National Summary of Fiscal Year 2010
Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan Implementation Reports
August 2011

As a condition for receiving future homeland security grant funds for communications interoperability initiatives, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) required each State[1] to complete a Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) by December 2007. All 56 States and territories submitted SCIPs, which were approved by DHS in April 2008.

The "Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007," which created the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP), requires States to submit annual reports to the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) on progress in implementing that State's SCIP and achieving interoperability at the interstate, State, county, regional, and city levels as a condition of receiving funding. In an effort to continue to measure States' progress on SCIP implementation, OEC prepared a SCIP Implementation Report for each State that detailed the current status of interoperable communications initiatives across the five lanes of the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum, governance, standard operating procedures (SOPs), technology, training and exercises, and usage.[2] These reports were shared with States in August 2008 with the opportunity for each State to verify the information and return it to OEC in September 2008. This information was analyzed by OEC in the 2008 National Summary of SCIPs in which all 56 SCIPs were analyzed and best practices were identified.[3] The National Summary of SCIPs serves as a tool to understand the national emergency response communications environment and identifies the common themes and trends found throughout the Nation.

Since 2008, States are required to update the SCIP Implementation Reports annually. A National Summary of SCIPs Report was created in 2008 and 2009. This document is the summary of analysis of the FY 2010 SCIP Implementation Reports. Similar to last year, it is clear that States are continuing to embrace their SCIPs, are updating them regularly to keep them relevant, and are working hard to implement them. Since 2007, a majority of States have employed a full-time statewide interoperability coordinator or are filling an equivalent position. From FY 2009 to 2010, there has been an increase in the number of full-time SWICs across the Nation. These individuals have spent significant time on SCIP implementation, education and outreach efforts, and enhancing statewide governance structures. Collectively these groups are achieving results across all lanes of the Interoperability Continuum.

In the current environment, with limited resources, collaboration and teamwork is more important than ever to ensure that the resources available are spent most effectively

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[1] State refers to State and territory.
[2] The Interoperability Continuum is available at http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFECOM/tools/continuum/default.htm.
[3] The National Summary of SCIPs is available at http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFECOM/statewideplanning/.

and efficiently – to support implementation of the SCIPs and the NECP. As seen in the common initiatives below, almost all States have an initiative to develop funding strategies for short- and long-term sustainment. In addition, States are increasing coordination with neighboring States and countries to further interoperability efforts. This will continue to be a pressing issue and concern for the statewide interoperability effort.

Common Initiatives and Status

An analysis of the FY 2010 SCIP Implementation Reports highlighted common initiatives. These common initiatives are outlined along the lanes of the Interoperability Continuum. In addition, the eight National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)[4] milestones that require action by the States are summarized at the end of this section.

Note that initiatives identified as complete reflect that a State has met a need or gap for a particular point in time. These initiatives will need to be updated or maintained on an ongoing basis. Examples of common initiatives are listed below.

Governance

In the area of governance, 37 States reported a total of 234 State Initiatives.

Governance	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Develop a regional or statewide funding strategy to identify, leverage, and secure viable, short- and long-term sustainment funding and resources.	2	31	13
Establish a regional governance structure.	1	20	13
Formalize governance structures.	1	11	14
Perform annual SCIP update and/or expand implementation.	0	15	11
Create an outreach program to educate State and local jurisdictions about interoperability, including funding and SCIP implementation.	2	12	3
Collaborate and coordinate with neighboring States and international partners in Canada and Mexico to develop interoperable communications strategies.	0	11	1
Engage tribal partners.	0	3	0

Note: For a few States it was unclear if they planned to implement, had begun implementing, or had completed the common initiatives.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

In the area of SOPs, 37 States reported a total of 143 State Initiatives.

SOPs	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Develop and draft new SOPs.	5	31	16
Develop regional plans.	1	17	8

[4] The NECP is available at http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFECOM/natlemergencycommplan/.

SOPs	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Develop new or revise existing SOPs to incorporate National Incident Management System (NIMS).	3	11	3
Develop regional or local level Tactical Interoperable Communication Plans (TICPs).	0	9	5
Review and revise existing SOPs.	1	10	2
Develop a formal process for SOP development, training, and maintenance.	0	2	4
Develop State or Regional Field Operations Guide (FOG).	2	3	1
Implement common channel naming.	0	4	2
Establish an online repository for SOPs.	1	1	1

Note: For a few States it was unclear if they planned to implement, had begun implementing, or had completed the common initiatives.

Technology

In the area of Technology, 47 States reported a total of 348 State Initiatives.

Technology	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Develop a statewide communications system.	1	52	17
Develop a statewide communications system-of-systems.	7	23	13
Develop solutions for statewide data interoperability.	1	28	6
Adopt P25 standards for systems and equipment.	4	14	8
Develop Strategic Technology Reserve.	0	12	5
Inventory State, regional, and local assets into database (i.e., CASM).	0	13	3
Incorporate narrowbanding/rebanding into existing and future technology roll-outs.	0	13	1
Conduct a statewide communications capabilities assessment.	0	6	6
Collaborate with neighboring States and countries to achieve interoperability.	0	5	1

Note: For a few States it was unclear if they planned to implement, had begun implementing, or had completed the common initiatives.

Training and Exercise

In the area of Training and Exercise, 47 States reported a total of 171 State Initiatives.

Training and Exercise	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Incorporate interoperable communications into all existing and future training and exercise programs.	6	27	5
Develop statewide training courses and exercises.	3	23	9
Conduct Communication Unit Leader (COML), Communication Unit Technician (COMT), or other ICS Communication Unit position training.	0	18	7
Develop multi-jurisdictional exercises (State to State, international, tribal, region-region).	1	8	2

Training and Exercise	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Ensure training and exercises are compliant with Federal standards, including NIMS, Incident Command System (ICS), and the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).	2	7	2
Adopt statewide certification for COML/COMT.	0	8	1
Develop statewide interoperable communications training and exercise strategy.	0	3	1
Develop web-based and CD-ROM tutorials, handouts, and classroom materials to provide for initial and ongoing training of practitioners.	1	3	0

Note: For a few States it was unclear if they planned to implement, had begun implementing, or had completed the common initiatives.

Usage

In the area of Usage, 51 States reported a total of 127 State Initiatives.

Usage	Planned	In Progress	Complete
Develop standards to ensure interoperable communications usage for day-to-day events and large scale emergencies.	9	22	12
Develop standards to ensure communications equipment is interoperable.	3	12	6
Conduct regular testing to identify impediments to interoperable communications.	4	6	3

Note: For a few States it was unclear if they planned to implement, had begun implementing, or had completed the common initiatives.

NECP Milestones

NECP State Milestones	Complete
Establish a full-time statewide interoperability coordinator or equivalent position.	49
Incorporate the recommended membership into the statewide interoperability governing body (SIGB).	46
Establish the SIGB via legislation or executive order.	43
Update SCIP to reflect plans to eliminate coded substitutions throughout ICS.	22
Begin tactical planning among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments at the regional interstate level.	16
All Federal, State, local, and tribal emergency response providers within UASI jurisdictions implement the Communications and Information Management section of the NIMS.	16
Incorporate the use of existing nationwide interoperability channels into training and exercises.	16
Incorporate the use of existing nationwide interoperability channels into SOPs.	13
Complete disaster communications training and exercises.	13
Define alternate/backup capabilities in emergency communications plans at the Federal, State, local, and tribal level.	11

NECP State Milestones	Complete
Program nationwide interoperability channels into all existing emergency responder radios.	7

Note: For a few States it was unclear if they planned to implement, had begun implementing, or had completed the common initiatives.

Analysis

Through a comparison from last year's National Summary of SCIPs, it can be noted that States, in general, have made significant progress on the following key statewide initiatives:

- Establishment of outreach and education programs around the interoperability effort and SCIP implementation.
- Collaboration and coordination with neighboring States and countries to develop interoperability strategies.
- Development of regional and local TICPs.
- Development of statewide interoperable communications training and exercise strategies.
- Execution of COML, COMT, or other ICS Communication Unit position trainings.
- Incorporation and compliance with Federal standards, including NIMS, ICS, and HSEEP.

Several noteworthy changes from last year include:

- A majority of States are improving statewide interoperability through the implementation of regional governance, planning, and procedures.
- States are beginning to engage tribal partners in the statewide interoperability effort.
- There is a greater focus on narrowbanding and rebanding.
- States have created new initiatives to adopt statewide certification for COML and COMT programs.

There has been significant progress on the following NECP milestones:

- Establishment of a full-time statewide interoperability coordinator or equivalent position.
- Incorporation of the recommended membership into the statewide interoperability governing body (SIGB).
- Tactical planning among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments at the regional interstate level.
- Elimination of coded substitutions throughout ICS.

UASI Reports

As part of the NECP Goal 1 implementation process, OEC required UASIs to demonstrate response-level emergency communications during a planned event. Additionally, as part of the State's SCIP Implementation Report update in 2010, OEC

required States to provide information on UASIs' current capabilities. The information reported is consolidated below.

Governance	UASIs
Urban area decision-making groups are informal, and do not yet have a strategic plan in place to guide collective communications interoperability goals and funding.	0
Some *formal* agreements exist and *informal* agreements are in practice among members of an Urban Area decision making group; Urban Area strategic and budget planning processes are beginning to be put in place.	18
Formal agreements outline the roles and responsibilities of an Urban Area decision making group, which has an agreed upon strategic plan that addresses sustainable funding for collective, regional interoperable communications needs.	19
Urban Area decision making bodies proactively look to expand membership to ensure representation from broad public support disciplines and other levels of government, while updating their agreements and strategic plan on a regular basis.	15

SOPs	UASIs
Urban Area interoperable communications SOPs are not developed or have not been formalized and disseminated.	4
Some interoperable communications SOPs exist within the urban areas and steps have been taken to institute these interoperability procedures among some agencies.	23
Interoperable communications SOPs are formalized and in use by all agencies within the Urban Area. Despite minor issues, SOPs are successfully used during responses and/or exercise(s).	17
Interoperable communications SOPs within the Urban Area are formalized and regularly reviewed. Additionally, National Incident Management System (NIMS) procedures are well established among all agencies and disciplines. All needed procedures are effectively utilized during responses and/or exercise(s).	8

Technology	UASIs
Interoperability within the urban area is primarily achieved through the use of gateways (mobile/fixed gateway, console patch) or use of a radio cache.	9
Interoperability within the Urban Area is primarily achieved through the use of shared channels or talkgroups.	16
Interoperability within the Urban Area is primarily achieved through the use of a proprietary shared system.	14
Interoperability within the Urban Area is primarily achieved through the use of a standards-based shared system (e.g., Project 25).	13

Training & Exercise	UASIs
Urban Area public safety agencies participate in communications interoperability workshops, but no formal training or exercises are focused on emergency communications.	2
Some public safety agencies within the Urban Area hold communications interoperability training on equipment and conduct exercises, although not on a regular cycle.	26
Public safety agencies within the Urban Area participate in equipment and SOP training for communications interoperability and hold exercises on a regular schedule.	14
Urban Area public safety agencies regularly conduct training and exercises with a communications interoperability curriculum addressing equipment and SOPs that is modified as needed to address the changing operational environment.	10

Usage	UASIs
First responders in the Urban Area seldom use interoperability solutions unless advanced planning is possible (e.g., special event).	2
First responders in the Urban Area use interoperability solutions regularly for emergency events, and in a limited fashion for day-to-day communications.	25
First responders in the Urban Area use interoperability solutions regularly and easily for all day-to-day, task force, and mutual aid events.	16
Regular use of interoperability solutions for all day-to-day and out-of-the-ordinary events in the Urban Area on demand, in real time, when needed, as authorized.	9

Summary

The SCIP Implementation Reports allow States, DHS, and Congress to track progress annually as required by Congressional mandate. OEC will continue to use the SCIP Implementation Reports as a "snapshot" to gain a clearer understanding of the current status of interoperability across the Nation. For FY 2011 States will update their report and additionally report on NECP State milestones and NECP Goal 2. This will enable OEC to more effectively align its resources and programs and establish a baseline to measure future progress.