SAFECOM NCSWIC

2017 PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGIC COLLABORATION MEETING
NCED | Norman, Oklahoma

Joint Meeting of SAFECOM and the National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators

November 7, 2017, Executive Summary

Highlight of the November 7th Joint Meeting – Real World Event: Hurricane Harvey

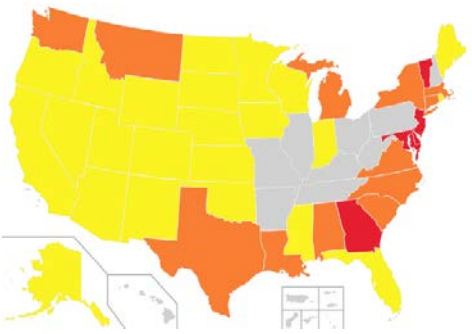
Todd Early, Texas Department of Public Safety, Public Safety Communications Service, Texas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), led a session on the preparation, planning, activation, execution, and post-event efforts required to support law enforcement, fire fighters, emergency medical services, 9-1-1 centers, and public works during Hurricane Harvey. Todd noted the development of the storm's rapid pace, leaving response personnel less time to prepare for the event. Due to the intensity and location of the eye in proximity to Houston, 9-1-1 centers were inundated with over 2,000 calls the first hour. Other speakers included Tom Sorley, City of Houston, Public Safety, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Shing Lin, Harris County, Public Safety Technology Services Director; and Lee Zapata, Aransas Public Safety Communications (Rockport, Texas), Communications Center Director.

Panelists described their experiences during the storm and mentioned lessons learned and best practices, including the following: 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; welcome assistance from other jurisdictions and outside locations; coordinate across necessary disciplines to ensure coordination for basic human needs (e.g., public works for portable sanitation units); and take care of your employees, ensuring provision of timely compensation, counseling to deal with personal trauma, and paid leave to recover.

Looking forward, the Houston team reminded those managing and coordinating response efforts to capture challenges and solutions. Panelists emphasized the importance of conducting a hot wash directly following an event. SAFECOM and NCSWIC should take part in evaluation studies following events to determine public safety community communications needs.

Joint Session Key Takeaways

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.



Map Key

Yellow: Have federal-recognized tribes

Red: Have state-recognized tribes

Orange: Have both federally- and state-recognized tribes

Since tribal lands are dispersed across the country and along the borders, it is extremely important to include them in planning and coordination at all levels of government to improve emergency communications capabilities and services. Brian Howard began the session by noting 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. Frank Harjo, Geographic Information Systems (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 to improve centralized data collection and sharing among tribal, state, and federal governments. Each participating tribe manages their individual, but interconnected, portal. Danae Wilson, Department of Technology Services, Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho, provided an overview of the tribe's critical infrastructure. The Nez Perce Tribal Broadband Network provides communications throughout parts of Idaho, Washington, Montana, and Oregon. 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

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information into the Washington State system to support incident response. The tribe is focused on identifying opportunities to expand response capabilities and share incident response information with public safety personnel.

During the Joint meeting, OEC and SAFECOM Leadership 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. Congratulations to Doug!

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), emphasizing FirstNet's priority is to build a strong relationship with their partner, AT&T, to ensure they understand the needs of public safety. FirstNet released state plans via an online portal on June 19. The 90-day opt-in period began September 29, with all states partnering as of December 29, 2017.

OEC Partnerships Updates – *DHS Science & Technology (S&T) Directorate:* Sridhar Kowdley, DHS S&T First Responders Group Program Manager, discussed the rapidly-increasing occurrences of electronic jamming (intentional and unintentional). He highlighted the need for first responders to learn how to identify jamming and the steps necessary for reporting and mitigating against such incidents. In July 2017, DHS hosted the second annual JAMMEX to help first responders identify, locate, and mitigate the impacts of jamming. Tactics reinforced during the 2017 JAMMEX included 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.

The Future of Emergency Communications – *Next Generation 9-1-1:* Laurie Flaherty, Coordinator, National 9-1-1 Program at U.S. Department of Transportation, provided her organization's objectives, such as serving as a coordination point for public and private stakeholders at the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial levels of government; collecting and creating resources for state and local 9-1-1 authorities; administering the 9-1-1 Grant Program; providing federal focus for 9-1-1; and promoting and supporting 9-1-1 services. The program was allocated $115M for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018; grants are expected to be awarded in early 2018.

Gerald Jaskulski, DHS OEC, provided an update on the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center's (ECPC) Federal 9-1-1 Focus Group, which 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). Similarly, Mark Buchholz, NG 9-1-1 Working Group Chair, Director, Willamette Valley Oregon 9-1-1, provided an update on the newly formed NG 9-1-1 Working Group, which is working to collect stakeholder input to identify, inform, and develop work products that will facilitate the transition to NG 9-1-1 across all levels of government. The working group is analyzing current work streams to identify unaddressed focus areas in regard to NG 9-1-1.

The Future of Emergency Communications – *Communications Unit (COMU) 2.0:* Chris Lombard, Interagency Board, COMU Working Group Chair, and Eddie Reyes, International Association of Chiefs of Police, provided an overview of the COMU Working Group's purpose and charge, emphasizing the group's role in advancing governance and outreach; training, curriculum, and delivery; qualification, certification, and credentialing; and standards and processes. They reviewed the COMU 2.0 Roadmap, a summary of goals and milestones over a six-month period, including establishing a governance framework, updating COML and COMT training courses, developing COMU 2.0 position requirements and curriculum, and providing the Federal Emergency Management Agency with recommendations for IT and communications integration into the National Incident Management System. Challenges to accomplishing these goals include stakeholder participation due to competing priorities, key partner buy-in, integrating IT stakeholders, and managing concurrent activities.

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Envisioning the Future of Our Nation's Emergency Communications – Kicking Off the 2019 National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) Working Session: The *National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)* is a stakeholder-focused strategic plan with a planning horizon of up to five years. OEC took the opportunity to engage SAFECOM/NCSWIC members in visioning sessions aimed at gathering ideas and feedback to shape and inform key tenets of the next NECP. Results and key takeaways from the meeting were organized in three areas, reflecting 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.

Stakeholders first identified topics for further exploration, including land mobile radio (LMR) and sustainability; FirstNet and its impacts on LMR sustainment; the lack of attention given interoperability, especially as it relates to "vendor-driven" versus user-driven solutions; mission-critical push-to-talk, including risks associated with standards development, resources, and all-in-one solutions; the consolidation and build out of 9-1-1 centers; the integration of other new and emerging technologies, especially related to the correlation of cost and execution, the role of standardization, leadership succession planning, and attention to need based on the increasing prevalence of hazards; the evolution of training and new technical skills (i.e., involving and hiring new disciplines); lack of coordination and solutions related to T-Band; establishing national-level leadership in the development of national standards for COMU; broader and more detailed consideration for data management; and cybersecurity (e.g., training, IT and public safety personnel, system coordination, best practices/lesson learned, funding and grants).

Participants at the breakout tables were also asked to reflect on the past and present state of certain topics (i.e., citizen communications; communications availability; cybersecurity; data sharing; funding/ grant funding; governance; grants decision making; infrastructure reuse, repurposing, and decommissioning; LTE/LMR integration; next generation 9-1-1 communications; emergency communications stakeholders; training and exercises) and to envision the future state (e.g., 5 years from now–ideal state, opportunities, challenges).

In the concluding session, SAFECOM/NSCWIC participants responded to four questions pertaining to OEC's ongoing 2019 NECP framework development: 1) "What is the most important goal needed to reach the NECP vision?" - 58% voted for "Governance and Leadership"; 2) "Should the ecosystem be included in the 2019 NECP?" - 63% voted "Yes, but modified"; 3) "Which stakeholder groups outside of SAFECOM and NCSWIC should be included in developing the NECP?" - The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPTSC) received a significant share of votes; and 4) "In one word, what is the most important thing needed to achieve interoperability?" - Funding, cooperation, collaboration, and governance were the top four words selected.

OEC continues to evaluate the raw data, 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. An iterative and open process will ensure NECP development reflects stakeholder input, remains data-driven, and serves to promote interoperability nationwide.

In Memory . . . 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.

As of January 3, 2018