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Annual Report to the Idaho Legislature by
Chief R. Mark Lockwood, Chair

March 19, 2007

CREATION

The Idaho Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) was borne from the tragedies experienced on September 11, 2001. On that date, many public safety responders lost their lives because they could not talk to one another. With the creation of the SIEC, Idaho made a positive decision to protect the lives of its public safety first responders in service to Idaho citizens, and provide them the communications capability they deserved.

The SIEC began in Executive Order 2003-07. Legislation was passed during the 2006 session of the Idaho Legislature to create the Idaho Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC). Accomplishments for the past year are noted with each statutory responsibility.

Idaho Code § 46-1204 outlines its purpose and responsibilities as follows:

“The council will serve as the governing body in affairs of public safety wireless radio interoperable communications for local and private entities and coordinate with the Idaho department of administration, which is responsible for state agency planning, to meet short-range and long-range telecommunications needs as authorized in chapter 57, title 67, Idaho Code. The council will promote interagency cooperation and provide support statewide for efficient and effective use of local and private resources to achieve public safety wireless radio interoperable communications for local and private public safety agencies.”

(1) Develop a statewide plan for local and private public safety wireless radio interoperable communications in coordination and cooperation with the Idaho department of administration;

2006: The SIEC remains engaged in the development of a statewide plan, in partnership with the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, county, municipal, federal and tribal government, and private entities.

(2) Develop and adopt standards for local and private public safety wireless radio interoperable communications in coordination and cooperation with the Idaho department of administration;

2006: The SIEC adopted and continues to recommend use of the Project 25 standard for wireless radio equipment. The SIEC adopted Project 25 (P 25) in 2005 as the standard for radio communications in Idaho. Project 25 is a suite of standards for Private Wireless radio equipment. For additional information pertaining to P 25, please refer to the I-C-A-WIN document, which accompanies this report.

(3) Recommend guidelines and standards for operation of local and private public safety wireless radio interoperable communications systems throughout Idaho in coordination and cooperation with the Idaho department of administration;

2006: The SIEC, in conjunction with the Idaho Department of Administration and the Bureau of Homeland Security, are assisting counties and state agencies in the development of emergency communications plans that will facilitate multi-disciplinary interoperability within their jurisdictions. This in turn will continue the development of a statewide emergency communications system.

(4) Promote coordination and cooperation among local, state, federal and tribal public safety agencies in addressing statewide public safety wireless radio interoperable communications needs in Idaho;

2006: The SIEC has engaged public safety communications users to identify needs at all levels as the statewide plan is developed. The SIEC will continue to do so in the design and build out phases of the statewide plan. The core organizational principles for the SIEC are cooperation, coordination and collaboration.

(5) Review priorities for statewide public safety wireless radio interoperable communications needs and assist users of the statewide system in the development of projects, plans, policies, standards, priorities and guidelines for public safety wireless radio interoperable communications in coordination and cooperation with the Idaho department of administration;

2006: As stated above.

(6) Develop funding recommendations for short-term and long-term system maintenance;

2006: The SIEC is working with the Bureau of Homeland Security and its federal partners to research and obtain all available funding opportunities for interoperable communications. Idaho's vision for use of the 700MHz spectrum has positioned the state to be a major competitor for the funding opportunity of the \$1 billion dollar appropriation slated specifically for users in the 700MHz spectrum. The past year the SIEC's focus has been on obtaining funding for the local users of the state.

(7) Research best practices of other states;

2006: The SIEC over the past several years has become a nationally recognized leader in the development of interoperable communications for emergency responders. This is evident by the contacts made to the SIEC office and invitations to share insight into our successful process from national organizations. The SIEC has optimized these invitations to share, through bringing back to the state valuable information on best practices.

(8) Prepare and present a report to the information technology resource management council by December 30 of each year describing the council's acts and achievements of the previous year;

2006: The SIEC will be on ITRMC's agenda in the near future.

(9) Provide recommendations to the governor and the legislature of the state of Idaho, when appropriate, concerning issues related to local and private statewide public safety wireless radio interoperable communications in Idaho and in accordance with homeland security presidential directives;

2006: The SIEC stands ready to continue to serve the office of the governor and the legislature through the utilization of our knowledge base developed over the past three (3) years. We remain poised to assist the governing bodies of the state by providing the expertise needed to continue the development and maintenance of a statewide emergency communications system for first responders.

(10) Report annually to the legislature of the state of Idaho on the planned expenditures for the next fiscal year, the collected revenues and moneys disbursed from the Idaho statewide interoperability communications fund and programs or projects in progress, completed or anticipated;

2006: The SIEC's has planned expenditures for FFY 2008 in the area of office operations, and completion of a statewide needs assessment (funded through the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security) that will become the basis for the next phase of the statewide system design and build plan. To date, there have been no financial transactions to the Idaho Statewide Interoperability Communications Fund. In 2006, the SIEC's major focus was assistance to Idaho counties and tribes with development of their interoperable communications plans, which will become the basis for their funding applications. This effort will continue throughout 2007.

(11) Serve as a conduit for the future allocation of federal grant funds to support the delivery of public safety wireless radio interoperable communications systems directed towards local government and private entities;

2006: The SIEC continues to make available information, and when possible, access to all sources of funding to further interoperable communications for local and tribal governments across the state. This source identification has often been realized through private entities partnerships developed over the past several years.

(12) Enter into contracts with experts and/or consultants as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter and to sue and be sued; and

2006: The SIEC did not engage in any contracts in 2006.

(13) Work in coordination and cooperation with the Idaho emergency communications commission established by section 31-4815, Idaho Code, and the information technology resource management council, established by section 67-5745B, Idaho Code.

2006: The SIEC was represented at all Idaho Emergency Communications Commission meetings in 2006.

MEMBERSHIP

The Council consists of 18 members, 4 federal liaisons, and one member each from the Idaho Senate and Idaho House of Representatives. The members of the SIEC are appointed by the Governor and represent various local statewide governmental associations and state agencies. The federal liaisons represent the organizations closely associated with the purpose of the Council.

Members include:

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Mark Lockwood – Chair | Idaho Chiefs of Police Association |
| Bruce Allcott – Vice Chair | Idaho Fire Chiefs Association |
| Bill Bishop | Idaho Military Division |
| Bob Burke | Idaho Department of Lands |
| Michael Candelaria | United States Department of Interior |
| Jerry Russell | Idaho State Police |
| Dia Gainor | Idaho Department of Health and Welfare |
| Jerry Goetz | Federal Law Enforcement |
| Mary Halverson | Idaho Military Division |
| Mark Hilton | National Interagency Fire Center |
| Lt. Col. Dean Hagerman | Idaho National Guard |
| Greg Laragan | Idaho Transportation Department |
| VACANT | U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security Trans. Security |
| Lorin Nielsen | Idaho Sheriffs' Association |
| Joe Young | Idaho Association of Counties |
| Shawn Larsen | Association of Idaho Cities |
| Joe Heggen | Idaho Department of Fish and Game |
| Joe Roche | Idaho Department of Administration |
| Shaun Cluney | Idaho Department of Corrections |
| Reggie Thorpe | Idaho Tribal Government |
| Sen. Denton Darrington | Idaho Senate |
| VACANT | Idaho House of Representatives |

OPERATIONS

The Council operates on an annual budget of approximately \$276,000 sub granted to the SIEC by the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. In May of 2004, the Council hired a full-time Project Manager, Dodie Collier, who works out of the SIEC office at Idaho State Police Headquarters, Meridian, Idaho. In August 2004, the Council hired a full-time Administrative Assistant, Sandy Harris.

During the past twelve months, the SIEC has been conducting a statewide assessment for the design and build phase of the statewide interoperable communications system. This system will provide the connectivity for city, county, tribal, state and federal emergency services with the ability to communicate in real time and on demand, on a day-to-day basis and in times of catastrophe. This system will provide voice, data and real-time video for use by first responders across the state.

INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS IN IDAHO

A looming challenge for this Council are the many changes in public safety radio communications being mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) continuing over the next six years that will greatly affect public safety communications in Idaho. The SIEC is aware of those changes and is working to mitigate the impact that will occur to Idaho's system and users.

In response to its initial charge, the SIEC began statewide informational meetings with Idaho's public safety community in 2004-2005 discussing communications issues facing public safety responders in service to the citizens of Idaho. An informative DVD was produced featuring Idaho first responders discussing communication issues and problems. This proved to be a valuable outreach tool.

About that same time, the SIEC issued a statewide survey to capture the high-level status of Idaho's current public safety infrastructure. From the information gathered, the SIEC began creation of the **Idaho Cooperative Agencies' Wireless Interoperable Network (I-C-A-WIN) Concept** for operable and interoperable public safety communications operations in Idaho, which accompanies this report.

While the SIEC was concentrating on statewide affairs, Idaho was receiving interoperable communications attention at the national level due to its unprecedented level of cooperation and collaboration within the Council and across the state, and its utilization of the newly established public-safety only spectrum, 700MHz.

In 2004-2005, the Idaho SIEC was selected by the National Governors Association (NGA) as one of five states to participate in the initial session of the *National Governors Association, Center for Best Practices, Public Safety Wireless Interoperability Policy Academy*. That opportunity provided the SIEC exposure to the latest national information and research available on interoperability planning and implementation. From this experience, the SIEC came away with an action plan to further interoperable communications in Idaho. That plan coupled with the information gathered statewide, evolved into the I-C-A-WIN Concept, now used as a model by the NGA. Additionally, a second generation DVD was produced highlighting solutions to problems discussed in the first version, again featuring Idaho first responders.

In December 2006, SIEC members were invited by the NGA to provide information on lessons learned and the progress of interoperable communications in Idaho to a national audience. Again, the NGA has issued the same invitation to the SIEC for March 2007.

In addition to the work of the Council, regions across the state are investing in interoperable communications systems for public safety responders, and working as partners with the SIEC in this coordinated effort. To date, approximately \$15 million dollars of local and federal monies have been used to increase interoperable communication capabilities across Idaho. Much of this resource has come from Homeland Security Grant Program funds through the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security.

Local jurisdictions, however, have been innovative and have shown unprecedented levels of interagency cooperation in combining other specialized grant program funding in order to leverage funds for maximum effect. In addition, the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security has invested \$2.5 million dollars in a master site controller that will allow a full complement of services and the highest level of interoperability within and among the public safety agencies across the state. Bannock, Ada, Canyon and Bingham Counties, the Shoshone Bannock Tribe, as well as Power and Canyon Counties, are all in the process of joining that system which will be connected through the master site.

THE FUTURE

The SIEC's vision is to create and utilize a "communications backbone" through the utilization of the State of Idaho microwave and fiber systems, thus providing the ability to tie all regional systems together into a secure and redundant communications system. This system will allow public safety responders to communicate with one another regardless of location, in day-to-day operations and times of catastrophic events across the state. The system would also tie Idaho's communications with its neighbor states and Canadian neighbor to improvement mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities for all hazards.

An SIEC website has been created and can be accessed at www.siec.id.gov .

ATTACHMENT

- *Idaho Cooperative Agencies' Wireless Interoperable Network (I-C-A-WIN) Concept*