SAFECOM & NCSWIC QUARTERLY
Newsletter

Note from the Director

By: Ron Hewitt, OEC Director

Welcome to Volume III, Issue I of the SAFECOM- National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC) Quarterly Newsletter. After a busy winter, we have been making progress on improving public safety communications interoperability and better aligning the Office of Emergency Communication's (OEC) products and services with stakeholder needs.

OEC continues to work with the National Governor's Association (NGA) to strengthen governance nationwide. NGA is in the process of finalizing its recommendations from the recent Policy Academy on Enhancing Emergency Communications Interoperability. OEC looks forward to assisting states with the implementation of these recommendations.

OEC is excited SAFECOM is sponsoring the SAFECOM Nationwide Survey (SNS) to inform the Nationwide Communications Baseline Assessment. The SNS is a nationwide data collection effort to obtain actionable and critical data that drives our nation's emergency communication policies, programs, and funding. Many SAFECOM and NCSWIC members have been involved in the SNS and we look forward to continuing this collaboration. Once the SNS is released, we will need everyone's help with a widespread outreach effort throughout the public safety community. Please encourage your states, jurisdictions, associations, and working groups to promote the SNS by sending emails, and utilizing their organization's websites and social media pages to spread the word and encourage participation. SAFECOM will deploy the SNS for a 30 day period in 2017. Please visit the SAFECOM website for the most up-to-date information.

OEC's Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program has accepted 161 technical assistance requests and 20 requests for Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) workshops. This number includes 12 standard SCIP Workshops and eight Enhanced SCIP Pilots. For the Enhanced SCIP Pilot, OEC is leveraging feedback from the NGA Policy Academy and stakeholder inputs from the Statewide Governance and Planning Integrated Project Team to conduct these workshops. The Enhanced SCIP Pilots will include working with states to conduct a more extensive review of governance, technology, and funding sustainability within the emergency communications ecosystem. In addition, OEC has completed eight observations of large-scale planned events in major urban areas under the Interoperable Communications Capabilities Analysis Program.

If you haven't already done so, please mark your calendars for the next in-person SAFECOM-NCSWIC meeting, May 2-4, in San Antonio, Texas. OEC continues to work with SAFECOM and NCSWIC leadership to ensure meetings are valuable, and the agendas take into account your feedback for schedule and session design.

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).

Here at OEC, we continue to rely on people like you to determine solutions, develop policy recommendations, and raise the awareness of public safety communications issues to help decision makers and elected officials better understand our community's primary concerns. Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you all in San Antonio, Texas next month. ∎

Note from the SAFECOM Chair

By: Chief Gerald Reardon, SAFECOM At-Large

I would like to start by thanking everyone for their continued dedication to SAFECOM. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our newest members including, Brian Howard, National Congress of American Indians, and Brian Schaeffer, National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians.

In the first few months of this year, SAFECOM has continued to work with OEC to support committee collaboration on today's most pressing public safety issues. The Governance Committee has developed documents outlining SAFECOM's 2016 achievements and strategic path forward for 2017 through the development of the 2016 SAFECOM Annual Report, 2016 Strategic Priorities Summary of Accomplishments, and the 2017 SAFECOM Strategic Plan and Implementation Guide. The Education and Outreach Committee has been focused on developing the SAFECOM Introduction Presentation, the SAFECOM Factsheet, and updating the SAFECOM website and Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) site. The Joint Funding and Sustainment Committee continues to work on updating the System Lifecycle Planning Guide, including adding an appendix with a Sample Lifecycle Template. The Joint Technology Policy Committee continues to work on developing a definition of "Public Safety Grade" and discussing information overload.

SAFECOM is pleased to be sponsoring the 2017 SNS. Both SAFECOM and NCSWIC members have been participating in the development of the survey. As we begin the outreach phase, please think about ways we can encourage agencies and organizations to respond to the survey. The more responses we receive, the better our understanding of communications gaps will be, which will greatly inform our efforts moving forward. The data gathered will not only support SAFECOM's mission, but OEC's mission to improve and advance emergency communication capabilities across the nation. SAFECOM will deploy the SNS for a 30 day period in 2017, depending on the necessary approvals. Please visit the **SAFECOM** website for the most up-to-date information and watch for e-mails asking for your help in recruiting your associations and working groups to assist in spreading the survey (newsletters, presentations, e-mail blasts, etc.). Included in the appendix of this newsletter is the SAFECOM's SNS Fact Sheet with more detailed information about the effort. Contact **SNS@hq.dhs.gov** with any ideas or questions.

Finally, I would like to thank OEC for its continued efforts to increase the safety of our communities through OEC's support of the SAFECOM mission. I look forward to seeing everyone at the next in-person SAFECOM-NCSWIC meeting in May. We have worked hard to modify the agenda to better suit everyone's needs. This is SAFECOM's meeting and we want you to get as much as possible out of the sessions. We would like to hear your feedback on the format of the meeting. Myself, Mark, and Doug appreciate your time and continued support. See you in San Antonio, TX! ∎

Note from the NCSWIC Vice Chair

By: Nikki Cassingham, Oklahoma SWIC

2017 is going to be a year of transition for the NCSWIC. Bob Symons, NCSWIC Chair, will be retiring and stepping down as the NCSWIC Chair, Region XIII Chair, and Wyoming SWIC. NCSWIC also has a number of new SWICs, including Frank Lujan, Jr. (Guam); Matt Webb (Georgia); and Everett Kaneshige (Hawaii). A number of other SWICs will also be moving on this year, bringing in even more new SWICs to our Program. They will be joining a dedicated NCSWIC community aimed at improving emergency communications nationwide. In addition to the membership changes, members of the NCSWIC are in the process of revamping the NCSWIC Charter, providing clarity and direction to the NCSWIC Program.

The NCSWIC committees have been busy during Quarter One. The Governance Committee developed and published the 2016 NCSWIC Annual Report, the 2016 Annual Summary Fact Sheet, and the 2017 Strategic Plan. The Planning, Training, and Exercise Committee recently met in Glynco, Georgia, to develop products, including the Position Task Book Certification Guidance and best practices for developing a Field Operations Guide. The Joint Funding and Sustainment Committee continues to work on updates to the System Lifecycle Planning Guide, including adding an appendix with a Sample Lifecycle Template. The Joint Technology Policy Committee continues to work on developing a definition of "Public Safety Grade" and discussing information overload. The committees will be meeting in-person during the upcoming joint meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

NCSWIC Planning, Training, and Exercise Committee members met in Glynco, Georgia on March 8, 2017 to develop committee products.

In addition to the products listed above, the committees have developed a number of other valuable documents that can be found on the NCSWIC Website. Bob and I continue to encourage each of you to peruse the website and share it within your state. I look forward to our continued collaborations with OEC to advance emergency communications within the states, regions, and across the country.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at our next joint NCSWIC and SAFECOM in-person meeting scheduled for the first week of May! The meeting schedule will be slightly different than previous meetings, with the joint session beginning Tuesday afternoon, a three hour Regional Interoperability Council Meeting, and a NCSWIC Business Meeting. Thank you for all of your continued hard work, and see you soon! ◼

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 and Exercises	Fourth Tuesday of every month at 3pm ET

2017 SAFECOM & NCSWIC Committee Leadership

NCSWIC Governance Committee:
Chair: Bob Symons
Vice Chair: Craig Allen

NCSWIC Planning, Training, and Exercise Committee:
Chair: Jessica Stolz
Vice Chair: John Stevens

Joint Technology Policy Committee:
SAFECOM Chair: Chief Gerald Reardon
NCSWIC Chair: Craig Allen
SAFECOM Vice Chair: Dan Wills
NCSWIC Vice Chair: Steve Staffier

Joint Funding and Sustainment Committee:
SAFECOM Chair: Tom Roche
NCSWIC Chair: Victoria Garcia

SAFECOM Education and Outreach Committee:
Chair: Chris Lombard
Vice Chair: Vacant

SAFECOM Governance Committee:
Chair: Don Bowers
Vice Chair: Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald

SAFECOM and NCSWIC March Executive Committee (EC) Meetings

The NCSWIC EC met on Tuesday, March 7, 2017:

- Received an update on DHS OEC priorities, products, and services
- Received updates from each NCSWIC committee
- Reviewed and approved draft award language for the first NCSWIC Leadership Award

The SAFECOM EC met on Thursday, March 9, 2017:

- Received an update on the Department of Homeland Secuirty (DHS) OEC priorities, products, and services
- Received updates from each SAFECOM committeee
- Approved the *SAFECOM Introduction Presentation* and the *SAFECOM Factsheet*
- Approved the 2016 Annual Report and 2016 SAFECOM Strategic Priorities: Summary of Accomplishments
- Approved the 2017 Strategic Plan and Implementation Guide

The SAFECOM and NCSWIC ECs approved the following documents on the March 2017 conference calls:

- White Paper: *An Unmet Need: National-Level Governance for the NIMS/ICS Communications Unit*
- System Life Cycle Template: *Appendix A: Sample Life Cycle Plan*

Please contact the **SAFECOM Inbox** for more information on SAFECOM activities, and **Bob Symons**, NCSWIC Chair, for more information on NCSWIC activities. ■

OEC Calendar

MAY 2017

| 2–4 | SAFECOM-NCSWIC Meeting |

JULY 2017

| 11 | NCSWIC EC Conference Call |
| 13 | SAFECOM EC Conference Call |

Meet the Stakeholders

Brian Schaeffer

SAFECOM, National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT)

Brian Schaeffer is the Interim Fire Chief for the Spokane Fire Department. He leads a 350 person all-risk agency that also manages a Combined Communications Center. This regional center provides Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) communications to 15 agencies serving as an interagency hub with federal and state partners. Prior to coming to Spokane, he was the Deputy Chief of the City of Yakima, Washington Fire Department. Additional previous assignments include progressing from firefighter to Fire Chief in Missouri and being a Flight Paramedic for an Air Medical Program. Brian earned a Bachelor's Degree in Fire Science and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. He is currently in the dissertation phase of a doctoral degree at Creighton University.

Brian sees his position as Fire Chief as an opportunity to live and share his passion for servant leadership. The Spokane Fire Department is a regional leader in the fields of public safety technology and communication systems, and is continually innovating and pushing the limits of established bureaucratic ideals in the industry. The Spokane Fire Department operates within a $61 million operating budget providing service for 15 stations with 14 engines, three ladder companies, two quint companies, one air/light/support, and two battalion chiefs 24/7.

Brian is married to his wife Ellen who practices as a nurse anesthetist in Spokane. Aside from anything outdoors, Brian is also an amateur radio operator (KI7KEU). Brian and Ellen have two golden retrievers and proudly live in the Indian Trail Neighborhood in the City of Spokane. ∎

Brian can be reached at **bschaeffer@spokanefire.org**.

Kristin Buda

Program Analyst, OEC National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) and Grants Branch

Kristin Buda joined the DHS, OEC, NECP and Grants Branch in April 2016. Before starting her work with OEC, Kristin was employed at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) where she worked on technology policy and integrating private sector response efforts into the whole of community response. She worked with FEMA's incident management assistance teams and the field qualification system programs. Prior to FEMA, Kristin supported the Department of Energy in the administration of the state and local energy assurance grants, as well as the development of a national electricity outage platform. Prior to joining the federal government, Kristin managed business tax credits for the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. ∎

Kristin can be reached at **kristin.buda@hq.dhs.gov**.

2017 SAFECOM Strategic Plan and Implementation Guide

This document identifies SAFECOM's 2017 goals and initiatives.

2016 SAFECOM Annual Report & 2016 SAFECOM Strategic Priorities: Summary of Accomplishments

This year in review document showcases SAFECOM's recent successes and achievements.

SWBCWG Addresses Opportunities under the New Administration

The Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG) held its first 2017 meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on January 24-25, 2017. The meeting focused on regional and statewide public safety land mobile radio (LMR) interoperability efforts, activities, and New Mexico's emergency response/preparedness.

NCSWIC Leaders Meet to Discuss the 2017 Strategic Plan

On January 10, 2017, the DHS OEC hosted leaders from the NCSWIC in Arlington, Virginia, to discuss strategic planning for 2017.

SAFECOM Leaders Meet to Discuss SAFECOM 2017 Strategic Plan

On December 6, 2016, the Office of Emergency Communications and SAFECOM leadership, to include the SAFECOM Chair and Vice Chairs as well as each of the four SAFECOM Committee Chairs, met in-person in Arlington, Virginia, to discuss SAFECOM's strategic plan for 2017.

2016 Funding and Sustainment Methods for Public Safety Communications Systems

Throughout 2016, the Joint SAFECOM and NCSWIC Funding and Sustainment Committee collected and compiled examples of funding methods used by public safety agencies to build, improve, expand, and support the ongoing costs of public safety communications systems. In total, the Committee compiled over 50 examples of how public safety agencies funded land mobile radio (LMR) system replacements and upgrades; 9-1-1 operations, service delivery, and consolidation; and broadband projects.

OEC Shares Lessons Learned with Canadian Colleagues

On November 29, the OEC Deputy Director Chris Essid shared key lessons learned on emergency communications governance with leading Canadian public safety stakeholders during the Tenth Canadian Public Safety Interoperability Workshop, also known as the Communications Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG), in Vancouver, British Columbia.

FPIC Launches Website

FPIC's primary goal is to address interoperability among the public safety community at all levels of government, foster intergovernmental cooperation, and identify and leverage common synergies. FPIC serves as a coordination and advisory body to address technical and operational wireless issues relevant to interoperability within the public safety emergency communications community, interfacing with voluntary representatives from federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal agencies.

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 NCSWICGovernance@hq.dhs.gov or SAFECOMGovernance@hq.dhs.gov.

2017 SAFECOM NATIONWIDE SURVEY FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

The SAFECOM Nationwide Survey (SNS) is a nationwide data collection effort to obtain actionable and critical data that drives our nation's emergency communication policies, programs and funding. SAFECOM will leverage the collected data to identify gaps and inform development of the program's strategic priorities; and will assist the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) to execute the Nationwide Communication Baseline Assessment (NCBA).

TARGET POPULATION

SAFECOM seeks responses from emergency response provider organizations at the federal, state, local, and territory levels of government, as well as Tribal Nations with:

- A public safety-related mission in the following four disciplines: Law Enforcement, Fire & Rescue, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)/Public Safety Communications Centers (PSCCs).
- Users of public safety communications technology during day-to-day and out-of-the-ordinary situations.

DEVELOPMENT

SAFECOM engaged with various public safety partners that represent the emergency communications community to help with the development of the SNS. The group started with the SAFECOM Continuum's five critical success elements, expanded it to include a Security element, and updated the content to reflect current public safety processes, practices, personnel, systems and equipment. The SNS will be completed by emergency responders and government officials at all levels of government in a wide range of positions to ensure that questions are easily understood across all geographic regions and disciplines.

PUBLIC SAFETY PARTNERS BENEFITS

Survey results will help government officials and emergency responders better understand emergency communications needs so that they can make the right funding, policy and programmatic decisions to strengthen capabilities. The SNS data will be shared, as appropriate, with emergency communications public safety partners. The data will:

- **Build knowledge** by raising awareness about current and future public safety communications plans.
- **Shape policy and funding** by gathering data that will equip decision makers to support public safety communications programs, services, and assistance.
- **Strengthen capabilities** by equipping public safety partners to evaluate their own emergency communications capabilities and seek communications improvements.
- **Support** Statewide Interoperability Coordinator roles and responsibilities.
- **Collect and share reliable data** with emergency communications partners at all levels of government in order to help with: **(1)** Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) development, **(2)** Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Analysis (THIRA) development, **(3)** state-level grant programs and guidance, **(4)** federal grant applications assistance, and **(5)** funding and resource sharing strategy development.

SURVEY RELEASE

SAFECOM will deploy the SNS for a 30 day period in the summer of 2017. Visit the SAFECOM website for the most up-to-date information.

QUESTIONS?

Questions on the SNS can be directed to SNS@hq.dhs.gov. Additionally, SNS documents are available on the SAFECOM website with instructions on how to take the survey and use the survey tool.