NCSWIC-SAFECOM QUARTERLY Newsletter

Vol I, Issue III | August 2015

Note from the Director

By: Ron Hewitt,
OEC Director

On July 1, 2015, I had the opportunity to speak at the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) 2015 Conference and Expo, where I addressed the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) and the evolving emergency communications ecosystem. As always, it was a pleasure to see such strong representation from SAFECOM and National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC) members.

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) has a longstanding relationship with NENA, which stands at the forefront of emergency communications issues. NENA has taken on added significance for us in the wake of the updated NECP and how it addresses changes to 9-1-1 in today's emergency communications ecosystem. Emergencies are often reported first to dispatchers, and 9-1-1 systems are fundamental to support the public's reporting of incidents and requests for assistance. Going forward, Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) will enable enhanced information exchange between the public and 9-1-1 responders by transmitting photos, videos and text messages, providing additional situational awareness at public safety answering points and to first responders.

The new NECP was released in November 2014. This updated version incorporates all current and emerging technologies, not just Land Mobile Radio (LMR), that are changing the emergency communications ecosystem. One priority involves ensuring emergency responders and government officials plan and prepare for the adoption, integration, and use of broadband technologies, including the planning and deployment of NG 9-1-1 technologies and the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN). The NECP also incorporates incident response coordination between governmental agencies, as well as the exchange of information between the public during emergency incidents and planned events.

The 2014 NECP adopts five strategic-level goals to empower public safety agencies to meet the diverse challenges of the constantly-evolving ecosystem. Those goals are Governance and Leadership, Planning and Procedures, Training and Exercises, Operational Coordination, and Research and Development.

Implementation of the NECP remains a top priority for OEC. To support its implementation, OEC continues to pursue Communications Unit (COMU) Training, with over 5,000 COMU members trained to date. OEC also continues to support states through priority telecommunications services, including the Government Emergency Telecommunications Services (GETS), Wireless Priority Services (WPS), and Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) programs.

OEC is excited to work with all of you on these initiatives. As we continue to adapt to a new emergency communications landscape, we welcome your input and feedback. On behalf of OEC, thank you for all of your hard work. We look forward to collaborating with you further 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 Vice Chair

By: George Molnar, *Nevada SWIC*

Change is in the air.

All around us, there are amazing developments in technology, policy, and society. In just the last few years, almost every sector has experienced ever-evolving modernization. As technology and communications experts, we're on the front lines of change.

With this issue of the newsletter, we welcome new Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs) from several states. Welcome aboard, colleagues. You've joined one of the most interesting, passionate, and committed groups of people I've ever met. Thank you for all that you've done—and more importantly, what you will do as your state's SWIC.

This summer, we also bid farewell to a giant in our midst. Darryl Anderson, Ohio SWIC, has been a driving force, a voice of reason and well-considered wisdom, and a friend to us all. His shoes will be impossible to fill. Although he is retiring, he has prepared his team well, so we will see great things continue to come from Ohio. Good luck Darryl. We will miss you and your tales of The Ohio State University.

Not only are changes occurring within the NCSWIC, change is brewing on Capitol Hill, too. Congress reminded us that interoperability is far from "done" with a recent report and a new direction for interoperability. The **State Wide Interoperable Communications Enhancement Act (HR 2206)** demonstrates that the value of our work is more important than ever. The **Amateur Radio Parity Act (HR 1301)** supports our auxiliary communicators. As leaders in our states, we need to stay in front of these initiatives and spread the word. The road is long and our burdens are many, but the goal is worthy.

What is changing in your statehouse, county commission, or tribal council? How is your community adapting to the advancements in the world of public safety communications? How is the volunteer community holding up? Talk with them all, and soon. Help them make the changes they desire to see in their community. ■

May 2015 Joint Meeting Highlights

SAFECOM and NCSWIC met jointly and individually in Jacksonville, Florida, on May 12-14, 2015. During the NCSWIC meeting, members received an update from OEC's Deputy Director, Chris Essid, on H.R. 2206, which requires states to certify they have a SWIC in place or that the functions of the SWIC are being carried out by a state official in order to receive Homeland Security Grant funding. Additional topics included a panel on SWIC succession planning, funding, and sustainment, as well as a session on communications coordination and lessons learned during real-world events, including the Northeast Pennsylvania Manhunt, Washington Navy Yard Shooting, and the 50th Anniversary of the Dream March in Selma, Alabama.

During the SAFECOM meeting, members heard from subject matter experts and discussed SAFECOM's position on information sharing, body worn camera systems, and identity management. A representative from the CSX Railroad Police Department discussed communications with local law enforcement on railroad systems during emergencies. Lastly, SAFECOM members had the opportunity to break out into the four committees to continue working on current initiatives and plan for 2016 priorities.

During the joint SAFECOM and NCSWIC meeting, a panel session on Canada/United States border experts and practitioners informed members of cross border interoperability collaboration efforts. The Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) provided an update on its current efforts and initiatives. Additionally, SAFECOM and NCSWIC members discussed cybersecurity issues and threat mitigation tactics.

The summaries for the NCSWIC, SAFECOM, and Joint meetings are available on the "News and Updates" section of the **SAFECOM and NCSWIC website**. ■

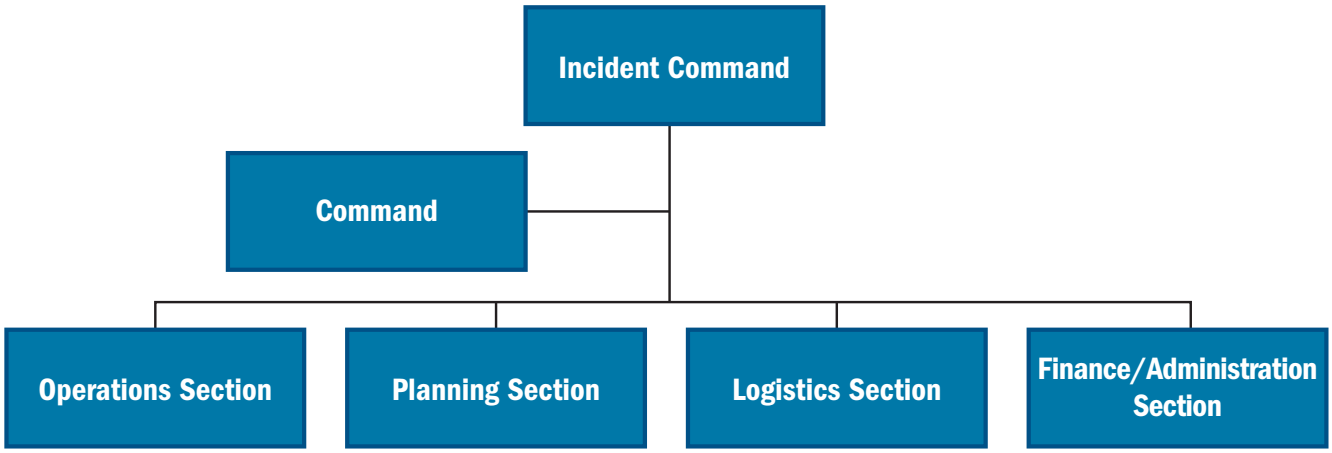
Note from the SAFECOM Technology Policy Committee Chair

***By: Chief Gerald Reardon**, City of Cambridge Fire Department*

As many SAFECOM and NCSWIC members are aware, the importance of both the Communications Unit Leader (COML) and Communications Unit Technician (COMT) have been discussed on numerous occasions. The primary thrust of the conversation surrounds the potential change in position locations of each in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) model to help best serve the incident. Currently, the COML and COMT positions rest in the Logistics Section.

Across the country, emergency communications practitioners use the Incident Command System (ICS), Figure 1, on a routine basis, as well as during scheduled events. However, scheduled events generally lasting eight to 16 hours do not typically require the Logistics Section to be utilized in a formal manner. As a result, the communications section is often under-utilized in the planning and execution of these events.

Figure 1: Incident Command Structure



As a high-ranking officer who has served as a COML for major events, I can say from firsthand knowledge that my experience as a COML is very different than someone who is just as capable, but does not have a high-ranking uniformed position. Incident Commanders are often hesitant to put lower ranking public safety officials or civilians in prominent positions within his/her command post. In municipalities where the communications subject matter experts do not hold high levels of rank, the communications element of the incident is often neglected. As a result, communications issues are cited in virtually every after-action report from every notable event or incident. Educating Incident Commanders on the importance of the COML is essential to addressing this constant shortfall.

There is a need to have a COML in the Command Post for the Incident Commander to ensure a successful event. At a recent Region I Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECCWG) meeting, the body unanimously agreed with the idea of having a COML position added to the Command Structure and to the staffing that develops Incident Action Plans. I highly recommend that all ten RECCWGs take a formal vote to support this endeavor in order to show the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) an increase in nationwide advocacy for the change. ■

Reflections from Ohio's Retiring SWIC

***By: Darryl Anderson**, Former Ohio SWIC*

Back in 1994, as an Ohio State Patrol Major, I was tasked with ensuring the interests of the Ohio State Highway Patrol as the state embarked on what appeared to us to be a dangerous project—building out a statewide "800 MHz trunked digital" radio system for eight state agencies. This sharing of infrastructure was unheard of at the time, and we were highly skeptical of the concept.

Fast forward 21 years, Ohio has a statewide P25 700/800 MHz mission critical public safety platform capable of providing this service for every police officer, fire fighter, emergency medical service provider and all other first responders within Ohio. Great strides were made in partnering with all levels of Ohio's governmental entities and have resulted in the many partnerships that are absolutely necessary to ensure the success of our Multi-Agency Radio Communications System.

We have utilized our Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC), established in early 2002, to break down the traditional "trust and communication" barriers. Our SIEC efforts resulted in one of the very first Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans (SCIP), published in 2005, prior to OEC's stand-up.

Ohio has actively participated in OEC activities since its inception in 2007. OEC has been invaluable in assisting Ohio and our SIEC in forwarding our interoperability programs, including Public Safety Interoperable Communications grants, annual Technical Assistance (TA) offerings, and the ongoing support and assistance our collegial relationship has fostered.

Perhaps the most valuable service OEC has established and continues to support is the firm establishment of specific SWICs in each state, reinforced by personal contacts afforded by our periodic meetings. Today, if you as a SWIC have a problem or challenge, you can reach out to OEC or your fellow SWICs for input and support.

I have served the state of Ohio for 45 years. During that time, I had considerable interaction with federal agencies, including serving as Ohio's Federal Bureau of Investigation(FBI)/National Crime Information Center liaison for several years. OEC is just as responsive as the FBI to state's needs, and even more agile due to its current philosophy and work ethic. As long as this remains, my successor SWIC in Ohio and all other SWICs will have the type of federal support we all can be proud of. If this relationship ever dulls or changes, call me; I'll have time on my hands! Good luck and Godspeed to all of you! ■

FCC's Plans to Close Field Offices Is Amended: House Leaders Announce Agreement with the FCC

***By: Jackie Bayless**, National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC)*

In March of this year, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Tom Wheeler made a statement before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government advising the following:

After analyzing a contractor report on field office use, we have determined that we can more efficiently deploy staff using a 'tiger team' approach and make better use of regional offices. This plan, if accepted by my fellow commissioners, will lead to 16 field office closures and annual savings of $9 million without diminished productivity.

In response to the plan to close so many of the FCC field offices that deal with interference, NPSTC collected examples of interference to public safety communications and presented evidence to the FCC. The examples, along with other evidence provided by industry stakeholders, demonstrate the importance of keeping the field offices open. Ultimately, the FCC agreed to make changes in the plan.

In a letter to the FCC, NPSTC urged the Commissioners to consider very carefully whether closing 16 of its field offices is the right approach. As public safety constituents, NPSTC said it believed "such closures would be an ill-advised rush to judgment which would negatively impact the public we all strive to serve." Many stakeholders joined in the discussion to send letters to their congressional representatives who supported the effort. Thevoices of the public safety communications community and many other stakeholders were heard and valued. On June 9, 2015, leaders of the House Energy and Commerce Committee announcedan agreement with FCC Chairman Wheeler to amend the FCC's plans to close FCC field offices.

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"Communities across America will continue to be served even as the commission becomes more efficient - it's a win-win," said U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce's Full Committee Chairman Fred Upton (R-MI). "It also demonstrates how much we can accomplish when we work together to tackle the many tough issues we face."

The revised plan will keep 15 of the FCC's 24 field offices open, instead of only eight, to ensure better rapid response capabilities for the western part of the country, provide a mechanism for escalating interference complaints, improve enforcement of the FCC's rules against pirate radio operators, and prevent the commission from transferring field office jobs to the FCC's Washington, D.C. headquarters.

NPSTC expressed its gratitude to the stakeholders who commented to the FCC, particularly the many public safety practitioners who shared stories of interference in the field to illustrate the potential problem of field office closures. Interference to public safety communications has the potential to impact lives; it is not merely an inconvenience. When interference occurs, the response from the FCC must be fast, effective, and performed by trained and equipped field agents. ■

FirstNet Requests Initial Data Collection by September 30

***By: Amanda Hilliard**, FirstNet Director of Outreach*

FirstNet is working closely with the state and territory Single Points of Contacts (SPOCs) to collect data from the public safety community inclusive of state, local, tribal, and territorial governments. This data will inform FirstNet during its acquisition of comprehensive network solutions and the development of state plans to assist in network buildout. FirstNet will deliver a state plan to each governor regarding the details of the proposed plan for buildout of the Radio Access Network within the state or territory. Participation in the data collection effort is critical to ensure the network meets the needs of public safety.

FirstNet requests all responses to the initial data collection effort by September 30, 2015, regarding:

1. Desired coverage and proposed build out phases
2. Potential users and operational areas
3. Current data usage with indicators of potential growth
4. Current services, plans, procurement vehicles, and barriers to adoption.

FirstNet will continue to work with the SPOCs to review and collect additional information on these topics beyond this due date; however, FirstNet is seeking as much information as possible in order to accurately incorporate the public safety's needs and desires into the network acquisition process.

If you are currently not involved in your state or territory's data collection efforts, please reach out to your SPOC to see how you can assist. The **SPOC contact list** and information on FirstNet's network **acquisition process** is available on the FirstNet website. If you have general questions about the data collection efforts, please contact FirstNet's **data collection team**. ■

2015 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

Interoperability in Baltimore During the Civil Disturbances—Lessons Learned

***By: Ken Hasenei**, Acting Maryland SWIC*

The nation watched in horror and disbelief the weekend of April 25-26, 2015, as protesters in Baltimore, Maryland, rioted across the city during planned protests following the death of Freddie Grey, while in police custody, on the afternoon of April 19, 2015. The rioters damaged vehicles and private property, which led to blocked roadways around the city. The rioting crowds formed quickly and dispersed just as fast, presenting problems for tactical and mobile field deployments. For additional assistance, hundreds of Maryland National Guardsman, State Troopers, and law enforcement from Ohio, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania reported to respond.

On April 27, I could see the glow of fires and the smell of smoke through the city as the riots continued. That day, I was called upon to take command of the staging area and establish communications as hundreds of personnel responded to the staging location at Oriole Park at Camden Yards.

In the unique position as Maryland's SWIC, Maryland State Police Major, Program Manager for the state's statewide radio project, Maryland FiRST, and supervisor of the Information Technology and Communications division, I became directly involved in command responsibilities and assisting with logistics, planning, scheduling, tactical operations and general operations for the event.

I worked with emergency personnel to establish lines of communications across the city in an effort to disband the threat of riot damage and bring peace back to Baltimore. Communications were quickly established and video systems were deployed in the Maryland State Police Command Vehicle. City Watch, a myriad of fixed cameras throughout the city, provided crowd surveillance, while State Police and Baltimore City Police helicopters flew overhead to monitor the disturbances.

In a response from the Governor for photos and maps of the affected areas, the Command Vehicle used Google Earth to monitor the locations of all deployed first responders. The information was sent to Maryland's Department of Information Technology, Geographic Information System section to consolidate the maps and upload them hourly onto a secure website. The Maryland National Guard also used Google Earth to track equipment throughout the city.

In order to assist the establishment of communications interoperability for all responders, the new statewide interoperable radio system, Maryland FiRST was used, despite the fact that the system was not complete. This $345 million project uses Project 25 (P25) Phase II technology on 700 MHz, allowing a multitude of frequencies and bands to be used across

multibanded radios. Working with my COML, Gary Davis, we established three radio channels: staging area/perimeter security, general police operations, and mobile field force/tactical units.

As more tactical units arrived, a fourth channel was created. Radio traffic was kept at a minimum, and handled mostly by supervisors, as most responding officers were busy with crowd control. Other jurisdictions offered additional equipment including radio caches, portable repeater systems, COMLs and other assets. Most of the State of Maryland's caches of radios were not needed as other agencies came fully equipped and were able to connect to the established radio channels.

Almost 1,000 radios were affiliated with the statewide system, and most agencies had national interoperability channels that were easily activated. Advanced communications with responding units from out-of-state proved useful in understanding the incoming radios and bands they operated on before boots hit the ground. Having a clearly designated communications area was also significant in the success of communications between the agencies.

Many challenges were discovered following the events in downtown Baltimore. In the aftermath, Maryland's COML and COMTs discussed Maryland's new system, statewide operational policies, proficiency, and types of technology used for training. Baltimore City Fire and EMS personnel also discussed the limitations faced using only 16 channels, believing more were needed.

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The main challenge for the State Police was maintaining communications with out-of-state law enforcement agencies. The role of the SWIC at a multi-agency event was also discussed after the event, including the SWICs involvement in operations and communications.

In most incidents, communications is usually cited as one of the worst issues; however, due to the effective planning among the dedicated personnel and the use of Maryland's new radio system, interoperable communications between the multi-agencies was cited as one of the best and most effective aspects of the emergency response. ■

Legislative Updates

On July 6, 2015, the President signed the Department of Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act (**H.R. 615**). The bill requires the DHS Under Secretary for Management to develop a strategy and take steps toward achieving and maintaining interoperable communications capabilities among department components. Progress reports on the department's efforts are to be submitted biannually. In its Committee Report, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee stated that it expects the Under Secretary to "collaborate with DHS offices for which interoperable communications is a primary mission, including leveraging existing interoperability planning documents provided by such offices."

The State Wide Interoperable Communication Enhancement Act (**H.R. 2206**) was approved by the House of Representatives and awaits approval by the Senate. The legislation requires that, to receive State Homeland Security Grant Program funding, a governor must certify that state has a designated SWIC or that the responsibilities described in the legislation are being performed within the state. During the House Subcommittee on Homeland Security's consideration of the bill, the Committee amended the legislation to emphasize SWIC coordination functions. In addition, the Committee changed the bill to require that SCIPs include details on modifications to previous goals and plans. ■

Border Communications Updates

Southwest Border Communications Working Group

The Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG) is a forum for federal, state, local, and tribal agencies in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas to share information on common issues, collaborate on existing and planned activities, and facilitate federal involvement in multi-agency projects within the Southwest Border Region.

The most recent quarterly meeting was held on July 21, 2015, in San Diego, California. The meeting was hosted by the City of San Diego and Regional Command and Control Communications, and was attended by emergency communications practitioners from across all levels of government. The meeting focused on enhancing communications operability and interoperability, effective use of the region's available critical communications infrastructure resources, and the exchange of information on key regulatory issues that impact emergency communications along the international border.

Meeting briefings and activities included:

- A review of the Cross Border Security Communications Network and user requirements working session
- A review of communications planning, best practices, and lessons learned during Super Bowl XLIX
- A review and discussion of the draft SWBCWG Mission document

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- A briefing and working session to discuss ensuring interoperability in encrypted communications
- Border communications overviews and updates from California and New Mexico
- U.S. Coast Guard Communications Area Master Station Pacific contingency communications
- Southwest Border Regulatory Issues

Additionally, the SWBCWG continues to host its monthly webinar series. The latest webinar was held on June 16, and featured OEC's TA Branch discussing the importance of the COMU program, personnel, and training. The webinar included candid discussion, led by the TA Branch, on the roles of COMU personnel, as well as the training process. State representatives from Texas, Arizona, and Oklahoma provided detailed information on their individual state certification programs. The next webinar is scheduled for August 18, 2015, on the topic of P25.

For more information, contact the **SWBCWG inbox**. ■

Canada-United States Communications Interoperability Working Group Update

The border region between Canada and the United States poses unique communications challenges along and across the border. Operable and interoperable communications gaps for radio and public safety communications, interoperability concerns for public safety broadband planning efforts, and a number of other communication issues hinder the exchange of information.

In an effort to continue addressing the communications challenges at the border, the Canada-United States (CANUS) Communications Interoperability Working Group (CIWG) held its annual meeting on April 30-May 1, 2015, at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Members participated in a discussion on the FCC-Industry Canada (IC) Statement of Intent, an update to the 1952 Treaty which extends roaming privileges to hand-held portable units used by emergency responders, provided the responder is properly licensed in their country of origin. Participants received field-level perspectives from stakeholders in Canada and the United States on cross-border communications activities and discussed the challenges associated with the frequency licensing process. The working group will continue to work with the FCC, IC, and stakeholders to identify solutions to streamline the process for notifying agencies on the status of their application. During the second day of the meeting, members reviewed the CANUS CIWG Five Year Work Plan, the document that drives the work and activities of the group, and provided suggested revisions and updates, including the identification of priorities for Year Three.

Members also received an update from Industry Canada on the 700 MHz broadband spectrum that was designated for public safety use in 2012. In April 2015, the Canadian Government announced it would allocate another 10 MHz of the 700 MHz spectrum to enable the creation of a Public Safety Broadband Network, a high-speed mobile network dedicated to emergency management. This decision signals that Canada will harmonize with the United States' spectrum plan for a Public Safety Broadband Network, one of the goals of the CIWG, and a key Canada-United States Beyond the Border Action Plan commitment.

As a follow-up to the CANUS CIWG meeting, a webinar was held on June 24, 2015. During this meeting, members approved the updated work plan and identified priorities and next steps. The CANUS CIWG will hold additional webinars on specific goals outlined in its work plan. ■

SCIP Program Updates

OEC continues to work with states and territories to update their SCIPs to reflect the current emergency communications environment as well as to provide a variety of support services and resources to assist strategic planning activities.

On the trend analysis front, OEC developed the annual SCIP Snapshot to replace the lengthy Annual Progress Report to identify trends, successes, and challenges to emergency communications nationwide. Findings from the SCIP Snapshots (below) help OEC identify stakeholder needs for technical assistance offerings and provide SWICs a comprehensive summary of emergency communications capabilities, issues, and funding requirements to key decision makers within their states and territories. Reports received indicate both challenges and successes in governance. Some states see involving new partners in governance structures as a success, while others identified that ensuring full and active participation in governance bodies is a challenge. States reported progress in the establishment of standard operating procedures and regional and statewide exercises, though funding continues to be a challenge.

OEC welcomes the opportunity to support states and territories with strategic planning needs and welcomes any feedback on available or needed offerings and resources. 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.

REPORTED SUCCESSES	REPORTED CHALLENGES
Governance	**Governance**
■ Frequent stakeholder meetings to discuss current and emerging trends in emergency communications ■ New faces participating in interoperability planning solutions (e.g., Chief Information Officers, day care centers, private industry representatives) ■ Inter-state regional coordination and collaboration	■ Recruitment of new members for Statewide Interoperability Governing Body (SIGB) positions ■ Maintaining regular SIGB meeting cadence and SIGB engagement ■ Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for SIGB working groups
SOPs	**Technology**
■ Update and distribution of Field Operations Guides	■ Increase in purchasing radios that are not P25 standard
Training & Exercises	**Life Cycle Funding**
■ Regional and statewide exercises continue ■ Communications Unit Leader and Communications Unit Technician training; deployment during real world events (e.g., hurricanes, large planned events) noted as successful in After Action Reports ■ Radio interoperability communications training incorporated into law enforcement and fire training academies	■ Decrease in federal and state funding putting additional strain on localities ■ Operations and Maintenance Dilemma—how to message the technology evolution and plan to maintain legacy systems and deploy new communications technologies ■ Rapidly changing technology makes roadmap planning (e.g., 15-year vision) difficult

On the Road: SCIP Workshop Updates

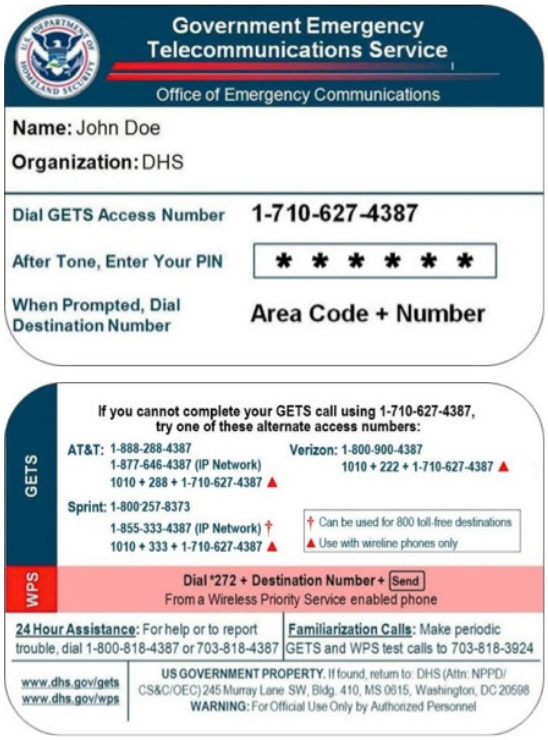
OEC continues to conduct SCIP Revision Workshops, a practice which began in 2013. These two-day in-depth workshops are designed to revise SCIPs to account for emerging technologies, including broadband and NG 9-1-1. SCIP Update Workshops began in 2015. Condensed in to one day, these workshops are offered to states and territories that have completed SCIP Revision Workshops. Update Workshops are customized to focus on validating goals, initiatives, reflecting on accomplishments, and addressing emerging issues. States often use these customized workshops to address challenges such as updating governance structures to include new partners, streamlining goals to better manage workflow, and identifying future needs such as training and funding. ■

Priority Telecommunications Services for First Responders

***By: Dorie Chassin and Tim Runfola**, OEC*

The ability to communicate and share information across jurisdictions and disciplines is vital for public safety personnel. However, during major events, such as natural disasters, traditional landline telephone circuits and cellular phone networks often become congested.

As a result, OEC provides the following services to federal, state, local, territorial and tribal emergency personnel, as well as industry personnel, to ensure ongoing communications under all circumstances: GETS, WPS, and TSP.



Successful call completion rates during large scale events, such as the Super Bowl and the Boston Marathon bombing, have shown these services drastically improve response operations. By familiarizing themselves with these services and implementing them when necessary, government leaders and emergency personnel will be better able to ensure they have access to reliable, resilient communications when they are needed most.

For more information on GETS, WPS, and TSP offerings, visit the SAFECOM and NCWIC Website's **Blog**. ■

NCSWIC and SAFECOM Executive Committee (EC) Conference Call Highlights

The NCSWIC EC held a conference call on Tuesday, June 30, 2015. Meeting highlights included:

- An update from OEC Deputy Director, Chris Essid, on various OEC efforts including Canadian and Southwest border updates, the Public Safety Communications Research Program conference, and legislative updates
- Approval of the "Introduction to NCSWIC" Presentation
- An update from TA Branch Chief, Serena Maxey, on current TA training opportunities and upcoming SCIP

The SAFECOM EC held a conference call on Thursday, July 9, 2015. Meeting highlights included:

- The approval of the COMU Working Group under the Education and Outreach Committee, which will be working with OEC's Integrated Project Team on future initiatives
- An update from OEC Director, Ron Hewitt, on his presentation at the NENA Annual Conference
- An update from OIC on its annual Video Quality in Public Safety program meeting

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

NCSWIC Website Launch

The **NCSWIC Website** was launched on July 2, 2015. Please visit the website for information on the NCSWIC, past meeting summaries, SWIC promotional materials, and a SWIC contact list. ■

Stakeholder Member Spotlights

Todd Herrera

Idaho SWIC

Todd Herrera is the SWIC and Preparedness & Protection Branch Chief with the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. He is responsible for managing a variety of divisions including the Geographic Information System and Risk Mapping, Mitigation, and Planning divisions.

Previous assignments held by Mr. Hererra include County Emergency Manager, Dispatch Center Manager, Radio System Manager, Records and Driver's License Manager, Patrol Lieutenant, Patrol Sergeant, Detective and Deputy. He has also managed the installation and day-to-day operations and management of the county-wide, five-site trunked radio system. Most recently, he served as the Chair of the 700 MHz Region 12 Planning Committee. He is also an amateur radio enthusiast (K7TRH).

Mr. Herrera has always found enjoyment working in the public safety community. Beginning at the age of 16 as a Police Explorer Scout, he has been interested in improving interoperability and public safety communications throughout Idaho. In his free time, Mr. Herrera enjoys spending time with his family, camping, geocaching, and working in his yard. ■

Todd can be reached at **therrera@bhs.idaho.gov**.

Bill Bamattre

Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association (MetroChiefs)

Retired Fire Chief William "Bill" Bamattre has over 40 years of experience in public safety. In 1971, he began his career as a student firefighter for the Stanford University Fire Department during his undergraduate years. He subsequently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science. In the beginning, he had aspirations of becoming a lawyer, but decided to take a "break" before continuing his education. During this break, he was hired by the Los Angeles Fire Department, which turned into a 32-year career that includes 12 years as the Fire Chief and General Manager of the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). While working in the rank of Fire Inspector, Bill returned to school and achieved a Master's Degree in Public Administration from California State University at Los Angeles in 1986. After his retirement in 2007 from the LAFD, Bill continued his work in public safety with the State of California as Project Manager for the California Metrics Project which endeavored to promulgate a common typing and description of emergency preparedness and response resources and capabilities.

With his combined public service and public safety experience, Mr. Bamattre is an ardent advocate of regional collaboration. During his tenure as Fire Chief, he initiated and chaired the Regional Interoperability Steering Committee that resulted in the creation of the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System.

Mr. Bamattre is excited to join the SAFECOM Executive Committee, and looks forward to representing the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs and working to keep them informed and involved. ■

Bill can be reached at **dpbams@aol.com**.

Michael Jacobson

***SEARCH**, National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics*

Michael Jacobson is an Information Sharing Specialist for SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, where he helps justice and public safety agencies nationwide to improve the use of technology and information sharing in mission-critical projects and initiatives. He assists in all facets of information sharing capability development and communications interoperability, including strategic planning,

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architecture development, business process modeling and analysis, service specification development, and project management. He also contributes to publications on key issues and participates in efforts to develop and adopt national information sharing and interoperability standards.

Mr. Jacobson has more than 25 years of experience, with expertise in the Global Reference Architecture, National Information Exchange Model, and Extensible Markup Language, business process modeling, and service-oriented architecture. Prior to joining SEARCH in 2009, he worked for the Montana Department of Justice (DOJ), where he managed the statewide Integrated Justice Information Sharing Broker program, which includes the information exchanges that allow a wide range of justice and public safety agencies to share real-time information quickly, securely, and accurately. He also served as Montana DOJ's Application Services Bureau Chief and assisted the department in planning, developing, and maintaining automated information systems. He has additional experience working with other department IT managers on statewide strategic planning, standards development, and policy issues.

Mr. Jacobson is a member of the FirstNet Public Safety Advisory Committee and has a bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Carroll College. He spends his free time on trails; running, mountain biking, and hiking with his family. ■

Michael can be reached at **mjacobson@search.org**.

OEC HQ Spotlights

Bruce Belt

***Functional Manager**, Regions III and IX OEC, Technical Assistance Branch*

Retired Army Signal Officer, Bruce Belt, spent 23 years supporting the Department of Defense (DOD), managing tactical and strategic communications systems throughout the United States, Korea, Panama, and Italy. Following his time in the Army, Mr. Belt worked as a Program Manager for a consulting firm supporting the National Communications System's Plans, Training, and Exercise Branch and the TSP Branch developing and conducting events in support of Emergency Support Function #2, Continuity of Operations Plans, as well as supporting the TSP Program. After eight years in the private sector, Mr. Belt transitioned to the public sector in which he worked for FEMA's National Exercise Division on state, local, tribal, and territorial events, including the 2014 Capstone Exercise.

Mr. Belt is a graduate of Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College). His personal hobbies include organic gardening, raising oysters, beekeeping, and coaching the Fairfax County Youth Football League. ■

Bruce can be reached at **Bruce.Belt@hq.dhs.gov**.

Cary Martin

***Functional Manager**, Regions I and IV, OEC Technical Assistance Branch*

Cary Martin has over 27 years military and Special Operations experience and an additional 10 years of public safety experience as a firefighter and search and rescue professional.

During his career, Mr. Martin worked as a U.S. Army Special Forces Communications and Operations Sergeant deploying to numerous overseas assignments. During these assignments, he worked with foreign and domestic partners to meet a wide variety of communications and operational needs and to understand local and strategic doctrine and capabilities. Mr. Martin particularly focused on C4I and the joint functions of command and control,

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intelligence, fires, movement and maneuver, and protection and sustainment. Mr. Martin was also employed as a trained fire fighter for the State of North Carolina and served five years as a search and rescue mountain, ground, and swift water professional for the State of Colorado.

Currently, he is a TA Functional Manager for Region I and the Region IV North (Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee). He conducts nationwide assessments of emergency communications capabilities to identify gaps and develop policies to improve federal, state, local, and public safety interoperability. Recently, Mr. Martin assisted the evaluation of the TA pilot RADO course in Texas and observed a statewide communications vehicle exercise for the State of Georgia. Mr. Martin develops and delivers technical assistance services to bridge gaps between existing emergency communications capabilities, needs, and evolving or future technologies, including digital networks and systems. Mr. Martin analyzes and recommends long-range plans, goals, objectives, and milestones for improving the application of technical assistance services to emergency communications programs, policies, practices, methods, and organizational structures across the nation. Additionally, Mr. Martin correlates and synchronizes organizational strategic planning objectives and associated metrics with nationwide interoperability performance metrics. ■

Cary can be reached at **cary.martin@hq.dhs.gov**.

OEC Calendar

AUGUST

4–5	In-Person Technology Policy Committee and NCSWIC EC Meetings; Boulder, CO
14	NCSWIC EC Conference Call

Workshops:
SCIP: *Maine, North Carolina*

SEPTEMBER

Workshops:
SCIP: *Arkansas, Hawaii*

OCTOBER

8	SAFECOM EC Conference Call
13	NCSWIC EC Conference Call

Workshops:
SCIP: *New Jersey*

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