



Note from the Director

By: Ron Hewitt, OEC Director

Welcome to Volume III, Issue III of the SAFECOM-National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators

(NCSWIC) Quarterly Newsletter. This is a critical time for our community as we work together to address communications needs to support multiple hurricanes in the south and wildland fires in the west, in addition to supporting your existing missions. Many of you have been touched by these disasters and participating in response and recovery efforts. Several members of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) team have deployed to assist in the recovery from these disasters and our programs are contributing in a variety of ways to help ensure the responders managing these situations have the communications capabilities they need. On behalf of the entire OEC team, I want to express my deep gratitude for your work and hope for a speedy recovery for all those affected.

In August, the NCSWIC Executive Committee (EC) held an in-person meeting in Chicago, Illinois, with NCSWIC leadership and members of OEC's senior leadership team to discuss the strengths and challenges of our work processes. The NCSWIC EC proposed a number of recommendations to improve our effectiveness, highlighted additional support needs, and drafted priorities for the NCSWIC. We spend a lot of time defining and delivering products and services, but this meeting was focused on ways to improve how the work gets done. As a result, OEC is making changes to our work processes to better serve you.

The Communications Unit (COMU) Working Group (WG) met in Lakewood, Colorado, on August 17-18, 2017, to discuss ways to improve COMU program management at the national, state, and local levels, and to determine if any changes are needed within the COMU to support FirstNet and other broadband capabilities. During this meeting, the COMU WG identified issues with the existing COMU governance model, determined the need to identify how data and broadband will be managed at the incident/event, discussed moving towards a nationwide federated model for COMU, split the COMU WG into two sub-groups, and began the development of the COMU 2.0 Roadmap. Sub-group 1 will continue to research and provide solutions to governance, certification and credentialing, and stakeholder engagement. Sub-group 2 will research and provide solutions to new communications functions, standards, process, and curriculum and delivery. The COMU 2.0 Roadmap will be an action plan that lays out the gaps, milestones, deliverables, and timeline for establishing a COMU 2.0 foundation. The Sub-groups will present the COMU 2.0 Roadmap at the Joint SAFECOM-NCSWIC in-person meeting on November 7, 2017.

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About the Newsletter

The SAFECOM-NCSWIC Quarterly Newsletter is designed to be a source of information, news, and updates for SAFECOM, Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs), their staff, and members of the stakeholder community. We hope it will be a valuable resource as you lead future statewide planning efforts and implementation of the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP).

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I am happy to announce the SAFECOM Nationwide Survey (SNS) opened on October 20, 2017. The survey will remain open until February 23, 2018. A tremendous THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the development, testing, and outreach efforts for the SNS to date! Your participation is crucial to the success of the SNS. As we continue the promotional and marketing campaign to bolster survey responses through the end of this year and the start of 2018, we will engage with you and your association contacts for additional support. Additionally, the SNS results will inform the 2019 National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) which we will be kicking off during the Joint SAFECOM and NCSWIC meeting in Norman, OK on November 7, 2017.

As many of you know, OEC launched an Enhanced Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Pilot this year based on your feedback and observations from the National Governors Association (NGA) Policy Academy. The purpose of the Enhanced SCIP Pilot is to provide an intensive review of each state's requirements for governance, technology, and funding across the full emergency communications ecosystem including broadband, Next Generation 911 (NG911), Land Mobile Radio (LMR), and alerts and warnings systems. The workshop format emphasizes the integration and evolution of all emergencies communications systems and technologies. In conducting the Pilots, it is clear each state has unique needs and OEC must continue to tailor its delivery of SCIPs and targeted technical assistance. Enhanced SCIP workshops have been completed in Iowa, North Carolina, Oregon, Tennessee, and West Virginia and are ongoing in Arkansas, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia.

Since the beginning of this summer, the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)/Wireless Priority Service (WPS) Customer Support Desk has received many new registrations from organizations in preparation for the Solar Eclipse. This June, new registrations nationwide were up approximately 25% with 267 GETS requests and 161 WPS requests. GETS, WPS, and Telecommunication Service Priority (TSP) have played a significant role in response and recovery efforts for Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. A total of 41,679 GETS calls connected at a 99% call completion rate and 6,064 WPS calls connected at 94% call completion rate. These statistics included user, test, and readiness calls, which primarily originated or terminated in the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Florida, and Texas. Additionally, 190 GETS cards were expedited and 2,853 cellphones had WPS activation expedited in support of these hurricanes. The TSP Program Office continues to support Emergency Support Function #2 during disaster response and recovery efforts. To date, over 375 Emergency and Essential Provisioning TSPs have been issued.



Super Bowl LI Panelists (left to right) Mike Lewis, Niki Papazoglakis, Ashley Gonzalez, and Erik Zugner at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

OEC started the GETS card reprint in December of last year. This past August, OEC printed and mailed 197,800 of 340,252 GETS cards to federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, as well as critical infrastructure partners. The new GETS card is much easier to use with simpler dialing instructions, updated alternate numbers, and two toll-free access numbers. Additionally, initial operational capability of WPS over Voice over Long Term Evolution (VoLTE) was deployed to Verizon's 4G LTE wireless network and public safety users now have priority over LTE/4G to the commercial cellular tower.

WPS over VoLTE has been tested in AT&T's 4G LTE wireless network and will be available to National Security/Emergency Preparedness users by November. For more information on priority services capabilities, OEC's five Priority Telecommunications Service Area Representatives (PARs) are available to help public safety organizations sign-up, understand, and exercise priority services for GETS, WPS, and TSP. Each PAR manages two federal regions that, with support of the OEC Regional Coordinator, promote priority services capabilities for eligible state, local, tribal, and territorial public safety functions.

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As part of the Interoperable Communications Capabilities Analysis Program (ICCAP), OEC has conducted 16 planned event observations over the last year. The goal of ICCAP is to help local, state, and federal agencies enhance their overall capacity to communicate with one another, using both voice and data, focusing on interoperability across the public safety communications ecosystem and preparing for the unexpected emergency or incident during a planned event. For each event, OEC has developed After Action Reports for the organizing agencies to understand strengths and areas of improvement. OEC is in the process of reviewing ICCAP findings and determining next steps for FY18.

OEC is continuing its work with states and territories to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of the Federal Government for the use of federal interoperability channels, in partnership with the Department of the Interior. The MOUs are intended to provide easier access for public safety agencies to utilize federal law enforcement and incident response channels and improve emergency communications interoperability with federal agencies. Thus far, we have signed MOUs in Wyoming, Texas, West Virginia, Minnesota, and Maryland. The following states have MOUs in progress: North Carolina, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Montana. For more information, or to start the process within your state or territory, please contact your OEC Regional Coordinator.

I wish to extend a warm congratulations to Dan Wills and Mark Grubb who were recently hired by OEC to support the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) Branch. Dan Wills was previously part of the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management, as well as a SAFECOM member. Mark Grubb was previously the Delaware Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), a former NCSWIC EC member, and SAFECOM Vice Chair. We are pleased to have them join the OEC team and share their vast knowledge and expertise!

Finally, the joint meeting of SAFECOM and the NCSWIC will be held November 6-9, 2017, in Norman, Oklahoma. I am looking forward to seeing you all at the meeting. As always, I appreciate your dedication and hard work towards improving emergency communications nationwide. Thank you for all that you do. ■



Note from the SAFECOM Chair

By: Chief Gerald Reardon, SAFECOM At-Large

With the coming of a new season, we reflect on a particularly busy summer. SAFECOM members continued work toward the collective advancement of public safety communications while many have also contributed during response and recovery efforts as a result of massive wildfires in the west and an unusually active hurricane season. Our thoughts are with those affected by these disasters as well as friends and colleagues deployed to assist in the field. Many of our own SAFECOM membership and support have been impacted by these disasters, including Colin Rizzo and Tom Sorley in Texas; Doug Aiken, Rick Comerford, Phil Mann, and George Perera in Florida; Mike Duyck in Oregon; Chris Lombard in Washington; Brad Richy in Idaho; Paul Patrick in Utah; and Josh Goldmark, and Ferdinand Milanese in California. Additionally, OEC has deployed Ted Lawson, Jennifer Cory, and Wes Rogers in support of hurricane recovery efforts.

As we near the final quarter of CY 2017, the SAFECOM EC, committee, and working group leads begin to consider accomplishments over the last few months and how priorities may shift in the coming year. Recently, Mark Buchholz, Willamette Valley 9-1-1 Director, took the lead as Chair of the NG911 Working Group, which kicked off efforts in late August. He and other SAFECOM members, including Trey Forgety, National Emergency Number Association (NENA), Terry Hall, National Association of Counties (NACo), Steve Verbil, SAFECOM At-Large with the Connecticut Office of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications, and Holly Wayt, Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO), contributed to initial discussions on the group's purpose and goals, including the identification of current work streams to avoid duplication of effort by groups and associations tackling NG911 issues. Additionally, the COMU Working Group met in person, mid-August, dividing some of its future work between two subgroups—the first will focus on governance, credentialing and certification, and stakeholder

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engagement while the second will tackle issues related to new communications functions, standards, processes, and curriculum and delivery. The development of these additional groups highlights the considerable influence of rapid technological change on the emergency communications landscape, such as next generation technologies and the integration of LMR and LTE networks, which will increasingly influence our strategic planning efforts through the end of the year and into 2018.

SAFECOM's 2017 election process has recently kicked off, with members of the Education & Outreach and Funding & Sustainment Committees voting for their chair and vice chair. Additionally, there are two At-Large EC positions and a SAFECOM Vice Chair position available. The Technology Policy Committee Vice Chair position is also currently vacant with the departure of Dan Wills, SAFECOM At-Large.

Due to the mid-term departure of Mark Grubb, SAFECOM Vice Chair, a special election will be held during the In-Person Meeting in November to fill the unexpired last year of his two-year term. The committee elections will be conducted via an online voting tool, and the Vice Chair elections will take place on November 8, 2017, in Norman, Oklahoma. If you know you will be unable to attend the meeting, please contact the [SAFECOM Inbox](#) to designate a proxy to place your vote.

SAFECOM Leadership, in coordination with OEC, has been hard at work developing content for the upcoming Joint SAFECOM and NCSWIC meetings at the National Center for Employee Development (NCED) Hotel and Conference Center in Norman, Oklahoma, November 6-9, 2017. The meeting will kick off with participation in an open Project 25 Compliance Assessment Program (P25 CAP) meeting the afternoon of November 6. Joint and program-specific sessions will take place over November 7 and 8, including SAFECOM and NCSWIC committee meetings. The SAFECOM and NCSWIC ECs will also meet Wednesday afternoon, followed by a joint EC meeting at the end of the day. On Thursday, several of the working groups, including COMU, NG911, and Southwest Border Communications Working Group, will have the opportunity to meet individually.

I am excited to share the news that we successfully launched the SNS last week. Thanks to those who have committed time toward these crucial efforts! If your association or its members have questions about the SNS, OEC has established a dedicated Help Desk to answer questions, call toll free at 1-833-723-3712 or email SNS@HQ.DHS.Gov. Additionally, OEC can offer a dedicated webinar to your state or association's members to assist them in learning about the SNS and completing the survey. Please contact the OEC Team through the [SAFECOM](#) and [NCSWIC](#) inboxes to obtain additional SNS promotional and marketing products to assist your efforts. For more information on the SNS, please visit the website at www.dhs.gov/safecom/sns.

A major priority over the next few months will be to work within our SAFECOM committees to develop our 2018 Strategic Plan to guide SAFECOM's general direction for next year. At the November Meeting, I'd like to encourage each of the committees to focus on summarizing your accomplishments from 2017 and objectives for 2018. If you foresee issues attending these meetings because of your participation in disaster recovery efforts, please email the [SAFECOM Inbox](#) with your uncertainty. I look forward to seeing everyone in Oklahoma! ■



Damage from Hurricane Irma in Florida
©Ted Lawson



Note from the NCSWIC Chair

By: Nikki Cassingham, Oklahoma Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC)

Summer 2017 was a time of change and growth for the NCSWIC community as we experienced two transitions. Former NCSWIC Chair Bob Symons officially retired, and the original NCSWIC Chair, Mark Grubb, announced he would be leaving the SWIC community to join OEC. Losing these veteran SWICs who helped establish the NCSWIC program and gave so much to help the program thrive will be challenging, but we must embrace this growth opportunity for the NCSWIC as an opportunity to continue to distinguish and enhance the SWIC position and the NCSWIC program as a whole. As most of you know, during the May in-person NCSWIC EC Meeting,

Joe Galvin, Illinois SWIC, was elected NCSWIC Vice Chair. I look forward to working with Joe and can assure you we will work hard for this organization. There are a number of outstanding SWICs who have stepped up to serve and lead this effort and we could not succeed without each of you.

As an example: in August, members of the NCSWIC EC participated in a meeting with OEC Leadership in Chicago, Illinois, to discuss the future of NCSWIC and brainstorm ways to improve coordination and collaboration with OEC. The outcomes from those discussions were recently shared with NCSWIC members. These included fostering greater relationships between SWICs and the various OEC branches, including communication with SWICs regarding OEC events in the states and maintaining an open dialogue with OEC leadership. Based on these discussions, I am encouraged the relationship between OEC and NCSWIC will continue to thrive.

Additionally, the NCSWIC Governance Committee met in early September in Des Moines, Iowa, to discuss 2018 Strategic Planning, the use of social media as a means of elevating the NCSWIC Program, and updating the SWIC on-boarding process. The meeting was productive and members finalized the Committee's 2018 priorities and provided input to the November in-person meeting agendas.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication to this program. NCSWIC would not be what it is today without each SWIC's participation and commitment to the NCSWIC community. I look forward to seeing all of you in Norman, Oklahoma, in November for the Joint SAFECOM-NCSWIC meeting. Happy Fall! ■

Border Interoperability Demonstration Project (BIDP)

The Border Interoperability Demonstration Project (BIDP) has concluded and its innovative solutions and best practices are now available. DHS OEC is committed to transferring BIDP information and knowledge to all border communities and other interested parties. OEC is also applying BIDP best practices to the Department's future grants, as well as coordinating with other federal agencies to act on recommendations. BIDP's results will continue to impact products and services, benefiting the public safety community as a whole and border communities in particular.

A key component of BIDP contributing to ongoing public safety efforts is OEC's development of studies, tools, and templates to assist emergency responders operating along and across U.S. borders. The principal publication is the *Border Interoperability Demonstration Project Closeout Report*, which provides an overview of the program, lessons learned, and recommendations. This report includes individual grantee reports on the seven selected communities that detail project outcomes, technical assistance, and partnerships.

In addition, OEC has developed knowledge transfer studies containing best practices and processes successfully demonstrated by BIDP recipients. These studies examine the feasibility of deploying tested interoperability solutions in other U.S. border communities, including:

- *BIDP Study on Implementing Interoperability Channels along and across the U.S.-Canadian Border*: OEC examined Montana's project to expand the use of a national interoperability channel, VLA31, by adding public safety officials spread across parts of the northern border. The study includes a five-step process to guide other communities in implementing shared interoperability channels.

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- *BIDP Study on Rural and Urban Area Interoperability Solutions along and across International Borders:* OEC studied the similarities and disparities in interoperability solutions for rural and urban border areas. The intent is to assist border communities of varying sizes to plan and implement the appropriate interoperability solutions that align with the Interoperability Continuum.

The next study will focus on California's BIDP project to identify recommendations for implementing advanced and emerging technologies in border regions. OEC is also planning to create templates and tools to assist border communities. Other potential tools include development of an environmental planning and historic preservation guide, inclusion of BIDP-derived information in the next *National Interoperability Field Operations Guide* update, as well as the creation of border-specific electronic field operations guides.

OEC is committed to working with stakeholder groups to share BIDP's innovative solutions and best practices, as well as to improve international policies and the coordination of emergency communications along the borders. The Southwest Border Communications Working Group and Canada-United States Communications Interoperability Working Group in particular will continue to serve as ongoing focal points for border coordination.

To learn more about BIDP or to download the closeout report, studies, and other documents, visit the BIDP website at <https://www.dhs.gov/border-interoperability-demonstration-project>. Please direct any questions or comments to BIDP@hq.dhs.gov. ■

2017 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
	Planning, Training, Exercises	Fourth Tuesday of every month at 3pm ET

2017 SAFECOM & NCSWIC Committee Leadership

NCSWIC Governance Committee:

Chair: Ken Hasenei

Vice Chair: Vacant

NCSWIC Planning, Training, and Exercise Committee:

Chair: John Miller

Vice Chair: Sue Krogman

SAFECOM Governance Committee:

Chair: Don Bowers

Vice Chair: Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald

SAFECOM Education and Outreach Committee:

Chair: Chris Lombard

Vice Chair: Mike Murphy

Joint Technology Policy Committee:

SAFECOM Chair: Chief Gerald Reardon

NCSWIC Chair: Joe Galvin

SAFECOM Vice Chair: Vacant

NCSWIC Vice Chair: Vacant

Joint Funding and Sustainment Committee:

SAFECOM Chair: Tom Roche

NCSWIC Chair: David Soloos

Upcoming SAFECOM and NCSWIC Meetings

Month	Day	Meeting
November	6-9	SAFECOM & NCSWIC Meetings; Norman, Oklahoma
	8	SAFECOM EC Meeting
	8	NCSWIC EC Meeting
	8	Joint SAFECOM & NCSWIC EC Meeting
December	7	SAFECOM EC Conference Call
	12	NCSWIC EC Conference Call

SAFECOM and NCSWIC July and September Executive Committee (EC) Meetings

The NCSWIC EC met on Tuesday, July 11, 2017:

- Members received updates on OEC programs and initiatives from Dusty Rhoads and updates on NCSWIC Committees and Working Groups from their respective Chairs
- The NCSWIC EC approved the *NCSWIC Intellectual Capital Assessment*, a survey designed to gather backgrounds and areas of expertise from across the SWIC community

The SAFECOM EC met on Thursday, July 13, 2017:

- Received updates on federal grants and the *FY17 SAFECOM Guidance*
- Discussed results from the Equipment Life Cycle survey conducted by the Funding and Sustainment Committee during the May 2017 SAFECOM and NCSWIC meeting in San Antonio, Texas

The SAFECOM and NCSWIC ECs approved the following documents during the July 2017 meetings:

- [COMU Personnel Position Task Book Sign-Off Process Template](#), a product developed by the NCSWIC Planning Training, and Exercises committee and co-branded with SAFECOM through the COMU Working Group

The SAFECOM EC met on Thursday, September 14, 2017:

- Received an update on the COMU Working Group's progress, key objectives, and development of the *COMU 2.0 Roadmap*
 - The COMU 2.0 Roadmap is an action plan that lays out the gaps, milestones, deliverables, and timeline for establishing a COMU 2.0 foundation
- Invited members to participate in a webinar, sponsored by the Funding and Sustainment Committee, to review completed sections from Phase 1 of the *Lifecycle Guide*
- Approved the [SAFECOM Elevator Speech](#) developed by the Education and Outreach Committee
- Approved the 2017 SAFECOM elections process, proposed by the Governance Committee, set to kick off on September 15, 2017

The NCSWIC EC met on Thursday, September 21, 2017:

- Members received updates from OEC Director Ron Hewitt, and Committee and Working Group Chairs
- Nikki Cassingham, NCSWIC Chair, and Joe Galvin, NCSWIC Vice Chair, provided an overview of the August 2, 2017, NCSWIC Leadership In-Person Meeting

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- Brad Stoddard volunteered to temporarily fill the vacancy in NCSWIC's representation to the Federal Partnership for Interoperable Communications

Please contact the [SAFECOM Inbox](#) for more information on SAFECOM activities, and [NCSWIC Inbox](#) for more information on NCSWIC activities. ■

Meet the Stakeholders



Holly Wayt

SAFECOM, Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO)

Holly Wayt began her career in public safety communications in 1991 after graduating from The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work. Her mind set on the social work profession, she applied to work as a dispatcher only temporarily. Ms. Wayt had no idea that not only would she find her passion, but her permanent career path in public safety communications.

Holly currently serves as the Communications Manager for the City of Westerville, a position she has held since 1995. Throughout her tenure at the City, the Communications Department, a consolidated Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), has tripled in the number of employees. She has also been involved with two complete renovations of the Communications Center and managed radio system changeovers that started with UHF/VHF and moved from an analog 800 MHz to now digital 800 MHz. She served as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Region 33 700 MHz Group for over 10 years. Holly also was a member of the Missing Kids and 9-1-1 Readiness Project Executive Committee for a number of years, most recently helping with the revision of ANS1.101.2-2010, now ANS1.101.3-2015.

For a number of years, Holly has assisted with the emergency preparedness exercises of the John Glenn Regional Airport Authority (CMH airport), serving as an evaluator of their Emergency Operations Center/Communications.

Ms. Wayt was recently elected to the position of First Vice President of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, International, Inc., (APCO), which is the world's largest public safety communications association, with over 30,000 members across the United States and abroad, dedicated to the enhancement of public safety communications. Her enthusiasm for APCO began in 1995 and has included numerous leadership roles both within the governance and committee roles.

In her spare time, Holly enjoys spending time with family and friends as well as fishing, boating, reading, traveling and gardening.

Holly can be reached at holly.wayt@westerville.org. ■



Chris Maiers

NCSWIC, Iowa SWIC

Chris Maiers was appointed as the SWIC for the State of Iowa in May of 2017. Prior to his appointment, Chris worked as an environmental specialist in the state's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) where he performed data analysis, drafted reports for stakeholders, and coordinated with contractors to develop and refine policies and procedures for air quality monitoring and equipment disposal. There, he was able to research air quality forecasting techniques in order to alert Iowans of deteriorating air quality before the event occurred.

Before his time in the Iowa DNR, Chris worked for nearly seven years as an operational on-air meteorologist with a local television station in Iowa. During that time, he achieved certification via the American Meteorological Society as a Certified Broadcast Meteorologist (CBM #313 - now inactive).

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Chris Maiers, Iowa's new SWIC, shows off his SWIC-Mobile.

While working as a broadcast meteorologist, Chris offered consulting expertise on Doppler weather radar systems to other television stations and taught meteorology classes at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa.

Chris is a graduate of Iowa State University's meteorology program. He also volunteers his time with the Central Iowa Chapter of the National Weather Association and serves as president of the Chapter. He also coaches Little League baseball in the Des Moines area.

Chris can be reached at maiers@dps.state.ia.us.



OEC HQ Spotlights

Gerald (Jerry) Jaskulski

Management and Program Analyst, OEC, Public Safety and National Security/Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Governance Branch

Mr. Gerald (Jerry) Jaskulski is currently assigned to DHS OEC, where he has supported the development of emergency communication policy, planning, PSAPs, and NG911 implementation coordination since 2012. In this role he works with federal, state, tribal, territorial, local, and private emergency communication stakeholders to develop policy and best practices to support and enhance nationwide emergency communication capabilities. Mr. Jaskulski is the OEC liaison to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)/National 911 Office and presently working on mutual beneficial interoperable emergency communication joint projects between the Department of Transportation/NHTSA/National 911 Office and DHS/NPPD/CS&C/OEC.

Mr. Jaskulski has worked in and supported public safety for over 40 years. His previous activities include:

- Captain, Fairfax County, Virginia Fire and Rescue Department (Retired) from 1974 to 2003 where he served as the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)/Virginia Task Force (VATF)-1 Communication Unit Leader, 911 / PSAP Fire and Rescue Supervisor, and was a National Registered Paramedic.
- Emergency Management Assistant Coordinator, Fairfax County, Virginia Emergency Management Agency from 2003 to 2005
- Assistant Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator, Stafford County, Virginia Fire & Rescue Department (Retired) from 2005 to 2010
- Program Analyst, U.S. DHS, Federal Emergency Management Agency from 2010 to 2012 managing the Federal Homeland Security Grant Programs for the States of Alaska, Idaho, and Washington.

Jerry can be reached at Gerald.Jaskulski@hq.dhs.gov. ■

In Memoriam: 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. His 42-year law enforcement career started in 1964 with the Rochester Police Department. He joined the Gates Police Department in December 1967 and became Chief in February 1974.

During a recent interview, Chief Roche stated his proudest accomplishment was the establishment of a county-wide communications system in Gates County. His department wanted to establish a communications system that would serve all 12 jurisdictions within the county to improve the cohesiveness of the county's law enforcement entities. At first, it was challenging to get everyone to agree with building out a county-wide communications system. Everyone was comfortable using their established methods of communication and did not see the need for change. Overtime, Chief Roche was able to convince all 12 Chiefs to make the switch, resulting in one centralized dispatch system that is still in place today. Not only did this centralized system improve public safety, but it allowed for more interaction between jurisdictions and strengthened relationships between departments. The system became an example for other counties across New York State to emulate.

When asked 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.

OEC Building Collaborative Relationships with Federally Recognized Tribes

DHS OEC is continuing efforts to establish and build collaborative relationships with federally recognized tribes to understand tribal emergency communications operations, resources, and interoperable emergency challenges. These efforts help identify opportunities for OEC to assist tribes with assessing and improving operable and interoperable communications capabilities.

COMU Training Calendar Released

The OEC, ICTAP Branch recently published a COMU Training Calendar. The purpose of this calendar is to keep stakeholders informed on communications trainings occurring around the country. The calendar can be found on the [ICTAP Resources Page](#) on the SAFECOM website.

FY 2017 Emergency Communications Financial Assistance Programs

Following Fiscal Year 2017 (FY 2017) appropriations, the ECPC GFG worked with federal granting agencies to update the *FY 2017 List of Federal Financial Assistance Programs Funding for Emergency Communications Opportunities*. The list includes program descriptions, available funding amounts, application deadlines, and links to federal agency websites for additional information. ECPC will continue to maintain and update the list throughout the year.

NPSTC Encourages Public Safety to Adopt the Trustmark Framework

On July 17, 2017, the [National Public Safety Telecommunications Council \(NPSTC\)](#) adopted a position paper encouraging public safety to leverage the [Trustmark Framework](#) and implement identity, credential, and access management (ICAM) solutions in agreement with SAFECOM and the NCSWIC.

ECPC GFG Roadmap to 2020 Released

In Spring 2017, the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC) Steering Committee approved the Roadmap to 2020 (Roadmap).

COMU Personnel PTB Sign-Off Process Template Released

The NCSWIC Planning, Training, and Exercise Committee, in conjunction with the SAFECOM COMU Working Group, developed the [COMU Personnel Position Task Book Sign-Off Process Template](#) to assist Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWIC), SWIC designees, state governance bodies, and regional governance bodies in developing a system for COMU personnel PTB sign-off. This template is intended to shepherd SWICs and/or state governing communications bodies through the basic processes and procedures necessary for establishing a COMU PTB sign-off process until such time that a national program is developed. This document is meant to guide, rather than restrict. Not all items may be applicable to your program. The SAFECOM COMU Working Group is currently working on the development of a national program. For additional Communication Unit resources visit: <https://www.dhs.gov/safecom/communications-unit>.

Note from the Director

On July 11, 2017, Ron Hewitt, DHS, OEC Director, provided updates on current activities and initiatives taking place at OEC.



CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER

If you would like to contribute articles for future newsletters highlighting innovative practices in your state, territory, or represented association, please contact SAFECOMGovernance@hq.dhs.gov or NCSWICGovernance@hq.dhs.gov.

The SAFECOM Nationwide Survey is now OPEN!

The survey will be open for responses through
February 23, 2018.

We need your help to promote the SNS!

**Please encourage your colleagues and members to
take the survey.**

**The Office of Emergency Communications has
resources to help with promotion – including draft
language, social media posts, and presentations.**

Questions?

Call the SNS Help Desk toll free at
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