



NEW YORK STATE  
DIVISION OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor

Jerome M. Hauer, Ph.D, MHS, Commissioner

**State Interoperable & Emergency Communication Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 11, 2014**  
**DHSES – Building 7A – First Floor Training Room**

**Bob Barbato:** Introductions

Reminders: On behalf of Commissioner Hauer who is currently at NEMA in VA, he appreciates your participation. I invite members from the Working Group today to a meeting this afternoon with the group. The Working Group provides program and technical expertise within NY. It is a resource to research, recommend etc. Welcome to co-chairs, Jay Kopstein and Eric Day.

**Board members present:**

Robert M. Barbato	Chair and Director of the Office of Interoperable and Emergency Communications
William Bleyle	Commissioner, Onondaga County 9-1-1
Steve Cumoletti	For Joseph D'Amico, Superintendent, NYS Police
Eric Day	Emergency Manager, Clinton County
Mark Fetting	For Michael C. Green, Commissioner, NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services
Toby Dusha	For Jerome Hauer, Commissioner, Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services
Brian LaFlure	Emergency Manager, Warren County
Todd Westhuis	For Joan McDonald, Commissioner, NYS Department of Transportation
John M. Merkliner	911 Coordinator, Monroe County
Richard Rotanz	Executive Director, Applied Science Director, Via Telephone
Michael Primeau	For Dr. Nariv R. Shah, Commissioner, NYS Department of Health
Mike Volk	Chief of EMS & Communications, Westchester County
James Voutour	Sheriff, Niagara County
Sgt. David Colliton	For Maj. Gen. Patrick A. Murphy, NYS Division of Military & Naval Affairs
Kevin Revere	Director of Emergency Services, Oneida County

**Board Member s Absent:**

Tara Stachelski	For Brian Digman, NYS Chief Information Officer, NYS Office of Information
Joel Eisdorfer	Partner, Real Estate Development Company
Joseph Gerace	Sheriff, Chautauqua County
Gary T. Maha	Sheriff, Genesee County

**Speakers:**

Robert M. Barbato	
Brian LaFlure	
Linda Messina	OIEC Counsel, DHSES
Toby Dusha	Radio Engineer, NYS DHSES OIEC
Matthew Delaney	Radio Engineer, NYS DHSES OIEC

**Barbato:** Motion to accept the November 13, 2013 minutes passes.

Several topics to cover today. First Brian Laflure will cover the AES standards review for consideration by board.

**Brian LaFlure:** We need to get information out that is pertinent to the purchases people are making. Money is being spent on radio equipment, while keeping in mind what state needs. There are no rules or regs. The Federal government put in a system (AES). Encryption is the digital way to change voice not to be heard. The Federal standard is open source and would like this to be used. Police agencies can share keys and connect. What is the incentive for requests from state and locals? What can it provide? What is the best way to implement? This is directed by vendors and wanted one group in charge. The Office of Emergency Communications was a recommendation. You cannot tell people what to buy but can share the best info for systems to work. There is protection through algorithms from 56-256 bits. The higher bit rate harder to break. AES has advanced encryption standards. 56 bits = break in 40 days. 256 is more strongly recommended. Users have to be P25 capable, some will use some wont. The US government recommends 256 bits. Are there non standard based solutions? These are based on federal standards. NYSP radio engineer Tom Leonard pushed for AES. Are default keys on the same system? That would not be a good plan. At a region 30 meeting, the recommended grant based radios need not have encryption but if purchased with grant money and encryption, they should be AES. Suggestion: if buying with grant money, then they need P25 and if buying radios with encryption, they must be capable of AES highest level of security minus military. We need to get info out, the sooner the better. OIEC will determine if this should be added to the grant. For more information visit: [www.Npstc.org](http://www.Npstc.org). This is an open platform not proprietary. This is not complicated, so please put it out there and suggest. Thank you. Questions?

**Barbato:** Discussion?

**Barbato:** Chris Tuttle region 2 DHS/OEC – Is there a guideline at the federal level? This has not been included yet as a grant requirement.

**Tuttle:** It is just a guideline at this point. A lot of people are pushing for it at state level. The CTSP based the need on Sandy Hook. It is seen as a best practice and they are looking to adopt. Right now just a guidance document. A lot of work will be put into it.

**Barbato:** The Board should consider as an operational guideline or best practice. Relative to requirement in grant program, however if valuable, please discuss with DHSES.

Questions?

**Cumoletti:** It should be considered in the grant process. This area needs specific best practice incorporation. Outreach? Think about as a board? Is it important enough to address in grant?

**LaFlure:** Putting money into systems is important. It is bad to spend \$5 million on a system and find it can't talk to someone due to manufacturer standards. We should send separate from grants so they have it. More as a synopsis or reference guide, the sooner the better.

**Voutour:** Ours has encryption capability.

**LaFlure:** Vendor issue? Saves money when they do have to design a system for each one. The research is already there so whatever brand can be used as long as it is encryption capable. NYSP standardized on it. Would work with common AES keys. Would like to make a motion to get this out. Concern: Important but if put into the grant scenario, we may spend more for agencies who wouldn't use encryption. Those who don't use encryption may not need to spend the money but the grant requirement would force that. Wording is important. If your equipment has encryption capability, you should make sure it has this ability.

**Barbato:** Motion is to discuss further the recommendation of a guideline.

**LaFlure:** OIEC should put wording together and vote.

**Barbato:** Board refers to CIWG for further discussion. Adoption of advanced encryptions standards make sense. The Board is asked to consider exploring the topic further. All those in favor – no opposed.

**Cumoletti:** In favor, but SICGB will have to get specific mandate from OIEC. Hope to get proper language out to the community and in the grant process.

**LaFlure:** Simple, we recommend the State adopt Federal recommendations and further explain to purchasers. State has concurrence with federal and this is how it affects you.

**Cumoletti:** Board needs to discuss.

**Barbato:** The grant is separate.

**LaFlure:** Yes any equipment should be included. We do not want to wait 3 months. Get concurrence in writing.

**Barbato:** Fine, a collaborative approach is better.

**LaFlure:** There is concern on the grant side, we do not want delay.

**Barbato:** Motion passed.

**Bleye:** Coming from an agency that went with proprietary equipment, we need to make a definitive statement that one kind of encryption is acceptable. 256 bit. From personal experience, this severely limits interoperability. Strapped, encrypted channels cause problems. In the interest of statewide interoperability, there needs to be a strong statement on needing to go encrypted.

**LaFlure:** Vendor suggestion?

Vendor will give proprietary encryption for free. The cost comes from subscribing, (Strap encrypted channels).

**LaFlure:** We have to start somewhere. Standardize somewhere to improve. Even just strictly software. Some companies get a lot of money for that which is an advantage for the field.

**Revere:** SICGB – how will this affect everyone? Additional money and raising standards, implications?

**Barbato:** At the afternoon meeting today we will further comment. Grant already states and might stop short but does reference existing standards.

**Barbato:** Moving along with an update on SICG grant program.

The primary purpose under CIWG is to start the state funded grant program to provide assistance to further NYS interoperable capability. It's the only program in the nation of its type.

Update – round 1 = \$20 million / 16 counties received \$11,730,00 dispersed to date. 7 or 8 counties cannot get done this year and extensions have been requested. There is progress but the spend rate is slower than we thought.

Round 2 = \$102 million / awards to 29 counties / 8 counties vouchering / \$8,225,405 reimbursed. Larger projects are having seasonal issues but there is significant progress. Requirements: Utilize a percentage for government standardized programs and training.

Round 3 = \$75 million / 17 counties received awards / No claiming activity to date. Looking to fill and increase capability, previous targets were unsuccessful.

**LaFlure:** Hamilton does not have round 3 are they out?

**Barbato:** Some are some aren't.

**Voutour:** What is the date period?

**Barbato:** 12 months roughly renewable up to 3 years.

**Voutour:** Many counties are having contract delays and its gotten worse. Slow pay on equipment leaving buildings and infrastructure not in place.

**Barbato:** Round 3 is renewable up to 2 years not round 2.

Board concerns:

Limited construction with weather etc. and deep frost lines.

Been told by vendor that county delivery and turnaround are due to similar purchases and vendor.

**Barbato:** Board should consider grant period recommendations.

**Voutour:** Why does state get a free pass when issuing contract?

**Barbato:** 7 months turnaround – need to do better. Extensions will help to not be held accountable for delays.

**LaFlure:** Counties may not have that info.

Board Concerns:

No county will start spending without executed contract

**Barbato:** We are trying to be more efficient. It is understandable but this is also not just state processing, there is also local level etc. Try to remit as quickly as possible.

**LaFlure:** Is round 3 ahead of time?

**Barbato:** No, we need discussions with chamber and finance staff for round 4.

Forming partnerships at the direction of NYS is taking shape and progress has been made. All NY counties are members of at least 1 consortium and most multiple. There are better partnerships, interoperability, identification of a go to person, and interoperable coordination. It is important that state agencies are part of the consortiums. Requests come in from local levels. There is also national & mutual aid channel improvement.

Board Question:

If the grant period was 3 yrs in Round 2, what is the final date?

**Barbato:** Going to have to look further due to the 7 month issue.

**Eric Abramson:** There is a 7 month responsibility.

Board Concern:

That really should be from contract sign date. We lost 7 months for projects.

**Eric Abramson:** We cannot write a contract without start date. Award date = contract period starts. Extensions help these issues.

**Barbato:** In recognizing the delay, that should be factored into extensions. Based on recommendations, we made the award date as the time counties can purchase. Do you want to change the contract execution date? Is the contract date of no value?

**LaFlure:** There are delay questions such as contract processing after state approval.

**Barbato:** Suggestions: Comprehensive engagement at county level so legislature is aware. If award date if of no value, we will consider changing. There are multiple phases and also consider larger counties vs. smaller.

**LaFlure:** No legislature will do that.

Board Concerns:

The key is to have the contract ready when awards are announced. The problem is do we move forward with the award letter? Future amendments not included.

**LaFlure:** We are very quick in my county to approve.

**Revere:** Our county is not that fast. We go with your letter and start moving the process. Forge ahead with contract date/award date.

**Gallagher:** 4 letters are tied to the delay and now a requirement - MWBE. We now have a better handle MWBE. Some Round 1 awardees have not even spent any of awarded funds. OIEC wants to see projects completed. Team effort is required with extensions –help – criteria – timelines with milestones. It is a 2 way street – we must work together.

Board Comments:

We are not spending fast enough in legislative eyes.

**Gallagher:** This is complex and requires teamwork.

**LaFlure:** Is this something the board could do legally, send a letter?

Board Comments:

The delays are not in DHSES, but rather the comptroller's office, etc., this is a long time for a contract.

**Barbato:** The board is free to make recommendations to executive and state legislature. Delays in round 2 – were an anomaly. We can try and expedite.

**Barbato:** The status of grants: 2012 PSAP, \$9 million had to be dedicated to PSAP, \$7 million for reimbursement for improvements. 11 counties were awarded. \$2 million for sustainment. (Same for 13-14 PSAP). Applications are due by 4/24/14, and we appreciate comments. Look forward to working on suggestions.

**Barbato:** Linda Messina with DHSES' Counsel's office is dialed in.

Next item – by laws and procedures

**Messina:** At the last meeting, we raised a draft proposal. Therefore a resolution on that was tabled. By laws state that the committee could include a draft and maintain board by laws, at subsequent meetings, etc. Questions on draft by laws or if board can take action to establish a committee?

**Barbato:** Motion to establish a committee for by law development, all in favor of a by law committee, motion carried.

**LaFlure:** Another committee? Board should handle this to prevent delays.

**Barbato:** It is difficult to get all board members

**Cumoletti:** By laws help define the mission of board. There are no by laws now so we need this. Many boards look to do this. Not having this falls on the board.

**Barbato:** Take this action item to distribute a draft and solicit adoption of by laws by the board.

**Toby Dusha:** OIEC program updates

National Weather Service conference call is at noon. Room is available for those wishing to listen in on the call.

**Channel naming working group** – The board did approve the policies for channel naming, but did not distribute. The plan now is to move forward and release channel naming guidance with an advisory that additional guidelines will be developed and issued, so as to not have to re program. Information needs to be released ASAP. The working group will re convene the group to address two (2) key topics: minimum interoperability channel programming and air to ground channels.

**Voutour:** Is NY law analog?

**Dusha:** Yes analog is the default setting for all radios; Analog is the common denominator to achieve interoperability.

#### **ICTAP**

Tactical Interoperability Communications Plans (TICP) updates: DHS-OEC is providing NYS with Technical Assistance (TA) projects. These are contractor supported services with no direct costs to the counties other than personnel to review and assist the contractor. Three (3) are for updating TICP plans of the former UASI's: Albany, Rochester and Buffalo. The intent is to add the interoperability data from other counties in the consortiums, into the TIC Plan. Once updated, the information will be available to create a field operations guide (FOG). Timeframe to complete the updates is through the end of the federal fiscal year for completion. An additional TA is for the Adirondack consortium to create an entirely new TICP for the 11 county consortium. Once these plans are completed, the state is on track for 40 of the 58 counties to be covered under a TICP. We are anticipating that in 2015-2016, additional TA programs will be available from DHS-OEC to develop plans for the remaining counties.

**LaFlure:** Start dates?

**Dusha:** Looking to do conference calls with each region within the next few weeks.

**Cumoletti:** Are contractors the same on all 5 projects?

**Tuttle:** Yes, La Fayette Group.

**Cumoletti:** Timing? Simultaneous? Updating?

**Tuttle:** Working for SWIC. We pushed hard on Lafayette group. They are sensitive to familiarization to NY region. Unintrusive, virtual information gathering. The formulas formats and gaps are being updating. On Adirondack side, they are starting from scratch. Timeline is until end of September. We are confident to meet that date. There are no reservations/concerns with the contractor. They are open to communication, good to work with, fast and dependable.

**Dusha:** Timing is good, as the new version of the CASM online data tool, new version has been released. This application will aid in the development of the TICP and FOGs. The information can be captured in CASM and imported into the TICP. Data collection shows good synergy between programs.

**Barbato:** Outreach is coming.

**Dusha:** ICTAP/COMEX communication unit exercise, training: Chris Tuttle obtained from the Feds a train the trainer course pilot program. It is planned for September/October timeframe and anticipate it to be held at the SPTC. Two (2) of training for the exercise controllers, evaluators and simulator roles, followed directly by 2 days of performing a COMEX with COML and COMT's trainees being evaluated. Feedback from the NYS participants on the composition and curriculum will be essential for DHS to enhance the course available for nationwide delivery..

**Communications Unit Technician (COMT) Training course** – July 14-18 in Phoenix, NY (Oswego County) classroom and hands on training for 15 technician level personnel from around the state.

**Barbato:** ICTAP course offerings are broad, so we canvassed the regional working group chairs from around the state for their priority needs in training and technical assistance. These course offerings are a product of that feedback. For 2015 I suggest you all consider ICTAP services that may be available to support counties.

**Tuttle:** Catalog updates are usually in the July/August time frame available.

**Barbato:** questions?

**Dusha: Communications/Credentialing:** Final draft of the credentialing policy for COML and COMT positions has been written. The document is based on a NJ template and contains components from the national IQS and NYS-IMT policies and 15 other state policies. Requirements: complete 5 ICS prerequisite courses; attend the approved COML or COMT FEMA/OEC training course. Complete a Position task book (PTB), 3 year completion period during a three (3) year period, with a grandfather clause for previously attained requirements. The credential will be valid for a 5 year period. This credentialing does not give credentials for a national based communication unit. This policy will be incorporated into DHSES credential/badging program.

**LaFlure:** Is it available?

**Dusha:** Drafts are available.

**Matthew Delaney:** FirstNet Update

FirstNet continues to develop concepts and business plans that have not been shared with the state yet. SLIGP – there was an implementation grant program workshop in Atlanta. Little learned, however the states told FirstNet to share more. Next big steps include state consultation as required by the legislation that created FirstNet. Provide states with a checklist of items in the next few weeks. These discussions will eventually provide each state with its FirstNet design. A timeline is unknown. NYS will take part in an OEC coverage workshop on April 2014 for 3-4 hours. ICTAP experts will assist with area coverage, siting, device coverage, and an overview. No consultation or design for FirstNet.

Not much activity on the Public Safety Broadband Working Group.

**Voutour:** Do we need to build on current towers and systems?

**Delaney:** It is likely that FirstNet will be built on existing public safety towers. Public safety needs are not developed into commercial carrier plans yet. Most experts agree not to stop using current LMR.

**Barbato:** Jay Kopstein co-chair of CIWG is here and we do have a working group on this. Know that broadband will not replace mission critical resources.

**Delaney:** The initial legislation may not be enough for network completion. We understand that States will not get a check for FirstNet. FirstNet will do the contracting.

Board Question:  
Subscriber cost?

**Delaney:** Users will pay to be on the network. Fees cannot exceed the cost to maintain network. Also, offsetting resources are useful to FirstNet.

Questions?

**Delaney:** Interoperability Survey and Analysis Project

This was distributed this fall and is being used to assess interoperability. Current status: contracted with NYSTEC and all but 3 counties responded. NYSTEC is working on a more thorough analysis. Reports should be produced in the next few months. Examples on raw data: interoperability with adjoining counties 85% have methods, only about 40% with adjoining states. Questions?

**Barbato:**

New Business?

No new business.

Thank you for attending. Useful and constructive discussion today. Feedback here is invaluable and will guide in implementation. On behalf of DHSES thank you. Motion to adjourn, passed.