



March 2015

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY GROUPS

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) actively partners with three emergency communications advisory groups, comprised of stakeholders from national organizations, public safety at-large members, and statewide interoperability coordinators (SWIC). While each organization works towards similar goals within the emergency communications environment, each has a distinctive mission. SAFECOM and the National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC) are supported by and provide policy recommendations to the OEC. The First Responder Network Authority's (FirstNet) Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) assists FirstNet in carrying out its duties and responsibilities. It is solely focused on the nationwide public safety broadband network (NPSBN). The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) is a public safety communications federation and is a member of SAFECOM and PSAC.

### WHAT IS SAFECOM?

SAFECOM aims to improve emergency response providers' inter-jurisdictional and interdisciplinary emergency communications interoperability across state, local, tribal, territorial, and international borders and the federal government. Its membership includes more than 70 representatives from state, local, and tribal emergency responders; major intergovernmental and national public safety organizations (including NPSTC and NCSWIC); and elected or appointed officials. These representatives provide input on the challenges, needs, and best practices involving emergency communications. OEC supports SAFECOM's development of grant guidance, policy, tools, and templates; the office provides technical assistance to federal, state local, tribal and territorial (FLSTT) practitioners. The DHS Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) supports SAFECOM's research, development, testing and evaluation, and standards elements.

SAFECOM:

- Promotes the use of technologies, resources, and processes related to emergency communications and interoperability;
- Educates relevant stakeholders and constituents on emergency communications and interoperability related issues;
- Provides input on challenges, requirements, needs, and best practices involving emergency communications; and
- Supports the implementation of the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) and the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plans (SCIP).

### WHAT IS NCSWIC?

NCSWIC is a national governance body established to assist state and territory interoperability coordinators with promoting the critical importance of interoperable communications and best practices within their states and nationally. NCSWIC is comprised of SWICs from all 56 states and territories. By developing professional partnerships and collaborating with public safety responders and policy makers, the NCSWIC promotes awareness of the critical importance of interoperable communications. NCSWIC enhances public safety by assisting states and territories with implementing the core elements of interoperability and ensuring interoperable communication

are achieved as needed, on demand, and when authorized; at all levels of government; and across all disciplines. NCSWIC members strive to enhance the response capabilities of public safety responders by coordinating and collaborating with FLSTT and non-governmental public safety responder agencies. OEC provides support to the NCSWIC to build partnerships, discuss important issues impacting emergency communications interoperability, and to share best practices and lessons learned.

NCSWIC:

- Improves public safety communications interoperability throughout the Nation;
- Assists the SWIC community with their outreach, SCIP program management, grants coordination, and policy development responsibilities; and,
- Works with emergency response leaders across all levels of government to implement the SCIPs.

## WHAT IS NPSTC?

NPSTC is a volunteer federation of 16 public safety organizations, whose mission is to improve public safety communications and interoperability through collaborative leadership. NPSTC analyzes and makes recommendations regarding public policy, regulatory and technology issues to governmental regulatory organizations on behalf of public safety. NPSTC continues to play a key role in providing input to DHS OIC and OEC regarding the issues of public safety wireless communications and interoperability.

NPSTC:

- Works to ensure public safety has the spectrum needed to communicate in life-threatening situations without interference
- Explores technologies, develops public safety requirements, and influences public policies involving public safety telecommunications; and,
- Analyzes the ramifications of particular issues and submits comments to governmental bodies with the objective of advancing public safety telecommunications worldwide.

## WHAT IS PSAC?

FirstNet established the PSAC in February 2013 consistent with the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012. The PSAC consists of 40 members from all disciplines of public safety, national organizations, FLSTT governments, and public safety at-large representation. The mission of the PSAC is to assist FirstNet in carrying out its duties and responsibilities. SAFECOM, NCSWIC, and NPSTC are members of the PSAC, as well as all the national organizations that are represented on SAFECOM.

PSAC:

- Offers guidance, information, and subject matter expertise to FirstNet from a public safety perspective to ensure that user needs, requirements, and public safety operational capabilities are included in the NPSBN;
- Provides subject matter expertise on concepts (e.g., policies, procedures, technologies, operational methods) developed by FirstNet; and,
- Advises FirstNet through the creation of initial documents, plans, or reports related to the build-out, deployment, and operation of the NPSBN. The PSAC reports include subject matter related to shared intergovernmental responsibilities or administration.

### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact [OEC@dhs.gov](mailto:OEC@dhs.gov) or visit [www.dhs.gov/oec](http://www.dhs.gov/oec).