

North Central Texas Council of Governments

**NOTES FROM INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF APRIL 25, 2007**

The meeting was opened by Chairman Scrivner who welcomed members.

**Agenda Item # 1: Interoperability Procedures: (Action)**

Chairman Scrivner requested approval of this item.

Fred Keithley, NCTCOG, provided information about staff, subcommittee, and Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program's (ICTAP) involvement.

Kelly King made a motion that a User's Group be formed from different areas of NCT COG to discuss and refine regional interoperability policies and procedures.

Chairman Scrivner commented that the Region received low marks on this item in the TICP Scorecard.

Harland Westmoreland motioned to accept the procedures.  
Charles Cinquemani seconded the motion.

All attending were in favor.

**Further Discussion on Users Group.** The Group would include firefighters, police officers, dispatchers, EMS, maybe utilities, public works, public health, etc. The product would be end user oriented. Chief King suggested that this group should be composed of users with operations backgrounds, primarily, but technical capabilities must be represented, also.

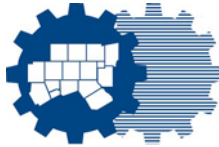
*(Item Update: Names for the Users' Group have been solicited and persons will soon be contacted for input.)*

**Agenda Item # 2: Regional Interoperability MOU (Action)**

Chairman Scrivner discussed how long the Governance Committee has worked on the Procedures.

Fred Keithley discussed the MOU's review by ICTAP and Operation's Subcommittee personnel. He stated that the document will be "umbrelled" by NCTCOG and will not be signed by individual agencies, unless that agency believes they need to sign or they want to make changes specific to their agency. It will be adopted by the Interop Governance Committee to serve as a regional MOU. NCTCOG Staff will take the document to NCTCOG's Executive Director who may wish to take it to the Executive Board. The Chairman commented that all agencies will be listed. The TICP Scorecard showed a lower score for lack of a regional MOU.

Gary Gilbert asked if NCTCOG will show all participants to whom the MOU is directed. After some discussion, the answer was, "Yes. "



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Gerard Eads asked a question about how to word this so as to avoid having lengthy delays in receiving approval. He pointed out with several cities in the room that it could take 3-6 months to get approval or longer.

Fred Keithley responded that the umbrella method by NCTCOG could avoid the delays.

Harlan Westmoreland asked if it must be signed or not.

Fred Keithley stated that it has gone through the Governance Committee and approved. It will not have to be signed, although each agency is welcome to take it to City Council/County Commissioners Court/Board meeting/etc. It is an umbrella MOU. It covers the items listed in the MOU, but it does not have any teeth. It provides some agreement among everyone if a multi-agency response is called for. It provides the needed MOU that DHS and ICTAP have requested. It will also work towards satisfying the MOU requirement of the Scorecard.

Several wording issues were identified by various Committee members. These will be corrected and an updated copy will be sent to the membership. The wording issues included:

- Remove “the undersigned’ in second paragraph.
- Change wording in bullet #2 to read “Each agency shall, with appropriate authorization, share with other agencies all information necessary to configure and program user radios for justified operation on their respective public safety radio systems.”
- Question for clarification, “Is there currently a COM-C or ACOM-C?”
  - “No.” Fred Keithley and the Chair replied.
- Add Contact list of Committee members to the end of the document with contact information.
- Remove item 15.
- Remove signatory section.

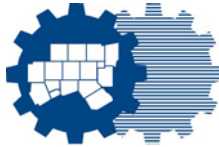
John Harazda (ATF) asked if it will affect ESF#13 locally? Several on the Committee answered “No.”

Chief David Martin said he was looking at it from an Operations standpoint. His question was, “Will just anyone be able to program an agency’s frequencies?? It will be hard to convince upper levels to go along with that.”

Chairman Scrivner responded that it will not affect that. Mostly Mobile Command Posts and needed radios will be affected. Even that will require authorization. It will allow more direct sharing of resources. If someone shows up at an incident, they do not automatically get access to everything...

The MOU will be fine tuned by staff according to input from Committee and returned to Committee for approval. The Committee will be given an opportunity for additional input. If none is received, the MOU will go forward as approved, then posted on NCTCOG’s web site.

*(Item Update: The revised MOU was sent for Committee approval May 2, 07.)*



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**Agenda Item # 3: Federal DOJ Usage Agreement:**

Decision was made that all participating agencies will sign the MOU and work directly with the FBI. NCTCOG will not “umbrella” the MOU for participating agencies. Many agencies have already signed the MOU and confusion and unnecessary duplication might result with the umbrella approach.

**Agenda Item # 4: TICP:**

The following are sub-topics regarding the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan. The Committee was requested to approve the suggested actions relevant to the TICP.

1. Consolidating and Condensing the TICP
  - a. All committee members agreed that updating and condensing the plan was needed. They would consider approval after reviewing revised document.
2. Requesting Additions to the Plan (all agreed to make requested additions)
  - a. Chairman Scrivner recommended that any changes should be funneled through CJ Holt at NCTCOG, so that he can incorporate the changes accordingly.
3. Moving the TICP to Rural Areas.
  - a. Chairman Scrivner polled the Committee to determine if all agree that the TICP plan should be moved into the rural counties outside the UASI service area. All persons in attendance were amenable to expanding the TICP, as time and resources permit.
4. Updating Information
  - a. A page of updates were included with handouts.
  - b. Plan will be updated as needed.

During discussions, Gerard Eads mentioned CASM and using ICTAP to work with the Governance Committee to implement CASM. Fred will re-contact ICTAP to see what assistance they can provide. Mr. Eads proposes that a NCTCOG position be added/used to keep information updated. Kelly King advised that it would be useful in conjunction with TRRN database to give more focused information.

**Agenda Item # 5: NPSPAC Mutual Aid Usage Plan**

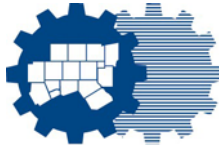
There was discussion on the method for managing the use of repeater throughout the region. It was mentioned there is a need to formulate documents/procedures to send to users of the NPSPAC channels. Kelly King said the operations subcommittee will develop the “Use Procedures”. JD Tiwater said he has a document that might be helpful. He will send to Kelly King and will work from there.

**Agenda Item # 6: Vacant Officers Position**

Open position was for Vice Chairman.

Kelly King and others nominated Gerard Eads. Numerous committee members seconded the nomination. (Harland Westmoreland, Charles Cinquemani, and others). No other nominations.

All were in favor.



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**Agenda Item # 7: Regional Interoperability Initiative Status Report**

Eighty-four (84) agencies completed or have sent in invoices for reimbursement from DEM. Five (5) agencies had not sent them in.

Also 10 were still in various stages of incompleteness. Most of the delays were small.

**Agenda Item # 8: Regional Functional Exercise (Keith Burley presents)**

Keith Burley from NCTCOG's Emergency Preparedness Department presented this item.

Exercise will involve a plane crash into a stadium, and there will be a radiation leak. There are still many questions about scope of exercise, including the depth to which role playing will occur. Location was yet to be determined. Ron Timmons from Plano asked if this exercise satisfied the exercise element required by DHS. Keithley advised that the matter will be explored and someone will get back to Mr. Timmons with the answer. CJ Holt, Communications Coordinator, and Keith Burley, Emergency Preparedness Specialist, will be attending the table top exercise and the functional exercise in San Antonio over the next month to determine the scope of the activities. They will report back to the Committee on these events.

Chairman Scrivner made a request for volunteers to serve on the Exercise Sub-committee.

*Item Update: To date, one person has come forward to serve on the sub-committee. Many thanks to Gary Gilbert.*

**Agenda Item # 9: Vendor Presentations:**

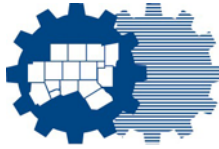
Requests to present a product demonstration to the Governance Committee may be raised in the future. What is the best way to accommodate such a request? Chairman Scrivner raised discussion as to whether the group would entertain requests from vendors to present product demonstrations or discussion about their products. General Consensus from the Committee was that, given time and resources, vendor presentations could be granted, but they would need to be granted to any vendor seeking audience with the Committee. There continued extensive discussion about how to accommodate such a request. A final recommendation was to hold a "vendor day" sometime in the future. The theme of the Vendor Day might be how to achieve Level 6 Interoperability. All presentations would sketch the best method for achieving Level Six.

The group agreed that no vendor presentations should be given to the Interoperability Governance Committee alone, but agreed that a Vendor Day would be a good opportunity for Vendor's to present to all who were interested.

**Agenda Item # 10: Level Six, Sustainability:**

Fred Keithley discussed the issue of sustainability (a plan for funding new equipment, software, repairing/replacing equipment, etc, without grant funds). He suggested that planning for this should begin soon, because it will take years to design a realistic sustainability model and gain local officials' support.

**Agenda Item # 11: Other Business**



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**DPS Communications Trailer:**

Fred Keithley invited the Committee to browse through the communications trailer that Phillip Herbst, DPS, was kind enough to bring. Thank you, Phillip.

**Texas Radio Coalition**

There was a discussion about the “Texas Radio Coalition”. The radio coalition is trying to incorporate Dallas, Houston, East Texas Medical, Harris County, San Antonio, Georgetown, and others into a consortium for the purpose of developing a position of strength. The position would allow them to research and analyze ways to integrate radio systems, formulate an emergency response plan, prioritize user needs, provide guidance to state officials, and distribute funding across the state. One question asked whether technical decisions had been made by the coalition. Chairman Scriver assured everyone that they are working on the technical issues. They are looking at several options, including Software Defined Radio and other options. Because the coalition includes so many agencies, it gives them the power to push for development of new technology to accommodate the varied landscape in the state. A recommendation was made to invite the Coalition leadership for a presentation about Coalition goals and progress.

**Rebanding Discussion**

Harland Westmoreland raised the question about naming conventions. The City of Euless and the North East Tarrant County System will be ready to program user equipment on May 16<sup>th</sup>, so a decision is needed on the Interoperability channels. NPSTC has made recent changes to the naming format. Most changes are workable. Some radios have 2- channel displays (i.e. numbers). Chairman Scriver advised that one of the reasons for the new conventions will be to accommodate this 2- channel scheme. Chief Westmorland stated that some decision for the region must be reached, so that all agencies can be more coordinated with radio channel naming.

Respectively submitted,

Fred Keithley