COMMUNICATIONS SECTION TASK FORCE



Defining the Future State of the Communications Section

The Task Force's Purpose and Charge

The SAFECOM and National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC) Communications Section Task Force was established to address gaps within the Incident Communications Unit through the development of: 1) nationwide federated model for the Communications Section to promote and provide consistent recruitment, training, retention, and support for all-hazards incidents; 2) national standards for qualification, certification, and credentialing; 3) updated training courses and curriculum; 4) clarification of existing position descriptions (COML, COMT, RADO, etc.) to include the all-hazards environment; and 5) new IT positions



Communications Section Task Force Goals

Governance and Outreach	Establish a nationally-agreed upon governance framework to promote consistent recruitment, stakeholder engagement, training, credentialing, retention, and support for all-hazards incidents across levels of government.
Training, Curriculum, and Delivery	Establish agency agreements on minimum requirements for training; update courses to include voice, broadband, and video capabilities training; and implement new positions to support the Incident Command System (ICS) structure.
Qualification, Certification, and Credentialing	Establish framework for qualification, certification, and credentialing.
Standards and Processes	Establish minimum requirements for experience, instructor, curriculum, position, and currency standards; develop cadre of qualified Communications Section personnel to support all-hazards incident requirements; and develop blueprint for certification and credentialing nationwide.

Recent Achievements

An Unmet Need: National-Level Governance for the NIMS/ICS Communications Unit White Paper

The white paper investigates the communications environment and addresses concerns put forth by the emergency communications community of responders

National Incident Management System (NIMS) Refresh Letter

The Communications Section Task Force delivered a letter to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Integration Center (NIC) providing a recommendation for a revision of the COML position within the Incident Command System and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The letter was submitted during the public comment period for the NIMS Refresh

Outreach

The Communications Section Task Force continues to expand its membership to include subject matter experts outside of SAFECOM, NCSWIC, FEMA, All-Hazards Incident Management Teams Association (AHIMTA), FirstNet, and the National Coordinating Center for Communications (NCC)



Communications Section Vision

Need for Stakeholder Buy In Need to Integrate IT Stakeholders ▶ Public safety is often reticent to modify a standardized system ▶ The demand for new and evolving communication technologies already in place for incident response exceeds the capabilities of the current ICS structure ► Many stakeholders are unaware of the increasing expectations for more ► Many of the stakeholders involved typically have LMR-centric backgrounds diverse communications capabilities at incidents, anticipated demands for ► Subject matter experts are needed to help map out opportunities broadband connectivity, and the need for improved processes concerning for evolving technologies for the Communications Section governance, training, qualification, and certification ► Stakeholder organizations need the flexibility to develop and use policies, practices, and procedures for qualifying Communications Section personnel to meet internal needs, while achieving agreement on variations supporting external requests for skilled people and technology to support the greater good **Communications Section** Sustained, Federated **New Comms Functions** Governance Model Supporting Emerging Technology Sustainable, Credible Accepted Curriculum Standards **Qualification Models** Stakeholder Engagement Repeatable Processes with Partnering Agencies for Curriculum Creation Course Refresh for Policies, **Quality Assurance Processes** Mechanisms, and Processes Inclusive of Entire Lifecycle Metrics-based Evaluation and Gap Analyses ► From a communications incident management perspective, multiple organizations have different operational requirements and conflicting expectations of the Communications Section roles and responsibilities, but these conflicts must be resolved with a unified approach for the future Communications Section ► As communications in incident response continues to evolve, A forum is needed to build relationships to address challenges a process is needed to address new tools, curriculum updates, and opportunities, such as qualification, curriculum development, and managing Communications Section personnel in an and continuing education across impacted organizations all-hazards environment **Need for Unified Approach with Partners Need for Flexibility for Future Evolution**

Additional Communications Section Functions

