

Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency

Interoperable Communications Meeting

Friday, November 15, 2013

**In Attendance:**

**Members:**

Jamia McDonald – Exec. Director of RIEMA  
Chris Callahan – RI National Guard  
James McLaughlin- Fire Chiefs Association  
Sid Wordell - Police Chiefs Association  
Peter Ginaitt – Lifespan  
Joseph DelGuidice – Prov. Communications  
Ralph Nahigian – RISCO North  
Frank Floor – Dept. of Environmental Mgt  
Joe Baker – Department of Transportation  
Sam Adams- Dept of Health  
Gina Caruolo - RI Dept of Corrections  
Greg Scungio - E-911  
Jack Landers - DOIT  
Brian Glancy – Rep. of RIEMA

Thom Guertin – SWIC  
Jamie Pereira – RIPTA

**Guests:**

Robert Godin - RISP  
Norma Sousa - E-911  
Leo Messier - RIAC  
John Washburn - RIEMA  
Brian Swann – Motorola Solutions  
Tom Guthlein – RIEMA  
Melinda Hopkins – RIEMA  
Gil Woodside – RIEMA  
Alex Potts – RIEMA  
David Schnell - Lifespan

Meeting called to order at 10:02 AM and reviewing minutes, roll call was done, there was a quorum. There were a couple of edits in the prior minutes; page 3: Compliance & Customer Service Sub Committee chair is Sam Adams, not Frank Floor. Page 4, paragraph 5, Sam Adams (Health) stated that on the ICS 205- some requested to use southwide 6. Sam Adams made a motion to approve as edited, seconded by Colonel Callahan, motion approved.

**Discussion on SOP's – Vetting Process for new users on RISCO – Tom Guthlein**

Tom Guthlein (RIEMA) discussed the checklist for new users becoming members. It goes over the benefits of them joining RISCO, how the coverage compares to and their needs and the policies and procedures that they need to follow to become a new member. Jamie Pereira (RIPTA) asked about clarification on new user, it was stated that it is someone new on the system, not someone trying to add more radios on the system. Peter Ginaitt (Lifespan) stated that current users that expand their use, still impact the system they need to change the volume of radios; will there be a checklist for those that want to increase their volume of radios on the system? Tom Guthlein (RIEMA) stated that yes there will be.

Jamia McDonald (Exec. Director RIEMA) stated that a will be a standing agenda item, to discuss anyone who wants to come on system. Col. Callahan (RING) stated that new users will need to discuss the bandwidth baseline, and that may fall on tech subcommittee to evaluate everyone's situation.

At the Trinity X exercise Gil Woodside (RIEMA) exercised a new ICS 205 form to increase interoperability and provided education using communication equipment to streamline communications during an event.

The next set of SOP's will be sent out, it deals with control issues.

Peter Ginaitt (Lifespan) stated that there isn't a glossary that explains all the technical terms that are in the SOP's. Tom Guthlein (RIEMA) said that he is working on one and will send it out as an addendum.

## **New Business**

### **Subcommittee reports**

#### **Technical Sub Committee - Brian Glancy**

The following are on the technical sub-committee: Tom Crotty (RISP), Joe Delguidice (Prov. Communications), Ralph Nahigian (RISCON North), and with Jack Landers (RIDoIT) permission I would like to put Tony Lupinacci (RIDoIT) on there also. Also had a request from a North Kingstown fire fighter. Brian stated he hadn't had any volunteers so he had to go out and recruit them. There has not been a meeting yet. The technical subcommittee first has to look at many of the SOPs to advise on them, the wording, and the technology. Second the technical subcommittee will serve as an advisory board, only if RIEMA needs advice on something, a purchase or a contract. They should have a look at any new technology coming down the pike they can say what a good idea is and what isn't. Goes well beyond RISCON, there's first net, broadband, fiber, any questions on another system, the technical subcommittee is knowledgeable about the area.

Firstnet would like to serve on the technical subcommittee also.

Ralph Nahigian (RISCON North) said that when Gil Woodside (RIEMA) and his crew want to do something they can ask the technical subcommittee for support.

#### **Budget and Capitol - Chief Wordell**

There has not been a meeting we have reached out to south county folks also representation of police fire, Gina Carulo (Corrections) will be on the committee along with Dawn Lewis (HARI) and Tom Guertin (SWIC). If there is anyone else that wants to participate, send an email.

Chief Wordell (Police Chiefs Association), ICC budget, RIEMA has an influence to other things, i.e. state police, thru the governor's office we need to make sure it doesn't take away from other areas. What is the cost, what do we need to take away. Budget is the capitol, most of my requests came from capitol talked to Colonel O'Donnell (RISP) and Director Coit (RIDEM), before we know what our final budget

looks like they need to look at all four agencies with communications area and who needs what. The question is who is the owner of this?

### **Compliance and Customer Service - Sam Adams**

No chance to meet, but some thought RISCOCON was the biggest thing to worry about with FirstNet coming down.

This committee wants to develop a mechanism to be sure the SOP's are being followed and that the users are using it correctly. We need to work with training committee to educate some people on this. Need to meet with some of the users as an opportunity to engage them and give them an educational piece and to bring that piece back to the committee. The education component is a big thing on how to use the radio. Two way dialogues will help facilitate.

On the compliance side feed back will be good, a traffic study will be helpful, changing their behaviors, we have to be thoughtful.

### **Training and Education – Assistant Chief James McLaughlin**

We had our first meeting; we will meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 10 am

The following are members on the subcommittee Gina Caruolo (Corrections), Ralph Nahigian (RISCOCON North), Dave Snell (Lifespan), Norma Sousa (E-911), Tom Guthlein (RIEMA), Joe Delguidice (Prov Communications), Capt. Coutu (Warwick PD) and Scott Lessard (North Kingstown fire).

We had a good discussion to reach out to fire academy and also the police academy. The Com-L Program may need to have someone proficient on that, maybe do a train the trainer training. The SWIC can certify the COM-L program. More people involved we can bring more people and make it more productive. The recent mill fire in Lincoln got the communities talking to each other. We are working on putting together a Field Operations Guide (FOG) we are one of 2 or three states that don't have one, it will be a great tool. The DHS technical subcommittee will make it for us. We are making sure we are reaching out to all the communities. Gil Woodside (RIEMA) will bring his vehicle with him for the meeting with the chiefs in northern part of state so they can see how it works. All police and fire need to tell us what they have.

Chief Wordell (Police Chiefs Association) made a suggestion that any training that law enforcement or fire have, we need to emphasize for them to get in touch with EMA so we can try to include everyone in it.

### **Policy Subcommittee – Colonel Callahan**

Colonel Callahan stated that they have a very small team, Peter Ginaitt (Lifespan) and Ralph Nahigian (RISCOCON North).

First for internal work and take the SOP's and put them in layman's terms for utilization, there is a strong roll in tying in with the technical and training subcommittees that we can recommend to the director we want to standardize the customer.

Second we need to derive an action from no communication, take any input and put regulations to set forth statutory, legal policy items that need to be addressed. Jamie Pereira (RIPTA) has agreed to serve on the policy subcommittee.

### **Firstnet**

Has been tabled until next month.

### **Statewide Communication Interoperability Plans (SCIP)**

Tom Guthlein (RIEMA) gave a presentation on the SCIP, it provides strategic direction and alignment for those responsible for interoperable communications at the State, regional, and local levels. We must remember our strategic direction must align with the idea that it works for the first responder. Then everything else must support that idea and help us manage the system as a whole. The test of some of this strategic direction will be found in our drills and exercises.

There are eight areas of focus: Annual report to DHS Strategy, Methodology, Governance, Technology, Standard Operating Procedures, Training and Exercise, Funding and Implementation these will help us address and reach the idea of total interoperability. It should be a working living document.

### **New Items:**

We were able to negotiate an extension with Motorola a 2 year contract at 20%, \$1.1 million through 2018. They are a very good partner we added performance reporting not only from them, but we can run the reports. Very detailed reports.

Enhancing the capabilities of RIEMA to do real time dashboard management during an event and see how busy things are. Can pull reports on demand on certain talk groups, channels, etc. That will touch all subcommittees. We didn't have this before now during an event we can request it. We will be able to program radios remotely as we get rid of old equipment and purchase new equipment with the technical standards we need.

### **New Item**

Can we get a handle on each agency and what they have, i.e. red cross; they take up a lot of bandwidth during an event. We can monitor the behavior and find out who is involved with the organization and who has the contact. The next set of SOP's is the end user agreement. Will we give to all agencies and put together a workshop? The process is covered in the SCIP and all issues will be brought up at the

annual conference. When we say agency- we must define who the user is. All emergency management directors have different levels of authority, have to be very cautious to over control. Must determine who the legitimate authority is over the users.

Chief Wordell (Police Chiefs Association) asked where we stand on the tower sites. John Washburn (RIEMA) said that the repeater assessments are like 60% done. Tom Guthlien (RIEMA) is working with broadband to do a tower assessment because we need a more detailed assessment on them. There are 29 towers all under different owners. There was a variable baseline. Partnering with EC Engineering to go in the field and figure out the base line. At the next meeting we will give time line on work plan.

Chief Wordall (Police Chiefs Association) stated that we can't lose site of the fact that there are sites that are working on agreements that have expired. Part of the capital budget request is to put it where it should have been, there is a lot of in-kind that we can leverage on our side.

Jamia McDonald (RIEMA Exec. Director) had one more point for consideration- anyone who is interested in being vice chair, please send her an email.

Sam Adams (Health) made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Joe Baker (RIDOT). Meeting adjourned at 11:07 am. Next meeting is December 3, 2013 at 10:00 am.