



**National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC)  
Meeting Summary  
December 4, 2014**

**Meeting Highlights**

- ▶ National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC) members received updates from the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) Technical Assistance (TA) Branch on the TA and Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) programs
- ▶ Members heard from a panel of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs) on outcomes and best practices from the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) State Consultation workshops
- ▶ SWICs provided input on a 2015 work product, the Introduction to NCSWIC presentation
- ▶ SWICs voted on proposed updates to the NCSWIC Charter, and Executive Committee (EC) members conducted the NCSWIC Chair election
- ▶ The NCSWIC EC reviewed 2014 Strategic Priority accomplishments and began discussions related to forming the 2015 committees and work product plans

**NCSWIC Action Items**

#	Description	Status	Owner
1	Complete NCSWIC Charter updates based on outcomes from the NCSWIC in-person meetings	In Progress	DHS OEC
2	Finalize and publish remaining 2014 work products	In Progress	DHS OEC
3	Continue to develop SWIC website on the DHS OEC public-facing domain to share information and for SWICs to demonstrate the link between their role and coordination with the Federal government	In Progress	DHS OEC
4	Hold special EC meeting in early January to continue discussion from the in-person meeting on 2015 NCSWIC committee structure and potential work products	Not Started	NCSWIC EC
5	Provide information to NCSWIC members about the 2015 NCSWIC priorities and solicit volunteers for each Committee	Not Started	DHS OEC
6	Explore the possibility of inviting SWICs to TA and SCIP workshops to act as subject matter experts	Not Started	DHS OEC

**Welcome and New SWIC Introductions**

Ron Hewitt welcomed members to the meeting and asked Mark Grubb to provide opening remarks. Mark reminded the NCSWIC of their various accomplishments since first meeting five years ago, and thanked each SWIC for their contributions toward interoperability. In November 2014, Mark, Ron, and FirstNet's TJ Kennedy testified in front of the House Subcommittee on Statewide Interoperability, where they lobbied for additional funding, including full-time SWIC positions in every State. Congressman Donald Payne, Jr., New Jersey, also introduced the SWIC Enhancement Act, which requires governors to appoint a fulltime SWIC in order to secure Homeland Security funding—a huge step towards codifying the role of the SWIC nationwide.



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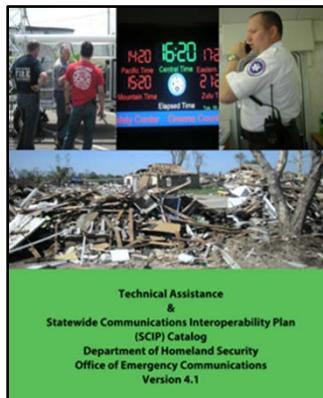
Ted Lawson, OEC, welcomed the following new SWICs since June 2014 and asked them to introduce themselves to participants:

State	Name
Louisiana	Chris Guilbeaux
Minnesota	Jackie Mines

New member Susan Plantz, acting SWIC for California, was unable to attend the meeting.

**OEC TA Branch Update**

Earlier this year, the SCIP Program was relocated to the Technical Assistance (TA) Branch to more closely align the SCIP planning process with the TA Program. Serena Maxey, OEC, discussed the numerous TA Branch accomplishments in 2014. OEC hosted over 200 TA offerings in 56 States and territories, including new specialized offerings related to regional, border, and tribal issues. OEC also helped in the development of SWIC Reference Books for all 56 States and territories. Also in 2014, OEC successfully launched the Communications Assets and Survey Mapping Tool (CASM) NexGen 2.2 as well as completed 53 Broadband Consultation Preparation workshops. Dick Tenney announced the expansion of Communications Unit training with the addition of Radio Operator, Incident Dispatcher, and Incident Communications Center Manager courses. OEC recently began assisting States in the development of their own Communications Unit Technician/Auxiliary Communications training, and now recognizes State-sponsored instructors.



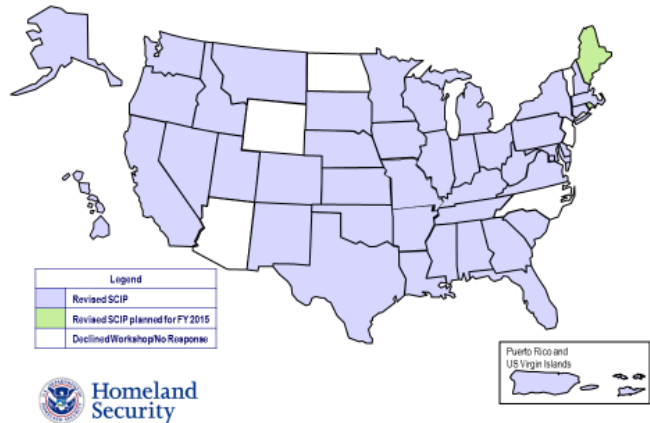
In 2015, OEC will focus on improving the use of commercial and private broadband services. In addition, the TA Branch will concentrate on three main focus areas: the 2014 National Emergency Communication Plan (NECP), the Emergency Communications Ecosystem, and enhanced coordination with other OEC branches. For the ecosystem, TA developed numerous national-level initiatives, including documenting voice and data communications for real-world events, conducting assessments to identify the voice and data elements of each segment, participating at State-sponsored conferences on the NECP and the ecosystem, and hosting Text-to-9-1-1 Preparation Workshops. [Public Safety Tools](#) will continue to focus on integrating SCIP and TA activities and expanding inter-agency sharing of emergency communications technical and resource information.

Jackita Bass, OEC, provided an update on the SCIP Program noting the importance of SCIP Revision workshops. From 2013-2014, OEC provided 47 SCIP Revision Workshops to support States and territories, which resulted not only in an updated plan but also provided OEC with insights on stakeholder needs. In 2015, OEC will also be providing SCIP Update workshops to help States and territories align their SCIPs with the 2014 NECP and emergency communications initiatives related to the various segments of the Emergency Communications Ecosystem, such as 9-1-1/Next Generation 9-1-1 and Alerts and Warning.



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To date, 21 SCIP Update Workshops have been requested; more will be scheduled in the coming months. Jackita announced that OEC will also provide ongoing support to each SWIC to address obstacles accomplishing their SCIP Goals and Initiatives, including assisting States and territories in preparing for the use of new technologies or further utilizing the Emergency Communications Ecosystem as a conceptual framework from which to base work. OEC also developed the SCIP Snapshot, formerly the Annual Progress Report—a streamlined tool aimed at providing information about trends, successes, and obstacles from the past calendar year. Findings from the SCIP Snapshot will help OEC further enhance service offerings and resources, and will help SWICs provide key decision makers within their State or territory with an overview of emergency communications capabilities. OEC will be providing guidance on completing the SCIP Snapshot, with a tentative completion date of March 30, 2015. After the 2015 submission, SCIP Snapshots will be developed through the [e-SCIP tool](#). The eSCIP is a useful tracking tool for updating SCIPs and also acts as a repository of information about each State’s or territory’s communications capabilities. Jackita reminded stakeholders that the eSCIP does not replace the collaborative process supported by the SCIP Workshops in reaching consensus on updating the SCIP. OEC staff is available to provide e-SCIP support and training, as needed.



*Figure 1. States with revised SCIPs in 2013-2014*

Jackita asked SWICs for feedback on how SCIP workshops can be improved, noting that they have recently updated the process to make the workshops more individualized. George Molnar, Nevada, applauded OEC for the SCIP program. Bob Symons agreed that OEC is very valuable for States that need help developing a plan; however, Wyoming has planners within their State with communications background that are able to assist in the plans development. OEC will work with States on an individual basis to host a follow-up workshop when needed.

**FirstNet State Consultation Panel**



Steve Noel hosted an impromptu panel session during the NCSWIC meeting highlighting outcomes and best practices from the FirstNet State Consultation workshops. Craig Allen, Iowa, Jackie Mines, Minnesota, Bill Schrier, Washington, and Lori Stone, Maryland, provided an overview of their recent State Consultation workshop experiences.

In preparation for the Maryland State Consultation workshop, Lori developed a FirstNet101 Guide and held a pre-consultation webinar to review logistics, provide background on the consultation process, and allow participants to begin thinking of questions to ask.



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Maryland spent approximately two weeks preparing for the workshop. Lori noted that the most difficult task during this period was deciding who would be invited to participate. The biggest success from the meeting was the involvement of a Baltimore Battalion Chief, who was able to provide real-world examples using broadband.

Minnesota was thankful to have feedback from Maryland's workshop during the preparation process. Jackie reiterated their struggle with the guest list. Originally believing only five people would participate, attendance numbers eventually jumped to more than 50 from State agencies and practitioner organizations. Prior to the workshop, Minnesota collected and shared incident data from six counties with FirstNet, including the type of incident, how wireless broadband was used, and what each county would like to see from FirstNet. Jackie noted the benefit of providing FirstNet with a list of questions prior to the meeting as FirstNet staff was prepared to answer the State's questions upon arrival. State personnel also appreciated hearing directly from FirstNet instead of secondhand through Jackie, which provided more substance to the information.

Washington State's workshop has been the most highly attended consultation to date. In consideration of uncertainties surrounding FirstNet and the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network, Bill opened the workshop with a comical graphic. Bill noted that States should come to their consultations prepared to provide examples of potential large-scale and catastrophic disasters particular to their State's risk (i.e. wildfires, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, etc.). He also suggested inviting border States to emphasize that the effort requires regional coordination outside of typical State or local networks (i.e., a truly national broadband network). Finally, Bill encouraged States to discuss next steps during the meeting to address future expectations.

Craig began preparations for Iowa's workshop by reviewing outcomes from Maryland's workshop. Iowa held a closed workshop, with approximately 50 State and local representatives and 10 FirstNet staff. Craig highly recommends following FirstNet's suggestions in preparation for their consultations. Iowa also did a dry run of the presentation before the workshop. Stakeholders provided primarily positive feedback. There was also a desire to invite more people to the second consultation workshop, including members of the private sector.

For Oregon's workshop, the Sheriff's Office was invited to provide technological expertise, including demonstrating the Office's smart phone application and a mobile satellite unit with camera feeds from local schools and banks. The Sheriff's Office demonstrated how difficult it is to receive clear video feed outside of a certain geographic radius (approximately four hours away); Oregon greatly needs FirstNet spectrum to allow for clear data transmission. Similar to Jackie, Steve believed that the Oregon workshop would only have 50 participants, but that number jumped to 90 in a short period of time.

During the question and answer session, Steve asked panelists to provide other States with at least one recommendation in preparation for their consultations. Bill suggested that SWICs read Washington's comprehensive [online report](#) developed as a result of their workshop. He also suggested reaching out to tribal nations. Jackie stated that Minnesota ran out of time during their workshop, but suggested continuing to interface with FirstNet following the meeting to continue progress. Craig recommended discussing State issues related to LMR with FirstNet prior to the meeting in order to increase the quality



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of information exchange. Lori invited Maryland's Governor-elect to the workshop. She suggested that States educate new officials early in the process.

Following the panel session, Amanda Hilliard, FirstNet, provided a brief overview of the workshops from FirstNet's perspective. Amanda agreed with issues raised by stakeholders regarding concerns on the time it takes to complete consultations; however, with each workshop, FirstNet continues to make progress toward completing them within the suggested eight-hour period. She also noted FirstNet's flexibility coordinating with larger States in need of longer or larger meetings. The workshops are generally broken down into two sessions: the morning session, which acts as a period for FirstNet to provide updates with questions and answers and the afternoon, which tends to focus on user needs and coverage. Amanda reiterated other panelist's recommendation of bringing local incident scenarios to the meetings to ensure local needs are addressed.

### **OEC Update**

Ron Hewitt thanked SWICs for their continued dedication and thanked Mark Grubb for his excellent leadership as NCSWIC Chair. Due to time constraints, Ron Hewitt decided not to provide the full OEC Program update listed below:

- **Next Generation Priority Services:** New 10-year contracts are in place for the Next Generation Networks Priority Services (NGN-PS) program. Contracts were awarded to the three major telecommunication carriers (i.e., AT&T, Verizon, and Sprint). These contracts will bridge the emerging technology gap for the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) and Wireless Priority Service (WPS) tools, from legacy circuit switch networks to the more recent VoIP packet switch networks. This technology upgrade will ensure continuity of operations at all levels of government and that first responders are provided a more up-to-date toolset for priority phone communications for both wired and wireless user equipment. Currently, OEC has 320,000 GETS users and 123,000 WPS users.
- **Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG):** The next SWBCWG meeting will be held in El Paso, Texas, on Jan 28 – 29, 2015. Meeting topics will cover the Cross Border Security Communications Network (CBSCN), discussions on the planned CBSCN table top exercise, and a pilot study with the San Diego CBSCN site, and will offer a border tour for meeting attendees. The Working Group continues to work on member-identified initiatives, including Southwest Border public safety spectrum analysis documents and cross-border communications interference and jamming issues.
- **Canada-United States Communications Interoperability Working Group (CANUS CIWG):** OEC has started to develop an agenda for the next Canada-United States Communications Interoperability Work Group meeting in Ottawa, Ontario, planned for mid- to late-January. Topics will include updates on the "Beyond the Border" effort on improving bi-national interoperable emergency communications.
- **Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC):** The ECPC Steering Committee Meeting was held on December 11, 2014. Meeting objectives included increasing information sharing regarding Federal emergency communications coordination activities to improve stakeholders' abilities to identify potential synergies and align efforts, and leveraging intra-departmental governance groups that coordinate emergency communications needs to enhance



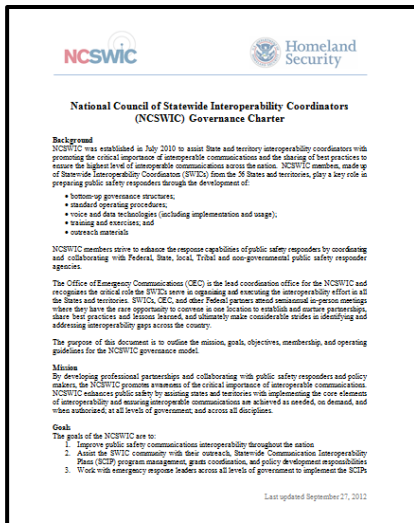


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the work of interagency coordination mechanisms. The 2013 ECPC Annual Strategic Assessment (ASA) remains in the DHS approval process; however, ECPC is continuing to plan for the 2014 ASA. Interviews will begin on January 5, 2015; ECPC Members were made aware of the strategy and engagement/timeline plan. Gary Mitchelson, Department of Treasury, who is already a regular and active participant with both ECPC and FPIC, has volunteered to serve as this ECPC liaison to the FPIC. Several findings from the 2013 ASA identified the need to increase information sharing on emergency communications activities. As discussed at the September 11, 2014, ECPC Steering Committee meeting, ECPC is migrating the ECPC Clearinghouse to Office of Management and Budget MAX Information System. In the coming months, ECPC will reach out to members for valuable information and to discuss additional collaboration capabilities of the new site.

- **One DHS:** DHS has leveraged the best practices of State and local interoperability planning to develop the DHS Communications Interoperability Plan, which is based in large part on the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum and the 56 State and territory SCIPs. Additionally, DHS Components are working through the One DHS Emergency Communications Committee to standardize their programming and use of DHS common channels for interoperability. The One DHS Emergency Communications Committee is focused on establishing a shared approach within DHS that mirrors the progress made across the public safety community.

### Charter Updates and NCSWIC Chair Election



At the September 17, 2014, NCSWIC EC meeting in Boulder, Colorado, EC members discussed clarifying language for the NCSWIC Charter, including voting processes. The EC requested that all SWICs vote on the following proposed charter updates:

1. Chair and Vice Chair elections should be held at the same time, every two years, instead of during alternating years.
2. If there is a vacancy in the Vice Chair position, a special election should be immediately held to fill the vacancy.

SWICs voted on the two proposed updates, approving both for inclusion in the NCSWIC Charter. Additionally, the NCSWIC EC elected Michael Varney, Connecticut, as the new NCSWIC Chair. The EC collectively thanked Mark Grubb for his years of service as the NCSWIC Chair. Mark Grubb will remain an EC member as the Region III Regional Interoperability Council Chair, and in 2015, will serve as the SAFECOM Vice Chair.

### 2014 Working Group Accomplishments and Proposed 2015 Initiatives

Ted provided updates on 2014 NCSWIC Working Group accomplishments to the EC:

- **Outreach:** The Outreach Working Group, in collaboration with the SAFECOM Technology Policy Committee, published the Revised Publics Safety Communications Evolution Brochure on May 19, 2014, and the Broadband 101 presentation on July 14, 2014. The working group also developed the T-Band Giveback Fact Sheet, which is currently under review but is still on



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schedule for publication before year end. As a working session during this meeting, NCSWIC members provided feedback towards the development of the “Introduction to NCSWIC” presentation, a promotional tool on the importance of NCSWIC for use during verbal presentations or as an additional resource for those seeking information about SWICs, past accomplishments, and current projects.

- **Funding and Sustainment:** The Funding and Sustainment Working Group, a collaborative effort with SAFECOM and NCSWIC, published the SAFECOM Grant Guidance on March 18, 2014, and a Repository of Funding Opportunities on September 4, 2014, both developed by OEC’s Policy and Planning Branch. The working group also published a collection of SWIC Success Stories on September 17, 2014. A final paper, originally suggested by Tom Roche, SAFECOM, was developed to highlight Public Safety Funding Mechanisms. This document is under final review and will be published in January 2015.
- **Collaboration and Preparedness:** Led by Steve Devine, Missouri, and Brad Stoddard, Michigan, the Collaboration and Preparedness Working Group developed the Project 25 Inter-Subsystem Interface Fact Sheet. This product is currently under review, and will be published in early 2015. The working group gathered examples of After Action Reports, and will post an AAR Repository in December 2014. Additionally, instead of holding a webinar, the working group hosted the Oklahoma Panel during the joint session to share emergency communications lessons learned during a real world event. Finally, the working group will assist in the development of the updated Governance Guide, discussed during the December meetings.

At the EC meeting, members approved changing the naming convention from NCSWIC “working groups” to “committees,” similar to the current SAFECOM structure. EC members then discussed moving from three current strategic priorities to a total of six committees mirroring the six lanes of the interoperability continuum. Mark Grubb suggested that EC members act as chairs for all future committees. Additional discussions will be held during two EC meetings in January to finalize the NCSWIC committee structure and prioritize 2015 work products and activities. Further guidance will be provided to the NCSWIC following those meetings.

#### **Upcoming NCSWIC Meetings**

The NCSWIC or NCSWIC EC will convene on the following dates in 2015:

- January 13, 2015; EC Conference Call (tentative)
- January 27, 2015; EC Conference Call
- March 25, 2015; In Person EC Meeting, Portland, Oregon
- May 12-14, 2014; In Person Joint Meeting, Location TBD
- June 2-5, 2015; PSCR Conference, San Diego, California
- July 21, 2015; EC Conference Call
- October 13, 2015; EC Conference Call
- November 2015; In Person Joint Meeting, Location TBD