

**DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY
Public Safety Interoperability Communications Committee
MEETING MINUTES
September 16, 2008
DOT Research Lab, 280 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067**

Welcome & Introductions:

The meeting was called to order at 1306 hours by the Co-Chair, Michael Varney. The following individuals were in attendance: Stephan Brown (DOT/Bradley), Robert DiBella (DEMHS), Jim Farkas (Region 5), Chuck Fuller (OSET), John Gustafson (Region 2), John Masciadrelli (OSET), Jeff Merwin (Region 1), Philip Mikan (DEMHS), Jeffrey Otto (Region 4), George Pohorilak (OSET), Gregg Prevost (Valley Shore), Gordon Shand (DPH), Dan Soule (LCD), Nick Varanelli (DEP), Pete Zack (DEP), Michael Varney (DOIT), Keith Victor (Region 3), John Warren (Military), Kris Wohlgemugh (DOIT), Jerry Zarwanski (OSET), Joseph Gaudett (Bridgeport PD), Sandra Baker (DEMHS), Bob Davis (Verizon Wireless), Greg M. (Verizon Wireless) and Steven Savage (NWCT Public Safety).

Mike Varney announced that Co-Chair William Hackett was not present.

Public Comment: None

Review of Minutes:

Motion to accept meeting minutes of July 15, 2008 made by John Gustafson; seconded by Keith Victor - accepted unanimously.

PSIC Grant Update:

Emergency Telecommunications Manager posting closed. Interviews were held at DPS and DEMHS. There were 10 candidates for each position. George Pohorilak held DPS interviews and Mike Varney sat on the panel. Offer has been extended to a candidate. Starting date will be September 26th. Once confirmation letter is sent to the candidate and the position is accepted, the name of the individual will be announced. DEMHS also held interviews and made a selection. A background investigation is currently being conducted. Both individuals will work as a team and should be on board by the next meeting.

Mike Varney informed the committee that MOUs must be in place in order to draw down funds. There is a 34-35% return rate from municipalities. Phil Mikan added that they should see a better completion rate and Washington will be informed once it reaches 75%. John Gustafson asked for the list of towns without MOUs. Regional Reps would like to know what towns are in the red. Phil Mikan will provide the list to everyone tomorrow.

There was a requirement from DHS to give a status on SCIP. Mike Varney gave a status report to list 7 goals and broke down the initiatives within SCIP. Meeting notes will include report. DHS changed the way States request technical assistance. States were allowed to request adhoc, now allowed only five requests annually. Requests go through Mike Varney and Libby Graham. Jim Farkas asked if this included CASM Training and Varney indicated that CASM is different and is a stand alone request. John Gustafson asked whether ICTAP only offer CASM through computer learning. Mike Varney will know more once he submits a request. He will poll the Regions to discuss obtaining CASM Training

Sub-Committee Reports:

- a. Technical Workgroup – (STOCS) Completing remaining towns for Phase 1; Phase 2 closed September 5th and the workgroup had a meeting to review applications. 25 applicants will begin MOU process and move to have training. Interoperability Committee Regional Coordinators would like to be in on meeting to review applications. John Gustafson stated the next meeting will be to ensure requirements are met on the applications then ESF 2 need to be included. Mike Varney would like to get everyone together in the meeting and will follow-up with an e-mail for those unable to attend. The meeting will be on 9/18 at DOIT, East Hartford.
- b. Training & Exercise Workgroup – Nothing to Report
- c. 700 MHz Planning Workgroup – George Pohorilak reported that the group met and discussed the CAPRAD Sort. A conference call was conducted with other states. It was determined that CT did not lose any spectrum as bad as initially thought. The workgroup must find out what frequencies we have and must be careful on how we allocate spectrum. Many items were tabled until the Emergency Telecommunication Managers begins on the State level. The workgroup will have a recommendation to change language in SCIP Plan at next meeting. The workgroup called for an annual review, but can't wait until next June due to Feb '09 deadline.
- d. 4.9 GHz Workgroup – Mike Varney will refer an e-mail to George Carbonnel of DOT due to a request from Cross Island Ferry to use 4.9 GHz frequency on the Ferry boats. Assistance with licensing is needed.

Report of Interoperability Usage and incidents during previous months:

A written report was submitted to Co-Chair Mike Varney. There were 56 ITAC tests (43 conducted by Millstone and 13 various agencies) with 4 activations (8/7/08 ITAC 3 - New Haven Hazmat Drill; 8/24/08 ITAC 4 - CSP/CTIC Motorcycle Incident in Farmington; 8/24/08 ITAC 1 - Fairfield Fire Dept tanker drill in New Canaan; and 8/25/08 ITAC 1 - Georgetown Fire Dept drill in the Reading area) No problems to report.

John Gustafson gave an update on the Special Hazard Exercise. The drill was cut short due to tornado warnings. George Pohorilak stated that Waterbury needs to be brought in for a meeting on usage of their system.

Old Business:

- a. Status on Portable Radio Inventory & Training Programs – Nothing to report
- b. HLS Grants – MOAs discussed under PSIC Grant also pertained to 2007 HLS Grant because one MOA will service these two grants.
- c. Transit Security Grant – Redrafting update of change. Will be a stand alone project.
- d. State Foam Trailer Program Communications – Nothing to report. Currently waiting for a response from DEP.

Regional Reports:

Region 1 (Jeff Merwin) – Deputy Chief Joseph Gaudett, Bridgeport P.D., reported that the 2nd COML course has been completed. Fairfield County Chiefs are pursuing a grant to create a radio channel from Greenwich to Stratford. The Region has been awarded almost 2 million in UASI grants. The workgroup met to decide to put money towards 700 MHz network. Jeff Merwin reported that Local Health Departments now have sat phones.

Region 2 (John Gustafson) – Waiting for MOUs in order to draw down funds for antenna system. Nothing additional to report.

Region 3 (Keith Victor) – Oct 14 & 15 training scheduled for TIC Plan at Cheshire Academy. Request made that training notice be shared and sent to committee. He also reported that West Hartford is putting in a new command post.

Region 4 (Jeff Otto) – Region 4 conducted interviews w/vendors. Requested revision to Region 4 report recorded in minutes dated July 15 (Region 4 had 1 license for VCALL/UCALL should be revised to state 1 license application.)

Region 5 (Jim Farkas) – Jim asked if there was guidance or a workshop for the \$87,000 IECGP. Steve Savage reported that ESF2 met with NW Regional Hazmat Team to provide guidance for \$48,000 they have. The group will work on a project for regional communications. They are working to get police and ham operators involved in the group.

New Business:

Chief States Attorney Request - The Chief States Attorney's Office is requesting use of ICALL/ITAC radios for their inspectors. A motion to approve was made by Mike Varney. Gregg Provost asked for additional details. Committee further discussed the request. John Gustafson moved to accept request, seconded by Jeff Merwin, unanimously accepted by committee. Gordon Shand recommended that guidance be given to the agency on what equipment to buy.

ICALL/ITAC Designation – Keith Victor informed the committee of West Hartford's band move from ITAC 821 to 826. He asked whether it will continue to be called ITAC/ICALL or be switched to the federal guidelines. Mike Varney indicated there would have to be different designations because of the different frequencies. Another channel designator for frequencies is needed. Victor suggested the national guideline be followed. Gordon Shand suggested using ITAC/ICALL A & B because it would be difficult to use federal guides. He cautioned that it would be huge to reprogram all the radios. John Gustafson indicated that the Technical Committee would review this under normal circumstances. A motion was made by Gustafson to use federal guidelines from this point forward. Victor seconded the motion. Mike Varney recommended that the group be put together to review this issue. There is no federal mandate to say it must be used for radio. More research is needed before a decision is made. The motions were withdrawn.

John Warren, CTNG, gave a briefing on WizBright. It provides imagery back to first responders. The system is now online at the Armory and Bradley Field. He is willing to provide additional briefings and introduction on the product. He further indicated that he is seeking server space on the State's system.

Correspondence/Grant Reviews: Nothing to report.

DEP Communication Vehicle:

Nick Varanelli and Pete Zack gave an extensive briefing on equipment capabilities of the DEP Communications Vehicle. The vehicle is used for large and small environmental incidents. DEP's Emergency Response Coordinator sends it out to a scene if necessary. Gordon Shand recommended that agencies get together with communication vehicles to see how they would work together during an incident. The DEP vehicle is currently on display in the parking lot for committee member to view after the meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2008 – 1:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Keith Victor; seconded by John Gustafson - accepted unanimously at 1430 hours.