

Minutes

South Dakota Public Safety Communications Council September 25, 2008

The South Dakota Public Safety Communications Council or SDPSCC as it will be named for the remainder of this document was held at 9:00 A.M., September 25, 2008 in the Kneip Building-Conference Room 3. Any additions or corrections prior to the next scheduled meeting are welcome.

Members Present: Dennis Gorton (SD Fire Fighters Assoc.), Chris Lewis (Dept. of Interior), Danny Hayes (SD EMT Assoc.), Jim Holmes (SD Dept. of Health), Larry Jandreau (Tribal Government), Daren Ketchum (SD Dept. of Public Safety), Andy Alban (Game, Fish & Parks), Ken Wesche (SD DOA/Wildland Fire Div.), Steve Christensen (SD Police Chief's Assoc.), Sheriff Fred Lamphere (SD Sheriffs' Assoc.), Dayton Myers (SD ARNG), Brad Stiefvater (SD Emergency Managers' Assoc.), David Atherton (SD APCO/NENA Chapter), Todd Dravland (BIT/SRC Engineering), Jason Humphrey (DOT) *sitting in for Greg Fuller*, Jeff Pierce (BIT Engineering Administrator), Natalie Harer (BIT).

Members Absent: Greg Fuller (DOT), Shirlee Leighton (Assoc. Commissioners), Rebekah Craddock (SD Assoc. of Healthcare Organizations), Emmett Keyser (SD Game, Fish & Parks), Brian Gortmaker (DCI).

Guests: Sonny Hagseth (Motorola).

Chairman Gorton called the meeting to order at 9:10 A.M.

Chairman Gorton welcomed the Council and guest to the meeting. New members; Bob Wilcox, Daren Ketchum, and Craig Price were introduced and welcomed by the Council.

Chairman Gorton asked the Council if there were any additions to the agenda. There will be an addition to New Business in regard to the 700 MHz. which was postponed at the April 25th meeting.

Approval of the minutes from the April 25th meeting.

Councilman David Atherton motioned to approve the minutes of the April 25th meeting, there being no additions or corrections, Councilman Fred Lamphere seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Old Business:

1. Budget Discussion/Jeff Pierce

A General budget handout was given to the Council. Additional funding in the amount of \$420,000 would make our budget two million dollars. The request has been sent to the Governor for approval and if approved, would then go on the Legislators in November.

The budget would include asking for an expansion of tech coverage by hiring an additional full time employee, currently we have one tech maintaining 54 sites, two controllers, and 1500 radios. Other items such as; contractual services, tower inspections every three years, and NIM which is not on the budget at this time but it is a potential new project.

It would be very helpful to have the support of each of the Council members by contacting your local Legislators and Representatives. We need to get the importance of this budget request out to those people so we have a better chance of having it approved.

Jeff was asked to visit with BIT Commissioner, Otto Doll to find out how to best approach Governor Rounds. It was suggested that a letter be drawn up from the SDPSCC showing the support of this budget.

Denny asked that each Council member contribute one paragraph to add to the letter. We don't want the letter to be any longer than two pages.

Councilman Lamphere made the motion to have Brad and Steve be in charge of drafting the letter. Chris seconded the motion, there being no further discussion, motion carried.

The timeframe for submitting those paragraphs is 15 days.

State Radio and Towers

Currently there are towers located in Bowdle, Herried, Castle Rock, and Pierre. The income from these towers is between \$50,000 and \$75,000 and goes to tower maintenance. Maintenance is contracted out and some is done by us.

The State's cellular phone providers are Alltel and Verizon. The average cost is \$49.00 and that does not include data services. At some point the local entities are going to have to pick up the funding because grant money is only good for the period of the grant.

Brad stated that of the \$130,000 committed to radios, there is \$50,000 remaining and that local money does not have to come from a specific entity.

Further discussion on the radios determined that there is a need to place a statement in the manual showing “who will get radios”. Right now there is no way of keeping track of those radios that no longer work or are being traded.

Sonny Hagseth (Motorola) informed the council that dealers have to give the radios ID numbers. Also, before a new order is completed the serial numbers have to be given to Motorola. We do not know what Johnson Radios has in place as far as their regulations.

Federal and Regional communication, as well as communication between other States is a growing issue. We would like to receive a grant to help implement a program to for this. Locally, Homeland Security money can be used to help get the program started.

Homeland Security funds have been used for a lot of small items such as, radios. Ideas for spending the grant money are running out and they should use some of this money to get the program started.

Interoperability is a confusing title and it was requested to clarify the definition, which is; Communication between agencies when applying for grants.

P25

SmartX is an instrument that can be used by each region to allow the switch over to P25 with radio capability. Regions would be equipped gradually. Eventually there will be a Master P25 Unit that will go to repeaters already in place. The repeaters will have a conversion box for radios to become SmartX compatible. In the long term, repeaters will be downloaded with P25 software and then the conversion boxes will not be needed.

Jeff asked Sonny if a representative can attend one of our meetings to explain how the systems works.

The SDPSCC will send a recommendation that we implement SmartX and give an explanation of our objective, a suggested end date and a completion target date.

Chris motioned that the SDPSCC move forward with a multi phase approach to implement P25 and find someone to develop a plan. Ken seconded, there being no further discussion, motion carried.

Radio System Update

- Currently there are no plans or funding for new tower sites.
- The Porcupine site is up and running, working well.
- Wasta is putting up a new Verizon tower.

Motorola radio training

Training for radio usage was discussed, each area has different zones therefore, each zone would need different training. It was also noted that “what works for one community doesn’t work for others”. No decision has been made on this topic.

Other Old Business

There was an outage in Sioux Falls in March; the company reported that it would not happen again.

Annual Interoperability Report will be given to the Council members.

New Business

700 MHz

Each State has to make a plan for the 700 MHz and 800 MHz Spectrum in order to go to a National Communications Infrastructure (NCI). South Dakota will probably never be a part of NCI but we still need to make a plan. South Dakota has no real need for 700 MHz to use for data, ect.

Because the SDPSCC members were executively chosen by Governor Rounds, they can not receive a stipend.

Interoperability Communications Brief

Jeff distributed this brief to the council members; information on what Interoperability means and what it does is in this handout. It may give some guidance for the letter that will be going to the Governor.

Lobbying

Is lobbying something that can impact this group or not? No decision made.

Routine Dispatch and Interagency Radio Communication

Dispatch channels are designated and programmed in radios, but the users should not be abusing the guidelines given to them. This bogs the system and could cause major problems.

Radio users need to be trained by their agencies through meetings, newsletters and whatever type of avenue works to get the information to them. Also, inform the users that noncompliance will lead to loss of their radios.

The training should also include a definition of dispatching and the difference between Inter and Intra. BIT is responsible for their system and BIT should notify those who are abusing that system. Jeff was asked to come up with a draft for the notification letter.

Madison

There is some concern in regard to land and air communications in cases of emergency. Can we designate a specific talk group so that the land and air emergency personnel can communicate with each other? There are safety concerns because land crews do not know where air crews are and at times there are several land and air crews dispatched to the same emergency scene.

A meeting should be held with these emergency personnel to discuss the communication concerns and Brad's group will draw up a proposal. Danny will take the issues to the EMT's.

Interstate Communication

Todd spoke to the group about traveling interstate. Emergency personnel should not carry their talk groups into different areas; they should be switching to each areas specific frequency. Not switching bogs down the system and it is not as effective.

Public Meeting Notice

A public meeting to discuss 700MHz will be held on January 15, 2009 at the Cedar Shores Resort in Chamberlain, SD. At this time there has not been a time scheduled.

There being no other business, Councilman Steve Christenson motioned to adjourn, seconded by Daren Ketchum-motion carried, meeting adjourned at 3:10 P.M.