NCSWIC & SAFECOM QUARTERLY
Newsletter

NCSWIC
SAFECOM

Note from the Deputy Director
By: Chris Essid

It was great seeing many of you in March at the International Wireless Communications Expo. As always, SAFECOM and NCSWIC members were well-represented in the speaking sessions. These included an update on the Project 25 Compliance Assessment Program and wearable technology for public safety, among others. The discussions as a whole focused on important developments in the industry that reflect back on the work you all do every day.

As you know, the updated National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) was released in November 2014. The 2014 NECP describes a new emergency communications ecosystem that is emerging as a result of the move from circuit-switched to packet-switched communications, as well as the increased focus on broadband and multimedia. The Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) thanks you for your work in implementing the goals of the NECP and helping the office fulfill its mission to ensure emergency responders can send and receive the multimedia information they need to do their jobs.

To begin making immediate progress on the input received from the focus groups, OEC adopted a set of short-term, high-impact activities that align OEC's efforts to the shifting field of emergency communications and the latest NECP, internally known as the 100-Day Plan. Adopted in late January of this year, the activities listed in the 100-Day Plan are on track to be completed in early May. Among the activities outlined in the Plan is the development of a standard operating procedure on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Grant Guidance. We hope this will provide a streamlined process to provide greater access to interoperable emergency communications grants.

The Plan also focuses on our border strategy, through which OEC plans to engage and support state, local, and tribal agencies operating along the Canada-U.S. and U.S.-Mexico borders. Continuing with state outreach, the Plan aims to align Statewide Communication Interoperability Plans (SCIP) and workshops with the updated NECP. OEC is developing a new template showing the alignment of NECP and SCIP goals and initiatives and will track data trends in emergency communications to identify future concepts or approaches to national initiatives.

We hope these key initiatives, in addition to other activities in the Plan, will put OEC on the right track with the updated NECP and provide our stakeholders with the necessary assistance. Upon completion of this first 100-Day Plan, OEC will begin another 100-Day Plan that contains four to six high-level activities that continue to advance emergency communications and empower our stakeholders.

OEC looks forward to your continued input and working with you to ensure your state's needs are met. On behalf of OEC, thank you for all of your hard work, and we look forward to collaborating with you throughout the year. ∎

About the Newsletter

The *NCSWIC-SAFECOM Quarterly Newsletter* is designed to be a source of information, news, and updates for SAFECOM, SWICs, their staff, and members of the stakeholder community. We hope that it will be a valuable resource as you lead future statewide planning efforts and implementation of the NECP.

inside this issue

Note from the NCSWIC Executive Committee

By: NCSWIC Executive Committee (EC)

Over the past few months, the NCSWIC Executive Committee (EC), with support from OEC, initiated a new committee structure that will improve NCSWIC's focus on the emergency communications environment. The four new committees will be chaired by a member of the EC. The four committees are structured as follows.

- **Governance**: Focuses on emergency communications governance, including governing processes and structures internal and external to NCSWIC. The Governance Committee is chaired by Bob Symons.

- **Training, Exercises, and SOPs**: Focuses on streamlining processes and identifying standard operating procedures related to public safety communications at all levels of government relevant to the SWIC community; and aims to coordinate closely with OEC on service offerings. The Training, Exercises, and SOPs Committee is co-chaired by Michael Varney and Nick Brown.

- **Technology Policy**: Promotes the use of technologies, resources, and processes related to emergency communications and interoperability. Topics involving usage and NG 9-1-1 will also fall under this committee. Technology Policy is a joint committee with SAFECOM. The NCSWIC Chair for the Technology Policy Committee is George Molnar.

- **Funding and Sustainment**: Concentrates on identifying innovative ways to sustain current programs, activities, and roles pertinent to stakeholders at the state, territorial, tribal, and local levels, as well as providing input toward funding sources and appropriations. Funding and Sustainment is a joint committee with SAFECOM. The NCSWIC Funding and Sustainment Committee co-chairs are Mark Grubb and Victoria Garcia.

Each committee addresses one or more of the lanes of the Interoperability Continuum, but also goes a step further to examine funding and sustainment issues. In the past, these committees have been staffed almost exclusively by SWICs; however, a qualified state or local employee may also participate at the SWICs discretion. Some SWICs have already volunteered to work under one (or more) of these committees. The EC encourages all SWICs to volunteer or identify a member of their staff (or other subject matter expert) to serve in their place on at least one committee.

If you have any questions regarding committee scope or membership, please reach out to OEC at NCSWICGovernance@hq.dhs.gov or contact your Regional Interoperability Council Chair. ∎

Note from the SAFECOM Chair

By: Steve Proctor, Utah Communications Authority (UCA)

After chairing my first SAFECOM EC meeting last month in Portland, Oregon, I gained a greater appreciation for this group's subject matter expertise. With its unique perspectives, SAFECOM is a powerful force in the public safety community. I would like to thank the SAFECOM members and the associations and organizations they represent for providing a rare opportunity for state, local, and federal collaboration.

During the March EC meeting, members heard from Chief Michael Duyck from the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and Karl Larson, the Radio Project Manager for the City of Portland. Chief Duyck and Mr. Larson highlighted some of the unique communications and emergency service initiatives that are taking place across the State of Oregon and particularly the City of Portland. Their presentations highlighted the need for agencies to have a stake in emerging technologies to successfully support emergency responders.

I would like to congratulate Harlin McEwen, who recently received the Federal 100 Award, which recognizes government, industry and academic leaders who have played pivotal roles that affect how the federal government acquires, develops and manages IT. Also, former SAFECOM member Chief Charles Werner recently announced his retirement from the Charlottesville Fire Department, and we wish him well in his future endeavors.

Finally, I would like to thank DHS for its continued investment in the safety of our communities through OEC's partnership and support of the SAFECOM mission. With each in-person meeting, SAFECOM evolves to continue providing solutions and practices to better serve and protect the nation and citizens we serve. ∎

MACINAC: Regional Collaboration — National Success

By: Mark Grubb, Delaware SWIC

To serve as a venue for cooperation and innovation for public safety wireless broadband stakeholders in the Mid-Atlantic Region, the states of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia created the Mid-Atlantic Consortium for Interoperable Advanced Communications (MACINAC), in 2011. As a consortium, MACINAC examines opportunities and challenges associated with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) and assists FirstNet as it creates a public safety wireless broadband network. MACINAC approaches issues and challenges from a regional perspective with a strong regional voice. Successful joint ventures include:

- The MACINAC Request for Information — a solicitation for submissions from qualified market participants with regards to the network

- A regional border site identification and coverage design effort

- Development of common network evaluation criteria and technical requirements

- Hosting two Public Safety Broadband Workshops featuring topics examining emerging broadband technologies and applications, local control, coverage requirements, potential users, and sustainability of the network

MACINAC will address issues such as the use and distribution of funds generated from excess network capacity and subscriber user fees discussed in FirstNet's Second Notice, released on March 13, 2015. The MACINAC has proposed to FirstNet the establishment of a public-private partnership to build and operate the portion of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN) in the MACINAC region. MACINAC proposes — in an opt-in scenario — to leverage private funding sources to close the gap between available federal funding support and the funding required to build, operate, and maintain the network in the mid-Atlantic. The proposal would monetize excess network capacity to defray operational expenses to ensure network longevity and sustainability.

The FirstNet Second Notice highlights FirstNet's intent to develop flexible "win-win" arrangements with states and their regions and to build the most effective network within their jurisdictions. These arrangements would ensure that the nationwide build-out and operation of the network complies with the minimum operating standards spelled out in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. The MACINAC regional approach serves as a model for increased collaboration among states in other regions to ensure the success and long-term financial sustainability of the network across the country. ∎

Indiana SWIC Supports OEC and All Hazards Incident Management Team Symposium

By: Serena Maxey, OEC Technical Assistance (TA) Branch Chief

Lee Williams of the Central Virginia Incident Management Team (IMT) invited the OEC Technical Assistance (TA) Branch to participate in the fifth annual All Hazards Incident Management Team Association's (AHIMTA) educational symposium, on December 9-11, 2014, in Fort Worth, Texas.

AHIMTA was formed in December 2010, to help standardize training, qualifications, and response across the Nation. Its mission is to provide leadership and education to IMTs throughout the country. When communities are faced with disasters like wildfires, blizzards, and tornadoes, the All-Hazards IMTs are often the first to bring order to the chaos.

Last year's symposium included approximately 400 responders from 40 states, with other responders coming from as far away as Australia. One hundred responders took part in pre-symposium training, including 17 participants who attended an OEC TA Communications Unit Leader (COML) workshop.

Topics covered during the symposium included leadership, IMT integration at all levels of government, and training and certification standards for state IMTs. Attendees learned about best practices from responders involved in incidents such as Hurricanes Sandy, Katrina and Ike, the September 11 attack on the Pentagon, the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster, historic wildfires, and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

OEC representatives Dick Tenney and Brandon Smith, along with Steve Skinner, Indiana SWIC, and Bonnie Maney, SAFECOM's former SEARCH representative, participated in a panel discussion about the role and value of COML personnel supporting interoperable communications in major disasters. Brandon Smith, OEC Telecommunications Specialist, described his experience as a COML during a 12,000 acre urban wildfire near The Dalles, Oregon, in 2013. Steve Skinner, the Indiana SWIC and a member of the Indiana Incident Management Assistance Team, discussed his deployments as a COML, logistics section chief, and planning section chief to large scale incidents and events like Hurricane Sandy, Super Bowl XLVI, and a tornado in Henryville, Indiana.

During the second half of the presentation, OEC representatives surveyed the attendees about their utilization of COMLs within their own IMT. Feedback included the following:

- There are advantages and disadvantages of having a pool of COMLs or having a COML regularly assigned to the team

- Some IMTs draw Communications Unit (COMU) resources from qualified personnel within the state

- There are a variety of internal IMT organizational models depending on states' governance structure and size

- There are challenges with training, exercises, and qualifications for other Incident Command System (ICS) positions apart from COMU positions

- Integration of COMU personnel for IMT drills, exercises and training opportunities is difficult

Some attendees said they had a very strong COMU within their IMT, while others did not have a formally established COMU. Although the COMU is a critical component of an IMT, it is often not utilized until a deployment is well under way. During the panel discussion about COML utilization, the audience recognized that governance, training, credentialing, staffing, exercising, and deployment of ICS personnel is a challenge for all unit leader positions including the COML. ∎

FirstNet State Consultation Update
By: Dave Buchanan, FirstNet Director of State Consultation

One of FirstNet's top priorities for 2015 is to promote open communication with all 56 states and territories. FirstNet engages regularly with all states and territories through monthly conference calls, quarterly webinars, and in person engagements.

FirstNet formally launched its state consultation process in July 2014 at the Maryland initial consultation meeting. The FirstNet User Advocacy Team designed the initial consultation meetings to meet with states and territories to discuss needs and to incorporate strategies learned from past processes. These initial meetings aim to help states and territories understand the relationship between FirstNet and the state or territory and how they will work together over the next several years, as well as to solicit feedback from the state or territory.

FirstNet is pleased with the pace and achievements to date. As of April 1, 2015, FirstNet has conducted 19 initial consultation meetings in the states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. FirstNet captures and archives key points of discussions from these consultation meetings with the states and territories. For summaries of these meetings, please visit the FirstNet Blog.

On March 23, 2015, FirstNet released to the sate/territory Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) data collection elements that will be useful to FirstNet's development of requests for proposals for Comprehensive Network Solution(s) and the state plans to ensure the network meets the needs of the public safety community. FirstNet requests that each SPOC collect information regarding coverage, users and operational areas, capacity planning, and current services. These important topics, among others, will continue to be discussed through the state consultation process.

It is important to note that consultation will continue throughout the life of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN); FirstNet will consult with the states and territories throughout the deployment and operation of the network. The goal is to ensure that the nature and content of consultation keep pace with the needs of the states, territories, and FirstNet as planning for the NPSBN evolves.

To keep stakeholders up-to-date on key consultation developments in their state, territory, or region, please refer to the master tracker of state and territorial activities on the FirstNet website. FirstNet will update this page on a regular basis.

To learn more about consultation or other FirstNet activities in your state or territory, please contact your state or territory SPOC. A list of the SPOCs can be found on the FirstNet Consultation page.

On behalf of FirstNet, I would like to thank the state and territory SPOCs for their cooperation and continued support for the consultation process and our collective efforts to plan and deploy the NPSBN. ∎

2014 NATIONAL 9-1-1 REPORT

By: Laurie Flaherty, Department of Transportation

The National 9-1-1 Program recently released the "2014 National 9-1-1 Progress Report." The report provides detailed reporting and analysis of the most recent collection of 9-1-1 statistics among states.

The report presents data collected from members of the National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators (NASNA) who participated in the study. Key findings from the report include:

- **A Majority of 9-1-1 Calls are Received from Cellular Phones**: More than 70 percent of all 9-1-1 calls are received from wireless phones compared to 25 percent of calls received from wireline phones.

- **Progress is Being Made toward the Implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1)**: Since the last report in 2011, state planning and progress toward NG 9-1-1 has increased across multiple stages of planning, contracting, and testing.

- **Some States Have Fully Operational NG 9-1-1 Systems**: More than 20 percent of responding states have fully operational NG 9-1-1 network infrastructure; however, 51 percent of states have made no progress toward implementation.

- **Wireline and Wireless Surcharge Funds Comprise 35 Percent of Annual Revenue**: While 45 percent of all funds are derived from other sources, 35 percent are collected through wireline and wireless surcharge fees.

The 2014 National 9-1-1 Progress Report allows 9-1-1 leaders from each state to analyze findings and consider more effective program modifications based on successful models implemented in other states. In addition, access to the report will help legislators and policy makers answer questions about how a particular state compares with other states on a variety of specific 9-1-1 characteristics.

The National 9-1-1 Program will continue to support this initiative and its commitment to work with the NASNA to gather state-level 9-1-1 data on an annual basis as a way to provide measurement for ongoing improvements of nationwide 9-1-1 systems.

About the National 9-1-1 Program

The National 9-1-1 Program provides federal leadership to support and promote optimal 9-1-1 services. It was created by Congress to provide information to improve the 9-1-1 system and to coordinate information sharing and activities among federal agencies and the 9-1-1 community. The Program fulfills its mission by developing and distributing a variety of tools and resources for the nation's 9-1-1 stakeholders. It is housed within the Office of Emergency Medical Services at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Transportation. ■

NCSWIC and SAFECOM Executive Committee Meeting Highlights
March 25-26, 2015

The NCSWIC and SAFECOM Executive Committees met in Portland, Oregon, to discuss a variety of critical and emerging public safety issues, the status of 2015 committees, and to hear from local public safety practitioners and federal partners.

NCSWIC EC meeting highlights included:

- A panel session featuring local public safety officials from the Portland metro area who discussed best practices and lessons learned

- A roundtable discussion on current activities and challenges in each region

- Approval of the NCSWIC Charter and discussions on the NCSWIC Website, Strategic Plan, and Annual Report

- Updates from the newly formed NCSWIC Committees

SAFECOM EC meeting highlights included:

- Keynote speeches from two City of Portland representatives on current technological and data analysis

- A review of committee initiatives and the approval of the SAFECOM Charter and the SAFECOM Elevator Speech

- Updates on the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) Canadian Cross-Border Interoperability Report findings

Please contact Michael Varney, the NCSWIC Chair, for more information on NCSWIC activities, and Steve Proctor, the SAFECOM Chair, for more information on SAFECOM activities. ■

SCIP Program: How can we help you succeed?

OEC's SCIP Program provides a variety of support services and resources to states and territories regarding their strategic planning. OEC assistance ranges from delivering customized SCIP Revision or Update Workshops to assistance with innovative tools and resources such as the eSCIP and the annual SCIP Snapshot.

OEC continues to conduct SCIP Revision Workshops, a process which began in 2013. These two-day in-depth workshops provide SCIP basics and are designed to revise SCIPs to account for emerging technologies, including broadband and Next Generation 911. To date, OEC has conducted 47 SCIP Revision Workshops, with five additional ones planned this year: American Samoa, Maine, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Vermont.

In late 2014, OEC began facilitating SCIP Update Workshops to support states with strategic planning. These workshops are usually one day and focus on updating SCIP plans to reflect recent activities involving new technologies, identifying alignment with the 2014 NECP and the emergency communications ecosystem. In several instances, states have used these workshops to tackle issues such as: updating governance structures to include new partners, revising goals to reflect recent activities, and identifying future needs such as training and funding. By the end of March, OEC facilitated workshops for Delaware, District of Columbia, Nebraska, and Washington. Additional SCIP Update Workshops are being planned for Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Ohio, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Texas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and West Virginia.

OEC's SCIP team has also been hard at work enhancing the eSCIP tool to support SWICs in updating SCIPs and managing annual reporting requests. The eSCIP program allows states to track the progress of their goals and initiatives, create a repository of previous SCIPs, and will populate future versions of the Snapshot. As OEC moves toward completion of the upgrade, it will provide additional details on how to use the new aspects of the system. In April, OEC is planning a webinar to walk through recent enhancements, which will be followed by one-on-one training in May. States with finalized SCIPs already have their information entered in the eSCIP. The eSCIP tool can be found on the Public Safety Tools web site.

The SCIP Team has also developed a SCIP transition presentation template that SWICs can use to brief key decision makers about the value of the SCIP and statewide planning process. The presentation can be customized with information about SCIPs, recent success stories, and ongoing efforts to enhance interoperability in the states or territories.

These offerings and resources were designed to support all states and territories. OEC welcomes feedback so the available offerings and resources can be tailored to your needs. OEC looks forward to working with each state and territory in the coming months. States that require specific one-on-one support for a SCIP initiative can reach out to OEC, and a SCIP Program member will provide you with assistance.

Finally, OEC thanks everyone for taking the time to complete the annual SCIP Snapshot. This annual report, which replaced the lengthy Annual Progress Report, contains information that helps OEC understand the kind of support and resources that will be most useful to you in the future. The SCIP Snapshot also captures the progress being made towards achieving SCIP Goals and success stories from the field.

For additional information on any of these workshops and resources, please contact Jackita Bass, SCIP Program Manager at: Jackita.Bass@hq.dhs.gov or at SCIP@hq.dhs.gov. ∎

2015 SAFECOM Committee Schedule

	Committee	Meeting Dates
SAFECOM	Education and Outreach	Last Wednesday of every month at 2pm ET
	Governance	Second Wednesday of every month at 2pm ET
Joint	Technology Policy	Third Tuesday of every month at 3pm ET
	Funding and Sustainment	Third Wednesday of every month at 4pm ET
NCSWIC	Governance	Fourth Thursday of every month at 1:30pm ET
	Training, Exercises, & SOPs	Fourth Tuesday of every month at 3pm ET

New OEC Guide Outlines Best Practices for Developers of Public Safety Mobile Applications

By: OEC Outreach

As the primary federal agency tasked with supporting and promoting emergency communications used by emergency responders and government officials to keep America safe, secure, and resilient, OEC plays a vital role in ensuring the nation's first responders are prepared to deal with the challenges of an ever-changing emergency communications environment. Today, some of those challenges are rooted in the burgeoning availability of mobile applications for public safety use.

The use of mobile applications by public safety professionals has risen sharply in recent years, and software developers have been quick to capitalize on the opportunity by producing a variety of applications tailored specifically to the needs of the public safety community. On an almost daily basis, technology headlines announce the arrival of a new application that could save someone's life, keep firefighters safe, or help officers locate missing persons faster.

Few would suggest this is an unwelcome development. First responders need mobile applications that distill data and analysis into simple, intuitive interfaces and instantly convey accurate, critical information as emergencies unfold. However, mobile applications can present significant interoperability, function, performance, and security risks to the first responder. These risks will multiply as mobile application use proliferates throughout the community with broadband adoption.

First Responder Mobile Application Development
Best Practices Guide
December 2014

Homeland Security

In light of these risks, OEC established the Mobile Applications for Public Safety (MAPS) program to promote public safety's overall requirements, catalyze innovation, and bolster the security posture of mobile networks and applications used by first responders. The project brings public and private sector partners together to help application developers understand the unique operating requirements of public safety and build applications that are secure, perform well, and ultimately enhance situational awareness.

In December 2014, the MAPS project released the First Responder Mobile Application Development Best Practices Guide. The Guide, designed for use by mobile application developers entering the public safety marketplace, describes the ideal attributes of a mobile application for first responder use:

- **Function**: The application should be designed to meet the needs of first responders and operate smoothly within first responder organizational and operational environments.

- **Security**: The application should employ up-to-date device, operating system, and programming security mechanisms and practices. It should also protect data from privacy intrusions, accidental leakage, and malicious attacks.

- **Performance**: The application should optimize the use of device and network resources (battery life and network bandwidth, for instance), scale to the size of the incident, and minimize distraction for the first responder.

On each of these points the guide provides a considerable number of bulleted recommendations, making it a user-friendly and informative resource for mobile application developers.

OEC would specifically like to thank DHS Science and Technology's First Responders Group and National Information Sharing Consortium, as well as DHS Office of the Chief Information Officer Enterprise System Development Office for their review and support of the Guide. OEC would also like to thank the many government, industry, and academic collaborators that provided invaluable insight into mobile application development.

Learn more about the project's policy, developer, and public safety guidance for the mobile application ecosystem at www.dhs.gov/maps. ∎

Cross Border Communications: Barriers, Opportunities, and Solutions for Border First Responders

By: Jackie Bayless, National Public Safety Telecommunications Council
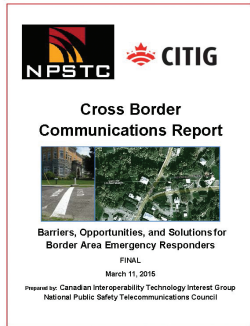
The Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) and the NPSTC recently published the Cross Border Communications Report: Barriers, Opportunities, and Solutions for Border First Responders, a comprehensive study of cross border public safety communications at the local first responder level. The report is designed to clarify legal and regulatory policies, identify best practices and examples of interoperability excellence, and advance specific recommendations to enhance public safety communications at the national border.

Cross border public safety communications is a complex issue that affects all first responder organizations operating near the U.S. and Canadian border. Fire departments, law enforcement, and EMS organizations are frequently asked to cross national borders to render aid.

The inability to communicate across the border area is related to regulatory and technological barriers, disparate and proprietary technology solutions, and uncertainty as to whether agencies can legally execute mutual aid agreements and operational policy directives with sister agencies across the border.

Addressing these issues, OEC has played a leading role in organizing resources and hosting an initial set of meetings. The Canada-U.S. Communications Interoperability Working Group has studied this issue to identify and resolve public safety communications issues at the federal, state/provincial, and local level. This effort is part of a broader bi-national "Beyond the Border" program seeking improvements at all levels of federal border interactions. Public Safety Canada serves in a leadership role with this group and co-chairs the CIWG with OEC. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Industry Canada have also been actively engaged in reviewing issues and identifying regulatory solutions.

DHS's Science and Technology Directorate and the Defense Research and Development Canada's Centre for Security Science have been strong advocates championing the identification, testing, and implementation of various radio, data, and technology platforms to enhance cross border emergency communications. The Canada-U.S. Enhanced Resiliency Experiment (CAUSE) exercises, which are held annually at the Canada-U.S. border, leverage new and innovative solutions to support emergency responders.

Best practices range from the use of a common radio channel, model Memorandums of Understanding, and pre-coordination between border agencies. For instance, the State of Montana has implemented a statewide cross border interoperability project involving VHF frequency 155.4750 MHz (VLAW31). This channel is also known as the "Nationwide Law Enforcement Communications Channel" and in the Montana area as the "Blue Frequency." In December of 2012, Montana applied for and received a waiver from the FCC to allow VLAW31 to be used by all public safety agencies for cross border emergency communications within 10 miles/16 kilometers of the border. This waiver permits fire, rescue, and EMS agencies to use the law enforcement channel.

Emergency vehicles border crossing events occur every day and are complex. Many public safety organizations operating near the border provide a roster of their personnel to their border security agency, Canada's Border Services Agency or U.S. Customs and Border Protection, to make sure they are able to cross the border in an emergency. In several cases, local public safety units can communicate directly with the border crossing officials to expedite travel across the border.

The Cross Border Communications Report lists and explains public safety requirements for cross border communications; addresses barriers and opportunities; includes current treaties and regulations with explanations; provides best practice examples; and, ends with a comprehensive set of recommendations. The appendices also provide additional valuable internet resources. ∎

Emergency Vehicle Operator: On-Board Device Distractions

By: Deputy Chief Eddie Reyes, Alexandria Police Department

In early 2014, a New York police officer was looking at the mobile data terminal (MDT) inside his patrol car when he ran a red light and collided with an unmarked police vehicle. Fortunately, neither officer was injured (*Associated Press*, 2014).

For emergency responders, driving emergency vehicles is a major component of serving the general public. These vehicles serve as transportation, storage, and workspaces. In-vehicle information technologies have become essential to provide effective and timely response, with new technologies being introduced regularly that can increase the safety of both the responder and the general public. While these new technologies are important for emergency operations, a potential risk arises when drivers choose (or are required) to interact with the technology while piloting the vehicle.

According to a 1980 study, driver distraction is identified as occurring "when a driver is delayed in the recognition of information needed to safely accomplish the driving task because some event, activity, object, or person within or outside the vehicle compelled or tended to induce the driver's shifting attention away from the driving task." The increased cognitive function and stress for first responders, including interactions with in-vehicle technologies such as computer-aided dispatch or radio, likely contributes to distracted driver crashes. Operating in emergency mode, however, is not the only cause for concern.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2012, emergency vehicle crashes recorded 131 fatalities, with 46% of the crashes occurring while in emergency mode. Occupants in other vehicles or people outside the vehicle made up 71% of these fatalities.

Deputy Chief Reyes represents the International Association of Chiefs of Police on SAFECOM and the Transportation Safety Advancement Group (TSAG). The TSAG serves an important function on behalf of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research, Innovation and Technology Administration, and Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office. Through its members and allied stakeholder groups, TSAG identifies surface transportation-based technologies and applications and promotes a national dialogue on public safety practitioners' first hand experiences and corresponding best practices and lessons learned. TSAG asked the Texas Transportation Institute to produce a white paper to explore the technologies and required interactions with those technologies inside emergency response vehicles. This paper also explored the problems generated by high cognitive workload and distraction and how these problems impact driving performance and safety. The report and additional information can be found on the TSAG website. ■

Meet the Stakeholders

Phil Royce
Florida SWIC

Phil Royce is the Communications Branch Director with the Florida Division of Emergency Management. In this position, Phil is responsible for managing all internal communications systems at the State Emergency Management Office, the State Watch Office, and various satellite locations around the state. Phil has over 31 years' experience in disaster communications, beginning at the age of 17 as a volunteer with the American Red Cross and Palm Beach County Florida Emergency Operations Center. Phil spent ten years at the Alachua County Sheriff's Office providing all aspects of communications and technical support to the Sheriff's Office, other Alachua County public safety agencies, and 13 counties in northeast Florida. His subject matter expertise in electronics, communications, and deployable assets has proven valuable to the State of Florida on a variety of projects. Phil's experience includes the development of educational curriculum, coupled with providing on-going training for Florida's deployable communications assets. Additionally, he has had close involvement with system operation of, and hands-on training on, the Florida Interoperability Network used to establish interoperability among incompatible radio systems across the state. Phil is currently part of the NPSTC's Canadian Centre for Security Science Deployable Systems working group. He is also part of the State Joint Task Force Technical Committee for the Florida Statewide Law Enforcement Radio System, the Executive and Technical Boards of FloridaNet, and he participates on numerous other technology working groups.

Phil is currently a member of the National Sheriffs' Association, the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO), and a lifetime member of the American Radio Relay League. During the last ten years, he has been deployed to several disasters, emergency incidents, planned events, and training exercises, filling the Incident Command System position of COML. During the recent State Communications Exercise, Phil was the acting senior COML for Region 3 tasking. Phil has multiple FEMA and DHS certifications to include COML and Communications Unit Technician. Phil holds a Bachelor's Degree in Homeland Security and Emergency Management from Ashford University and is working towards an International Association of Emergency Managers Certified Emergency Manager certification. He also holds a State of Florida four-year indentureship as a Journeyman Electrician. Phil actively promotes and operates communications systems in Amateur Radio (KE4PWE), Auxiliary Communications, Amateur Radio Emergency Services, Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services, and emergency communications that serve public safety and emergency management agencies. Phil's pastime is collecting and restoring vintage broadcast and communications radio equipment. ■

Phil can be reached at Phil.Royce@em.myflorida.com.

Scott Edson
Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)

Commander Scott Edson was appointed as the SAFECOM Executive Committee's primary representative to MCCA in October 2014. Commander Edson has over 37 years of law enforcement experience with the Los Angeles (LA) County Sheriff's Department, and currently oversees the department's Communications and Fleet Management Bureau, Data Systems Bureau, and the Crime Information Management Bureau.

Commander Edson is a very active member of the National Sheriffs' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCCAAPCO, and is a board member on the new International Public Safety Association. He often represents these associations on panel discussions, committees and meetings. Additionally, Commander Edson chairs many committees including the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Information Sharing Subcommittee. He is also the LA County Sheriff alternate on the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System (LA-RICS) Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors and Chair of the LA-RICS Operations Committee. LA-RICS is a FirstNet early adopter and plans to go live with the broadband network later this year.

Commander Edson is passionate about regional and national interoperability and what FirstNet will provide to public safety. Commander Edson is also a new member of the Public Safety Advisory Committee representing the MCCA.

Previous assignments held by Commander Edson include Captain of the Communications and Fleet Management Bureau, director of the Law Enforcement Information Sharing Program, manager of the Crime Analyst Program and Sheriff's Data Network, and various assignments in custody, patrol, investigations and emergency management. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology Management and an Associate of Arts degree in Administration of Justice. Commander Edson spends his free time traveling with his family, enjoying his ham radio (W6EDS), flying airplanes (private pilot), and riding motorcycles. ∎

Scott can be reached at SDEdson@LASD.org.

OEC HQ Spotlights
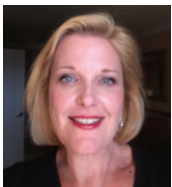
Jessica Kaputa
NCSWIC Program Lead, *State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Partnerships*
OEC Partnerships Branch

Jessica Kaputa has more than 20 years of Federal IT and communications experience and an additional 10 years of emergency telecommunications experience within DHS's Office of Cybersecurity and Communications (CS&C).

During her career, she has worked as an IT support lead for the Navy's Tomahawk Missile and Unmanned Arial Vehicle Program, and provided network acquisition and provisioning services, training, and customer service support for the Federal Aviation Administration's unclassified and air traffic control networks. During her time at CS&C, Jessica has provided engineering support to the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service and Wireless Priority Service programs, and she has coordinated training and exercise programs for federal disaster emergency communications. She also provides operational support to FEMA's National Response Coordination Center during Federal Emergency Support Function #2 activations. Jessica volunteers her time supporting communications and search and rescue efforts with the Congressional Wing of the Civil Air Patrol based out of Andrews Air Force Base.

She holds a Master's Degree in Telecommunications and National Security from the George Washington University. ∎

Jessica can be reached at Jessica.Kaputa@hq.dhs.gov.

OEC Calendar

MAY

12-14   Joint SAFECOM-NCSWIC In-Person Meeting; Jacksonville, FL

JUNE

2-5   Public Safety Communications Research Program Conference; San Diego, CA

Workshops:
SCIP: Iowa, Rhode Island, Texas

JULY

9   SAFECOM EC Conference Call

21   NCSWIC EC Conference Call

Workshops:
TA: American Samoa, North Carolina, Vermont

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If you would like to contribute articles for an upcoming NCSWIC-SAFECOM Joint Quarterly Newsletter, please contact either NCSWICGovernance@hq.dhs.gov or SAFECOMGovernance@hq.dhs.gov.