

# **State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget**

Department of Administration  
Public Communications Services  
Budget Request Unit

## **Public Communications Services Budget Request Unit**

**Contact: Lawrence M. Walsh, Chief Technology Officer**

**Tel:** (907) 465-2220 **Fax:** (907) 465-3450 **E-mail:** Larry\_Walsh@admin.state.ak.us

### **BRU Mission**

To ensure infrastructure for the dissemination of information statewide.

### **BRU Services Provided**

The Alaska Public Broadcasting Joint Venture (APBJV) advocates to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, US Department of Commerce and other federal agencies and private organizations to identify additional funding sources for Alaska Public Broadcasting.

Support of the delivery of public broadcast programming through four full-power television stations, numerous low power television translators and via satellite transmission.

Operating grants to public radio and television stations throughout Alaska.

The Satellite Infrastructure component provides the backbone for the delivery of the following:

- Alaska One - Statewide public television originating at KUAC Fairbanks, distributed by satellite and broadcast throughout the state, reducing overhead and duplication of effort.
- Alaska Two - Gavel to Gavel coverage of the Legislature and other government activities originating from KTOO Juneau, distributed by satellite, accessible to 80% of Alaskans (no direct state support).
- Alaska Three - Distance education from the University of Alaska and the Distance Delivery Consortium, distributed by satellite and reaching 100 communities and rural campuses (no direct state support).
- Rural Television- The Satellite Interconnection Project carries the Alaska Rural Communications Service, the programming of which receives no operating support from the state, reaching some 248 villages and communities across Alaska with educational, news and information, and commercial television programming.
- Delivery of the State and Federal Emergency Alert Service, data and transmitter control circuits, and delivery of public radio programming to individual local stations.
- APBJV Staff now manage the SIP Technical Monitoring effort including providing one stop service for trouble shooting system problems at the community level, repair and replacement of integral components at the system level or the community level, and technical referrals for matters requiring special or on-site work.

Because there is no terrestrial or other platform for delivery of these services, this makes the transport of these and other vital state communications needs a basic piece of the State's infrastructure.

### **BRU Goals and Strategies**

**PROVIDE EMERGENCY ALERT SERVICES TO ALL THE COMMUNITIES IN THE STATE.**

- Ongoing collaboration with the Division of Emergency Services to provide emergency alerting through the satellite infrastructure.

**IMPROVE PUBLIC BROADCASTING'S ABILITY TO DELIVER COST-EFFICIENT PROGRAMMING.**

- Ongoing improvements to the Satellite Interconnection Project to better enable public radio and television networking.

**REDUCE THE STATE'S ROLE AND COST IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING FUNDING AND SUPPORT.**

- Support the consolidation of management and other overhead; support the Alaska Model.

## Key BRU Issues for FY2001 – 2002

Continue to provide quality public broadcasting despite diminishing funding.

Funding has declined to a level where a number of stations are unable to provide staff to produce local news and information, their primary function; many others are struggling to maintain those services for their communities.

Funding reductions over the past decade and a half have created much-diminished systems. Stations are threatened with the loss of federal operating funds as their state matching funds decrease. Staff and management turnover has increased creating extraordinary pressures on the system to maintain continuity of service.

Stations must, and have become more efficient in the delivery of their programs especially critical local services such as news, public information, weather, cultural programs and emergency alerts.

The public broadcasting system in Alaska is highly interdependent and operates on a very thin margin: should one of the major users fail, the bulk of the system could collapse for lack of funding. There continues to be inadequate funds for maintenance and repair for the over 220 earth stations and low power television transmitters owned and operated by the state and licensed to the state by the Federal Communications Commission. The transmitters are all well beyond their life expectancy and are failing at an alarming rate. Any repairs or maintenance performed on these transmitters is coordinated by the Alaska Public Broadcasting Joint Venture (APBJV) and paid for by the local communities. At any one given time approximately 15 to 20% of the system is out of service. There are no available operational system spares.

Under the new tariff, the state will provide over 80 percent of the funding needed for the lease and operation of the satellite. The balance comes from users. The users, who have combined their efforts in the Alaska Satellite Interconnection Project Management Group, are developing ways to attract additional users to bring costs down.

The satellite plays an important role in being the only means by which all of Alaska is connected. In a state where roads will never be built to each village and Internet connectivity is slow and unreliable, the satellite remains the electronic road to each community. It is a basic piece of the state's communication infrastructure.

## Major BRU Accomplishments for FY2000

As a result of substantial review and revision of the APBC's strategic plan, the Alaska Public Broadcasting Commission (APBC), in cooperation with Alaska One - Public Television and the Alaska Public Radio Network implemented an important, and unique public/private partnership to support Alaska's public broadcasting system. The Alaska Public Broadcasting Joint Venture (APBJV), in its first year of operation, saved the public broadcasting system over \$2 million and assisted the grantees in generating an additional \$480,000 in federal support for public radio.

The APBJV has coordinated the activities and efforts of Alaska Public Radio, Public Television, the Satellite Interconnection Project, the Alaska Rural Communications Service (ARCS), and the APBC. The APBJV staff created and implemented an Internet Web Site that provides service and information, including the program schedules for the Alaska Rural Communications Service, to all of the State public telecommunications users and the general public.

The APBJV has replaced many of the functions formerly provided by State government but previously abandoned due to lack of funding. Such services to grantees include management assistance, engineering and technical advice, training of local staff and boards, and liaison with numerous governmental entities.

Through a federal Public Telecommunications Facilities Program grant and state matching funds, the regional cooperatives have fully implemented the Satellite Interconnection Project including the delivery of public radio, public television and distance delivery television over the state leased satellite transponder. This project maximized the usage of existing state resources by a magnitude of five fold.

In close cooperation with ITG, the APBJV has accepted the responsibility for the management and coordination of the statewide ARCS television program service including the development of and implementation of the daily program schedule and the coordination of the ARCS Council. The APBJV also has the responsibility for the Satellite Interconnection Project Management Governance and technical oversight.

**Public Communications Services  
BRU Financial Summary by Component**

*All dollars in thousands*

	FY2000 Actuals				FY2001 Authorized				FY2002 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
<b>Formula Expenditures</b> None.												
<b>Non-Formula Expenditures</b>												
Public Broadcasting Commission	57.0	0.0	0.0	57.0	54.2	0.0	0.0	54.2	54.2	0.0	0.0	54.2
Public Broadcasting - Radio	2,599.9	0.0	0.0	2,599.9	2,469.9	0.0	0.0	2,469.9	2,469.9	0.0	0.0	2,469.9
Public Broadcasting - T.V.	794.0	0.0	0.0	794.0	754.3	0.0	0.0	754.3	754.3	0.0	0.0	754.3
Satellite Infrastructure	639.3	0.0	425.2	1,064.5	632.3	0.0	673.7	1,306.0	2,232.3	0.0	673.7	2,906.0
AIRRES Grant	76.0	0.0	0.0	76.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,166.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>425.2</b>	<b>4,591.4</b>	<b>3,910.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>673.7</b>	<b>4,584.4</b>	<b>5,510.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>673.7</b>	<b>6,184.4</b>

**Public Communications Services**

**Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002**

Changes to services in FY2002 will center on continuing efforts to provide quality services at the authorized funding level.

**Public Communications Services**

**Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component**

**From FY2001 Authorized to FY2002 Governor**

*All dollars in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2001 Authorized</b>	<b>3,910.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>673.7</b>	<b>4,584.4</b>
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>				
-Satellite Infrastructure	1,600.0	0.0	0.0	1,600.0
<b>FY2002 Governor</b>	<b>5,510.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>673.7</b>	<b>6,184.4</b>