

SCRPS Status Update

FCC Form 5640

OMB Control No. 3060-1270

File No. SC-SU0002947

Applicant Information

Applicant FRN 0031577018

Applicant Address 1224 W Platte Ave

Applicant Name NE Colorado Cellular Inc

Applicant City Fort Morgan

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Applicant State CO

Applicant Phone 9705423605

Applicant ZIP Code 80701

Contact Information



Is the contact the same as the contact listed on the Application Request for Funding Allocation? If not, please list below.

Contact Name Summit Ridge Group, LLC

Contact Address 49 West 38th Street, 12th Floor

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Contact City New York

Contact Phone 2124334800

Contact State NY

Contact ZIP Code 10018

*Indicate which deadline you are meeting with this filing.

2024-10-07

Explanation of Effort and Availability of Commercial Equipment

*Provide an explanation of efforts undertaken, and challenges encountered, in permanently removing, replacing, and disposing of covered communications equipment or service.

Overview: Lack of funding jeopardizes NE Colorado Cellular, Inc's ("Viaero") entire SCRP efforts (the "Project"). In Q2 2024, Viaero suspended deployment on new sites due to lack of funding. Without more funds, Viaero cannot commit to working beyond the 181 currently constructed and the remaining 44 sites currently in progress (out of 887 total). Nonetheless, as described below, Viaero has progressed methodically within the constraints of current financial realities.

Site Prep Status: Viaero began the site work required before Ericsson's installation activity. Viaero has also established internal procedures for executing the project plan (RAN & MW), including setting quality control standards for supervising vendors. As of 10/7/24, Viaero has completed the following: Electrical:686/715, Shelter Upgrades:14/14, Concrete Pads:19/71, Access Road Prep:7/40, Generator Replacements:432/511, Permitting:662/885, Lease Negotiations:31/90, NEPA/NHPA:570/591.

Core Deployment Status: Major Milestone Achieved: Core deployment was completed in Fort Morgan and Grand Island switching centers, all migrations and stabilizations were completed, and integration of RAN/Transport Network has begun. Viaero and Ericsson recognized the need to start the Core Project before the application was approved. Both companies agreed to start the full Core Project in 08/2021, ordering hardware and starting the high-level design. As of 10/7/24, the Core project is 100% completed. All onsite hardware and software have been delivered, installed, and commissioned. Integration and Acceptance Testing is 100% completed. The Acceptance Test Plan is 100% completed. The traffic on Huawei Core has been migrated to Ericsson Core, completed in 03/2023. Monitoring and Stabilization have been completed. Ericsson's LTE Sites have started to be turned up on the Ericsson Cores. All LTE (Long Term Evolution) RAN (Radio Access Network) (Ericsson and Huawei) have been rehomed to the Ericsson Cores. The only remaining portion of the Huawei core still connected or operational relates to the CBRS spectrum and RAN equipment. The Huawei core must remain on air until all Huawei CBRS RAN is replaced to support SAS vendor requirements.

RAN Deployment Status: Viaero and Ericsson agreed to start the RAN Project in a limited scope in 10/2021. This scope included the individual RAN site surveys using drones where practical, Radio Frequency Design, limited hardware ordering, site hardware configurations, cutover planning, and limited Construction Drawings of the baseline cluster. The baseline cluster started the installation of RAN equipment in 07/2022. 181 Sites were cut over as of 10/7/24, with 176 sites having all RAN prohibited equipment removed. Viaero is working to close out 181 Sites by the end of Q4 2024. Lack of full SCRP funding and 3rd party funding sources currently preclude construction beyond the 225 sites planned as of 10/7/24.

The current status of the RAN Deployment of the Ericsson LTE network:

Radio Frequency Design Sheets Completed: 878/887, Construction Drawings Approved: 593/887, CX (Construction) NTPs (Notice to Proceed) Received: 384/887, CX Start: 308/887, CX End: 237/887, Integration Completed: 177/887, Cutover Completed: 181/887, Prohibited Equipment Removed: 176/887.

Transport Deployment Status: Viaero and Ericsson agreed to start the Transport Project in 10/2021, with a limited scope. This scope included individual site surveys using drones where practical, link design, PCN coordination with the FCC, limited Construction Drawings, IP design, link hardware configurations, and a limited number of hardware orders.

The current status of the Transport Deployment of the Ericsson transport network:
NTP Microwave Link: 528/597, PCN (Prior Coordination Notice process) Complete: 477/597, NTP Construction: 295/597, Construction Start: 187/597, Build Complete:

*Explain whether you are finding commercially available equipment in the marketplace. If not, then explain efforts taken to obtain replacement equipment.

The lack of full funding has required Viaero to limit equipment orders. Viaero remains concerned about future equipment availability when order quantities increase, particularly if the Project funding is not resolved in a timely manner. Suppose the reimbursement fund is not fully funded in the coming months; Viaero will be forced to cancel or postpone equipment orders due to an inability to pay invoices without the assurance of reimbursement. Additionally, it has been difficult to identify and hire qualified, experienced telecommunications engineers and project managers. Training inexperienced individuals will put pressure on Viaero's build deadlines, which may require a deadline extension.

* If there is additional information relevant to the preceding questions or that you believe the Commission should be aware of, please include the information below.

a) As Viaero/Ericsson began actual site scoping, new issues arose specific to the towers being scoped

b) Viaero is also constrained by the SCRP funding limitation. Unless resolved, this challenge will soon force Viaero to suspend work on the Project, jeopardizing the Project timeline and budget.

Direct Challenges to the Speed and Efficiencies of the SCRP Program:

a) Lack of Full Funding – Viaero suspended new site work in Q2 2024 and estimates current funding will require suspending existing deployment activities by the end of Q4 2024. Re-starting once full funding is provided will be time-consuming and will add additional costs to the SCRP. Viaero has committed nearly all of its 39.5% allocation. Approximately 64% of the available funding has been reimbursed, 11% is currently in process with the FCC, and another 10% is currently invoiced but not processed with the FCC yet. Viaero estimates an additional 15% of Viaero's current or future work will result in invoicing. In total, Viaero has spent or committed approximately 85% to 90% of its available funding. Unless additional funding is secured shortly, Viaero will need to suspend the Project in approximately 90 days. The majority of contracted field construction crews have already been assigned to other (non Viaero) projects. Restarting deployment will add extra (unbudgeted) costs and additional time to remobilize and schedule crews, potential contract re-negotiations with contractors, and increased costs due to inflation since vendor proposals were reviewed prior to the SCRP application submission in January 2022. In addition, costs will likely increase due to low probability of re-starting the project with the same crews which have experience in the Viaero network. Finally, the delays due to lack of funding are increasing causing tension with vendors who committed to support Viaero's SCRP under a more expedited timeline.

Without full funding for SCRP, Viaero will be unable to finish the removal, replacement, and disposal process. Due to partial construction or sites that have not completed deployment, approximately 75% of Viaero's network will be left with unsecure Covered Equipment. Moreover, Viaero's Covered Equipment is no longer vendor supported. Partial or full network interruptions may occur if an issue arises that cannot be resolved, such as a site, card, or another network component going down. Network interruptions not only affect Viaero's rural customers' ability to continue to receive mobile and broadband services, but could also affect their ability to access critical functions such as dialing 911 or their ability to work, access their educational material online, participate in telehealth resources, etc. For many of its towers, Viaero continues to serve as the carrier of last resort. The Project has also impacted Viaero's ability to expand or grow its network because it has devoted significant resources and time to swapping out the equipment and managing the Project. The Project harms Viaero's customers' service quality because continuous network construction and partially complete construction negatively impact network performance. Any further delay in receiving full funding will also prolong this project with continued harm to Viaero's business. Viaero encourages the FCC and Congress to ensure full funding for the SCRP is appropriated as soon as possible to avoid the need to suspend and then restart it.

b) Labor Shortages—Funding limits now necessitate reduced tower crews. Existing Ericsson-contracted crews are being removed from this Project and assigned to other (non-Viaero) ongoing deployments across the country. Finding qualified crews to complete this project will become challenging and may cause additional time delays

Program Compliance

*Indicate whether recipient has fully complied with (or is in the process of complying with) all requirements of the Reimbursement Program.

Yes No

*Indicate whether recipient has permanently removed from its communications network all covered communications equipment or services that were in the recipient's network as of the date of the submission of the recipient's application request for funding.

Yes No

If recipient has not yet completed the removal process, what estimated percentage of the removal process have you completed?

20

*Indicate whether recipient has replaced all covered communications equipment or services that were in the recipient's network as of the date of the submission of the recipient's application request for funding.

Yes No

If recipient has not yet completed the replacement process, what estimated percentage of the replacement process have you completed?

20

*Indicate whether recipient has disposed of all covered communications equipment or services that were in the recipient's network as of the date of the submission of the recipient's application request for funding.

Yes No

If recipient has not yet completed the disposal process, what estimated percentage of the disposal process have you completed?

10

*Indicate whether recipient has fully complied with (or is in the process of complying with) the timeline submitted by the recipient. If not, provide explanation for deviation.

Yes No

*The filer has indicated no to a question in this section, please provide additional information.

Please see text above.

Certifications

*By checking the box and providing the electronic signature where indicated below, the Certifying Official on behalf of the filer certifies under penalty of perjury that:

(1) The Certifying Official is authorized to submit this status report on behalf of the above-named filer and, based on information known to me or provided to me by employees responsible for the information being submitted, the information set forth in this status report has been examined and is true, accurate, and complete, and the expenditures, disbursements and cash receipts are for the purposes and objectives set forth in the terms and conditions of the Federal award. The Certifying Official acknowledges that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information or statement, or the omission of any material fact on this status report or on any other document submitted by the filer may subject the filer and the undersigned to punishment by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act (47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), 1606), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code (18 U.S.C. § 1001, §§ 286-287, and § 1343), or can lead to liability under the False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. §§ 3729-3733, and §§ 3801-3812). (2) The filer is in compliance with the statute, rules, and orders governing the Reimbursement Program, including but not limited to allocations, draw downs, payments, obligations and expenditures of money, and the Certifying Official acknowledges that failure to be in compliance and remain in compliance with those statutes, rules, and orders may result in the denial of funding, cancellation of funding commitments, and/or recoupment of past disbursements. The Certifying Official acknowledges that the filer will maintain detailed records, including receipts, of all costs eligible for reimbursement actually incurred for a period of 10 years; and will file all required documentation for its expenses. The Certifying Official acknowledges that failure to comply with the statute, rules, and orders governing the Reimbursement Program could result in civil or criminal prosecution by law enforcement authorities.

Certifier Information

Certifier Signature	Michael Felicissimo	Certifier Phone	9705423605
Certifier Name	Michael Felicissimo	Certifier Email	mike.felicissimo@viaero.com
Certifier Title	President		
Date Signed	2024-10-07		