



Interoperability Across Jurisdictional Lines

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“We’re from the Department of Homeland Security. You left your damn door unlocked.”

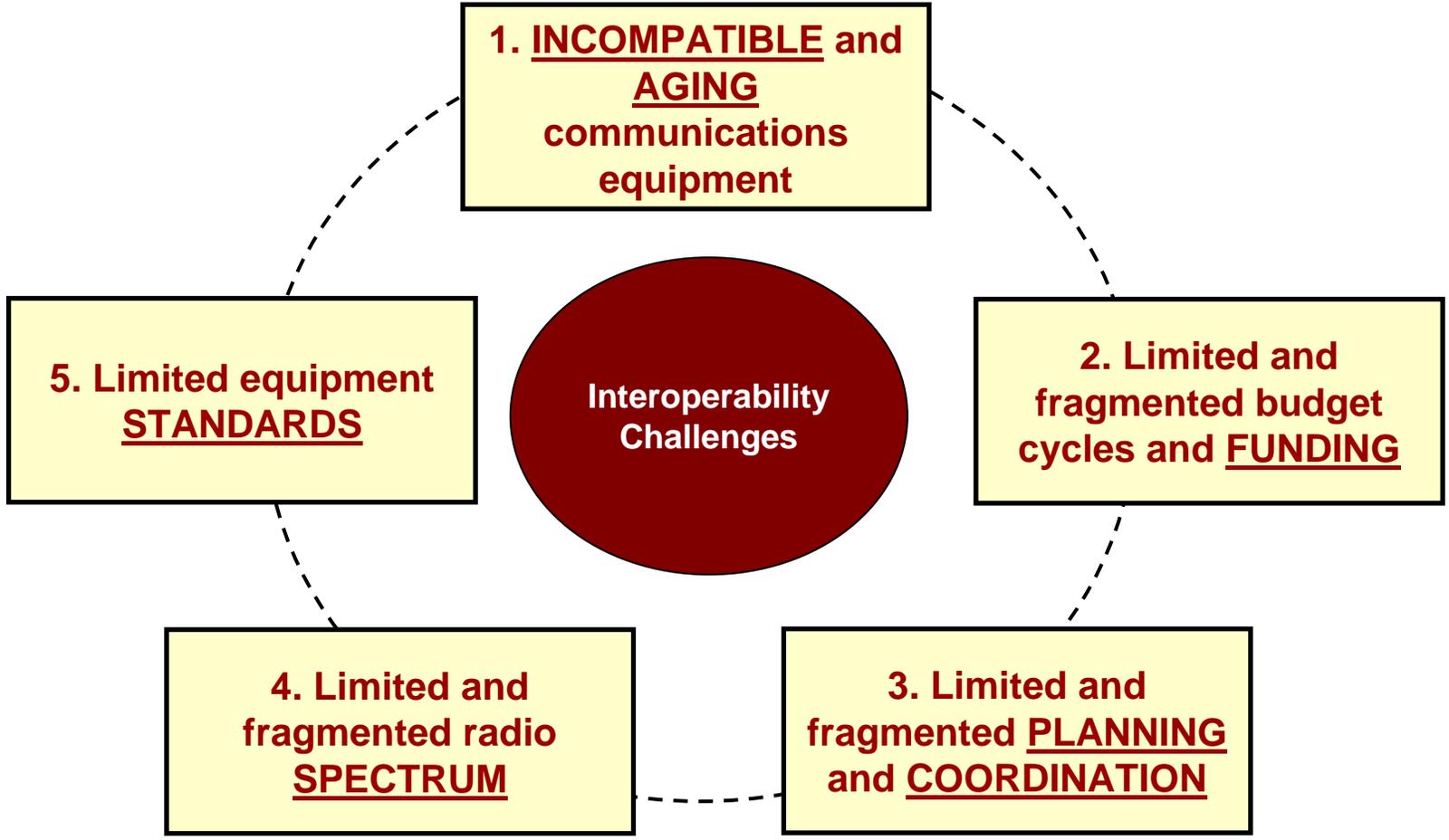


Wireless interoperability is the ability of public safety service and support providers to talk with each other via voice and data:

- On demand
- In real time
- When needed
- When authorized



- Improves the ability of public safety practitioners to reduce the loss of life and property in emergency situations
- Facilitates rapid and efficient interaction among all public safety organizations
- Provides immediate and coordinated assistance in day-to-day missions, task force operations, and mass-casualty incidents



These five issues were identified by the National Task Force on Interoperability in its February 2003 final report, Why Can't We Talk? Working Together to Bridge the Communications Gap to Save Lives.



Mission

The Science and Technology Directorate's Office for Interoperability and Compatibility's (OIC) mission is to serve as the overarching program within the Department of Homeland Security to strengthen and integrate interoperability efforts that improve local, tribal, state and federal public safety preparedness and response.



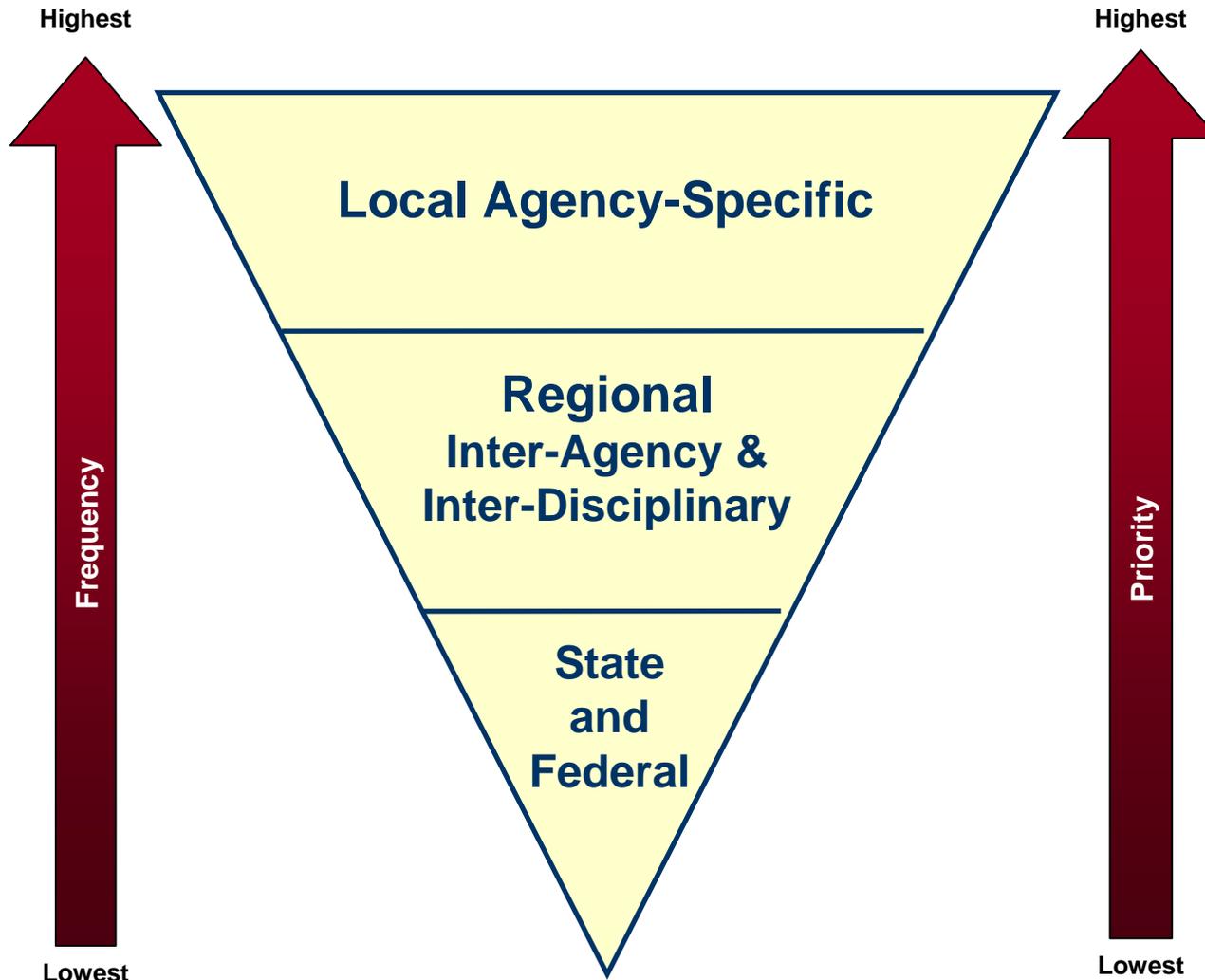
- Support the creation of interoperability standards
- Establish a comprehensive research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) program
- Identify and certify all DHS programs that address interoperability issues
- Integrate coordinated grant guidance
- Oversee the development and implementation of technical assistance
- Conduct pilot demonstrations/technology transfer
- Create an interagency interoperability coordination council (IICC)
- Establish an effective outreach program



- Communications (SAFECOM)
- Equipment
- Training

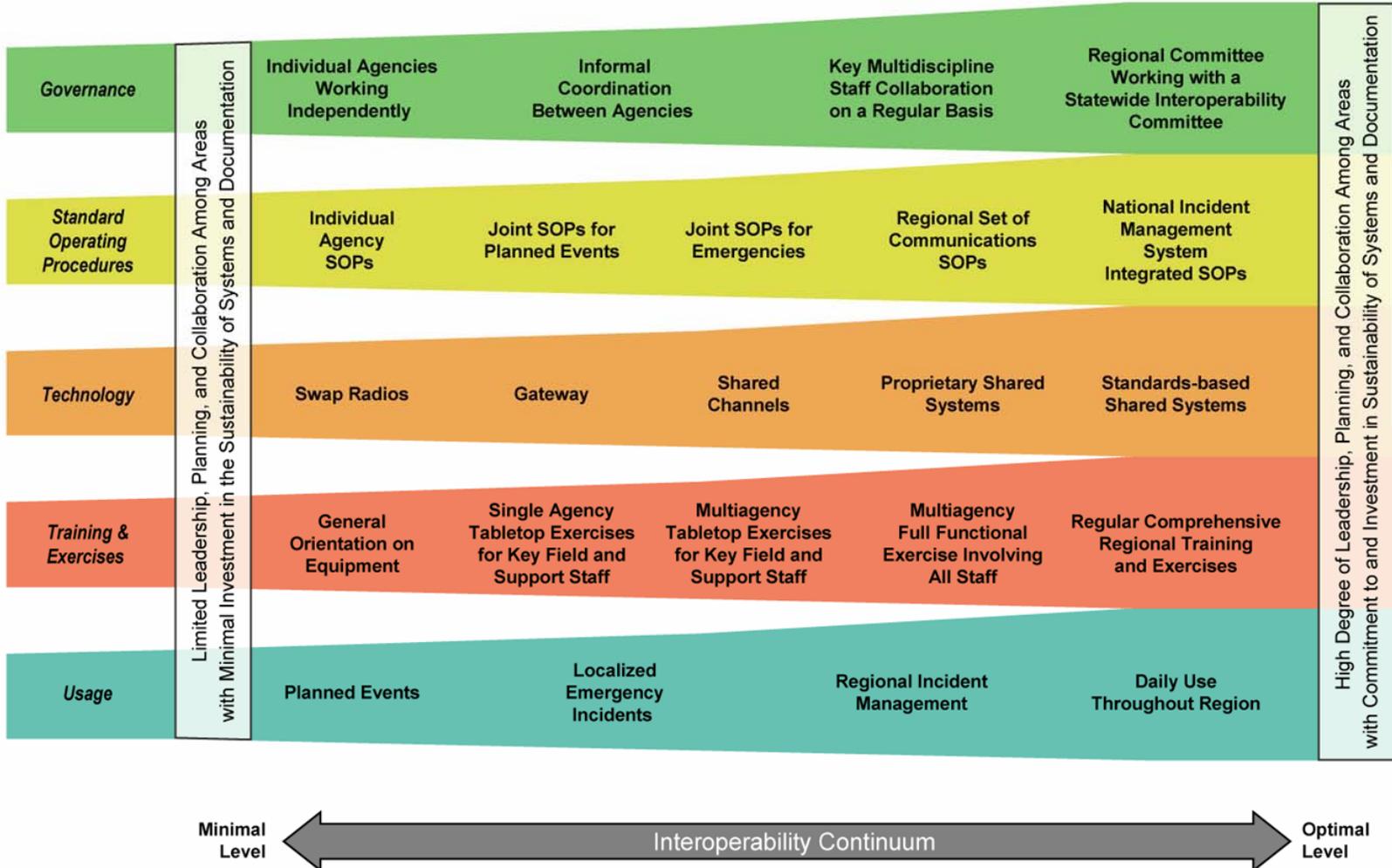


SAFECOM, a program of OIC, is the umbrella program within the federal government designed to coordinate the efforts of local, tribal, state, and federal public safety agencies working to improve public safety response through more effective and efficient interoperable wireless communications.





- Public Safety Statement of Requirements (SoR)
- Coordinated Grant Guidance
- Statewide Communications Interoperability Planning (SCIP) Methodology
- Interoperability Continuum

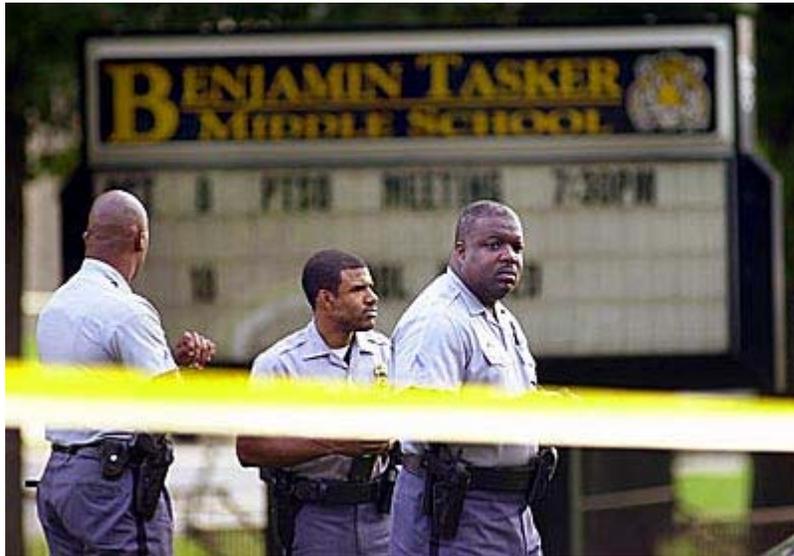




Local agencies are primarily concerned with communications within their own organization – but must work with surrounding agencies.

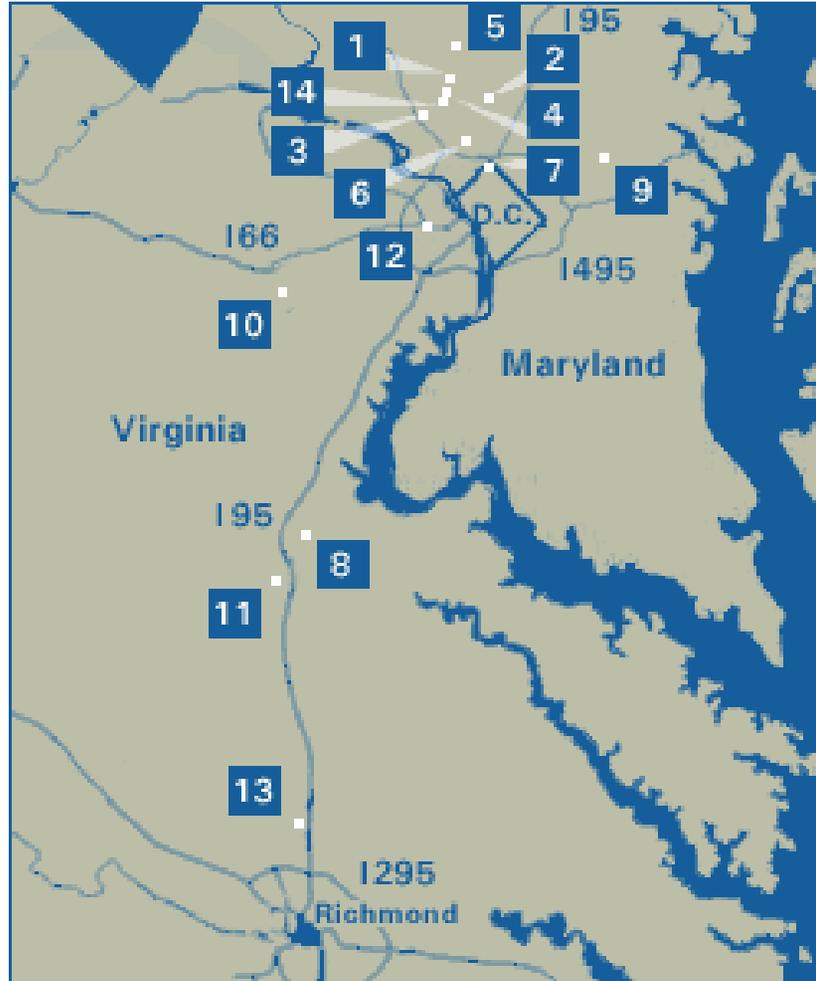


Need for Coordination





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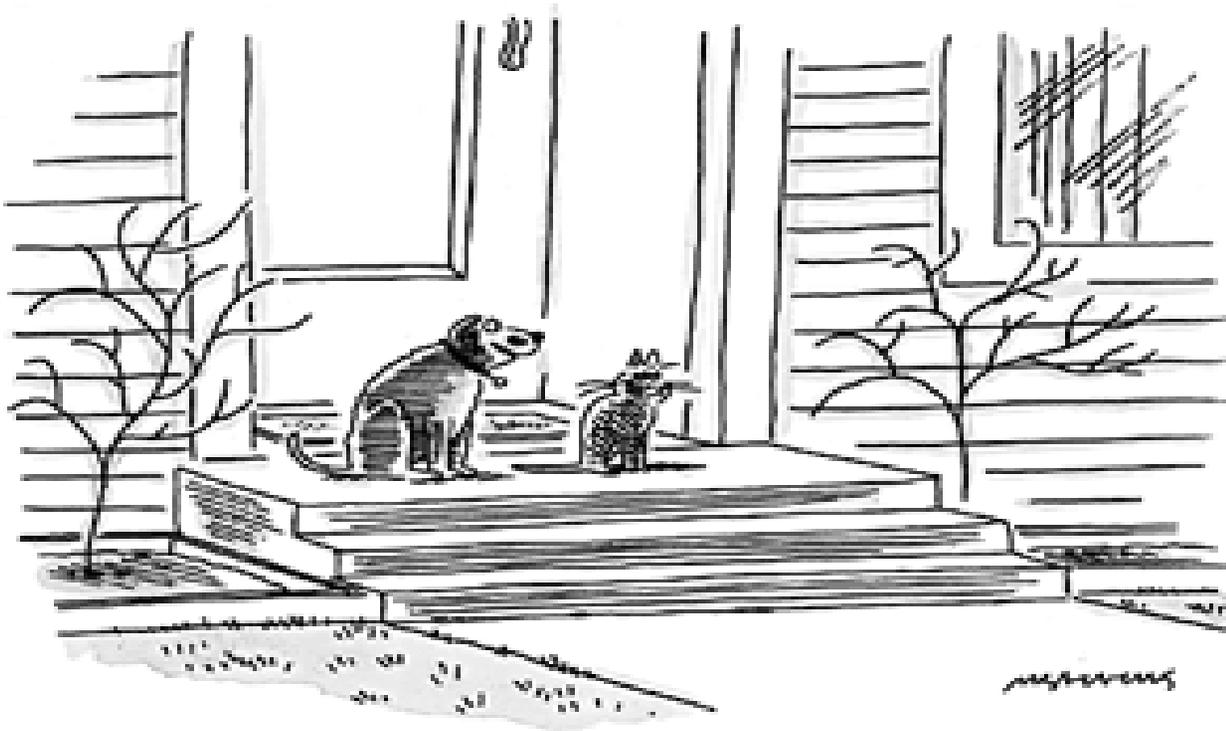




- The Intelligence Reform Act authorizes SAFECOM to carry out a minimum of two RCIP projects to improve interoperable communications nationwide.
- Criteria includes:
 - Level of risk to the area;
 - Number of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies located in the area;
 - Community’s risk and vulnerability;
 - Level of commitment and buy-in of the particular region;
 - Articulation of a defined interoperability need by the region;
 - Ability of the pilots to serve as national models.
- SAFECOM is currently preparing an interim report to Congress and a final report will be prepared when the projects are complete.



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"I like to think of myself as a vital link in the homeland-security system."



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