



## MEETING MINUTES – July 9th, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Waller Creek Center, 625 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 104, Austin, TX

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m. Peter Collins made brief opening remarks of welcome and thanks.
2. **First item of business was a review of minutes from the June 11th, 2007, meeting. Dan Scrivner made motion to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Jeff Haislet. Motion passed by unanimous vote.**
3. General discussion of results of the statewide Focus Group sessions, led by Carol Sutherland, with the goal of developing our "Hot Topics" for the July 30th statewide strategic planning session.

### **A. Spectrum**

- Jurisdictions and licensees have used up their allotment of 800 MHz frequencies. Some are maxed out due to system loading. Without additional channels (700 MHz, additional 800 MHz coming from rebanding), system busies will increase. (John Chaney, Harris Co.)
- We need more mutual aid channels than are available in 800 MHz. (Robert Adelman, Bexar Co.)
- Cross-border interference is a growing problem and may not be resolved by rebanding. (Bonnie Guinn, El Paso.)

### **B. Technology**

- Agencies need direction and migration plans. VHF wideband or narrowband? 700 MHz? APCO Project 25? Without clear direction, more agencies will become technological islands. (Barney Welch, Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission)
- Old equipment needs replacing. Patching together disparate systems tends to use of conventional radio resources quickly so is not an effective and long-term means of interoperability. (Tom Sorley, City of Houston)
- Disparate bands and technologies in use in many areas make interoperability difficult or impossible. (Sheriff Earl Petropoulos, Refugio Co.)

### **C. Coordination**

- Some agencies have fair to good coordination between them but regions as a whole are lacking. (Robert Adelman, Bexar Co.)
- Designated Communications Leaders (Comm-L's) and Communications Management Teams are not in place in many areas.

- The state needs to "urge" regional training and exercises that involve local, state, tribal, and federal agencies. (Dan Scrivner, City of Dallas)
- There is a statewide problem with DPS coordinating with local entities. (Bob Pletcher, DPS)

#### **D. Operational Structure**

- Need a statewide resource database similar to the Texas Regional Resource Network (?) but more accessible. (?)

#### **E. Training**

- Online interoperability training may be an indispensable component of any statewide interoperable communications system. (Tom Sorley, City of Houston)
- Training exercises have to involve dispatch centers. (Robert Adelman, Bexar Co.)

#### **F. Funding**

- Sustainability, maintenance, ongoing system support have to be considered. (Grant funds pay for equipment but underfunded agencies are required to maintain it out of their operating budgets.)
- Many areas have no "operability" (can barely function with existing systems and subscribers), so must be brought to that level before interoperability can be realized. (Tommy Murillo, Lubbock)
- Have to plan for a statewide backhaul network leveraging existing infrastructure and adding to it with new construction. (Bob Pletcher)
- NO UNFUNDED MANDATES FROM THE STATE!
- Houston has no radio cache available.
- The Brazos Valley needs a single upgrade to merge several disparate systems into a single, adequate system.
- Volunteer fire departments often cannot afford to "play" on the new systems because they cannot afford subscriber equipment. (Jeff Haislet, ETMC)

#### **Answers to the 5 Strategic Questions:**

**1)** Does your radio system have the capacity and coverage you need to perform your job effectively?

**NO** (YES = 10, NO = 11)

**2)** Do your public safety agencies have the ability to talk on the Texas Interoperability Channels thru your dispatch center or a mobile command vehicle?

**NO** (YES = 22, NO = 4)

**3a)** Have you identified the technology and equipment needed to provide your public safety agencies with communications interoperability

**NO** (YES = 18, NO = 4)

**3b)** do your public safety agencies have the necessary funding and/or a plan to acquire funding to meet your communication needs?

**NO** (YES = 0, NO = 25)

**4a)** Have the NIMS requirements been incorporated into your SOPs?

**YES** (YES = 22, NO = 0)

**4b)** Has a NIMS-certified Communications Unit Leader been identified?

**NO** (YES =14, NO = 9)

**4c)** do you have regular and realistic exercises that address potential problems in the region and involve the participation of all personnel?

**NO** (YES = 9, NO = 14)

**5)** Is your interoperable system used every day for managing routine as well as emergency incidents?

**NO** (YES = 16, NO = 8)

**4. Vision Statement discussion. Final language as follows, approved by unanimous vote:**

"By 1/1/2015, provide all public safety and critical infrastructure responders at all levels of government, including local, county, special districts, tribal, state, and federal, with the highest level of real-time direct interoperable radio communications utilizing Standards-based Systems and incorporating the 700 MHz public safety frequencies."

5. CASM (Communication Assets and Survey Mapping) presentation by John Chaney. John is the CASM Administrative Manager for Texas. Contact him to set up a new CASM account.

6. Election of TxRC delegates to the July 30th Statewide Strategic Planning session:

- John Chaney nominates Jeff Haislet
- Tom Sorley nominates Steven Casko
- John Chaney nominates David Blakey
- Mike Simpson nominates Gary Wilks
- Gary Wilks nominates Robert Adelman
- Carol Sutherland nominates Sheriff Earl Petropoulos as Alternate
- Ron Mayworm nominates Joe Peters as Alternate
- Paul Gilbert nominates Lee Lignon as Alternate

**Motion to approve nominations made by John Chaney, seconded by Ron Mayworm. Passed by unanimous vote.**

**7. Motion to accept Critical Initiatives as stated in Item 3 (above) made by Jeff Haislet, seconded by Fred Keithley. Passed by unanimous vote.**

8. Wrap-up discussion of PSIC grant and other grant opportunities. To qualify for federal communications grant funds going forward, agencies will have to meet the SCIP guidelines...

9. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.