Emergency Communication Networks Program Updates

Notes from Director

- Jim, Melinda, Dan, Dana, and Kate Weeks, our Director of Legislative Affairs in the Commissioners Office, just returned from attending an intense 2 day workshop in Philadelphia, sponsored by the National Governor's Association (NGA) and supported by the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC). We were joined by our public safety peers from 10 other states. This was the fourth of four such meetings held over the course of the past several months and attended by 48 states in total.
- This meeting was extremely productive. We had structured networking time with the other states to learn what is working well for them and what their struggles are as public safety across the nation is making this huge transition into the data world while maintaining the need for interoperability between platforms a priority. Each state was given an opportunity to present and be questioned on their respective governance structure. Ours is fondly referred to as "The Minnesota Model" by OEC, so clearly, we are doing many things right! Kudos to all of our public safety professionals throughout the state!
- As well, we were afforded dedicated and individual state staff one-on-one time with specialized facilitators who were contracted by OEC to assist us identifying our key successes, as well, as challenges we face as an ECN team in support of the SECB. Once challenges were identified and prioritized, we tackled setting goals and tactics for addressing them with a timeline. Our MN team found this to be an invaluable experience. It was much like the strategic planning process we completed with the SECB earlier this year, but this exercise was geared more specifically to what strategies ECN might implement internally to lend a better level of support to all of our public safety constituents across Minnesota.
- The brainstorming and documenting we completed in this session will not only enhance the SECB Strategic Plan, but is geared to assist the ECN team with some important tools as we transition to a new Governor's administration and legislature in a few months. Having Kate attend with us was of great benefit.

NG 9-1-1

GIS

- Each County is at different points in their GIS data collection and remediation. You can find status maps for every county on ECN's website under '911 Program' and 'GIS Information' along with the most recent version of the GIS newsletter. The deadline for

Counties submitting their Community Name validation has passed and a total of 17 counties did not meet this deadline. ECN will be reaching out to assist them in getting this information. The successful completion of this first phase (data collection and remediation) is critical for NG911 implementation. ECN will be making this a priority through 2018 and into 2019 as no other project or initiative is as important as a solid statewide GIS dataset for 9-1-1.

Text to 911

- 18 counties now operational PSAPs continue to express interest in accepting texts, please send any questions or intentions to Dustin Leslie.
- By the end of this year, each PSAP needs to either take their own texts, or have a plan in place with another PSAP. A draft MOU has been provided by our office as a way to extend the current agreements. Suggested costs are also included, but it will be up to each individual PSAP to negotiate. Ultimate goal is to have every PSAP in MN text-enabled by 2020, but it's also important to keep in mind that some counties are receiving zero texts from their citizens, so perhaps an expensive hardware/software upgrade is not necessary. Discussion to continue.

COOP Plans

- If your COOP has not yet been completed and/or sent in, an email request for a formal extension is required. COOPs and extension requests can go to Cathy Anderson at ECN.
- To date, out of the 102 PSAPs, there have been 74 COOPs submitted, 22 extensions requested, and 8 no responses. While we understand this is a daunting task, it is a vital one. Several had mentioned that your PSAP never had any kind of plan in the past and indicated it was a good thing to get started on. One PSAP stated they already had an emergency happen at their PSAP, so the understanding about what needed to go into their Plan was actually a bit easier because of their experience.

Firewall Project

- Progress continues with the implementation phase. The Airport PSAP is set to go live on 7/30 and will be in a "soak" period for up to two weeks for data collection. Additional sites will go live after the 2 week data collection.

ARMER

ARMER Software Updates

- State is currently in a five-year contract with Motorola for software and maintenance. This contract runs through 2021 and will bring ARMER from version 7.15 to 7.19.

- Motorola disclosing little about future software versions beyond 7.19.
- Motorola has presented a new five-year contract to move beyond 7.19 that appears out of our financial reach.
- ECN, MnDOT, and Motorola meeting in late June to further explore Motorola's offer.
- This issue is included in the draft Strategic Plan recently approved by the Steering Committee. In July the Operations and Technical Committee authorized the creation of a workgroup of ARMER subsystem owners and administrators to study this matter.
- ECN has sent out a Doodle Poll and is trying to identify a meeting date for the work group.
- Contact ECN if you would like to participate.

Federal & non-911 Response Entity Participation

- The Steering Committee has accepted a report by Rey Freeman Communications Consulting regarding Federal and Non-911 Response Entities Use of ARMER.
- The Steering Committee directed ECN to ask DPS Legal Counsel for a legal opinion about whether 911 funds could legally be used to support communications for federal entities.
- The Steering Committee will continue to review this topic when a response is received from Counsel.

Radio IDs, Talkgroup IDs, System Administrators, & Agency Contact Persons

- Inconsistencies found between OTC approved ID counts and actual ID counts.
- Some agency contact and System Administrator info out of date.
- ECN, with MnDOT's support, has created a password-secured site on HSIN (Homeland Security Information Network) where sensitive information like this can be stored.
- Each region is asked to identify someone to update their System Administrator information.
- Contact Jim Stromberg at ECN for site access and more info.

Interoperability

Regional Interoperability Coordinators (RICs)

- Desire 2 RICs – one north and one south.
- RFP published on July 16, 2018. Closes on August 8, 2018.

2018 Public Safety Communications Conference

- Feedback from 2018 conference was good.
- Developing conference planning topics for 2019 conference.
- Would like each region to provide direct assistance to conference planning and delivery.

New COMU Personnel

- There were no new COMU recognitions.

Communications Unit (COMU) Subcommittee Updates

- Does not meet during odd numbered months.

Strategic Technology Reserve (STR) Subcommittee Updates

- Does not meet during odd numbered months.

Interoperability Committee

- Approved accepting historical INTD training as eligible for state Incident Tactical Dispatcher recognition.
- Approved AECS Position Task Book for Amateur Emergency Communications Specialists with AUXCOMM training. First in nation; model for other states and DHS OEC to follow.
- Approved the interoperability pieces of the proposed Strategic Plan.
- Commencing an examination of the value and future of the Minnesota Public Safety Mobile Radio Cross Spectrum Interoperability System (a/k/a VHF Overlay). Work group authorized and to include a representative from ECN, MnDOT, each region, National Guard, MIFC, Dept. of Health, EMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement. Contact Jim Stromberg if interested.

Interoperability between LMR and LTE

- DHS S&T is continuing to do research on the interfaces and standards created by 3gpp.

Interoperability between LTE Network Carriers

- California just announced on July 3rd, 2018 a cellular service technical requirements document for pre-solicitation that requires quality of service, priority, and preemption interoperability between carrier networks.
- Colorado filed with the FCC the request for clarification on the guidelines for commercial network interoperability for the NPSBN, that all carriers interoperate by sharing information on quality of service, priority, and preemption. Verizon filed a letter of support. Region 5, which MN is a part of, is considering filing a letter of support.
- APCO is asking for feedback on their Site Hardening draft document for determining Public Safety Grade standards.

Wireless Broadband / FirstNet

- Procurement News

- o Verizon is currently updating their state contract with the Dept. of Administration and they are forecasting a July 1st date that their new public safety rates.
  - o "FirstNet built with AT&T" has made several announcements of added RAN infrastructure in the state in 2018. Edgerton MN is the latest announcement with additional 4G LTE coverage. Previously, AT&T announced new infrastructure and coverage in Park Rapids, Baudette, Angora, Bena, Stephen, Thief River Falls, and Fergus Falls.
  - o AT&T announced on April 17, 2018 that FirstNet would be deploying Band 14 in St Cloud.
  - o AT&T continues to extend their device options on FirstNet. The LG V35 ThinQ was announced in stores on June 8, 2018.
  - o Sierra Wireless announced certification and approval on their AirLink MG90 High Performance multi-network in-vehicle router.
  - o Intrepid Response is now certified and approved by FirstNet. Intrepid Response is a situational awareness application.
- Workbook guidance and generic application toolbox details are on the DPS-ECN website to help evaluate cellular service for your agency. Suggestions for improvements can be made by contacting Program Manager, Melinda Miller (Melinda.Miller@state.mn.us), or 651-201-7554. An agency can request a meeting with the Program Manager to help develop an agency specific plan for cellular service, as well.

IPAWS

Training Events

- Public Alerting Authority Best Practices Workshop; Training is available for PSAP, Emergency Management, personnel. It is customized to your system to send out alerts and provide guidance on operating guidelines.
- The next scheduled workshops are in:
  - o St. Cloud, October 23rd from Noon to 4 p.m. to register go to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZJGN6H5
  - o Marshal, October 24th from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to register for that session go to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HMZBJQC

Testing

- The next Nationwide Test will be on September 20th at 1:18 p.m. CST and will be done by both Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) and Emergency Alert System (EAS) for more

details to the FCC ORDER granting the test: https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-18-752A1.pdf more information will be coming the closer we get to September.

Grants

- The regions submitted applications for the new 2019 SECB grant and approved the appropriate projects. The number 1 priority for the grant this year is the GIS project which will assist counties in getting their GIS data improved. This project is important as we look to a transition toward NG911. There is still money available that will go toward more GIS projects. MNGEO has identified more counties that need assistance and we are encouraging those counties to apply through their regions. The next step for the SECB grant is to get approved at the August Finance Committee meeting and the August SECB meeting.
- There is just over $100,000 in funds available for the current SHSP grant. Not all of the firewall money will be spent so a second application round will be open to the regions. Regions are encouraged to find portable radio projects as the next SHSP grant will not have money available for equipment – only training and exercises.

Stay connected with ECN and the SECB

- Visit our website to, sign up for, or manage what communications you currently receive from us:
  http://ecn.dps.mn.gov