated onto the screen for accuracy
25 purposes to make sure that it's -- sometimes errors do

1 happen. So that's kind of keeping a measure on that
2 particular accuracy, that particular caption accuracy.
3 Vocabulary plus spelling.

4 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. I just need to think
5 about it.

6 For clarification, I don't think that it's
7 Sprint. I've just never -- I mean, I use a caption
8 phone every day, and I never see 95 percent accuracy in
9 my calls because the longer the conversation and the
10 faster that someone that is hearing is talking, then
11 CapTel can't keep up. That's been my experience in the
12 use of the caption phone. But it's not Sprint. It's
13 the way that the phone is designed.

14 **MR. BRANCH:** And it may very well be the
15 transmission of the words to the screen. That's what
16 you're talking about; right?

17 **MR. FORSTALL:** Using the internet.

18 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Yes. But my experience is
19 also that the internet is faster but is never close to
20 the same accuracy either.

21 **MR. BRANCH:** There's different factors that we
22 would need to check into: possibly settings, looking at
23 the settings, looking at the particular network that
24 you're using. There's various factors that we could
25 look at, troubleshoot it.

1 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** I don't think that it's a
2 network problem. I think that it's the use of the voice
3 recognition for caption phone. It's not a network
4 problem. I just want, especially the PSC, to understand
5 what the 95 percent accuracy means to me. It's the
6 transfer of the information, but it doesn't necessarily
7 mean that the words are going to be accurate every time.
8 That's all.

9 **MR. BATES:** Thank you.

10 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Are there any additional
11 questions for Jeff? If not then -- oh, I'm sorry.
12 Chris.

13 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** One more. And I already
14 spoke with Jeff about this, and I think that I emailed
15 you about the 911 information before with AT&T. And I
16 think before with Sprint we received information about
17 the 911 calls that went through TRS, just like a monthly
18 number. And it was just for my purposes; I was
19 collecting the data because it would be important for
20 emergency information. And I would think that that's
21 important to the PSC also.

22 So if Sprint can plan on trying to find a way
23 to collect that data, it would be appreciated.

24 **MR. BRANCH:** Okay. Thank you.

25 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you. So if there are no

1 additional questions, we can move to -- the next item on
2 the printed agenda is an item listed as "Other." It's
3 an item for anything that we have not covered, any --
4 just an open discussion of questions we can entertain at
5 this time.

6 If not, then we are -- we can go ahead and
7 conclude today's meeting. I'm sorry.

8 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** We were just discussing that
9 the HLAA contact on here is really old. It's wrong.
10 Richard Herring is --

11 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I'm sorry. Which? Which --
12 oh.

13 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Richard Herring from the
14 Hearing Loss Association.

15 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, we questioned that. He is
16 --

17 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** He's not a chapter president
18 anymore.

19 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay.

20 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** And, more importantly, I
21 don't know if we want to try and get HLA's state
22 president, Cynthia Moynihan. And if you email me, I can
23 get you the information for a contact for you.

24 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, that would be good. We
25 appreciate that. Because there has been -- yes. And we

1 will -- we have had some concern or thoughts about the
2 representation there. So we can coordinate with that
3 and reach out.

4 And as I indicated earlier, we will be
5 addressing Mr. D'Angelo and Mr. Wata's recommendation on
6 behalf of the Florida Association of the Deaf. So that
7 would be good. Thank you, Chris.

8 **MR. FORSTALL:** So you would -- you will do
9 that?

10 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Yeah. If you would just
11 remind me on an email just if you don't hear from me.

12 **MR. WILLIAMS:** We will. We'll follow up.
13 We'll take care of it.

14 **MR. LITTLEWOOD:** Okay. Thank you.

15 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Because, like I said, it is --
16 it's something that we've had on the radar. So I
17 appreciate your help, your assistance on that.

18 Are there any other questions or matters for
19 discussion?

20 (No response.)

21 If not, we will go ahead and adjourn at this
22 time. And we just want to thank everyone for your
23 participation. We're adjourned.

24 (Meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.)
25

1 STATE OF FLORIDA)
 : CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
 2 COUNTY OF LEON)

3
 4 I, LINDA BOLES, CRR, RPR, Official Commission
 Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing
 5 proceeding was heard at the time and place herein
 stated.

6
 7 IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
 stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
 same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
 8 and that this transcript constitutes a true
 transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

9
 10 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'
 11 attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
 financially interested in the action.

12 DATED THIS 19th day of April, 2016.

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 14 *Linda Boles*

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