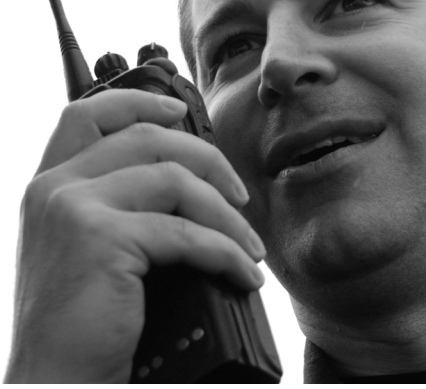
Statewide Interoperability Coordinators Newsletter



volume seven, november 2009

A Note from Chris Essid

As we kickoff the second year of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) Newsletter and approach our third SWIC meeting, I realize that so much has happened in our SWIC community over the last year. One year ago, we were gearing up with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA) for our first SWIC meeting, had just issued the first SWIC Newsletter, and had conducted the first four of 49 Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Implementation Workshops. When I wrote my first newsletter message, we only had 16 full-time SWICs. Now, there are more than 40 of you! I am proud that our office has been able to support this community, creating opportunities for SWICs to share insights with each other, provide input to the Federal government, and build important relationships across the country. As I said in the first newsletter, all of us at the Office of Emergency Communications know that you are key players in our success and we are committed to supporting your efforts.

When I think about the next year, I am excited about the work that we will undertake together and the progress we will make. Between the upgrade of the National Emergency Communications Plan, the initial measurement phase for the NECP goals, and the development of new tools and guidance documents like the Regional Governance Guide, we at OEC will need your insights and assistance.

see "chris" page 3

December SWIC Meeting

The next SWIC meeting, hosted by the NGA Center for Best Practices in partnership with OEC, will take place on December 2nd and 3rd in Boston, Massachusetts.

The NGA Center for Best Practices and OEC are working with a SWIC planning committee to develop an agenda that is reflective of the national interoperability environment and is relevant to common issues facing the SWIC community. The meeting will include a mix of plenary and breakout sessions covering topics such as the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) goal measurement, training and exercises, grant management, narrowbanding, policy development, sustainability, and regional governance. There will also be structured networking sessions designed to foster new relationships and increased collaboration between State representatives.

Similar to the June SWIC meeting, each State and territory is allowed to invite up to two additional guests in order to build support for statewide communications interoperability efforts. These additional individuals must be engaged in the statewide effort in one of a few pre-selected roles to qualify for attendance.

If you have questions regarding the meeting, please contact David Henry at dhenry@nga.org or at 202-624-5366. ■

OEC Scheduling FY 2010 SCIP Implementation Workshops

Following the success of last year's 49 SCIP Implementation Workshops, OEC is once again offering each State and territory a workshop. The workshop is designed to help implement your SCIP by bringing State, local, tribal, and territorial representatives together to discuss communications gaps and SCIP initiatives.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 workshop, which will be held in your State/territory, will also help participants understand how NECP Goal One will be demonstrated in 2010 and begin to prepare for NECP Goal Two measurement which will need to be demonstrated in 2011. OEC will provide a neutral facilitator, a note taker, and a Federal representative to lead the workshop. These individuals will work directly with the SWICs to tailor the workshop to each State's needs and priorities within four service offerings:

1) SCIP Initiative Planning,
2) Statewide Strategic Planning/SCIP Update,
3) Statewide Interoperability Education and Outreach, and
4) Governance for SCIP Implementation.

If you have questions or still need to schedule your workshop, please contact Darcie Gladden at Darcie.Gladden@dhs.gov or 202-343-1615. ■

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Meet the Coordinators

California – Michael Crews

Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
California Emergency Management Agency

I am the newly appointed SWIC for California. Working for the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA), I bring a diverse background from aviation communications to consulting work for the Department of Defense. Prior to my new role as a SWIC, I held a variety of technical and managerial positions including my professional career as a consultant for Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc. As a consultant, I worked with various U.S. and foreign government agencies. I was assigned to Pacific Command Headquarters in Honolulu, where I managed numerous projects involving mission readiness and crisis response for the Pacific region. Some of these projects included FEMA sponsored exercises like hurricane preparedness, simulated influenza pandemics, and terrorist attacks. In addition to exercises, I have been involved with supporting real-world events, to include the 2004 Indonesian Tsunami, which gave me an appreciation for the importance of civil-military coordination.

My experience with interoperability came from my support of several Joint Warrior Interoperability Demonstrations (JWID) exercises. These Joint-Staff sponsored demonstrations assessed the interoperability efforts of U.S. and Allied military forces. Prior to my career as a consultant, I served in the U.S. Navy as a communication analyst on reconnaissance aircraft deployed to regions in Asia and the Persian Gulf.

Although fairly new to public safety communications in California, I welcome the challenges that my new position presents. I understand that "solving" interoperability in California will be a relatively long process and require a great deal of resources. Nevertheless, I believe the best approach involves balancing innovation with well-established best practices and focusing on the small accomplishments to reach the final goal. ■

North Carolina – Percina Curtis-Diggs

North Carolina Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
Office of Interoperability, North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety

I currently serve as the North Carolina SWIC located within the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety. The recently established Office of Interoperability is designed to serve as a single point of collaboration, coordination, and mission-centric leadership for statewide emergency communications. The newly established North Carolina Office of Interoperability works to coordinate, support, promote, and ensure operable and interoperable emergency communications across North Carolina's 100 counties. This is accomplished through governance, grants management, technology/statewide systems, training and exercises.

Prior to relocating to North Carolina this past summer, I spent the last five years as a Top Secret Senior Analyst in weapons of mass destruction consequence management with an aerospace/bio-defense consulting firm in Alexandria, Virginia, supporting Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Defense (DoD) programs. These assignments included serving on analytic support teams within the DHS Science and Technology Directorate, Office of Health Affairs, the DHS inaugural Quadrennial Homeland Security Review architecture team, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency's Chemical and Biological Defense Operations, and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Chemical and Biological Defense Program's Transformational Medical Technologies Initiative. Previous to my work with DHS and DoD, I served for over three years as the inaugural Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response with the Anne Arundel County Department of Health (Annapolis, Maryland). In this capacity, I also worked closely with local, State, and Federal emergency preparedness policy, planning, and training initiatives in the National Capital Region.

I received a Bachelor of Science degree from UNC-Greensboro in Public Health, Epidemiology, and Disease Prevention, and a Master of Science degree from the University of Maryland in Business Administration. My journey has prepared me for the rigors and challenges of establishing true interoperability at the statewide level. Critical to this effort is maintaining a focus on the mission while ensuring a mutual respect for all levels of government essential to the process. We as SWICs must set the example and the tone for "interagency operability" fostering a culture which results in true interoperability. We must remain keenly aware of the parts, the people, and the process. ■

Wyoming – Robert Symons

Interoperable Communications Coordinator
Wyoming Public Safety Communications Commission Administrative Support

For 28 years I worked for the City of Sheridan, Wyoming, Fire-Rescue Department and retired in February 2005. I served as the Fire Chief during my last eight years with the Fire-Rescue Department. This department provided fire protection, emergency medical services, rescue, and hazardous materials response to the City of Sheridan, Wyoming; Sheridan County; and the Sheridan Veteran Affairs Medical Center. It was during my fire service career that I learned the importance of interoperability and the problems associated with having limited interoperability between local agencies, neighboring counties, States, and Federal agencies. Our interoperability was the sharing of radio frequencies and hoping the radios were programmed correctly.

see "symons" page 4

"chris" from page 1

And we look forward to continuing to support your statewide interoperability efforts. In response to your feedback, we are once again offering each State and territory the opportunity to host a SCIP Implementation Workshop. I am glad that we have the capacity to do this again and hope that you will take us up on the offer. I consider the workshops that I attended last fiscal year to be among the highlights of my tenure at OEC so far.

Through my travels, I continue to hear a consistent theme: Enhancing partnerships between every level of government–Federal, State, local, and tribal–is essential for advancing emergency communications nationwide. OEC is focusing a lot of attention on intra- and interstate regional collaboration and coordination. As many of you have experienced in your own States, intrastate regional groups provide a direct forum to coordinate and leverage your joint resources across a particular region. The alliances created through regional coordination enable your office to identify which communities within communities feel misrepresented or need help with training or acquiring new capabilities. Regional efforts also have the ability to empower your localities. I know first-hand, when communities are brought together and asked to participate in the process they become more engaged and show more collective support to one another. Additionally, intrastate regional groups will be helpful to SWICs as we enter the first phase of measuring NECP Goal Two achievement.

OEC is committed to helping you develop strong regional structures. In addition to the release of the Regional Governance Guide next year, OEC is in the process of hiring regional coordinators, who will align with the 10 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions, that can help with both inter- and intrastate emergency communications planning and implementation. These coordinators will collaborate with our partners at FEMA and will be local liaisons between you and OEC to ensure greater support for your statewide and regional interoperability efforts.

As always, I hope that this newsletter is a helpful resource to you and your State. If you have stories to share, please let us know so we can highlight them in a future issue. And please share your feedback so our office can better serve you in the future. I hope that you all have a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday, and I look forward to seeing you in Boston at the next SWIC Meeting on December 2-3. Until then, best wishes for continued success. ■

7 Steps to Achieving Interoperability

by Laura Kingman, Special Deputy, SIEC Outreach and Public Affairs, Washington State Patrol

The Seven Steps to Achieving Interoperability establish a process anyone can use to further interoperability in a local area, a region, and statewide.

The framework is based on several premises:

- The SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum does a great job of illustrating the elements and the stages of interoperability; the Seven Steps provides the "how."
- Technical experts often desire to start the conversation around technology.
- The people who have policy and budgetary authority are often not comfortable "talking tech."
- Eighty-five percent of achieving interoperability comes from establishing and building individual relationships.

Pulling from my background in marketing, communications, and information technology, and with the support of the Washington State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC), we developed the Seven Steps to Achieve Interoperability. SIEC Co-Chair James Broman, Lacey Fire Chief, added the T-O-G-E-T-H-E-R acronym (See Figure 1).

The Seven Steps are based on the following facts:

- Individuals involved always know what's best for them; and a heavy-handed approach never works.
- Policymakers and those with budgetary authority want to help, and will, when they are aided by a process that helps them understand what is needed.
- Technical experts can do their best work when operational needs are clearly defined in advance.
- A process was needed to help strengthen relationships and get people working together to fill gaps.

The Seven Steps are:

① **T**alk
Get to know your neighbors

② **O**verview
Define interoperability for your region

③ **G**et protocols
Adopt existing national standards as appropriate

④ **E**ngage
Sign agreements

⑤ **T**echnology
Coordinate technology

⑥ **H**elp team
Provide training on protocols and technology

⑦ **E**xercise
Provide testing on protocols and technology

Ready
You Are Ready!

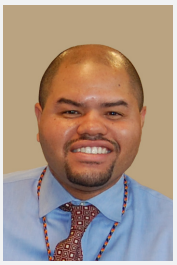
Figure 1

You'll notice that no technical conversations take place until Step 5 in the process. It is essential that policymakers and other non-technical professionals understand interoperability. If the discussions become technical too early in the process, necessary players may fade from the room and the discussions.

The Province of British Columbia, Canada, expressed support for the Seven Step process and the Province of Ontario, Canada, has requested permission to use the Seven Step process in their information and training materials province-wide.

The Seven Steps can be found on the SIEC website at www.siec.wa.gov/plan. For more information please contact Laura Kingman at 360-507-3881 or laura.kingman@wsp.wa.gov. ■

OEC Staff Spotlight



Ralph O. Barnett, III

Ralph joined the Federal staff of OEC in July 2009, as a Telecommunications Specialist for OEC's Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach team. Prior to "officially" joining OEC, Ralph supported OEC as an Associate with Booz Allen Hamilton. He provided program management support for the Multi-Jurisdictional Communications Services and the Policy, Planning, and Analysis Divisions. In addition, Ralph was the Secure Portal Administrator for OEC activities and he has experience in the area of emergency responder interoperable communications. In that capacity, Ralph engaged in program efforts associated with the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC) and the SCIP peer review process. Prior to his work with OEC, Ralph also supported the Environmental Protection Agency Superfund Program, DHS Information Technology and Evaluation Program (ITEP), and Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Grant Program. Additionally, from 2003 to 2006, Ralph provided programmatic support for the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) including website administration. Ralph holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Lincoln University, Pennsylvania. ■

Adrienne Werner

Adrienne joined the Federal staff of the OEC in September 2009 as a Telecommunications Specialist for OEC's Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Team. Adrienne had been supporting OEC as a contractor with Booz Allen Hamilton since May 2008. Prior to joining Booz Allen Hamilton, Adrienne spent three years serving as an Operations Analyst on the Secretary's Briefing staff in the Office of Operations Coordination, DHS. In that role, she coordinated across U.S. security, intelligence, and law enforcement communities to develop analysis and evaluation of operational and intelligence reporting for the Secretary's daily briefing. Prior to her Federal service, Adrienne spent seven years working in the telecommunications industry as a regulatory and requirements analyst at Verizon and Iridium LLC. Adrienne holds a Master of Arts degree in Homeland Security from the Naval Postgraduate School, and a Master of Arts degree in Public Policy from George Mason University. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and French from Dickinson College. ■

CONTRIBUTE TO THE SWIC NEWSLETTER

If you would like to contribute articles for upcoming SWIC Newsletters to highlight innovative practices in your State or territory, please contact Amanda Musser at Amanda.Musser@dhs.gov.

"symons" from page 2

In 2004, the State of Wyoming initiated the WyoLink system, a Project 25 (P25) very high frequency (VHF) digital trunked radio system. This project was the result of a yearlong study that involved public safety agencies from the local, county, State, and Federal government levels. One of the goals of WyoLink is to improve interoperability between all levels of government and public safety disciplines. This study also resulted in the creation of the Public Safety Communications Commission (PSCC). This governance board consists of 17 members, appointed by the Governor, representing public safety organizations, local governments, State agencies, tribal entities, Federal agencies, and the public at large. I joined the PSCC in April 2005 as the Administrative Support.

The PSCC recognized the importance of involving Federal agencies in WyoLink and created working relationships by working closely with the Federal Partnership for Interoperable Communications (FPIC), sponsored by OEC. The mutual need for operability and interoperability has resulted in Federal agencies using WyoLink and sharing Federal frequencies to complete the frequency plan for the trunked radio system. Wyoming and Colorado are beginning discussions on improving interstate interoperability between the two statewide systems.

Interoperability means searching outside the box for common problems and developing the relationships to solve the problems. The SWICs provide a gateway for developing contacts and relationships for improving interoperability. ■

Calendar

November

OEC-Sponsored Communications Unit Leader Training Course

- **17-19 – Honolulu, HI**
- **17-19 – Saco, ME**
- **17-19 – Atlanta, GA**

State/Locally-Sponsored COML Training Course

- **17-19 – Vancouver, WA**
- **18-20 – San Antonio, TX**

December

SWIC Meeting

- **2-3 – Boston, MA**

NCS Offers Priority Telecommunications Services to Ensure Ongoing Communications for Disaster Response

Uninterrupted communications is critical for first responders to effectively and efficiently respond to a natural disaster, a terrorist attack, or other emergency event. However, the harsh reality is that a disaster, natural or otherwise, can trigger congestion on the public telephone network. This congestion forces fire and rescue workers, EMTs, police, and other emergency response personnel to compete with the public for the same congested landline and wireless resources.

The National Communications System (NCS), part of the DHS Office of Cybersecurity and Communications, provides priority telecommunications services that enable emergency responders and other key emergency management personnel to have their critical communications get 'priority' treatment over calls from the general public during times when the public network is severely congested.

The NCS priority service offerings include: Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), Wireless Priority Service (WPS), and Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP).

GETS is nationwide landline priority service that enables emergency responders to receive priority in the public network by having their calls queue—moving their emergency call to the first available free line.

WPS is the NCS wireless companion to the GETS program and provides emergency responders with similar priority treatment when they experience high levels of congestion when dialing from their cell phones. The use of WPS and GETS assures to the greatest extent possible that emergency workers get connected and stay connected to one another.

NCS also manages and operates a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program called Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) that provides service vendors with an FCC mandate for the priority provisioning and/or restoration of telecommunications services critical to homeland security.

For more information about the programs and services offered by the NCS, visit their web site at http://www.ncs.gov or call 1-866-NCS-CALL (866-627-2255). ■

FY 2010 Technical Assistance Request Update

OEC received FY 2010 technical assistance (TA) requests from 49 of the 56 States and territories. OEC is reviewing prioritized requests from each State to identify areas that align with the NECP and States' SCIP initiatives. FY 2010 funds will be allocated to State-requested TA projects as they become available. Although most projects will be approved early in the fiscal year, some will be deferred until additional resources become available. To maximize the number of projects funded, OEC will be working with each State to refine the scope of each requested offering and may suggest additional ways to stretch limited resources to fund more projects. For example, by scheduling multiple site visits on consecutive days or delivering some services on a regional basis, OEC may reduce travel and other overhead costs.

OEC understands the tremendous pressure States are under in these hard fiscal times and recognizes that there are limitations to personnel, travel, and time available to receive and participate in TA. In an effort to allow the maximum participation in TA at the State and local level, and alleviate some of the burden on State leadership, OEC will be offering TA directly to Urban Areas in States that have opted not to receive TA in FY 2010. An OEC TA representative will be contacting SWICs soon to discuss their FY 2010 TA requests. ■

Southwest Border Communications Working Group

To improve interoperability and resource sharing among Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies operating in the U.S. southwest border, OEC coordinated with the FPIC to establish the Southwest Border Communications Working Group (SWBCWG). The working group provides a forum for agencies to address common challenges, collaborate on existing or planned initiatives, and identify opportunities for multi-agency resource sharing projects.

Most recently, the SWBCWG met on October 14, 2009, in El Paso, Texas. The 85 participants from Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies discussed spectrum usage and availability, the status of current system development efforts, interoperability challenges, and potential opportunities to share resources (such as infrastructure and spectrum). Among the highlights were remarks by Chris Essid and briefings by the FCC and the Secure Border Initiative Program. At a regional level, briefings were provided by the: Customs and Border Protection (CBP) El Paso Sector; NCS; Texas Department of Public Safety; City of Nogales, Arizona; and City of Yuma, Arizona. As a result of these discussions, participants identified a number of actions and potential coordination opportunities to enhance interoperability for Federal, State, and local agencies operating in the CBP El Paso Sector.

In addition to providing administrative support to the working group, OEC is offering technical assistance to State and local agencies. Specifically, OEC helped local agencies meet FCC regulatory requirements (i.e., Special Temporary Authorizations) to ensure the continued operation of public safety radio systems and to avoid regulatory penalties.

For more information on the SWBCWG, cross-border communications issues or the FPIC, please contact OEC at OEC@hq.dhs.gov. ■

NIIX Launches New User Capabilities

The National Interoperability Information eXchange (NIIX) is a secure, web-based resource designed to support the public safety telecommunications community in its efforts to increase interoperable communications across the country. The website is maintained by the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) and is supported by the DHS Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) and OEC. NIIX serves as a repository for interoperability documents and a centralized location for peer-to-peer sharing and collaboration between community members. Recently, the NIIX website added new features designed to further support member coordination.

In May, NIIX members were granted the ability to respond directly to one another through threaded discussions. SWICs can now present discussion questions to the SWIC community as well as share success stories, challenges, and solutions with their counterparts. Training sessions on the new threaded discussion capability will be announced on the NIIX National Calendar and are available upon request. Requests for training can be sent via e-mail to support@niix.org.

Additionally, Canadian and Mexican government officials can now register for NIIX. This added benefit allows members who are currently coordinating cross-border initiatives to use the NIIX to communicate with their Canadian and Mexican counterparts. To confirm their membership in the public safety telecommunications community, Canadian or Mexican applicants must provide the NIIX Administrator with the name of their U.S. partner when registering.

Increased dialogue between public safety professionals is a critical element in the advancement of the interoperability movement. Currently 36 SWICs are registered on NIIX and members of the SWIC community. SWICs that are not currently members can request access to the NIIX by going to www.niix.org and clicking on "Register for NIIX."

Some other websites supporting the emergency response community include:

SAFECOM website – The SAFECOM website provides information and resources to help members of the emergency response community meet their communications and interoperability needs. The site can be accessed at **http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFECOM/**.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website – The FEMA websites provides users with information about the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF). The site can be accessed at **http://www.fema.gov/**. Information on grants and assistance programs can be accessed at **http://www.fema.gov/grants**.

Department of Justice (DOJ) website – The DOJ website provides users with an overview of interoperability and a broad description of related issues. The site can be accessed at **http://www.ojp.gov/nij/topics/technology/communication/welcome.htm**. ■

Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network Update

by Steve Noel, Oregon Statewide Interoperability Coordinator

Once completed, the Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network (OWIN) will vastly improve the condition of interoperable communications in Oregon and will allow emergency responders to communicate more effectively by linking State agency users with regional and local users across the State of Oregon. This system-of-systems is the consolidation of four State agency's existing radio systems and will replace 80 percent of Oregon's public-safety communications infrastructure with a 700 MHz trunked radio system. When the first phase of the construction plan is complete, the sites will cover most of western Oregon, which is where 80 percent of the State's population resides.

The statewide system has faced significant political and economic challenges during its inception. An initial consultant's report estimated that the cost of installing a statewide, public safety radio system would be approximately $1 billion due to the challenges presented by the vast and varied Oregon terrain. However, strong partnerships between State, regional, and local public-safety agencies have helped the State achieve cost savings and have ensured the success of the project. OWIN aggressively recruited and now has 41 signed agreements with partners at the local, tribal, and Federal level. These partnerships have helped in financing the project, and have resulted in crucial support from the State Legislature with local system users playing a key, supportive role in budget discussions.

OWIN also cooperates with partner agencies in securing grants that offset costs. So far, 28 separate sites and 54 microwave radio installations are linked by 680 miles of completed microwave pathways.

For more information about the OWIN Project, please contact Bill Gallagher at bill.j.gallagher@state.or.us. ■

Local Control Results in Statewide Interoperability in Montana

by Ian Marquand, Public Affairs and Outreach Coordinator, Interoperability Montana

City leaders in Glendive, Montana, sometimes jokingly ask Alan Michaels whom he really works for—the city of Glendive or Montana's independent, non-profit interoperability organization.

Michaels earns his salary as Chief of Police in Glendive, a small city built along the widening Yellowstone River as it flows toward North Dakota. On top of that, he also devotes considerable unpaid hours as the "Project Director" for the Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium, a collection of eight eastern Montana counties organized to bring interoperable public safety communications to their part of the State.

Michaels' commitment represents the heart of Interoperability Montana's approach: achieving Federal and State goals by empowering local governments. He and his Eastern Montana associates aren't alone. Montana has nine interoperability consortia, each operating as a non-profit interlocal association with members appointed by counties, tribal governments, and other public safety or service providers.

In turn, each consortium designates a Project Director to represent its views and vote on collective financial and policy issues at statewide Project Directors (IMPD) meetings at the organization's statewide headquarters in Helena, Montana. (Besides Michaels, IMPD members include a county commissioner, a local 9-1-1 manager, county sheriffs, and disaster planners.) In addition, consortium members with specific expertise serve on statewide committees on finance, governance, and technical matters.

All of this interaction – consortium meetings, committee meetings, Project Directors meetings, conference calls, and other assorted gatherings – requires a significant commitment of time and energy. In Michaels' case, each meeting in Helena requires a 900-mile round trip.

In the end, however, Montana's commitment to a locally-driven, largely volunteer, approach to interoperability has led to a unique governance structure that exists cooperatively – but distinctly apart – from State government. Individually and collectively, consortia members have done the lion's share of planning and implementing a statewide interoperable communications system for Montana.

Put another way, local "buy-in" means a better "build-out." ■

Executive Order Establishes Colorado SIEC

by Gene McGahey, Colorado Statewide Interoperability Communications Coordinator

On September 17, 2009, Governor Bill Ritter released Executive Order B 005 09 creating the Colorado Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC). This event represents the culmination of months of planning and preparation by a group of individuals dedicated to the interoperability effort and is a monumental accomplishment for the State of Colorado. This dedicated group includes Kim Coleman, Digital Trunked Radio System Project Manager and Susan Lynn, Assistant State Attorney General who assisted in writing the first draft of the document.

The newly formalized governance body will meet regularly, at least four times per year, at the direction of its chair. Although the Executive Order does not outline formal membership positions for Federal representatives, there will be Federal participation in the SIEC through appointments to subcommittees and working groups. Therefore, membership will be multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional, and representative of all levels of government. The group is charged with multiple responsibilities including:

- Providing policy level direction and promoting efficient and effective use of resources for matters related to public safety communications interoperability.
- Developing a statewide vision for interoperable communications.
- Promoting cooperation among Federal , State, local, and tribal public safety agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the business of providing public safety in addressing statewide radio interoperability needs in Colorado.

In addition to advancing interoperability efforts in Colorado, Executive Order B 005 09 makes Colorado the 20th State to satisfy the following NECP Milestone – *"Within 12 months, SIECs (or their equivalents) in all 56 States and territories should incorporate the recommended membership as outlined in the SCIP Guidebook and should be established via legislation or executive order by an individual State's governor."*

Other States working towards establishing their respective governing bodies by Executive Order can find templates and over 20 real-world Executive Orders on the NIIX website at www.niix.org. ■

About the SWIC Newsletter

The *SWIC Newsletter* is designed to be a source of information, news, and updates for SWICs and their staff. We hope that it will be a valuable resource as you lead your SCIP implementation efforts, future statewide planning, and alignment to the NECP.

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