

Meeting Summary
Joint Meeting of SAFECOM and the
National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators
November 7, 2017

Marriott Conference Center at the National Center for Employee Development

WELCOME AND MEETING OVERVIEW

Chief Gerald Reardon, SAFECOM Chair, and Nikki Cassingham, National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC) Chair, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to Norman, Oklahoma, noting the power of these collaborative efforts to identify next steps for improving emergency communications interoperability and a path forward for 2018.

Director Ron Hewitt, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), also provided opening remarks, thanking SAFECOM and NCSWIC members for attending. Ron asked SAFECOM and NCSWIC members to envision public safety communications needs in 2024 and the potential steps required to take for achieving that vision. He stated OEC’s commitment to ensuring that SAFECOM and NCSWIC remain key contributors in strategizing a path forward for advancing public safety communications. Ron identified the following topics as priority areas for DHS OEC now and into 2018:

- SAFECOM Nationwide Survey (SNS)
- 2019 National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)
- Communications Unit (COMU) 2.0
- Next Generation 911 (NG 911)
- Enhanced Statewide Communication Interoperability Plans (SCIP) Pilot

Table 1. New Members

New SAFECOM Members

Name	Association
Nikki Cassingham	NCSWIC (Alternate)
Joe Galvin	NCSWIC
Michael Garcia	National Governors Association (Alternate)
Tracey Hilburn	Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO) (Alternate)
Holly Wayt	APCO

New NCSWIC Members

Name	State
Troy Babbitt	Wyoming
Thomas Czaja	Wisconsin
Charlie Guddemi	District of Columbia
Glen Klaich	Colorado
Brent Larson	Idaho
Chris Maiers	Iowa
Melissa Nazzaro	Massachusetts
Robert Plant	Nevada (Acting)

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REMEMBERING A FRIEND: CHIEF THOMAS J. ROCHE



Thomas J. Roche passed from this life on October 10, 2017. As a longtime member of SAFECOM he served SAFECOM and the greater public safety community proudly and passionately for many years. Chief Roche was Monroe County's longest-serving police chief

when he retired in May 2006. When asked in a recent interview about his time as a SAFECOM member, Chief Roche stated SAFECOM is a “fraternity that helps people.” He noted he always looked forward to inviting new people to SAFECOM, learning from them, and teaching them about the importance of the SAFECOM community. He stated his appreciation for SAFECOM and the positive impact it had on him. Amongst his many accomplishments in SAFECOM, he was perhaps most proud of his role as the chair of the Funding and Sustainment Committee and the many accomplishments of that committee.

In his free time, Chief Roche loved spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren. He was a huge Notre Dame fan and at least once per year he did his best to get to a home game to root for the Fighting Irish.

REAL WORLD EVENT: HURRICANE HARVEY

State and local public safety communications subject matter experts discussed the preparation, planning, activation, execution, and post-event efforts required to support law enforcement, fire fighters, emergency medical services, 911 centers, and public works during Hurricane Harvey.

Kicking off the panel, Todd Early, Texas Department of Public Safety, Public Safety Communications Service, Texas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), noted the hurricane developed quickly,

**HURRICANE HARVEY:
SUCSESSES AND TIPS**

- Build relationships to fall back on when planning is overcome by events
- Pre-deploy Federal ESF-2 functions (e.g., embed Communications Unit Leader in Emergency Operations Center)
- Incorporate public works capabilities into communications plans (e.g., high-water rescue capabilities)
- Establish a secure, unified communications structure (e.g., Moxtra) to assist coordinating assets, such as resource planning and staging personnel, and information sharing for inclusion in after action reports)
- Maintain Very High Frequency systems
- Do not turn away help from neighboring counties; local communities who welcomed assistance from other jurisdictions and outside locations fared better in the aftermath from a communications perspective
- Coordinate across necessary disciplines to ensure coordination for basic human needs (e.g., public works for portable sanitation units)
- Take care of your employees, ensuring provision of timely compensation, counseling to deal with personal trauma, and paid leave to recover

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leaving response personnel less time to prepare and pre-plan for the event. Just a few days before the hurricane made landfall, Texas organized preparations for a tropical storm. Harvey increased in intensity, finally making landfall as a Category 4 Hurricane. Weather models estimating the amount of rain for the region all exceeded previous estimates, further challenging planners to prepare for and stage the event. Due to its circular path, the eye of Hurricane Harvey crossed over some geographic areas along Texas' coast twice, dropping record-breaking amounts of rain on the region – 56 inches in Houston and 65 inches in Beaumont. In the end, Texas received an estimated 33 trillion gallons of water, displacing 30,000 people. The effects of this 1000-year storm inundated 911 call centers, with over 2,000 calls within the first hour alone. Todd noted that while much has been accomplished with regard to public safety communications planning, little can be done to fully plan for and predict the outcomes and needs of such an event.

In Texas, the Communications Coordination Group was activated, responsible for coordinating all communications assets in the area when local jurisdictions request assistance. Equipment was also pre-staged throughout the area to aid in recovery. Todd commented a key best practice is building valuable relationships to fall back on when planning is overcome by events. The federal [Emergency Support Function – 2 \(ESF-2\)](#) was pre-deployed and communications carriers were also included as part of the team to ensure responders and citizens had the infrastructure needed to receive assistance.

Tom Sorley, City of Houston, Public Safety, U.S. Conference of Mayors, highlighted successes and challenges during the response to Harvey, noting unusual circumstances related to Houston suffering three significant flooding events over a three-year period. Post-Harvey, the city averaged 4,600 rescues a day for three days. Most of Houston was under water during the storm, and additional areas were submerged upon releasing the reservoirs.

Planners paid particular importance to the Communication Unit Leader (COML) and Communications Unit Technicians (COMT) during preparatory phases of the February 2017 Houston Super Bowl. Prior to the Super Bowl, planning for communications was often lacking. Successful communications planning for the event allowed for greater relationship building across agencies, a clear benefit in the response and recovery from Harvey. In the days leading up to the storm, the city proactively inquired about a COML and communications plan. For the first time, the city's EOC had an imbedded COML within the ESF. Public Works was also incorporated into the communications plan for the first time due to their high-water rescue capabilities.

Shing Lin, Harris County, Public Safety Technology Services Director, further emphasized the relationship-building piece. In events such as Hurricane Harvey, he noted the importance of establishing trust across the various teams, disciplines, and potential jurisdictions involved, as those with stronger ties are able to more readily support one another.

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HURRICANE HARVEY CHALLENGES

- Intensity of the hurricane increased in a very short period of time, hampering pre-planning and pre-staging efforts
- Coordination between federal, state, and local Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams was challenging
- While communications plans included public works, communications were hampered as radios were not pre-programmed to communicate with the EOC
- Coordinators failed to give the Dispatch Center, co-located in the EOC, the communications plan, which failed to filter down to the forward deployed teams, causing confusion from day to day
- Due to long duration of the event, generators ran out of fuel, causing the EOC to divert high-water vehicles from rescues to delivering oil
- Personnel and resource distribution requirements needed to be better determined in the plan, such as those needed to man shelters
- Long-term maintenance of infrastructure and debris removal has been the hardest part of recovery
- A lot of fine details and lessons learned slipped away as time passed, emphasizing the need for a hotwash directly following the event

One of the most effective new technologies leveraged during both the Super Bowl and the hurricane was a secure unified communications structure (e.g., Moxtra) for creating communications groups to upload and share data. Using this platform, Harris County was able to reserve the use of the radio system for critical voice calls. Shing was also recalled information shared through the tool for review and inclusion in the after action report. This capability proved to be beneficial during both events in coordinating assets, such as resource planning and staging personnel. Following Harvey, planners recognized the need to better determine what type of personnel are needed, where and when, particularly as the water kept rising. Shing noted Harris County will re-evaluate the decision and purchasing process in lieu of the past several disaster events to ensure funds are appropriately spent on necessary equipment, vehicles, and building requirements.

Lee Zapata, Aransas Public Safety Communications (Rockport, Texas), Communications Center Director, continued with some additional best practices disaster planners may not initially consider. The city's communications personnel are co-located with law enforcement and the Sheriff's Office, and because all patrol and employee cars were destroyed, the city needed state assets to respond to calls for service. Response from throughout the state arrived and was self-sufficient, limiting burden on the already overtaxed city. Lee highly recommended accepting assistance from organizations and volunteers converging on the area, keeping in mind the need to track resources and maintain accountability. She noted there are still nearby counties who turned down help and are still communicating on portable radios.

She emphasized the importance of being prepared for manning shelters, providing the city of Rockport as an example. Their EOC was not prepared to shelter citizens, and when forced to provide refuge for thousands, struggled to efficiently provide medical assistance as needed. Lee advised maintaining VHF systems for communications as new teams arrive. Prior to Harvey, Rockport did not have a COML plan,

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but intends to develop one. She also prepared in advance in terms of public utilities, such as portable restrooms, which can take days to weeks to be available. Lee also emphasized the importance of taking care of your employees, including ensuring timely payment, providing counseling to deal with personal trauma, and encouraging employees to take time off work to recover.

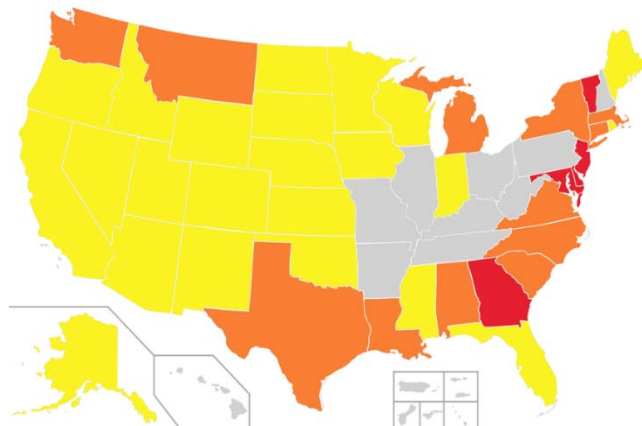
Panelists also noted that long-term maintenance of infrastructure and debris removal is the hardest part of recovery. There continues to be an enormous amount of debris causing traffic accidents and impeding clean-up efforts. Every city and county school was damaged. While schools are now open, a lot of maintenance is needed. With an influx of construction companies in the community, there is an added burden on the city to grant permits to fix homes and buildings.

Looking forward, the Houston team reminded those managing and coordinating response efforts to capture challenges and solutions. Panelists emphasized the importance of conducting a hotwash directly following an event. SAFECOM and NCSWIC can assist in developing case studies for the last several events to determine what the public safety community needs.

TRIBAL PANEL: THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION AND THE NEZ PERCE TRIBE

Tribal public safety communications subject matter experts discussed tribal emergency capabilities, latest activities, and challenges impacting public safety, and identified opportunities to improve coordination and collaboration and provide public safety assistance to participating tribes.

Robin Beatty, DHS OEC, Federal Tribal Liaison, thanked SAFECOM and NCSWIC members for the opportunity to host their first tribal panel. There are 567 federally recognized and 60 state recognized tribes within the United States. In her role, Robin conducts outreach to tribes to promote assistance that OEC can provide and to foster collaboration. Tribal lands can cross multiple states, counties, jurisdictions, and even countries, and some tribes have lands located on and across the borders with Mexico and Canada. Therefore, it is extremely important to include tribes in planning and coordination at all levels of government to support improving emergency communications capabilities and services.



Map Key

- Yellow:** Have federally-recognized tribes
- Red:** Have state-recognized tribes
- Orange:** Have both federally- and state-recognized tribes
- Grey:** Have neither federally- nor state-recognized tribes

Robin also highlighted the technical assistance OEC provides to tribes to improve emergency communications through training, technical assessments, assistance with exercises, and development of plans and standard operating procedures. OEC encourages tribal participation in working groups, such as

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the Southwest Border Communications Working Group and the Canada-United States Communications Interoperability Working Group, which are focused on improving operable and interoperable communications and collaboration at all levels of government. OEC has also been working to develop governance profiles to demonstrate the emergency communications landscape for a tribe including key capabilities, activities, challenges, and opportunities to improve operable and interoperable communications. To date, OEC has completed nine profiles and another 10 profiles are in various stages of development. Governance profile development has supported tribal efforts to apply for grant funding, complete emergency management planning, and receive technical assistance to support communications efforts. Robin encouraged SAFECOM and NCSWIC members to share information about OEC's profile efforts with tribes during the course of day-to-day operations and to provide any contact information they may have for tribes who might be interested in completing the profile process, regardless of their level of maturity, to OEC.

As she introduced panel moderator Brian Howard SAFECOM Representative to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), Robin emphasized OEC's commitment to developing collaborative and trusted relationships with tribal nations in coordination with organizations, such as the NCAI. Brian Howard began his remarks by noting the many barriers tribes face accessing communications services, especially from a public safety perspective. He also reminded SAFECOM and NCSWIC audiences that tribal lands are rural and lack robust telecommunications services.

SOUTHWEST BORDER MEETING

The Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG) held a meeting with federal, state, and local representatives on November 9, 2017 to discuss public safety communications activities across Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. The SWICs provided regional updates and challenges. Representatives from the FCC provided an update on spectrum and frequency issues affecting communications in the Southwest Border Region. All meeting attendees participated in a regional emergency communications infrastructure discussion and planning exercise to support an upcoming data collection effort focused on identifying systems and resources available throughout the region to support a proposed interoperable communications network.

Key meeting outcomes:

- The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) will coordinate a call with the J6, National Guard, and DISA North to identify DoD communications assets within the Southwest Border Region.
- DoD and OEC to coordinate a meeting in December to discuss development of a centralized border communications network within the Southwest Border Region.
- SWBCWG participants to identify systems within or adjacent to the Federal Communications Commission's border sharing zone boundary of 110 kilometers/68 miles that may support a centralized, shared, border communications network.

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Frank Harjo, GIS Manager for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma, discussed the tribe's efforts to develop the Tribal Emergency Response Application, a public safety information sharing platform tool used as a mechanism to improve centralized real-time data collection and sharing among tribal, state, and federal governments. The tribe's land covers 11 counties and about 4,800 square miles, and the tribe must work with partners across multiple jurisdictions and levels of government. The tribe formed a partnership with the Citizen Potawatomie Nation, Kickapoo Tribe, Seminole Nation, and the Inter-Tribal Environmental Coalition in Oklahoma to develop the tool using U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funding and federal and state standards to manage user credentialing, response resources, responder capabilities, and incident management information. This open-source application can be used across multiple devices to support emergency planning, management, and response. Each participating tribe manages their individual, but interconnected, portal. The application enables data collection and access in rural areas, even in offline mode. Frank provided a demonstration of the portal to show the planning, personnel and asset tracking, and administrative (documentation and report generation) functions. During the question and answer period, NCSWIC and SAFECOM members asked why the tribes chose to build a system versus using a commercial off-the-shelf product. He responded his tribe specializes in ESRI/Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and each participating tribe wanted to be able to control their respective data, and this could not be done effectively using proprietary software.

Danae Wilson, Department of Technology Services, Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho, provided an overview of the tribe's critical infrastructure. For rural reservations, emergency communications are established after critical infrastructure is built. The Nez Perce Tribal Broadband Network provides communications within Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. DHS has been a great partner to the tribe during infrastructure build-out. The network initially started as a broadband effort to support tribal members. System enhancements later enabled support to public safety/law enforcement and other emergency support entities. The tribe has faced a range of major challenges, such as vandalism of infrastructure and equipment, public outrage over perceived incursion on private property, identifying funding, and addressing system coverage disparities. The tribe has faced multiple major wildfire responses since 2014 and the influx of personnel coming into the area has taxed communications support capacities and local support infrastructure. There are also several dams in the Pacific Northwest and the tribe must address run-off challenges. The tribe recently began using new surveillance technology (e.g., drones) to support incident response and management. Since the tribe subcontracts law enforcement dispatch to an entity in Washington State, there is a growing need to upload GIS information into the Washington State systems to support incident response. The tribe is focused on identifying opportunities to expand response capabilities and share incident response information with public safety personnel. When asked how the tribe manages and clears drone flight patterns through incident commanders in hazardous areas, Danae shared the tribe uses a mobile command unit to manage flight coordination. This unit can be loaned to neighboring jurisdictions to support incident communications. The tribe uses this mobile unit to share the number of drones being deployed, how many registered users are available, where resources are being deployed, and when these resources will be deployed. The tribe shares this information with local responders at all levels of government.

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OEC PARTNERSHIPS UPDATES

FIRST RESPONDER NETWORK AUTHORITY (FIRSTNET)

Jacque Miller-Waring, Region 6 Lead for FirstNet, provided updates on the implementation of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN). Jacque emphasized that FirstNet's priority is building a relationship with their partner, AT&T, to ensure they understand the needs of public safety. As such, consultations with states and territories continue to ensure user needs are addressed and the project is moving forward. FirstNet released state plans via an online portal on June 19. Jacque noted the FirstNet Board provides direction for the project on how consultations are conducted and how FirstNet interacts with its partners. Ron Hewitt, OEC Director, recently became the DHS designee to the Board. The 90-day opt-in period began on September 29, with 31 states and territories choosing to partner to date.

Kevin McGinnis, FirstNet Board Member, added that FirstNet is two years ahead of schedule and under budget. More capabilities are being discussed and added weekly. Kevin reminded stakeholders the process for developing and implementing FirstNet began ten years ago. FirstNet remains dedicated to working on behalf of public safety, and will continue to move forward to address the needs and concerns of the users as the network is deployed.

DHS SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (S&T) DIRECTORATE

Sridhar Kowdley, DHS S&T First Responders Group Program Manager, discussed the rapidly-increasing occurrences of electronic jamming, both intentional and unintentional. He highlighted the need for first responders to learn how to identify jamming and the steps necessary for properly reporting and mitigating against such incidents. DHS S&T is dedicated to raising awareness of what jamming looks like, what they can do, and how to tell if it is being used. Additionally, they recommend resilient and redundant communications pathways to mitigate jamming interference. Legal statutes in each state and territory are different, so it is important for agencies to conduct a legal review on jamming. Although they are attempting to gather as much data as possible, DHS does not know how extensive the jamming issue is nationwide. Agencies should report all instances of jamming to the Federal Communications Commission for tracking purposes.

In 2016, DHS hosted the first annual First Responder Electronic Jamming Exercise (or JAMMEX). With 190 participants, DHS tested illegal, commercial-grade jammers purchased online against first responder communications systems to test mission response. In July 2017, DHS hosted the second annual JAMMEX building from the foundations of the 2016 exercise to help first responders identify, locate, and mitigate the impacts of jamming. This year, over 250 first responders participated from more than 100 agencies and vendors. Sridhar thanked Brandon Smith and Dan Wills, both from OEC, for assisting with the 2017 exercise. Some overall tactics that were reinforced during the 2017 JAMMEX include developing a PACE (Primary, Alternate, Contingency, Emergency) plan for communications, training personnel on recognizing and reporting potential jamming threats, and using spectrum analyzers during special events.

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**THE FUTURE OF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:
NG 911 AND COMU 2.0**

NG 911

Dusty Rhoads, DHS OEC, provided opening remarks on the future of emergency communications. This panel presented information on the future of NG 911 and the COMU. Dusty briefed members of SAFECOM and NCSWIC on recent efforts by OEC and the stakeholder community, such as standing up the NG 911 Working Group and new initiatives within the COMU Working Group, to enhance and modernize public safety communications to ensure the most accurate and current information and methodologies are implemented to better support the responder community. Facilitating the transition to NG 911 and improving COMU are critical to the advancement of communications capabilities within the public safety community.

Laurie Flaherty, Coordinator, National 911 Program at U.S. Department of Transportation, provided an update on her organization's efforts. After providing a brief history of how the National 911 Program was established, Laurie noted objectives of the program are to serve as a coordination point for public and private stakeholders at the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial levels of government; collect and create resources for state and local 911 authorities; administer the 911 Grant Program; provide federal focus for 911; and promote and support 911 services. Laurie continued with an update on the 911 Grant Program. The program provides grant funding to help 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) provide citizens with optimal 911 services. The program was allocated \$115M for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. The deadline for the public to provide comments on draft regulations was November 6, 2017. Grants are expected to be awarded in early 2018. For more information, or to receive updates on the National 911 Program, visit 911.gov.

NEXT GENERATION 911 (NG 911)

The NG 911 Working Group held its first in-person meeting in Norman, Oklahoma on November 9, 2017. Members reviewed potential deliverables identified during a previous meeting and provided feedback on potential deliverables; as well as offered new suggestions on where the working group should focus its efforts.

Members prioritized potential deliverables and agreed to focus on the following short-term efforts: GIS best practices, executive summaries of vital NG 911 documents, and the promotion of the NG 911 readiness scorecard. Additionally, members agreed to focus on a long-term effort of facilitating meaningful discussions among all levels of government in order to address inconsistencies in architecture and operations among the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), states, and other jurisdictional tensions inherent in the evolving paradigm.

The NG 911 Working Group meets at 4:00 p.m. ET on the second Tuesday of each month.

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Laurie also provided an update on the National 911 Profile Database. The database, managed by the National 911 Program and promoted in collaboration with the National Association of State 911 Administrators, voluntarily collects data to measure and report on the progress of states and 911 authorities in enhancing 911 systems. Nationwide 911 data is key for accurate understanding of the current status and planned capabilities of 911 systems across the United States. Without data, it is difficult for state and federal governments to allocate the proper amount of funding to 911 agencies or develop appropriate governance models and oversight policy. To date, the data indicates slow but steady progress is being made on improving 911. Laurie concluded by emphasizing the importance of having the right people around the table—those who have an understanding of what public safety responders need to ensure 911 continues to progress.



Source: Laurie Flaherty Presentation, Nov 2017



Source: Laurie Flaherty Presentation, Nov 2017

Gerald Jaskulski, DHS OEC, provided an update on the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center’s (ECPC) Federal 911 Focus Group. The Focus Group seeks to enhance coordination of Federal 911 initiatives by periodically convening to pursue joint projects to capture insights, recommendations, and thought leadership to 911 stakeholders. Currently, the Focus Group is working to collect data and document the availability, nature of assets, and capabilities of U.S. Federally owned and operated PSAPs and public safety

communications centers (PSCCs). As of now, there is no resource for information sharing that highlights which federal departments and agencies operate a PSAP or PSCC, how many federally operated PSAPs and PSCCs exist, where federally operated PSAPs and PSCCs are located, or the types of services offered at those locations. Understanding the depth and breadth of the federal 911 community will likely result in significant cost savings and contribute to a smoother transition to NG 911. The Focus Group is working to develop a data collection report on federally owned and operated PSAPs and PSCCs. This report will be updated annually as new information is collected.

Mark Buchholz, NG 911 Working Group Chair, Director, Willamette Valley Oregon 911, provided update on the newly formed NG 911 Working Group which was established to utilize stakeholder input to identify, inform, and develop work products that will facilitate the transition to NG 911 across all levels of government. The working group is analyzing current work streams to identify unaddressed focus areas in regards to NG 911.

Holly Wayt, City of Westerville, Ohio, Communications Division Communications Manager, reviewed the future training initiatives for NG 911. She commented on the need to make personnel at the local level aware of cyber security risks. She noted it is essential for equipment to be secured to mitigate cyber risks. Holly also referenced the need for greater interoperability between law enforcement, fire and

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rescue, emergency medical services, and other public safety entities. Lastly, she suggested the need for a public safety applications task force.

COMU 2.0

Chris Lombard, Interagency Board, COMU Working Group Chair, and Eddie Reyes, International Association of Chiefs of Police, opened the COMU panel by providing an overview of the COMU Working Group’s purpose and charge. Chris stated the COMU Working Group’s four main priorities are advancing governance and outreach; training, curriculum, and delivery; qualification, certification, and credentialing; and standards and processes. Chris and Eddie acknowledged that in order for the COMU vision to become a reality, stakeholder buy-in across the public safety community is required.

¹Chris and Eddie also provided an outline of the additional functions needed within the COMU in order to successfully respond to incidents. As an incident expands and grows, the essential functions required to support the communications for that incident become more diverse and robust. By adding these essential functions to the COMU, public safety officials can do a better job of planning for large incidents.



Source: COMU Working Group: Defining the Future State of the Emergency Communications Unit Fact Sheet

COMU WORKING GROUP MEETING

The COMU Working Group held an in-person meeting in Norman, Oklahoma on November 8-9, 2017. During this meeting, the COMU Working Group reviewed and discussed milestones on the COMU 2.0 Roadmap: Working Group Timeline and determined next steps. COMU Working Group members focused their milestone discussions on five topics, which included governance and stakeholder engagement; qualification, certification, and credentialing; standards; processes and procedures; and curriculum and delivery. Members will continue discussions on these topics during the monthly COMU meetings.

COMU Working Group members also discussed the need for additional COMU functions. At the end of this discussion COMU Working Group members agreed on the organizational structure for the additional COMU functions. The next step will be to start building out and updating new and existing position descriptions. The COMU Working Group meets monthly on the second Monday of each month from 2:00 p.m. ET to 3:00 p.m. ET.

¹ COMU Working Group: Defining the Future State of Emergency Communications Unit Fact Sheet <https://www.dhs.gov/safecom/communications-unit>

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In conclusion, Chris and Eddie reviewed the COMU Working Group's COMU 2.0 Roadmap. The roadmap lays out a summary of the goals and milestones for the working group over a six-month period. Major milestones include identifying and establishing the best governance framework for COMU, updating the COML and COMT training courses, developing the COMU 2.0 position requirements and curriculum for those positions, and providing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with recommendations for information technology (IT) and communications integration into the National Incident Management System. Challenges to accomplishing these goals include stakeholder participation due to competing priorities, gaining buy-in from key partners, integrating IT stakeholders, and managing concurrent activities. Chris concluded by thanking SAFECOM and NCSWIC for their continued support of the COMU Working Group.

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION'S EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS: KICKING OFF THE 2019 NECP WORKING SESSION

BACKGROUND

The *National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)* is a stakeholder-focused strategic plan with a planning horizon of up to five years. Together with public safety partners, the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) has initiated the first phase of its national planning lifecycle process to publish a third *NECP* iteration with a 2019 target release date. To kick off the *NECP* development process, OEC engaged stakeholders at the Joint SAFECOM/NCSWIC Meeting on November 7, 2017. At the meeting, OEC took the opportunity to obtain input from SAFECOM and NCSWIC members in visioning sessions aimed at gathering ideas and feedback to shape and inform key tenets of the next *NECP*. This document summarizes high-level results and key takeaways gleaned from the meeting sessions. OEC continues to evaluate information gathered from the sessions to identify key issues to be addressed by the *NECP*. Throughout 2018, OEC will continue the iterative process of *NECP* framework development in consultation with SAFECOM/NCSWIC and other partners and stakeholder groups.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Results and key takeaways from the meeting are presented below in three areas, reflecting the main components of the session design: (1) open-ended identification and discussion of *NECP* topics; (2) feedback on *NECP* topics of interest pre-determined by OEC; and (3) results from the closing polling questions.

1) Identification and Discussion of Key Emergency Communications Topics

To open and stimulate initial conversation among the participants, OEC facilitators asked participants to identify topics that are given "too much" or "not enough" attention within the emergency communications community. After identifying topics, the participants chose a subset for additional exploration and discussion. The table below summarizes findings from the initial set of exercises:

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<p>Topic Identification and Discussion: “Too Much Attention” and “Not Enough Attention”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group identified 21 “too much attention” topics. Topics receiving the most votes were: land mobile radio (LMR), FirstNet, technology, PSAPs/911, and encryption • Topics chosen for further exploration were: LMR and Sustainability, FirstNet, interoperability, Mission Critical Push-to-Talk (MCPTT), and consolidation of 911 centers • The group identified 47 “not enough attention” topics.² Topic areas receiving the most votes were: personnel, FirstNet, integration of new technology, funding, and data/data management • Topics chosen for further exploration were: T-band, FirstNet coverage, national standards for COMU, credentialing, data management, and cybersecurity
<p>Topics Chosen for Further Exploration – selected takeaways from participant discussions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMR and Sustainability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Although technology is advancing rapidly, LMR is still only mission critical (voice) alternative. LMR must co-exist with broadband, and transition must be careful, if and when, broadband alternatives are truly ready ○ Other perspectives: “fear of the unknown” beyond LMR; significant transition costs; “we want cool stuff, but we want it to be familiar and usable” • FirstNet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participants held widely varying opinions on FirstNet; some skepticism voiced particularly from tactical/operational side; General agreement that there continues to be a lack of understanding of FirstNet specifics (e.g., pricing, functions, timing) and not enough detailed information available to enable informed decision-making/planning ○ Continued concern regarding impact on LMR sustainment efforts; “NECP planning should include FirstNet” • Interoperability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Good conversations” occurring at end-user level, but concerns voiced regarding vendor role/engagement, e.g., “vendor-driven” versus user-driven solutions, circumvention of standards; Project 25/ Inter RF Subsystem Interface (ISSI) issues; “the new solutions being developed need to interoperate” ○ Wide agreement that the topic of interoperability still does not get enough attention • MCPTT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Immaturity of technology and standards are risk to development/adoption; effort could take resources away from other important issues; all-in-one solution may not be realistic/feasible • Consolidation of 911 Centers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to carefully weigh amount of effort/time likely to be expended given other critical needs and issues; case-by-case/local approaches may be appropriate; might not make sense to pursue (e.g., business case justification, resources) • Integration of New Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participants noted a lack of understanding of actual costs and that the lack of integration could cost more in long run; need to address importance of integration of new and existing technology/role of standardization; changes in leadership can inhibit progress and succession planning can mitigate; recent disasters/incidents are calling greater attention to this issue

² 47 topics were initially identified and then consolidated into 23 “topic areas.”

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• Personnel and Technical Skills

- Discussion identified: need for mechanisms/approaches to ensure the technical skills of personnel— solutions may include vocational/degree programs, FEMA Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) Radio Frequency (RF) academy, and hands-on-training; recruiting and retention challenges; competition with private sector for personnel; leveraging government and private-sector partnerships (e.g., vendor training, DHS/FEMA/National Guard programs) to increase personnel technical skills

• T-Band

- Concerns regarding not enough coordination and collaboration; issues and risks of vacating band without real, proven solutions in place; too many unknowns; decision-makers not listening to public safety

• National Standards for COMU

- Greater leadership needed on national level; more outreach and marketing
- Resistance to change cited (e.g., FEMA)

• Data management

- Noted as an overlooked topic: need for data management training; impacts all levels of public safety; discussion on PSAP-telecom data transfer and NG911 implications

• Cybersecurity

- Wide agreement that the topic of cybersecurity does not get enough attention
- Participants noted ideas that would bring more attention to cyber issues: increased training to staff; better coordination between “cyber”/IT and public safety organizations/systems; increased sharing of cybersecurity best practices/lessons learned; grants that allow cybersecurity expenses

2) Past, Present, Future Discussion on Key Emergency Communications Topics of Interest

After the initial set of exercises above, OEC facilitators led table-top discussions on 12 pre-determined topics of interest to collect topic-specific feedback, perspectives and guidance. Participants at the breakout tables were asked to reflect on the past and present state of a chosen topic and then to envision the future state (e.g., 5 years from now—what is the ideal state, what opportunities will exist, what are the challenges to achieve?). The participants discussed the following topics: (1) **citizen communications**; (2) **communications availability**; (3) **cybersecurity**; (4) **data sharing**; (5) **funding/ grant funding**; (6) **governance**; (7) **grants decision making**; (8) **infrastructure reuse, repurposing, and decommissioning**; (9) **LTE/LMR integration**; (10) **next generation 911 communications**; (11) **emergency communications stakeholders**; and (12) **training and exercises**. The tables below identify high-level results and selected takeaways from the exercises:

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Topic: Citizen Communications

What kinds of methods is public safety using for government-to-citizen and citizen-to-government communications? What new communications systems or devices do you anticipate influencing the public safety community the most 5 years from now?

Results/Key Takeaways

- Current capabilities include a mixture of emerging (e.g., text-to-911 and social media) and traditional (e.g., dialing 911 and issuing press releases) methods of communicating with citizens
- In the future, social media could increase its importance for emergency communications (e.g., become a dispatch mechanism or deliver micro-targeting social media ads); new technologies could monitor citizens and report on events (e.g., biometric implants or automated home monitoring systems that call 911 when an event is detected); and new methods could track and alert citizens (e.g., location-based alerting utilizing very specific geo-fencing or public safety messaging delivered via dynamic advertising devices)
- Challenges: Social media may exist at the center of emergency communications to the exclusion of government; information/data overload for emergency responders; data retention and integrity (i.e., is information received by first responders real?); privacy issues; cost of deploying and replacing new technology; and technology adoption outpacing the development of associated policy

Topic: Communications Availability

What are the most pressing issues associated with ensuring that communications are available when needed? What communications availability challenges should be solved and what new solutions should be developed?

Results/Key Takeaways

- Participants noted that mission-critical components are one connected system – availability, resiliency, and reliability considerations are also interconnected
- Beyond technical considerations, updated agreements and SOPs are also important components to ensure future communications availability; as technology evolve, innovation can serve to identify solutions to maintain availability but policy and planning (e.g., legislation) also must evolve to address new challenges
- Takeaway: Moving to new platforms, availability concerns will increase (e.g., data/video world, cybersecurity threats)

Topic: Cybersecurity

What is the state of public safety/emergency communications cybersecurity today? Five years from now, what will cybersecurity for emergency communications will look like? How will things change?

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Results/Key Takeaways

- Within emergency communications sphere, cybersecurity practices continue to mature but much work still needed; threats and challenges identified include failure to install patches, malware/ransomware, lack of adequate training; continued poor public safety operational security
- Opportunities for enhanced cybersecurity include: use of 2-factor authentication; trustmark/credentialing approaches; federated identification; encryption; improved cyber training and live drills; red cells/penetration testing; leveraging random security checks; National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC) and US- Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) support
- Cybersecurity needs to be explicitly addressed in *NECP* and not just within the IT or technology section; ensure training has focus on “people and not just the technology”; finding the right balance of security versus accessibility – avoiding the issue of “too much cybersecurity” or “everything locked down” that may impede access/sharing/interoperability

Topic: Data Sharing

Where are we today in terms of the kinds of electronic data exchanges that are occurring? What will future public safety data sharing look like?

Results/Key Takeaways

- Increasing breadth of data sharing capabilities/systems – old and new (e.g., NLETS, Fusion Centers, RISS, ONDCP, WebEOC, CAPWIN-UMD, NCAR, Regional RMS, CAD-to-CAD, IPAWS, social media)—moving forward, the increased number and types of data sources and streams will present new challenges and opportunities
- Challenges: interoperability becomes more complex—could be more difficult to attain; determining balance between the “value” of new capabilities versus risks/costs introduced when adopted (data management, storage, security, and integrity); bandwidth/data “overload” implications—could impede decision making
- Opportunities: better and more integrated situational awareness; biometric monitoring; video integration/use (e.g., fusion centers); Internet of Things (IOT)/new applications
- Key takeaway: Pace of change (data/video technology) is so great that the planning horizon must be lengthened (e.g., beyond five years) - “As soon as you arrive, your requirements/needs have already changed”

Topic: Funding/Grant Funding

How did your agency fund emergency communications activities ten years ago, and how will grant funding needs change five years from now?

Results/Key Takeaways

- Grant funding in the past did not adequately consider sustainment/lifecycle planning – still an issue today; Currently, need for new equipment, alongside rapidly evolving technology, present challenges
- Participants noted challenges such as need for cybersecurity funding, general equipment maintenance funding, sustainable funding sources (better lifecycle planning/management); and expensive technology costs
- Opportunities: Better lifecycle planning/management and education of public safety officials, government officials, and decision-makers
- Takeaway: Increased focus on and funding to address cybersecurity; support for grantees to “keep up with technology,” and support education of legislators and public safety officials on communications funding needs

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Topic: Governance
<p>What are the main governance issues facing emergency communications? How will governance structures, models, and groups be different in the future?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Results/Key Takeaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States support flexible models and varying governing mechanisms to more readily absorb and react to increasing ecosystem complexities (e.g., partners, new technologies and capabilities, policies, networks) • Factors such as federal initiatives, legislation, guidance, and funding have supported development of statewide governance structures; however, more recently, states struggle to maintain and grow their membership without dedicated funds • Challenges: ability to execute without legislative power; lack of grant funding; efforts to link or join disparate, discipline-specific groups (e.g., 911 Boards, Radio Control Boards) to improve decision-making at the state level; determining appropriate vendor participation in formal governance • Opportunities: use of state governance to develop strategies for including missing partners (e.g., tribes, IT positions, etc.) especially as technologies evolve and the stakeholder base expands; development of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) as formal agreements fostering inter-state and cross-jurisdictional collaboration; coordination with associations representing decision makers within states (i.e., National Governors Association, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayor) to elevate emergency communications issues across multiple levels of government; • Key Takeaway: Future governance structures must be inclusive of under-represented groups, but careful considerations should be given to how/when new partners are included and their influence

Topic: Grant Decision Making
<p>How does your agency justify emergency communication investments, and what are the impacts of not receiving money for critical investments? What critical decisions will states face over the next five years if choosing to use the NPSBN?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Results/Key Takeaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching plans are necessary, as is the need for accountability to ensure funding is spent as needed • Challenges: Funding needs not adequately considered; Lack of higher-level, regional plans and sustainability plans; Equipment is often out of date. Participants expressed the NPSBN is sole way to obtain grant funding. If opting in, states will have lack of control over vendors. If opting out, funding levels may not be adequate and states will still have to comply with standards • Opportunities: Regional planning through overarching plans that allow for statewide coordination, and sustainability plans to outline guidelines and accountability measures for buying equipment; If opting in, participants discussed potential access to grant funds for services. If opting out, states will have more control over outcomes, access to State Alternative Plan Program (SAPP) grants, and a long-term commitment • Key takeaways: Reliance on grant funding and decreased funds limit ability to purchase equipment; SWIC review of grants is not standardized or enforced

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Topic: Infrastructure Reuse, Repurposing, and Decommissioning
How are organizations addressing infrastructure reuse, repurposing, and decommissioning when adopting emerging technologies? How should organizations reuse, repurpose, or decommission infrastructure?
Results/Key Takeaways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies/procedures vary by agency, equipment type, level of government, etc. – better, more consistent articulation of policies/procedures can help. Particularly important in transitioning equipment to others • Challenges: tracking disposition, decommissioning costs preclude “proper” disposal, security (e.g., drive wiping procedures, encryption implications) • Opportunities: New sustainable, upgradable products, recycling/disposable culture, leasing, better public-private collaboration on standardization • Takeaway: The culture of reuse is changing (e.g., just-in-time manufacturing and disposable technology becoming more common) – guidance on technology lifecycle planning and changes to funding mechanisms would be helpful

Topic: LTE-LMR Integration
How does the public safety community use commercial wireless services today in conjunction with LMR? What are current challenges with commercial wireless use, including LTE and LTE-LMR integration? What are expectations for use of commercial wireless services, including LTE, five years from now?
Results/Key Takeaways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five years ago, no commercial wireless data and LMR integration (and LTE not deployed yet). Today, increasing data/LTE usage in a variety of contexts (e.g., GIS/mapping, situational awareness with video, asset tracking, backhaul, database queries, routine smartphone use, verified alarms, mobile data terminals, text-to-911) – however still no integration of LMR and data (siload) • Challenges to adoption/integration include capacity during surge, coverage, availability of open, safe apps, cost, PTT interoperability, rural-urban differences, encryption, usability for LMR-trained responders (e.g., defining LTE talk paths, I/O channels) • Five years from now: Hopeful for greater use and applications to support mission: voice recognition/voice-to-text applications, PSAP-to-responder stream, preemption/priority capability, increased sharing of diverse information/data types and across organizations (F/S/L), ability to access archived data/information in real time. Complexity and technical issues likely to remain within this time horizon (MCPTT) • Takeaway: Public safety will have to be convinced that LTE is tested/proven/accepted as pre-requisite to greater use/integration.

Topic: Next Generation 911 Communications
How have 911 systems and public safety answering points (PSAPs) evolved? What new implementations or challenges are on the horizon for NG 911?
Results/Key Takeaways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitioning to NG 911, codec consolidation, and the virtual and physical consolidation of PSAPs have brought new services to 911, but also a new level of technical complexity • Additional training and operating procedures will be required to address emerging technical capabilities (e.g., handling data, supporting shared services, considering machine-augmented capabilities)

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- Challenges: evolution is ongoing (i.e., can never be 100% complete & compliant); increasing interaction with other PSAPs (e.g., ability to transfer to a PSAP anywhere in the US); funding and increased training investment
- Takeaway: A rich set of opportunities in the future: resiliency and flexibility through mobile and virtual PSAPs; ability to capitalize on technology service offerings (e.g., text, GIS, over the top services); augmentation of dispatching capabilities (e.g., machine intelligence, EC3s)

Topic: Stakeholders of the Future

How has the makeup of the public safety stakeholder changed over time? What does the stakeholder of the future look like?

Results/Key Takeaways

- In the past, stakeholders were more focused on the local level; analog radios rather than GIS/IT data; Less engagement with 911 and alerts/warnings, and obtaining input from the public was very limited
- Current stakeholders have engaged at all levels of government and are more discipline-specific (fire, EMS, 911, public works/utilities, etc.) and guided by MOUs; Today, more involvement by CIOs/IT personnel and 911/Alerts & Warnings stakeholders. Citizens have now become stakeholders (data via text, videos, etc.)
- Stakeholders of the future are predicted to be more automated with disciplines, people, and software tools all working together. Participants envisioned future state in which the world will become more interoperable, functioning at the regional/nationwide level, and incorporating international organizations as well as organizations not traditionally associated with public safety, such as universities, and increased communications/situational awareness provided by citizens from the scene
- Takeaway: The world is becoming more interconnected on a larger scale. Traditional, analog radio is being replaced with automated, IT-driven stakeholders, requiring increased focus on cybersecurity and IT

Topic: Training & Exercises

How have training/exercises evolved? How should training/exercises be structured in the future?

Results/Key Takeaways

- In the past, there was more available funding, resulting in more exercises; Interoperability was also observed in the exercises, although PSAPs were less included
- Currently, exercises include the private sector, NGOs, and utilities, as well as PSAPs; however new technology is not incorporated; ICS/COMU is impacting operations through better coordination and documentation.
- Future training and exercises should incorporate new technology, such as public safety applications and LTE; however, careful implementation is required to avoid information overload
- Key Takeaway: Over the past 5 years, training and exercises have expanded to include necessary participants, but have not evolved to account for emerging technology

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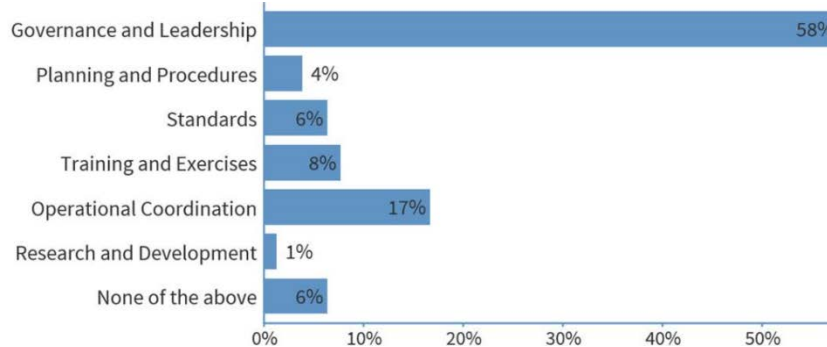
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3) Results of Closing Polling Questions

In the concluding session, SAFECOM/NCSWIC participants responded to four questions pertaining to OEC’s ongoing 2019 NECP framework development:

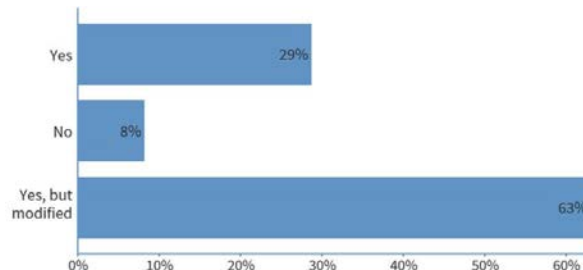
Question 1. “What is the most important goal needed to reach the NECP vision?”

Result: 58% voted for “Governance and Leadership”



Question 2. “Should the ecosystem be included in the 2019 NECP?”

Result: 63% voted “Yes, but modified”



Question 3. “Which stakeholder groups outside of SAFECOM and NCSWIC should be included in developing the NECP?”

Result: The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPTSC) received a significant share of votes.

Question 4. “In one word, what is the most important thing needed to achieve interoperability?”

Result: Funding, cooperation, collaboration, and governance were the top four words selected.



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NEXT STEPS

Through interactive sessions with the SAFECOM/NCSWIC meeting participants, OEC directly engaged key stakeholders and collected valuable feedback on where they are now and where they realistically expect to be in the future. High-level takeaways from the meeting help describe past, present, and future capabilities and needs, and provide useful inputs and considerations across a five-year horizon and beyond. OEC continues to evaluate the raw data captured from the sessions, and additional insights will be leveraged as *NECP* Phase 1 activities proceed, including future stakeholder engagement, detailed issue identification and validation, and future ecosystem research, data gathering, and analysis. As additional information, insights, and perspectives are collected from these and other key stakeholder groups, the collective data pool will enable OEC to iteratively identify, scope, and prioritize those emergency communications themes, opportunities and challenges that matter most to the stakeholders. An iterative and open process will ensure that *NECP* development fully reflects stakeholder input, remains data-driven, and ultimately serves to promote interoperability for nationwide across the emergency communications ecosystem.

MARILYN J. PRAISNER SAFECOM LEADERSHIP AWARD



Figure 1: Presenting the Marilyn J. Praisner SAFECOM Leadership Award; From Left to Right: Former SAFECOM Vice Chair, Mark Grubb; OEC Director, Ron Hewitt; SAFECOM Vice Chair and Award Recipient, Chief Douglas M. Aiken; and SAFECOM Chair, Chief Gerald Reardon

This year, SAFECOM honored Chief Douglas M. Aiken with the Marilyn J. Praisner SAFECOM Leadership Award. This Award recognizes SAFECOM members who have significantly and consistently contributed to the effectiveness of SAFECOM in its mission to guide DHS in the improvement of public safety communications, and to provide the national public safety community with high quality products to guide its members in the development, coordination, and improvement of their own public safety communications systems. This award is bestowed on behalf of SAFECOM to individual members who exemplify the mission of SAFECOM.

Chief Aiken has nearly 40 years of career public safety experience. Among the many associations he has participated with over the years, Chief Aiken serves as the current director of the International Municipal Signal Association; member of the board of Public Safety Spectrum Trust; and vice-chair of National Public Safety Telecommunications Council. Chief Aiken served with the Manchester, New Hampshire Fire Department, and currently serves as Chief of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid. He retired from the New Hampshire Air National Guard in 2007 at the rank of colonel after a forty year military career during which he served as the Director of Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems

(J-6). He holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Management from New Hampshire College, an associate degree in

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Electronic Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology, and is a graduate of the Air University Air Command and Staff College and the Air War College.

Chief Aiken has been a member of SAFECOM since its inception and has served in a variety of roles, most recently SAFECOM's Vice Chair. During his long tenure with SAFECOM, Doug has led many of SAFECOM's efforts that has positioned SAFECOM to be the impactful public safety advisory group it is today. Congratulations Doug, and thank you for all your hard work and dedication to the public safety communications community!

SAFECOM AND NCSWIC COMMITTEES

SAFECOM EDUCATION & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The Education and Outreach Committee reviewed strategic priorities scheduled for completion in 2017, which require additional work or close out. Committee members determined 2018 strategic priorities and identified possible dates for two upcoming in-person committee meetings for 2018. The group discussed OEC and SAFECOM presence within the larger community's conferences and major events, especially to further SAFECOM's mission and recruit potential new associations and at-large members.

Education and Outreach Committee members reviewed the Public Safety Communications Evolution Brochure, agreeing further work needed to be done to revise the general content in order to reflect progress in the field since its 2014 update and capture changes to future goals as a result of new and emerging technologies. Committee members agreed the brochure's graphic also needed to be revisited to better depict new requirements for achieving interoperability alongside the integration of internet protocol-based and broadband technologies. The group discussed the new cyber security section analyzing its impacts on Education and Outreach and how members can adapt to this new information.

SAFECOM GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The SAFECOM Governance Committee focused on closing out some additional products under development throughout the year. The Governance Committee discussed recent membership updates and a review of the SAFECOM elections process. Over the past few months, the Education and Outreach, Funding and Sustainment, and Technology Policy committees held elections for committee chair and/or vice chair positions. SAFECOM members also conducted elections for the open SAFECOM Executive Committee (EC) At-Large positions. As a final step, SAFECOM conducted regular and special elections to fill the two open vacancies for SAFECOM Vice Chair.

Governance Committee members approved the *SAFECOM Recommended Guidelines for Statewide Public Safety Communications Governance Structure* document for EC consideration, which will be provided for review prior to the next EC meeting. Members also identified work products completed in 2017, and discussed the Committee's 2018 strategic priorities and proposed work products. Governance committee members discussed potential dates to hold in-person committee meetings for 2018, in which the committee member will be able to focus on updating and streamlining the *SAFECOM Charter*.

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JOINT SAFECOM & NCSWIC FUNDING & SUSTAINMENT COMMITTEE

During the committee meeting, members reviewed and discussed the 2017 work products completed over the course of the year, prioritized 2018 strategic initiatives, and continued to develop ongoing work products. The new priorities for 2018 include: the release of Phase II of the Emergency Communications Systems Lifecycle Guide (Maintenance and Sustainment, End-of-Lifecycle, and Disposition), Emergency Communications Systems Lifecycle Continuity of Operations Planning, Knowledge Transfer Database, and Emergency Communications System Lifecycle educational tools for decision makers.

Phase I of the Emergency Communications Systems Lifecycle, which includes the first four phases of the Systems Lifecycle (Pre-Planning, Planning, Acquisition, and Implementation), was approved by the SAFECOM and NCSWIC ECs and will be released by the end of 2017.

JOINT SAFECOM & NCSWIC TECHNOLOGY POLICY COMMITTEE

The Technology Policy Committee discussed ongoing activities and initiatives and plan for 2018. The committee is finalizing the *Request for Proposal (RFP) for Subscriber Units* (“Do’s and Don’ts”) document for NCSWIC EC and SAFECOM EC review and approval. This document will be a component of the *RFP Best Practices for LMR Subscriber Units Toolkit* to be developed in FY18. The committee agreed to update *The T-Band Giveback: Implications for the Public Safety Community* white paper. The committee plans to coordinate committee efforts with the NG911 WG to develop white paper(s) and guidance documents focused on preparing local law enforcement officials and fire personnel for transition to NG911 from a policy and procedures standpoint. The committee will also work with the NG911 WG to identify and capture challenges and best practices for managing public safety information from new data sources and develop a primer to address information overload. The committee also plans to identify and document opportunities for public safety to utilize Intelligent Transportation Systems and potential impacts to consider within the *Public Safety Utilization of the Intelligent Transportation System* white paper. Finally, the committee plans to develop the *Addressing Interoperability When Developing or Purchasing a Public Safety Application* document to outline what to consider when developing or purchasing an App targeted to public safety from an interoperability standpoint. The next committee call is scheduled for December 5 from 3:00-4:00 pm ET.

NCSWIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The NCSWIC Governance Committee reviewed the status of 2017 committee activities and work products and approved nine strategic initiatives for 2018. In addition to standing committee initiatives such as the Annual Report and Strategic Plan, next year the committee will work on developing and implementing the NCSWIC’s social media presence, update the SWIC Elevator Speech, update the 2008 SWIC Book, begin discussions on updating the 2014 Governance Guide, and implement the new SWIC On-Boarding process.

NCSWIC Governance Committee Chair, Ken Hasenei, led a discussion on utilizing social media to elevate the SWIC and the NCSWIC Program. Members reviewed a draft white paper on social media usage that will be presented to the NCSWIC EC in early 2018 for approval. Additionally, members conducted a working session to update the 2014 SWIC Elevator Speech. Members suggested a number of edits and

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additions, including changing the name to the SWIC Executive Briefing. Additional edits are due prior to the next committee conference call on Thursday, January 25, 2017.

NCSWIC PLANNING, TRAINING, AND EXERCISE COMMITTEE

The NCSWIC Planning, Training, and Exercise (PTE) Committee met to discuss current and future committee products. John Miller, New Jersey SWIC, led an initial discussion on the Field Operations Guide (FOG) Best Practices White Paper, a guide detailing best practices on how to develop a FOG. The document is intended to serve as a resource for SWICs and/or state governing communications bodies who are beginning the process of developing their document. During this discussion, members reviewed the white paper and provided comments and feedback on content, and provided suggestions on additional best practices to include in the white paper. Once the committee's edits are incorporated into the paper, the document will be made available to members for review prior to the next committee conference call.

At the May 3, 2017, PTE in-person committee meeting, PTE members identified the need for an Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) Mission Readiness Package product. The Committee hosted a webinar on September 26, 2017, to educate PTE committee members on Region IV's EMAC Mission Readiness Package and the processes and procedures used during the development phase. During this meeting, committee members determined the committee's package would be a series of standardized templates with instructions for developing an EMAC Mission Readiness Package. The goal is for other regions to be able to utilize the templates to build their own EMAC Mission Readiness Package.

Finally, members of the PTE Committee discussed the committee's 2018 strategic priorities and identified the status of work products scheduled for completion in 2017. To close out 2017, the committee will continue to host its scheduled webinars and complete the FOG Best Practices White Paper. In 2018, the committee will build out the sample standardized EMAC Mission Readiness Package templates, host a webinar on the integration of SWICs into state training and exercise programs, and record podcasts on the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program Technical Assistance Offerings; and if time permits, develop a white paper on how to incorporate broadband into TA Offerings, SCIPs, trainings, and exercises.

For more information regarding committee meetings, please reference individual committee summaries.