



State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor

Statewide Interoperable Communications System
Executive Committee

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

Post Office Box 3677
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677

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Honorable Bobby Jindal
Governor of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

Dear Governor Jindal:

On behalf of the Statewide Interoperable Communications System Executive Committee (SIEC) it is my pleasure to provide this report on the status of interoperable communications for first responders in Louisiana.

Louisiana's local communications systems are highly disparate. These systems range from recently deployed systems to aged and even out-dated systems. Local entities have been trying very hard to work within their means. There are some parishes that have succeeded in establishing better interoperability than others who struggle with a lack of funding and resources.

Prior to establishment of SIEC, there was no statewide guidance which resulted in individual parishes making decisions that best suited their needs and resources. This is the major cause of disparate systems.

Louisiana is challenged to develop an interoperable system among a landscape that is highly vulnerable to multiple weather events of catastrophic proportion. Further challenges include federal regulations, mandates, and grant restrictions that limit our options.

Since the Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee (SIEC) was established by Executive Order KBB 2006-17 and 2006-24 (as amended) by Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, the SIEC made progress to advance the state's communications abilities. Its mission was to design, construct, administer, and maintain a statewide shared communication system with the capacity to transport voice, data, and imagery within the system as well as to develop and approve system design, system testing, and the implementation plan. To accomplish this, the SIEC established policies and secured funds for the system operation, administration, and maintenance.

This governance body has been an essential element in Louisiana's plan to build a statewide communications system. In December 2006, the Louisiana Legislature gave their full support for communications interoperability and approved to create and establish the Louisiana Interoperability Communications Fund within the Louisiana Treasury. All monies in this fund shall be used to solely establish, design, develop, acquire, construct, administer, operate, and maintain an interoperable communications system within the state. The Legislature has appropriated approximately \$24 million combined for FY 2006, FY2007, and FY 2008 for the build-out of the P25 System. (*Funding map of P25 System Infrastructure Provided as Appendix A*)

SIEC Accomplishments

SIEC meetings and events

The SIEC has taken great effort to ensure the involvement of key stakeholders from local and state first responder organizations as they conduct regular monthly meetings to discuss the needs of communications interoperability in Louisiana. This process has provided the SIEC with essential information to make sound judgments as they pertain to interoperability as well as provide the populace with information such as progress and developments on communications networks.

Creation and maintenance of the SIEC website

The SIEC's website is a compilation of logistical, administrative and public awareness information. This website has both general information as well as a library of interoperability data available to all SIEC members and Louisiana first responders.

Development of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan

The Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) subsumes and builds upon previous planning efforts by state agencies and local jurisdictions in cooperation with key federal agencies. Key lessons learned that have driven planning in Louisiana over the last several years include those learned in the nation's response to the 9-11 terror attacks, and the state's response to the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. The latter highlighted the state's needs for more robust systems, and the federal response to Katrina and Rita funded some of the early development of the P25 System, that is the centerpiece of this plan. Of course, emerging communications technologies also permit enhanced interoperable communications, and regulatory changes in frequency allocation require planning and implementation.

The SCIP continues to play a pivotal role in outlining the state's communication needs and begin addressing them to create a seamless interoperability network. The SCIP was drafted by the SIEC and support staff with the help of regional representatives, organizational leaders and state legislators in an effort to form a

comprehensive plan for meeting the state's interoperability needs. This document also met the requirements of the Department of Homeland Security, Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant, and allowed the release of substantial Federal funding that will play a key role in moving Louisiana towards statewide interoperability.

The State's plan is purposely flexible, to meet the challenges in funding sources, development of standard operating procedures, on-going evaluation of system capacity and emerging technologies, and public information to increase local buy-and increased usage. In addition, this plan is integrated with the State's Homeland Security Strategy, specifically Goal 1, which calls for establishing an interoperable communications environment for all the State's first responders. Finally, the outlying goals established by this document are fully nested with the State's Homeland Security Strategy and incorporate the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum to ensure continuity and integration with the direction established by the federal government.

Conduct of "needs assessment" surveys

The SIEC identified gaps in Louisiana's communication's system by means of conducting a web based "needs assessment" or survey, which identified statewide communications capabilities at both the local and state level addressing infrastructure, training and personnel. 100% of all parishes and state first responder agencies have completed the assessment. The compilation of this data continues to play a pivotal role in identifying interoperability needs across the state for local and state first responders. These needs continue to be addressed through statewide funding requests and implementation of interoperability polices and procedures.

Utilization and development of the Communications Asset Survey Mapping tool (CASM)

The state's communications assets have been evaluated, and the data is being entered into the federally provided CASM tool, which makes all of the nation's communications and emergency response assets visible to emergency response coordinators to assist in making timely and efficient decisions during incidents. This tool can be used on an intra-state level to address local and regional needs as well as to provide personnel at the command level with a means of evaluating interoperability performance. Furthermore, this system makes the implementation of new technologies recognizable to state officials so they can then reassess the needs of first responders based on the availability of the latest communications assets.

Implementation of the My State USA system

Louisiana is participating in a six month Pilot Project with the Department of Homeland Security "My State USA" emergency notification system. This system provides Louisiana's citizens with a comprehensive warning system capable of informing the public in minutes through email, regular and cell phone

technologies. The system gives citizens of the state critical information that facilitates the state's mission of protecting property and saving lives during incidents, and is a great augmentation to Louisiana's growing interoperability network. Upon completion of the pilot project, the SIEC intends to complete the Request for Proposals for an "Emergency alert and warning system".

Initialization of the state "outreach program"

The SIEC and support staffs have assisted in the education of local first responders within all 64 parishes to understand the state's efforts to design a statewide P25 compliant system, and to determine the benefits of local participation in such a system. The SIEC and staffs have also begun working with regional representatives in creating Regional Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TIC Plans) that will assist local officials to govern their interoperability assets and make them eligible for federal grant programs.

Following list the status of the Regional TIC Plans:

- Region 1: Completed and approved by DHS.
- Region 2: Completed and approved by DHS
- Region 3: 98% complete
- Region 4: 80% complete
- Region 5: 5% complete
- Region 6: Beginning
- Region 7: Beginning
- Region 8: 5 - 10% complete
- Region 9: Beginning
- Statewide: Beginning

Development of Statewide Communications System, Standard Operating Procedures

The SIEC staff, in cooperation with Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Public Safety Services, has prepared in draft form Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), which will govern the P25 statewide communication system while allowing significant tactical and operational communications freedom to regions and local jurisdictions that utilize the system.

Implementation of Cooperative Endeavor Agreements/Memorandums of Understandings/Interagency Agreements

The SIEC continues to enter into various Cooperative Endeavor Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding's, and/or Interagency Agreements with local governments on the acquisition and use of a variety of communications assets, which provide mutual benefit to first responders connected to the statewide system.

Multi State Communications

The SIEC continues to enhance interoperable communications among Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana through the Gulf States Interoperable

Communications (GSIC). Louisiana has entered into a Multi State Interagency Agreement with Mississippi to connect the two state's P25 700 MHz systems. The GSIC states jointly applied for FY2007 Homeland Security Grant Program funding as was recognized in the top 15% of applicants nationwide as having a sound plan to connect the disparate state systems. Louisiana understands while advances will be made over the 2008 calendar year, it is anticipated a full integration of communications for all three states will consist of a three to five year period.

Interoperability and Other Systems

UHF and VHF systems are primarily in use by rural smaller jurisdictions but mostly concentrated in the northern Louisiana by local police, sheriffs and fire departments. The State recognizes that some agencies will continue to use their existing systems and may never or not readily move to the P25 System. The SIEC believes that as the system becomes ubiquitous in the State that almost all these agencies will move to the system. However, the SIEC will continually work in coordination with local first responder agencies to determine whether they need continuation of IP-based solution technology or assistance in developing a plan to transition to the P25 system.

Continuing support of legacy systems and developing interfaces among disparate systems while migrating to newer technologies is essential to the creation of a total interoperable communications system. Louisiana has taken measures to ensure interoperability between the P25 System and disparate systems, which includes the following:

- IP gateways. Throughout the state, gateway devices connect many of the disparate systems, including VHF and UHF systems. Ensuring interoperability between the P25 System and these disparate systems and coordinating those resources with public safety users operating in the VHF/UHF spectrum provides the best opportunity to enhance public safety interoperability. Due to the number of gateway devices deployed throughout Louisiana, if these systems are connected to the P25 System, its use must be regulated. Therefore, the State is developing gateway technology guidance within the P25 System Standard Operating Procedures for those legacy disparate systems that connect to the statewide system.
- Console patches.
- Programming radios with interoperable channels and mutual aid channels.
- Providing radios to each parish Office of Homeland Security/Emergency Preparedness for distribution to local first responders command and control personnel. Through state appropriated funds, the SIEC purchased 2100 P25 compliant radios which were distributed at a ratio of 85:15 between local and state agencies. Each of the 64 Louisiana parishes received 28 radios and the remaining radios were distributed among state agency first responder agencies.

In order to encourage migration from existing technologies to newly-procured technologies, which includes usage of the statewide system, in FY2007-2008 the State provided appropriated funding for 100% of all maintenance and operation fees for the infrastructure of the P25 System. Local first responder agencies are not assessed fees to join to the P25 System or for locally-owned infrastructure and systems connected to the statewide system.

All procurements utilized by the State's dedicated funding for the P25 System will be authorized for the purchase of P25-compliant equipment. In addition, GOSHEP, as the State Administrative Agency for the federal Homeland Security Grant Program, strongly encourages local jurisdictions to invest new monies into P25 compliant radios.

However, due to significant investments already made at the local level, GOHSEP will allow parishes to continue to utilize grant funds to support existing legacy systems. In order to compensate for this, the State, through the Louisiana National Guard, State Police and GOHSEP, maintains multiple means to tie into the State network with local systems in the event of a major incident requiring emergency response from multiple agencies and cross-jurisdictions.

Strategic Technology Reserve

A variety of communication resources are available for immediate deployment in an emergency or major incident. These assets are available upon request through Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2, and include the following:

- Radio Caches-Several caches of extra radios are maintained by DPSS to deploy in connection with a specific public safety response. The SIEC holds 200 radios in its inventory available to all local and state agencies, which are to be deployed for local and statewide events. Louisiana State Police (LSP) has a total of 144 radios distributed in caches and located at each LSP Troop headquarters within the nine regions.
- Mobile Command Posts – ESF 2 has three Mobile Command Posts available in its inventory. LSP – (2), GOHSEP – (1). Though not all inclusive, these command posts are equipped with 700/800 MHz, VHF, UHF, aviation and HF radio communications systems, IP gateway devices, satellite communications, video teleconferencing, telephone and computer systems.
- Mobile Communications Equipment Trailers - Currently, there are three state-owned mobile command trailers in the ESF 2 inventory. SIEC (2), LSP (1). These trailers are located in the northern regional of the state, LSP headquarters and southeast regions of the state. These trailers are equipped with 700/800 MHz P25 trunked site, 800 MHz mutual aid repeaters, VHF/UHF mutual aid base stations, satellite dish, interoperability gateway and internet and Voice-Over IP access. There is one LSP owned 800 MHz Smartzone System trailer equipped for the 800 MHz system and includes 800 MHz mutual aid repeaters. In addition, LSP owns one satellite dish trailer to restore a broken T-1 line

at a tower site and one box satellite dish trailer to expand capacity at a site.

- Interoperable Communications Extension System (ICE_S). The Louisiana National Guard owns and maintains one ICE_S, a mobile tower with satellite backhaul and 100 cell phones provisioned to operate on that tower as well as commercial networks. ICE_S is one of 24 systems currently in operation with the Army and Air National Guard, Northern Command, and FEMA. These other systems are available to the Louisiana National Guard upon request in times of emergency.

Emerging Technology

The SIEC also recognizes the importance of monitoring emerging technologies that may have application in the enhancement of interoperable communications. The SIEC expects to use \$2 million of the PSIC grant to fund emerging technology purchases. The Committee is evaluating broadband IP based 2.4/4.9 GHz mesh network technologies.

Funding Summary through FY2008/2009 Executive Recommendation

P25 System Infrastructure (*Funding map of P25 System Infrastructure Provided as Appendix A*)

Louisiana has committed over \$78 million in funding from a variety of local, state and federal sources to purchase equipment for the P25 system infrastructure. This funding will provide statewide communications infrastructure and redundancy providing secure 95% or better coverage when using a portable radio inside a building at street level in the more densely populated seven metropolitan areas of the State, and secure 95% or better coverage when using a mobile street level radio in all other areas of the State, which will optimize and further improve statewide interoperable communications.

Subscriber Radios

Louisiana has committed over \$15.8 million in funding from several state and federal sources, for the purchase of both portable or mobile radios and console dispatch equipment for local and state agency responders. The ratio of assignment of the equipment has been 85% local responders and 15% state agencies. Louisiana emphasizes as we request and secure communications funding that the importance of providing resources to the local first responders take priority over state agency responders.

System Maintenance

Louisiana has committed over \$14.5 million in funding from the state general fund and federal grants towards ongoing statewide system maintenance. The system maintenance will be provided by the Dept of Public Safety and Corrections, Public Safety Services.

Executive Staff Support

Louisiana has committed approximately \$500,000 in funding from the state general fund to provide full time dedicated interoperability positions, which will provide executive staff support for planning, policy and research.

Continued funding sources will be identified and researched by the SIEC Budget and Finance Subcommittee. As with the current committed funding sources the committee's research will be diverse and include, but are not limited to the following:

State and local funds: The State and local governments will continue to collaborate and coordinate requests for appropriation funding to be used towards implementation of the SCIP. Examples of State and local revenues which may be used to fund appropriation requests include, but are not limited to State taxes, bonds, and 911 surcharges, and commercializing available state-owned tower space.

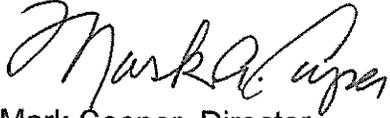
Grants: The SIEC will continue to seek State and federal grants from areas such as, the Homeland Security Grant Program, Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program, COPS Grant Program, the Port Security Grant Program, and congressional earmarks.

Public/Private Partnerships: The SIEC will continue to enter into cooperative agreements with local and state agencies and private entities to support the goals and objectives of the SCIP. Projects which may be considered are: leasing versus buying technology and infrastructure; co-locating towers; and providing redundant connections to infrastructure. To continue further development and interest in partnerships, the SIEC established a policy in consideration of an application for partnership.

Achieving statewide interoperability for Louisiana's first responders is a massive undertaking. Louisiana has been aggressively making efforts to improve its public safety communications systems and foster cooperative relationships among all first responders. With your continued support, Louisiana will continue to lead the nation in achieving true communications interoperability through a shared system providing a more efficient, and effective emergency response team for the citizens of our State.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Mark Cooper, Director
Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
Statewide Interoperable Communications
System Executive Committee

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cc: Timmy Teeple, Chief of Staff
Angele Davis, Commissioner of Administration
Senator Mike Walsworth
Representative Bodi White
SIEC Members

