

Communications Interoperability Working Group
24 March 2004
Minutes

| Meeting was called to order at 1305. There were no Public Comments. The 10 February 2004 meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made, seconded and unanimously passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

A status of the 800 MHz I-CALL/TAC handheld radio inventory was provided by CTDHS. It was reported that approximately 100% of the LE, 75% of the fire and 75% of the EMS entities have been contacted by CTDHS seeking validation of the number of radios distributed/held. No information on the number of local emergency management directors (EMD) contacted was available.

Training and the distribution of 800 MHz radios to those previously identified entities is slated to take place in the end of April/ beginning of May time frame. DOT requested a copy of the 800 MHz video tape. More will have to be made. Once done copies will be provided to State agencies in need. In response to a question about the distribution of the 800 MHz radio training video tapes, it was reported that all of the tapes had been given to the OEM Area Coordinators. The Area Coordinators will delivery a tape to each local EMD personally. The tapes are not intended to supplant the need for EMDs to attend the training if they have not already done so. The tapes are to be used as a tool to refresh the training previously provided along with the power point presentation that is available on the OEM web site.

A request for updated information about the reimbursement related to past 800 MHz training sessions was made. Captain Davoren stated that the Byrne Grant previously thought to have been received was still in the process of being “re-opened”. Once re-opened, payment to Ellington FD (for Chief Varney) and to OEM (reimbursement for paying Bob Dibella and Eric Fine) would be made. Captain Daveron state that the information provided relative to who should get paid what seemed to be enough documentation.

There was a discussion about the need to provide the 800 MHz radios to local health directors (LHD). LHDs could be the “incident commander” during a public health emergency. It was identified that as an incident commander, an LHD would most likely be located in a municipal EOC along with the Chief Elected Official and the local emergency management director (EMD). Thus, the LHD would have access to the 800 MHz I-CALL/TAC command and control system via the radio being issued to the EMDs. It was reported that DPH still plans to buy a cache of the 800 MHz handheld radios to be delivered to the scene/LHDs as necessary during a public health emergency.

Mike Stemmler reported that 66 of the 140 PSAP I-CALL/TAC control stations have been installed. Another 28 have had site visits and are on the schedule. Also 8 of the 20 locations identified by OEM (the Millstone EPZ/host communities) have been installed with another 3 scheduled. CTDHS provided the response on the request to provide a control station to CG Sector Long Island Sound (formerly called Coast Guard Group/MSO). It was reported that ODP had denied the request because the CG is a federal agency and the funds to buy the control stations are for state/local use. Mike Stemmler stated that DPS could provide a control station that had NOT been purchased with federal SHSP grant money. All agreed with that solution.

This led into a discussion related to whether or not the CG should be invited to the interop comms meetings. All agreed that due to the working relationship between state/local agencies and the CG as well as the fact that both the State and the CG were undertaking new communications projects that the CG's participation would enhance interoperability. Thus, CG Sector Long Island Sound will be invited to attend future meetings.

Chief Varney and Chief Jakubson could not attend thus there was nothing to report from the Technical sub-committee.

There was a discussion about providing an 800 MHz control station to Life Star. Chief Gary Allyn (West Harford FD) has committed to providing a written request for the 800 MHz radio to Life Star but the request has yet to be received. Thus, further discussion was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS:

It was reported that the *State of Connecticut Plan for Enhanced Public Safety Communications Interoperability* had been sent to the Governor via letter from OPM signed by Skip Thomas on 11 March 2004. The Governor was asked to support the Plan in general but specifically to "direct the necessary resources to come together to study, design what is needed to achieve Enhanced Public Safety Communications Interoperability for the State of Connecticut". There was further discussion related to the need to continue to develop a budget plan so as to be ready to get the plan to federal and state legislators and ask that money be earmarked.

A discussion about the articles provided to the members via e-mail before the meeting took place. The concerns and potential solutions contained in the articles validated what had been done in Connecticut thus far and what was being planned for the future.

The next technical sub-committee meeting is set for 15 April. Letters have gone out to all of the local law enforcement organizations asking for data related to the inventory of communications capability. Nobody in attendance knew if a similar letter had been sent to the fire departments or EMS organizations yet. Need to check with Chief Varney. Gordon Shand (DPH) is to get the "boilerplate letter form Chief Varney and send it to the EMD organizations.

A CT Civil Air Patrol (CAP) representative requested the committee consider providing funds to CT CAP to refurbish its communications infrastructure. The need described seemed reasonable both in purpose and in dollar amount. However, the committee does not control any of the possible funding sources. A couple of the members committed to discussing the matter with their organization.

UCONN Spring Weekend was identified as an event that will use multiple public safety assets. The I-CALL/TAC radios will be used to insure interoperability.

The CT Department of Motor Vehicles has expressed an interest in being on the I-CALL/TAC system. DMV has 60 inspectors and works closely with the CSP. DMV would also like to attend the interop meetings. Attendance was approved by the committee.

It was reported that the State of New Jersey wants to coordinate use of the radio frequencies and thus would like to attend the meetings. This idea did not receive support due to being outside of the scope of the committee. NJ should work with the DPS OSET on such matters.

The next meeting has been set for 1300 Tuesday 27 April 2004 at DPS HQ.

Adjourned at 1410.