



ECF

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Interoperable Communications a Big Hit At All Star Game By Robert A. Stoffel

Every year, top Major League Baseball players come together to celebrate America's favorite pastime at the All Star Game. This July, events leading up to the game featured a series of public events, including a 5K run, a celebrity softball game, the Home Run Derby, and the All Star Red Carpet Show, drawing thousands of fans.

Twenty-eight public safety agencies and private organizations came together to coordinate, plan, and demonstrate interoperable communications throughout the week of events, which also served as the Anaheim Urban Area Goal 1 Demonstration. Representatives from the US Department of Homeland Security's [Office of Emergency Communications](#) and peer observers witnessed Anaheim's successful demonstration of response-level communications.

"From my past experience of 38 years, I believe this was one of the most smoothly run and flexible events regarding multi-agency, interoperable command, control and communications events I have been involved with."

- Anaheim Police Officer Scott Maddy

In collaboration with neighboring public safety agencies, Anaheim already had in place an 800 megahertz (MHz) Countywide Coordinated Communications System (CCCS). The 81-channel analog/digital trunked radio system supports multiple disciplines, with over 20,000 radios in operation averaging 63,000 transmissions on a typical summer day.

The City of Anaheim led communications planning and implementation efforts, and Anaheim Police Officer Scott Maddy served as [Communications Unit Leader \(COML\)](#). "The flexibility of the 800 MHz CCCS worked well for all disciplines involved in this five-day event," said Maddy. With several agencies providing support, Maddy says all public safety organizations were able to communicate using the CCCS system, various console patches, and an ACU 1000. The overall Communications Plan for the event was developed through public safety and private partnerships. "Each



Division Command was provided special UHF portable radios that allowed for direct voice communications of venue-specific private radio channels, providing the Command Post an immediate way of communicating with these venues should unanticipated problems develop," said Maddy.

Anaheim Fire Deputy Chief Scott Berg remarked that nothing "reminds you how well our system works until you

give your partner from a Federal agency a portable radio capable of communicating across law, fire, private security, emergency medical services, HazMat, Bomb Squad, and public health! Premier nationwide events are only possible with great cooperation, and that cooperation is enhanced tremendously by quality communications," he said.

"It says a lot when we can run a complex operation like All Star week and take our interoperable radio communications for granted," said Anaheim Police Chief John Welter. The week was a true success, and the interoperable communications plan worked as planned, successfully integrating the needs of Federal, State, local, public, and private disciplines seamlessly into one plan.

Robert Stoffel is the Director of the Communications and Technology Division for the Orange County Sheriff's Department, and has been involved with interoperable communications for 21 years. He can be reached at Robert.Stoffel@comm.ocgov.com.

2nd Canada-US Cross Border Interoperable Communications Workshop



Public Safety
Canada

Sécurité publique
Canada



Homeland
Security



2010 CANADA-U.S.
CROSS BORDER INTEROPERABLE
COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP



The [Office of Emergency Communications](#) (OEC) co-hosted the 2nd Canada-US Cross Border Interoperable Communications Workshop that took place in Windsor, Ontario, from September 13 to 15, 2010. The workshop brought together over 150 participants representing a broad base of users and officials from all levels of government in both Nations with an interest in improving cross border communications along the Canada-US border.

During the workshop, OEC Director Chris Essid and Department of Homeland Security's [Office of Cybersecurity and Communications](#) Assistant Secretary Greg Schaffer were joined by their Canadian counterparts - Mark Williamson, PhD, Deputy Director General of the Centre for Security Science Defence Research and Development Canada, and Public Safety Canada Assistant Deputy Minister Daniel Lavoie – in giving the welcome and keynote speeches.

Assistant Secretary Schaffer also met with Assistant Deputy Minister Lavoie, while Director Essid participated in the first day's meetings, coordinating with our Canadian partners, and contributing to the success of the workshop

Through topic-based panels and interactive breakout sessions, the workshop aimed to help users and officials develop a common understanding of, and a unified approach to, Canadian-US cross border interoperability challenges. Issues discussed during the two-day event

included: governance, technology, training and exercises, standard operating procedures, information sharing, spectrum regulations and many other related topics.

OEC staff participated in meetings with public safety users, operators, and officials from all levels of government representing both Nations. Following the conclusion of the workshop, OEC staff remained in Canada to assist and support the Canadian team in the continued development of their Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan, which will be modeled after the [National Emergency Communications Plan](#).

For more information about the workshop, please contact OEC at oec@hq.dhs.gov.



Inspector **Lance Valcour**, Program Manager for the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group and Canadian Police Research Centre, speaks at the Canada-US Cross Border Workshop

From the Field: Interoperable Emergency Communications in Texas

By Mike Simpson, Texas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator



In recent years, the State of Texas has faced a number of natural disasters and large-scale events that have challenged the public safety community's ability to communicate. Building on lessons learned from these events, Texas public safety officials collaborated to develop a comprehensive strategy for improving emergency communications. Now, with a statewide plan in place and a proposed long-term funding strategy to make cost-efficient investments, Texas is making strides towards strengthening its capabilities on a day-to-day basis and in the event of an emergency.

Planning for Texas-Sized Challenges

Covering more than 268,000 square miles, Texas shares a 1,254-mile border with Mexico, and claims 367 miles of coastline on the Gulf of Mexico, requiring advanced coordination with multiple Federal agencies and statewide jurisdictions. According to the [Texas SCIP](#), Texas often has the most yearly Federal disaster declarations in the Nation, resulting from the damage of tornadoes, hurricanes, flash floods, and drought.

In 2007, Mike Simpson was des-

ignated by the [Texas Governor's Office of Homeland Security](#) to coordinate the development of the [Texas Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan](#) (SCIP). The Texas SCIP provides radio communication interoperability strategies and guidance to 5,300 Federal, State, county, municipal, district, tribal, non-profit, and critical infrastructure entities serving the State's 25 million residents.

"Collaboration is at the heart of success," said Simpson, describing the contributions by the local emergency response community when developing the Texas SCIP.

Using Resources Available

While leading Statewide planning efforts, Simpson has used every opportunity to better equip emergency responders in Texas, including procuring communications

**"We take advantage of every TA opportunity offered by OEC."
"Collaboration is at the heart of success."**

-Mike Simpson, Texas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator

training through [OEC's Technical Assistance \(TA\)](#) program. "We've utilized workshops, Communications Unit Leader training, and support for SCIP implementation. Now we are pursuing COMT," said Simpson, referring to the Communications Technician (COMT) training also available through OEC TA.

Continuing Progress

Simpson is focused on the long term; Texas will continue to implement its statewide plan and long-term strategies in alignment with the Goals and objectives of the National Emergency Communications Plan.



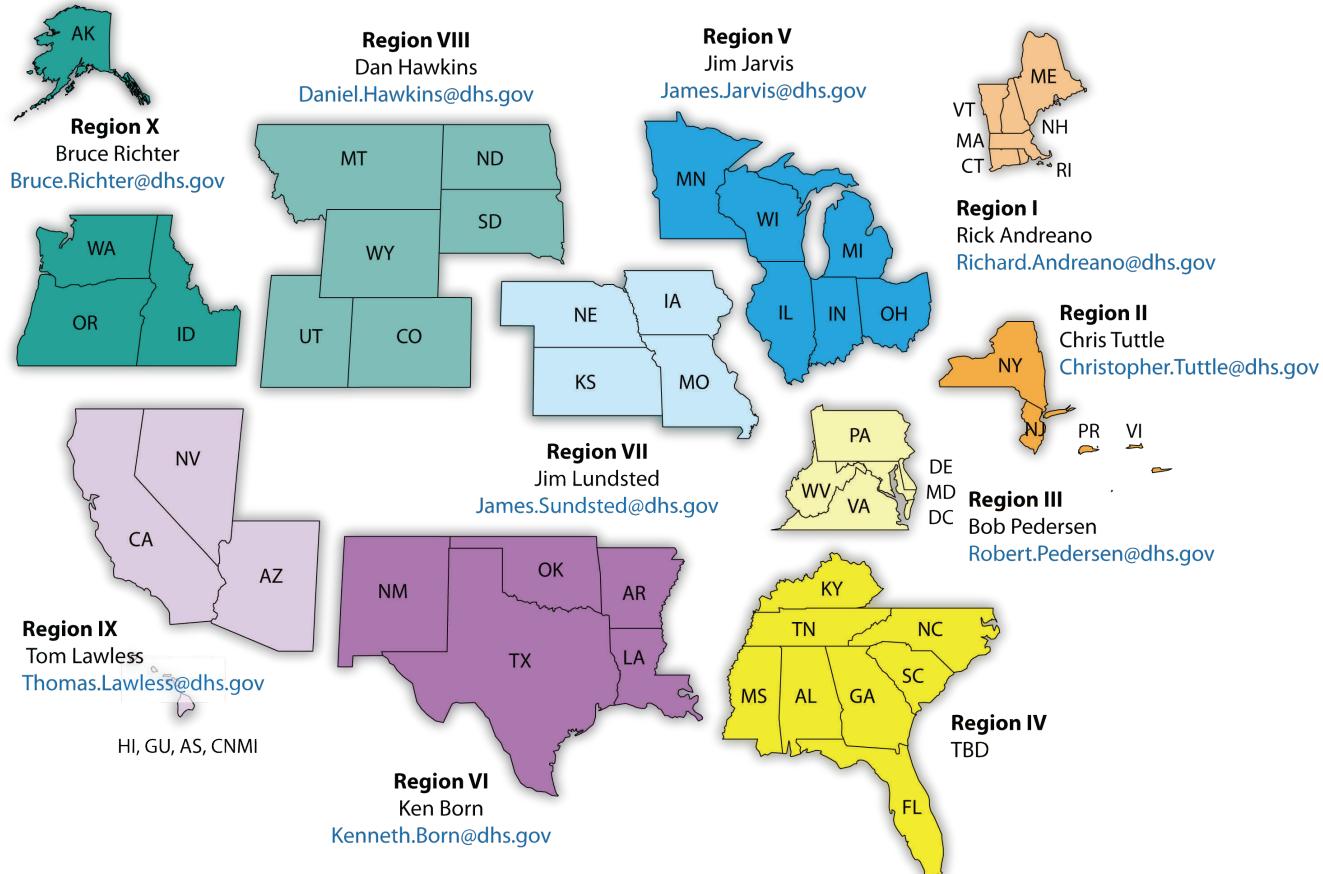
Mike Simpson is the Texas Statewide Communications Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) and Assistant Director of the [Texas Department of Public Safety](#) for Law Enforcement Support. He can be reached at mike.simpson@txdps.state.tx.us

OEC Enhancing Interoperable Communications through Regional Coordination Program

In Fiscal Year 2010, the [Office of Emergency Communications](#) (OEC) launched its Regional Coordination program. Currently, nine out of the ten Regional Coordinator positions are filled. The Regional Coordination Program was established to assist OEC in fulfilling its mission of ensuring communications operability and interoperability for emergency response personnel at the Federal, State, local, and tribal levels of government. Specifically, the Regional Coordinators will represent OEC in the field, and provide regional guidance and planning support involving OEC service offerings, national policy, and the implementation and update of the National Emergency Communications Plan.

Regional Coordinators will work collaboratively with Federal, State, local, and tribal authorities within their respective regions to enhance emergency communications capabilities, interoperability, and operability. They will accomplish this by fostering intergovernmental partnerships, and by providing OEC's stakeholder community with a full understanding and subsequent support of its service offerings and activities.

To find out who your Regional Coordinator is, please refer to the map below.



About the Office of Emergency Communications

The mission of the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) is to support and promote the ability of emergency responders and government officials to continue to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, or other man-made disasters, and work to ensure, accelerate, and attain interoperable and operable emergency communications nationwide.

The *Emergency Communications Forum* (ECF), published by OEC, is intended to engage and inform the emergency response community; policy makers; and Federal, State, local, and tribal officials about issues and events that directly affect everyday nationwide emergency communications.

We would love to feature your story in future editions of the ECF. Please send any articles or content ideas to oec@dhs.gov.