



# Press Release

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## **DHS's SAFECOM RELEASES TOOL FOR CREATION OF STATEWIDE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS PLANS**

*SCIP Methodology is Based on Successful Virginia Planning Process*

Washington, DC – The Department of Homeland Security's SAFECOM Program and the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) today announced the availability of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Planning (SCIP) Methodology. The SCIP Methodology, which can be downloaded from SAFECOM's Web site, outlines a step-by-step process for developing a locally-driven statewide strategic plan for enhancing communications interoperability.

“The methodology proved to be an effective tool that can help local governments and states to improve public safety communications across disciplines and jurisdictions,” said David Boyd, Director of SAFECOM. “This approach is designed to ensure that local public safety officials play an active role in developing the plan so that it will meet their practical needs.”

The methodology is based on the strategic planning approach jointly developed and tested by the Commonwealth of Virginia and OIC/SAFECOM to create the Virginia statewide plan in 2004.

“Virginia's efforts resulted in a comprehensive plan that addresses the interoperability needs and challenges of Virginia's public safety community *as identified by Virginia's public safety community*,” said Chris Essid, the Virginia Commonwealth Interoperability Coordinator (CIC). “Consequently, we're seeing a ground swell of support for the plan we just completed.”

The SCIP Methodology offers ten essential planning phases that all states can use to create their own statewide communications plan. They include:

- Establish Key Relationships and Funding
- Gather Information

- Create Project Plan and Roadmap
- Identify Roles and Responsibilities for the Project Team
- Recruit Focus Group Participants and Meeting Preparation
- Conduct Focus Group Interviews
- Analyze Data and Prepare for Strategic Planning Session
- Prepare and Conduct Strategic Planning Session
- Develop Statewide Communications Interoperability Strategic Plan
- Guidelines for the First 90 Days of Implementation

Additionally, the methodology provides detailed, step-by-step explanations for each phase—including critical tasks, timelines, planning resources, sample documents, and templates for communication materials. It also reflects best practices and lessons learned to guide new planning committees. The SCIP Methodology is one of many tools for addressing interoperability challenges developed by SAFECOM over the past year, such as the Interoperability Continuum, which serves as an organizing framework for comprehensive interoperability improvement efforts, and the Statement of Requirements, which defines future communications requirements for crucial voice and data communications in day-to-day, task force and mutual aid operations.

State public safety officials who are interested in developing a strategic plan for improved statewide interoperability can find the methodology, as well as other SAFECOM resources, at [www.safecomprogram.gov](http://www.safecomprogram.gov).

*The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate serves as the primary research and development arm of the Department, utilizing our nation's scientific and technological resources to provide federal, state and local officials with the technology and capabilities to protect the homeland. Created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) oversees the vast range of public safety interoperability programs and related efforts throughout DHS. Priority areas include Communications (through the SAFECOM Program), Equipment, and Training.*

*SAFECOM was established in 2002 as part of the President's Management Agenda that oversees all initiatives and projects pertaining to public safety communications and interoperability. It is the overarching umbrella program within the Federal government to help local, tribal, State and Federal public safety agencies improve public safety response through more effective and efficient interoperable wireless communications. For more information about the SAFECOM Program, contact [safecom@dhs.gov](mailto:safecom@dhs.gov) or call 866-969-SAFE.*

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