

# STATEWIDE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

## INTEROPERABILITY COMMITTEE

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April 21, 2015 1:00 P.M.  
Chair: Dave Thomson  
Special Meeting by Conference Call

### MEETING MINUTES

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#### Attendance:

#### Present      Members/alternates present:

Chair: Dave Thomson/Jim Crace—MN Chiefs of Police Association  
Vice Chair: Troy – Minnesota State Patrol  
Victor Wanchena/Vacant – MN Dept of Corrections  
Clif Giese/Dan DeSmet– MN Ambulance Association  
Bill Schmidt/Vacant – MN Department of Health  
Brian Askin/Dan Kuntz – MN DNR  
Tim Lee/Mukhtar Thakur/Brad Peters – Mn/DOT  
Pam Biladeau/Bob Norlen – MN EMSRB  
Ron Jansen/Chris Kummer– MESB  
John Sanner/Rich Stanek – MN Sheriffs Association  
Ulise Seal/Vacant – MN Fire Chief's Association  
Lance Lehman /Bill O'Donnell –MN Bureau of Crime Apprehension  
Pat Coughlin/Vacant – MIFC  
Mike Martin/Brian Smith – Federal Seat  
B.J. Battig/Vacant – UASI  
Troy Tretter/Tom Simota – MN National Guard  
John Dooley/- HSEM  
Scott McKellep/ Michael Wisniewski - HSEM Greater MN  
Terry Stoltzman/Vacant – HSEM Region 6  
Rick Freshwater/Mark Darnell – SE MN RAC  
John Maatz/Kimberly Hall / SW MN RAC  
Brett Miller/Darrin Haeder – SC MN RAC  
Micah Myers/Kristen Lahr– Central MN RAC  
Scott Camps/Kerry Swenson /Bruce Hegrenes– NE MN RAC  
Pat Novacek / Brian Zastoupil – NW MN RAC  
Monte Fronk – Tribal Government  
Jim Halstrom – Association of MN Emergency Managers (AMEM)

*\*Members attending marked with highlight.*

#### Guests:

Jackie Mines, DPS-ECN  
Cathy Anderson, DPS-ECN  
Carol-Linnea Salmon, DPS-ECN  
Rubin Walker, DPS-ECN  
Randy Donahue, DPS-ECN

Jill Rohret, MESB  
Rod Olson, City of Minneapolis  
Jon Vavruska, Hennepin County

**Call to Order:**

Chair Thomson calls the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Chair asks for a motion to approve the Agenda.

**John Dooley moves to approve the agenda.**

**Terry Stoltzman seconds.**

**Motion carries.**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Chair asks if there are any changes to the previous meeting's minutes. None stated.

**Ron Jansen moves to approve the previous meeting's minutes.**

**Clif Giese seconds.**

**Motion carries.**

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ACTION ITEMS

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STATE STANDARD 1.11.1 (CATHY ANDERSON)

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Cathy Anderson presents the changes recommended by the work group and as presented in the meeting materials.

She reads the suggested language under section four, "Recommended Protocol/Standard."

*Local System Administrators are responsible for maintaining system configuration databases for local infrastructure, subscriber databases, and console configuration databases. Therefore, they shall have successfully completed the appropriate training on the system management functions.*

*Appropriate training shall, at a minimum, include equivalent experience and/or formal factory training, either at the factory or in the field, conducted by a qualified instructor."*

*Local System Administrators shall be familiar with the ARMER State Standards.*

*In addition, personnel responsible for day-to-day database administration (i.e. moves, changes, or additions to a system or subsystem subscriber database) shall receive formal vendor/factory training from the equipment manufacturer or a trained individual designated by the Local System Admin. If necessary, MNDOT will provide additional ARMER "add-on" training."*

Discussion about how to define "equivalent experience". Suggestion that with the "and/or" added it says if you have equivalent experience, then that is your training.

Anderson reports that there may have been liability reasons to leave it vague (and not require certification). She said the workgroup especially didn't want "qualified instructor" removed because you could get a third party shop without that language. The general consensus is that they wanted it to stay fairly nebulous but yet say that somebody had to be qualified.

Discussion about what is equivalent training and how could it be interpreted. Agreement that "equivalent training" should be defined. All system administrators should have the same level of understanding of the system.

Tim Lee clarifies that MnDot does not provide system training. MnDot provides the "dos and don'ts" of the system, the best practices.

**Brian Zastoupil moves to change the wording of the last sentence on page 1 to read: "If necessary, MnDot would provide additional ARMER System Administrator best practices training."**

**Kerry Swenson seconds.**

Discussion about the fourth paragraph, where it says "or trained individual designated by the Local System Admin."

Anderson says the example was if somebody leaves their position and someone takes their place as the new county system admin, they could be trained locally, for their county.

Concerns that the quality of training could be diminished as it is handed from one person to another and so on. Discussion about the role of the system admin. The system admin keeps in mind the local and regional needs and balances those with the best interests of the bigger picture of the system. Because of this responsibility, it is suggested that factory training be required of all system admins. It is suggested that this is outside of the scope of the factory training and is covered under the requirement that the system admin be familiar with the ARMER State Standards.

**Motion carries.**

Further discussion about requiring vendor/factory training for anyone who will be a local system admin.

Lee says that MnDot sends every new person to factory training. It depends on how you set up the accounts. MnDots radio techs and engineers have different rights for what they can do in the system. The radio shops that are programming radios can deal with the alias and I.D.s for radios but they can't go in and build talk groups. It's all how you set up the accounts and what you allow them to do.

**Jansen moves to require manufacturing training to be a local system administrator. He moves to change the second to last line on page 1 to read: "shall receive formal vendor/factory training from the equipment manufacturer."**

**Swenson seconds.**

BJ Battig points out that the fourth paragraph begins, "In addition, personnel...." It does not say, "In addition, local system administrators..." He proposes a friendly amendment to change this language.

**Jansen and Swenson accept a friendly amendment from B.J. Battig to change "In addition, personnel responsible for day-to-day database administration..." to "In addition, Local System Administrator responsible for day-to-day database administration..."**

**Motion carries.**

Ron Jansen says we need to define "equivalent experience" or remove it in paragraph two.

**Ron Jansen moves to remove “equivalent experience” in paragraph two. This changes the Standard to read, “Appropriate training shall, at a minimum include, formal factory training, either at the factory or in the field, conducted by a qualified instructor.”**  
**Zastoupil seconds.**

Discussion about further defining the training. Should it list the Motorola or the 7.X or keep it more open so it will not have to be changed if the vendor changed, etc.

Jansen suggests changing it to, “Appropriate manufacturer training shall, at a minimum, include formal factory training, either at the factory or in the field, conducted by a qualified instructor.”

Anderson suggests, “Appropriate training shall at a minimum include ARMER infrastructure formal factory training, either at the factory or in the field, conducted by a qualified instructor.”

Thomson suggests adding ARMER.

**Friendly amendment was accepted to change the Standard to read: “Appropriate training shall, at a minimum, include ARMER infrastructure formal factory training, either at the factory or in the field, conducted by a qualified instructor.”**  
**Motion carries.**

Long discussion about different levels of those performing system admin functions and is there a need for more than one tier and should everyone need to take the factory training.

Randy Donahue reports that in the southern region, for example, it has been defined as being two different jobs. By MnDot requirement, every county’s participation plan has to have someone named on the document as a local system manager or administrator. That person in most of the very rural counties manages everything. They manage I.D.s, keep track of where the radios are, etc. The only thing they don’t do is the actual technical programming of the radios or getting into a client terminal and activating the radios. You could have two distinct positions where one is just doing the technical labor and the other is doing the nuts and bolts of managing the county’s resources. In many rural areas, the technical work is done by the Motorola vendor.

Mike Martin gives the example of the FBI. They program their own radios but don’t do anything with the P.M.

Discussion and agreement that this Standard is meant to address the person who is sitting in front of a P.M.

It is suggested that the committee may want to revisit the topic of the various levels of system administration that are carried out in different regions or capacities and particularly how that relates to State Standards.

**Monte Fronk moves to approve Standard 1.11.1 as amended.**  
**Kerry Swenson seconds.**  
**Motion carries.**

The Standard will go before the Operations and Technical Committee in May.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Chair Thomson announces that the ISSI proposal will be coming before this committee next month on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting adjourns at 2:14 p.m.

STATEWIDE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION NETWORKS  
INTEROPERABILITY COMMITTEE

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May 19, 2015 1:00 P.M.

Chair: Dave Thomson  
by Conference Call

MEETING MINUTES

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**Attendance:**

**Present            Members/alternates present:**

Chair: Dave Thomson/vacant—MN Chiefs of Police Association  
Vice Chair: Tim Boyer – Minnesota State Patrol  
Victor Wanchena/Vacant – MN Dept of Corrections  
Clif Giese/Dan DeSmet– MN Ambulance Association  
Bill Schmidt/Vacant – MN Department of Health  
Brian Askin/Dan Kuntz – MN DNR  
Tim Lee/Mukhtar Thakur/Brad Peters – Mn/DOT  
Bob Norlen/vacant – MN EMSRB  
Ron Jansen/Chris Kummer– MESB  
John Sanner/– MN Sheriffs Association  
Ulise Seal/Vacant – MN Fire Chief's Association  
Lance Lehman /Bill O'Donnell –MN Bureau of Crime Apprehension  
Pat Coughlin/Vacant – MIFC  
Mike Martin/Brian Smith – Federal Seat  
B.J. Battig/Vacant – UASI  
Troy Tretter/Tom Simota – MN National Guard  
John Dooley/– HSEM  
Michael Wisniewski/vacant - HSEM Greater MN  
Terry Stoltzman/Vacant – HSEM Region 6  
Rick Freshwater/Nate Timm – SE MN RAC  
John Maatz/Kimberly Hall / SW MN RAC  
Brett Miller/Darrin Haeder – SC MN RAC  
Micah Myers/Kristen Lahr– Central MN RAC  
Kerry Swenson /Bruce Hegrenes– NE MN RAC  
Brian Zastoupil – NW MN RAC  
Monte Fronk – Tribal Government  
Vacant– Association of MN Emergency Managers (AMEM)

*\*Members attending marked with highlight.*

**Guests:**

Mary Borst, Mayo  
Mike Fink, Motorola  
Joe Reichstadt, Metropolitan Council  
Rick Juth, DPS-ECN  
Marcus Bruning, DPS-ECN

Rubin Walker, DPS-ECN  
Cathy Anderson, DPS-ECN  
Carol-Linnea Salmon, DPS-ECN

**Call to Order:**

Chair Thomson calls the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Chair asks for a motion to approve the agenda.

**Lance Lehman moves to approve the agenda.**

**Clif Geise seconds.**

**Motion carries.**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

Chair asks if there are any changes to the previous meeting's minutes. None stated.

**Giese moves to approve the previous meeting's minutes.**

**Pat Coughlin seconds.**

**Motion carries.**

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ACTION ITEMS

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ISSI PROPOSAL

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Nate Timm introduces the ISSI proposal and gives a brief summary. ISSI is a solution that connects different IP trunking systems together allowing foreign radio systems to interface providing a clean patch for talk-groups. This request is to have the SECB purchase a state level solution. The immediate need is for the Duluth and Douglas County, WI area which would allow interoperability between Duluth and Superior, WI. Duluth could be on the WISCOM system and Douglas County could be on ARMER system.

Other viable uses of ISSI:

- 1) Interoperability between Goodhue County and the nuclear power plant. There are a lot of drills between the county, the power plant and WI bordering counties.
- 2) State of Iowa is close to purchasing an 800Motorola system.
- 3) South Dakota has an older system but a modern core.
- 4) North Dakota does not have current plans for a statewide system but is exploring it.

Considerations:

Some of the Wisconsin counties are not going to join their state system (WISCOM) and in those cases ISSI would not be an interoperable solution.

Bruce Hegrenes says Duluth has been looking at this for two years. There was a breakout session from Motorola on this at the Interop Conference last year. It was also presented to the OTC which formed a committee to look into the pros and cons of the ISSI solution and to make a business case. This document is a result of that and includes a quote and proposal from Motorola.

Arguments for needing the ISSI solution in Duluth:

- 1) Uniqueness of the terrain and business areas in St. Louis County and Douglas County
- 2) We have a short border with Wisconsin.
- 3) We share an international seaport.

Patching concerns:

The region has lost the ability to patch since St. Louis County and the city of Duluth have migrated to ARMER. Douglas County is about to go on the WISCOM system. At this point Duluth is limited to using VLAW 31 along the border. The State Patrol could also benefit. We recently had a chase across the border which didn't go very well without being able to talk to any squads in Wisconsin.

This would also be a good solution for MN and Iowa when Iowa builds a statewide system.

Timm says additionally we have private ambulances that go across the border as well. They are using control stations in WI that are brought back to MN on phone lines. ISSI would allow them to have all this on their consoles.

Marcus Bruning is representing ECN on this matter. He summarizes that this request to purchase the ISSI solution on a statewide basis and add it to the state backbone was initially brought before the OTC which deemed it to be technically feasible and then it was moved to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee decided that in determining if it should be purchased as a statewide solution the request should be presented to the seven regions to see where it was needed or would be utilized. The RICs brought the information to the regions and asked if it should be a statewide project or a regional project. Six of the seven regions reported back that they did not support this as a statewide asset at the current time nor did they identify it as a priority or current need. The NE region identified it as a current need and priority.

Timm says when this went before the SE regional board it was asked if the region should fund it and the answer was no but that it was not presented as whether it should be a statewide asset. The region did not want to pay for it but was interested in the topic and felt it could be useful.

Ron Jansen states that there is a current precedent with the purchase of Genesis where the SECB and committees determined that if the metro region wanted to use Genesis, the metro should pay for it and for the ongoing maintenance and those that don't have a use for it shouldn't have the financial burden.

Hegrenes says St. Louis County has already paid for and installed a microwave link for this solution with a grant they have \$130,000 including a \$30,000 matching funds that St. Louis County will pay. The grant ends in November so if it is not used by then it goes back to the federal government and can't be used for anything else.

Rubin Walker asks what is the estimated cost.

Hegrenes responds that it is \$306,000 which includes 10 talkgroups for manual roaming.

Timm says the current pricing point is for 10 interop talkgroups. Each additional 10 talkgroups would be \$50,000. He heard from Mr. Fink that the proposal has gone down by about 10%.

Hegrenes says the ongoing cost for maintenance would be between \$30,000-40,000 per year.

Walker asks has the CCGW been explored at all with this proposal.

Timm says all border counties each have control stations-- two ARMER control stations with every border county but there are some problems with control stations and patching and there are some delay issues and it doesn't have the capacity to provide full interoperability.

Walker says that control stations might be a viable option that could be a lot more financially feasible.

Timm says there are some options we could explore if we can't fund ISSI but because it can impact so much of the state we feel it is a statewide asset.

Chair Thomson asks if any of the bordering agencies or the nuclear plant committed to using ISSI if we should fund it.

Timm responds that the nuclear plants haven't committed to it. They are concerned about cyber security and adamant that they maintain the core. They have ARMER radio as a fall back.

Tim Lee says it is a nice way to get talkgroups mapped between the system. One of the concerns MNDOT has is the counties bordering are not all on WISCOM. Only Douglas County has said it is going to WISCOM. Counties on the WISCOM system are still hit and miss along the border. Same issue with Iowa. Iowa is still trying to secure money through their legislation which they have done repeatedly. There is not guarantee they will get it.

As far as the budget, the SECB would have to vote to fund it. If the Finance Committee votes to fund it, it will probably come out of the regional grants currently available and these were for regional priorities. MNDOT could pay the ongoing maintenance of \$30,000/year from the existing budget but something else would have to be removed to do so.

Hegrenes says we have spent appreciable money to be interoperable with Canada. Two Motobridge equipment packages were purchased for interoperability with two provinces in Canada. We have more need for interoperability with our bordering states than with Canada. We lost the ability to talk to the state patrol in Wisconsin and Iowa. If the ISSI system is not approved, maybe there should be a study commissioned to take a look at interoperability.

Timm say interoperability is great across the state but we have maybe neglected our state borders. Doing a study may help move things along. The ISSI will not be an immediate fix. It will fix St. Louis County but it will still be hit or miss down the border. If the Finance Committee already decided not to fund this he not sure what the use of this meeting will be but it's hard to lose the money that's been committed to it.

Hegrenes says the Finance Committee tabled this and deferred it to the Interop Committee and sent it back to the regions.

Monte Fronk adds that sometimes tribal nations have an issue with how to have interoperability with federal agencies if they come from different regions. This could be an issue with interoperability down the road. He gives the example of wildfire crews coming from federal agencies that are not MN based.

**Ron Jansen moves to approve the ISSI to be added to the ARMER backbone system but not for statewide funding. He moves that the system be funded by the individual bordering counties that want to use it and that the ongoing maintenance also be funded by those counties.**  
**Clif Giese seconds it.**

Chairs calls for further discussion.

Timm says his concern on the language stated is that if grant money could be found would the language of the motion be problematic.

Chair Thomson says he thinks if the regions were to secure grant money or the state secure grant money it could be diverted.

Jansen adds that the metro does not feel that other regions should have to be charged for the ongoing maintenance.

Hegrenes raises the concern about who would control the system if it is paid for only by agencies that decide to use

it.

Thomson's opinion is that would not be an issue in the spirit of good faith regarding interoperability.

Thomson adds that if the proposal would only fund ten talk groups then an agency in the SE would not have access to it.

Timm thinks there would have to be some language on this if St. Louis pays for it and then a private party wants to start using it.

Jansen says we have a similar thing with Genesis. A certain number of licenses were purchased by Hennepin County. As a new party starts using the system, the cost gets divided up between the number of new users.

Thomson says for the SE regional logging solution as new agencies join they pay their portion of the costs.

Chair calls the question.

**Motion carries.**

Hegrenes suggests that the committee discuss doing a state border interoperability plan including hiring a consultant to develop a plan.

Thomson asks if there was a study done for the bordering agencies when we deployed the control stations. Hegrenes says there was not.

Timm suggests that the RICS have conversations with the border counties to see who is on VHF and who is on an IP trunking system and to find out what is working now and what has to change.

Bruning thinks the RICS are working on that and it is not too much to ask. He is working on that in the NW.

Walker says he will coordinate with the RICS to get as much information as we can in the next two months.

Hegrenes reiterates his recommendation to hire a consultant. He says there is a lot on the plate for the RICS and for the Interoperability Coordinator. Maybe take a look at different technology. We don't have to take care of the funding, it's just a recommendation. As they've done with Canada.

Timm agrees with Hegrenes. He asks Tim Lee if there is money in the control project to put in a couple of control stations or would that be funded by the county.

Lee would have to look. He adds that no one has defined who needs to talk to whom? ISSI will do a lot of things but Hegrenes is the only one who said how it would be used. We've never gone out to see where are the interoperability gaps and where do we have problems and what are the possible solutions.

Rick Juth agrees. We don't have a SWIC on board yet and that would have be within that person's role and responsibility. Certainly there are pockets where there is a willingness or desire by the neighboring county or state for interoperability across the border but he doesn't have a sense of how much desire or willingness there is to operate with MN. When the control stations were offered up there were a number of sheriffs in the neighboring states that didn't want to do it even though we were offering to pay for it. Why should MN foot the bill if Wisconsin wants to have interoperability? Or North Dakota?

Chair Thomson asks when we might have a SWIC for the state.

Juth believes Director Mines has a list of candidates and is in the process of scheduling interviews.

Walker says we could at least begin looking at this process. Maybe it will be determined that we need a consultant but he suggests starting to look at this and see how we can address it.

Lance Lehman asks didn't we just pass a resolution to forward to the SECB to endorse ISSI? Aren't we going backward with a study of the issue if we endorsed ISSI?

Thomson says not necessarily. We are discussing other contingencies we might have.

Hegrenes says the conversation is about overall interoperability across state lines. The ISSI was just one technology. We are now back to using telephones. We want to pursue a wireless solution.

Chair Thomson says we have had a good discussion and ECN has information about what we need.

Meeting adjourns at 2:04 p.m.

# STATEWIDE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

## INTEROPERABILITY COMMITTEE

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November 17, 2015 1:00 p.m.  
Chair: Dave Thomson  
Mn/DOT Arden Hills Training Facility  
1900 West County Road I  
Shoreview, MN 55126

### MEETING MINUTES

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#### Attendance:

#### Members/alternates\*

Chair: Dave Thomson/vacant—MN Chiefs of Police Association  
Vice Chair: Tim Boyer/vacant – Minnesota State Patrol  
Victor Wanchena/Vacant – MN Dept of Corrections  
Clif Giese/Dan DeSmet– MN Ambulance Association  
Bill Schmidt/Vacant – MN Department of Health  
Brian Askin/Dan Kuntz – MN DNR  
Tim Lee/Mukhtar Thakur/Brad Peters/Jim Mohn – Mn/DOT  
Bob Norlen – MN EMSRB  
Ron Jansen/Chris Kummer– MESB  
John Sanner/vacant – MN Sheriffs Association  
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Micah Myers/Kristen Lahr– Central MN RAC  
Kerry Swenson /Bruce Hegrenes– NE MN RAC  
Dave Olson/Bryan Green– NW MN RAC  
Monte Fronk – Tribal Government  
vacant– Association of MN Emergency Managers (AMEM)

*\*Members attending marked with highlight.*

#### Guests:

Jackie Mines, DPS-ECN  
Cathy Anderson, DPS-ECN  
Marcus Bruning, DPS-ECN

Rick Juth, DPS-ECN  
Carol-Linnea Salmon, DPS-ECN  
Troy Tretter, MESB  
Steve Ouradnik, DOC  
Nate Timm, Washington County  
Carrie Oster, Motorola  
Mike Fink, Motorola  
Rod Olson, City of Minneapolis  
Joe Reichstad, Metro Transit  
Mary Borst, Mayo

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## CALL TO ORDER

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Chair Thomson calls the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

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## APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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Chair asks for a motion to approve the agenda. Micah Myers requests to add a discussion about SOA repeaters.

**Micah Myers moves to approve the agenda as amended.**  
**Victor Wanchena seconds.**  
**Motion carries.**

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## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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Chair asks if there are any changes to the May meeting's minutes. None stated.

**Monte Fronk moves to approve the May minutes.**  
**Wanchena seconds.**  
**Motion carries.**

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## ACTION ITEMS

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### STANDARD 3.44.0 PURSUIT (CATHY ANDERSON)

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Cathy Anderson introduces Standard 3.44.0, as presented in the meeting materials.

This standard was revised by the standards workgroup and reviewed by the Operations and Technical Committee. Anderson gives an overview of some of the edits.

In the first paragraph, the word vehicle was added in front of "pursuit communications".

Under *Technical Background, Capabilities*, the radio board name was changed to the Statewide Emergency Communications Board and the following two lines were deleted:

*"This standard empowers each service branch to establish the threshold for use of its talkgroups."  
"Law enforcement service branch talkgroups include LTAC1, 2, 3, and 4."*

The workgroup deleted a paragraph about control stations. Under Recommended Protocol “law enforcement” was added before PSAPs. (All LTAC talkgroups are required for law enforcement PSAPs...)

Under Recommended Procedure on page 3—“The pursuing agency’s dispatcher will reserve the resource on the StatusBoard” was moved to the second bullet point.

On the bottom of page 3, there is a note saying this information should go in the best practices guide.

On the last page, under Management, language was cleaned up to reflect the new names of the regional radio boards.

Chair calls for questions or comments.

**Wanchena moves to approve Standard 3.44.0, as presented.  
Micah Myers seconds.**

Chair calls for further discussion.  
No discussion.

**Motion carries.**

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## NEW BUSINESS

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Micah Myers introduces a discussion about SOA repeater pairs (SOAR). He reminds the committee that a request was made to the Operations and Technical Committee (OTC) from the Central Region for an SOA repeater pair to be used by Kandiyohi and Stevens Counties to assist in areas where there is limited indoor coverage. The Operations and Technical Committee voted that an SOA3 repeater could be used as a temporary solution at fixed locations in Stevens County subject to approval through change management and approval by the Interoperability Committee. Myers raises the concern that the change management process can take a long time.

Chair Thomson responds that one of the concerns brought up at the System Managers Group (SMG) and OTC was that incoming units would not have a clear pathway until this went through change management and every radio was reprogrammed.

Discussion of the pros and cons of this solution and possible impact on other users and of alternative solutions to the coverage issues.

Bruce Hegrenes reiterates that at the OTC the solution was allowed on a temporary basis but the committee required that it not circumvent the change management process.

Myers says Kandiyohi County will put in a repeater pair and patch to it for now.

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## OLD BUSINESS

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None.

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## REPORTS

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### ECN REPORT (JACKIE MINES)

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Jackie Mines reports for Jim Stromberg, the new ARMER SWIC program manager, who was unable to be at the meeting.

ECN is planning a Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) conference on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 to update the SCIP.

Planning is also underway for the Interop Conference which will be held on April 25-27 in St. Cloud. One idea under consideration is holding a table top exercise similar to the one held in Elk River earlier this year. Another idea is to broaden the focus on one of the days to appeal to a larger audience and in particular to fire chiefs. Mines encourages anyone interested to get on the planning committee. Contact Jim Stromberg.

The Minnesota Communications Field Operations Guide (MNFOG) was last updated in April of 2014 and needs some changes. Jim Stromberg will create a workgroup to update it. The National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG) was just released with some changes.

Control stations were purchased in the past for interoperability with neighboring states. Some counties are using them and some are likely not being used. Stromberg will be reviewing this to see where the control stations are located, who is using them and where they are not being used, and will offer training.

BNSF and CN Railroads have asked about being on the ARMER system. They would use it for interoperability in the case of a derailment, not for day to day. The RICS and regions working on that.

Stromberg is also looking at the COML and COMT programs. The goal up to this point has been training and having enough COMLs and COMTs. Stromberg will consider goals for the program going forward. He will work with this committee it.

Marcus Bruning gives an update on border interoperability with Canada and North Dakota.

ECN received an opinion from the FCC some time back that if we were to achieve interoperability with Ontario if the equipment was to be located in the state of Minnesota or in the U.S. it would have to be owned by Ontario. A week ago, Bruning received a donor radio from Ontario with their VHF resources programmed into it. MnDot and has agreed to install the equipment at the International Falls ARMER tower site and they are going to connect it via CCGW. The MN State Patrol has agreed to control that resource. Part of the agreement with the Ministry of Communication calls for operations and testing of the asset.

It has been recommended that we seek FCC licensure for the station. There is a treaty from the 1950s that allows resources to communicate back and forth, which initially applied to taxi cabs. The treaty allows you to cross over the border and talk back to your home country without any licensure but the concern is that it is not a taxi cab but a fixed resource. Jim Stromberg is working with Jim Jarvis on FCC applications. Bruning anticipates that MnDot will be installing the equipment shortly and as soon as the FCC licensure comes through we should have a protocol developed and be able to test and then operate it.

In addition to trying to establish interoperability at the International Falls Fort Francis site, the Northeast Users and Owners and Operators groups are looking at how it will impact Ontario as it goes across Lake County and Cook County and on the operations that they frequently have in the Boundary Waters area particularly with regard to wildfire.

Bruning reports that some time ago ECN gave grants to the Northwest region to obtain 800 megahertz control stations and install them in Roseau County to establish interoperability with Manitoba. Equipment was purchased and installed but the project was never completed. There were staff changes and it was no longer clear what the status of the project was. Recently, ECN gave a grant to the NW region to hire a consultant to make an assessment about whether the original plan still makes sense and that the equipment had all been acquired and accounted for

and to make a recommendation to the NW board. Bruning will have more information the next time this committee meets.

Regarding interoperability with East Grand Forks, MN and Grand Forks, ND, Bruning reports there was a VHF overlay located in Crookston but some portable resources in North Dakota were not able to reach it, particularly those in the Red River area. He worked with MnDot to relocate the VHF overlay to East Grand Forks. That is in place now and working well. He also reports on a solution between East Grand Forks and Grand Forks to be able to have immediate interoperability across three bridges. When they were both on VHF systems they had interoperability but as Polk County migrates to ARMER they need a new solution. Polk County is going to purchase a VHF resource and use a directional antenna pointed to Grand Forks and have Grand Forks PD main in their PSAP in Polk County.

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ADJOURN

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Meeting adjourns at 1:44 p.m.