

SCRPS Status Update

FCC Form 5640

OMB Control No. 3060-1270

File No. SC-SU0001531

Applicant Information

Applicant FRN 0001754209

Applicant Address 3984 County Rd 32

Applicant Name Pine Belt Cellular, Inc.

Applicant City Arlington

Applicant Email cores@pinebelt.net

Applicant State AL

Applicant Phone 3343855000

Applicant ZIP Code 36722

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 Sam Hariton

Contact Address 4031 University Dr., 2nd Floor

Contact Email sc.external.rfi.pinebelt@widelii

Contact City Fairfax

Contact Phone 7035601750

Contact State VA

Contact ZIP Code 22030

*Indicate which deadline you are meeting with this filing.

2023-04-11

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.

Applicant has not conducted any work on the removal and disposing of covered equipment since the inception of the program. Applicant has conducted work on the replacement of covered equipment and services since the submittal of the last quarterly report. Applicant continues to work on turn-up of the new core. The core replacement is substantially complete however certain functional elements remain to be finalized and fully accepted. Applicant is still waiting on delivery of one hardware item that is critical to the ongoing operations, administration, and maintenance. As for the RAN, ground prep work is complete at 16 of 67 tower sites and has started at 3 more. 6 of 67 eNodeB's have been converted to the new equipment.

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

Applicant continues to find that some equipment and services are not commercially available in a reasonable amount time or at reasonable costs. Efforts continue in terms of trying to negotiate tolerable terms with tower owners and in that respect some progress has been made with some but not with all landlords. Furthermore, we are finding the tower modification costs, in many instances are way beyond initial estimates. Viewed holistically and subject to the availability of funds as well as the requisite FCC approval of a 5640 modification submission, Applicant may need to shift and pursue more new tower construction activities than originally expected. For the core, the recent "big tech" layoffs has adversely impacted the availability of some intellectual resources needed to "fine-tune" the network. Likewise, Applicant continues to await delivery of one key server component in order to achieve the standard level of post installation operational reliability.

* 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.

The burdens of this program continue to mount, which, as described above, is very much compounded by the funding uncertainties. If the shortfall is not soon address, many of the areas served by our wireless broadband network could soon find themselves moving back to the days of dial-up if work has to stop and the covered equipment reaches its end-of-life either through normal wear and tear or as a result of a rip with no replacement being possible. Frame this reality with the other reality that this issue is first supposed to be about national security, everything viewed in makes one want to ask "where's the beef"? Applicant strongly urges the FCC to do all it can to encourage the US Congress to act on the shortfall and provide the funds now that are overdue and necessary for this crucial program to succeed.

Applicant wishes to point out that its completion % estimated with this filing is lower than submitted with the previous report. A different approach to this estimate was taken. That method used with this filing was to count the number of total locations (core, 2 spare storage sited, plus 67 towers) and quantify each with respect to Site Prep, Replacement Equipment Installed, Covered Equipment Removed, and Covered Equipment Disposed. Whereas there is no site prep or installation required at the two spares storage locations, the denominator for the first two measures is 68 and 70 is used for the other two. The specific counts are 18/68 or 28%, 9/68 for 15%, 0/68 for 0% and 0/68 for 0% respectively for the four measures. This produces a blended % complete estimate of 28/276 or 10%.

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, replaced, and disposed of (or is in the process of permanently removing, replacing, and disposing of) all covered communications equipment or services that were in the recipient's network as of the date of submission of the recipient's application requesting funding.

Yes No

If you have not yet completed the removal, replacement, and/or disposal process, what estimated percentage of the removal, replacement, and/or 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.

The original timeline indicated the replacement EPC would be complete by 5/31/22. This milestone was not reached, and only in part, until January 2023. Applicant still has a significant amount of “post conversion clean-up work” to complete related to that milestone. The tornado which hit Selma, AL just a week prior to the EPC conversion compounded the challenge of this event and that, coupled with several other external factors beyond Applicant's ability to control continues to slow down the pace of these activities.

Of equal, if not greater significance are all the continued uncertainties with respect to the program funding shortfall. The RAN work has started and is progressing well but if congress does not act soon on this issue, Applicant will be forced to cease work and “wait it out” until Applicant is assured the funds will be available to pay for the replacement equipment and services performed. This will most certainly result in Applicant having the request an extension.

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	John Nettles	Certifier Phone	334-385-5001
Certifier Name	John Nettles	Certifier Email	cores@pinebelt.net
Certifier Title	President		
Date Signed	2023-04-06		