

**New Hampshire Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) Meeting
DMV Auditorium, 23 Hazen Drive in Concord
September 19, 2017
9:00am**

I. Welcome and Introduction

Meeting called to order @ 9:12 AM

II. Accepting Minutes from May 12th, 2017 Meeting

The decision was made to vote on the meeting minutes at the next meeting.

III. Working Groups Status Updates:

- **Frequency Working Group – Chair - Supervisor Tom Andross**

Workgroup meetings since May 12 SIEC meeting:

- June 21 @ Fire Academy
- July 12 @ Lakes Region
- August 30, 09:30 @ Derry PD

Scheduled/upcoming

- September 20, 13:30 @ Fire Academy
- October 18, 13:00 @ Cheshire SO

ID formats for Interoperability Radios:

A suggested format was distributed years ago. Over time at least two radio shops have added subcategories to address added disciplines acquiring and programming digital radios capable of generating traffic on Public Safety systems (highway departments, Emergency Management, etc). Interop concerns arise when radios generate traffic or emergency signals on adjoining systems and transmitters need to be identified.

After lengthy discussions, the workgroup adopted a revised numbering scheme which will be shared with radio service vendors for their review and comment, then brought to SIEC for approval. The updated formats will include all state agencies, and dispatch console equipment.

An agency ID was assigned to Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, and an agency ID was verified for Central NH HAZMAT through Capital Area Fire.

Equipment Standards Recommendations

The workgroup has completed the update of the draft document and it has been sent to the radio vendors for their review, and will then be presented to SIEC for adoption. Additional guidance on encryption was added to the document.

Memorandum of Agreements for frequency matrix programming

We are finally seeing good progress on distribution and return of department agreements. There are eight remaining outstanding. Workgroup members will be following up with the stragglers shortly to answer any questions. To date, the MOU exercise has resulted in only one frequency correction (FIRENET)

Use of NHSP Troop Station Radio Frequencies in Fire/EMS Apparatus:

A Fire Department within the I93 Corridor expressed a need to have NHSP channels in fire equipment radios. The agency was referred to NHSP for a discussion about channel permissions and operational considerations. Committee members noted that both agencies have full use of multiple interop channels (Zone H) that might be utilized.

Encryption

Several agencies are utilizing encrypted transmissions, either by user-selection or system-wide. Interoperability concerns arise with neighboring departments with incompatible equipment, users unaware that nearby assistance may not hear them, etc. The workgroup will append the SIEC's existing Best Practices (in concert with the equipment standards) document and submit for approval at the next meeting to address this issue.

NH DOS web hosting of frequency matrices and radio ID database

The workgroup collectively believes further discussion and investigation of state resources needs to take place between the various IT professionals to identify their concerns and accomplish creation of these systems--dialogue is in progress with State DOIT.

Usage/deconfliction of "Zone H" interop channels

The workgroup is reviewing events where communications plans have utilized multiple ZoneH interop frequencies with some requiring coordination with other nearby events. This issue continues to be complicated by agencies re-using designated Interoperability channels as local/regional use channels (ie VLAW31 vs "LP Car-car", and VFIRE21 vs "280"). As part of the updated best practices document review, the workgroup will ask the SIEC to facilitate improved adoption to mitigate this issue.

- **Operations Working Group – Chair - Chief Mark Doyle**

The last meeting was held in December, which was a joint meeting with the Frequency WG, where they discussed the H-bank. The next meeting will occur in October.

- **CommL/CommT Sub-committee – Chair - Supervisor Cecily McNair**

One application for a CommL interview has been received. They are hoping for more and will proceed with setting up a meeting.

- **Data Communications/FirstNet Working Group – Chair - Director Carol Miller**

There have been 24 meetings since the beginning of the year, and the working group will meet a couple more times within the next week. The working group has shown a great commitment to ensuring that the state of NH has options when it comes to FirstNet. Currently the working group is preparing an analysis based recommendation for the SIEC based on the evaluation of the following categories:

- spectrum
- coverage
- cost
- devices
- governance

IV. FirstNet Presentation – Michael Varney – Region I Coordinator

The final state plans will be uploaded into the portal this afternoon, an email will be sent that will detail the updates that have been made to the portal. The 90 day clock will not start until FirstNet formally notifies the governor. FirstNet is waiting on final review from the NTIA for each state's funding level determination. Once that information is available it will be overnighted to the governor and the next day the 90 day clock begins. SPOCs will be notified as well. Letters should go out shortly. The questions submitted in the portal have been answered, that information will be sent later this week. By next week the answers will be uploaded into the portal.

V. AT&T Presentation – Owen Smith, Robert Klein, Doug Clark

AT&T offered their thanks to the state for working with them during this process. AT&T owns 140 MHz of licensed spectrum excluding band-14. There will be priority and pre-emption across all bands. Their cell site growth during the past 9 years has reached 120 sites. They have a strong commitment to rural coverage. AT&T spoke about their commitment, accountability, security, innovation and agility. AT&T reminded everyone that they are contractually mandated to provide MCPTT, and mission critical voice, as well as Z-axis location based services.

VI. Verizon Presentation – Lisa Thorne, Joshua Esposito

Verizon spoke about their commitment to public safety. The Verizon Network has been rated #1 for the following:

- performance
- network reliability

- network speed
- data, call and text performance

They have invested 180 billion since 2000, and they are offering a robust network with priority service and preemption. They have a 70% share of marketplace in the state, which means they are a proven entity. They will build a core, and they will self-fund. Verizon has spent 30 million in the state. The vast majority of their towers meet the NPSTC public safety grade requirements. Greater than 90% of their cell sites have backup generators. They stated that the state will need to have a conversation about deployables, to answer questions such as should they be housed in-state? Verizon has 8,475 miles covered in the state, which equates to a population coverage of over 98%. Push-To-Talk is available today. They will offer enhanced data plans. There is a question of how the Verizon core network and the AT&T core network will interoperate. Verizon's number one goal is to be interoperable.

VII. Rivada Networks Presentation – Declan Ganley

Declan Ganley thanked the state for working with Rivada Networks to develop an alternative state plan. Rivada's plan accounts for building a band-14 public safety grade network throughout the state. New Hampshire's vision has led to great interest in the state. US Cellular issued a recent press release stating that they will collaborate with Rivada Networks. Rivada is willing to work with Verizon and AT&T, they want capacity on the band-14 network. The only way for New Hampshire to keep the band-14 spectrum is to opt-out. Band-14 spectrum is different in terms of power and propagation, it's very valuable. Public safety is entitled to a band-14 public safety grade network. Rivada will build out the network at no cost to the state. If the state opts-in they will lose the band-14 spectrum forever. Rivada bid on the FirstNet RFP, and they were the only bidder to provide 30 square foot propagation to fulfill the FirstNet RFP requirement. Rivada will provide statewide coverage, deployables, ruthless preemption, and Z-axis location. Opt-out and lead the nation.

VIII. Brief Remarks from John Stevens

John thanked all of the presenters. He reminded everyone that this process began in 2015 with the goal to ensure that NH received the attention that it deserved. Remember this is a 25 year commitment. Thank you to the SIEC, and the Data Communications working group. Competition is important, and it is our responsibility to look out for all first responders in the state.

IX. Questions

- **FirstNet**

Mike Sitar asked if NH opts out, will we still have access to the FirstNet core? Mike Varney answered yes, there will be access to the core.

Steve Kropper asked does it apply to cross border, and core to core security, will there be interconnection amongst US carriers? Mike Varney answered, discussions are ongoing with Canada. It is the intent, but nothing has been defined yet. Yes, with other cores.

Henry asked will FirstNet be available to hospitals? Mike Varney answered that healthcare and EMS will have access to network.

- **ATT**

Skip Christenbury noted that the coverage map shows primary coverage through Strafford and Rockingham counties but this isn't the case, and the coverage maps aren't accurate. What is the process to resolve discrepancies? AT&T answered that this forum doesn't go away, and that when it comes to in-building coverage solutions they will look at different tools to solve the issue. FirstNet will step in if they don't solve the issue.

Bill Dowey asked about the plan roll out area for the underserved areas, bonds, provisioning dollars, priority for disaster areas? He stated that Bristol is underserved. AT&T answered that they have partnered with different companies, like Northeast Wireless. 10 sites have been built in Grafton to help expand coverage in underserved areas. Wireless Partners built 14 towers in Coos county, and AT&T will be getting access to these sites. AT&T has submitted an aggressive proposal pending an opt-in decision for additional tower buildouts where people recreate. Work start immediately upon opt-in, and all of the towers will be on the air within 5 years. No bonding is needed. Disaster areas are a priority, they have a multitude of cell sites and multiple frequency layers. They offer their commercial network plus band-14.

Henry stated that Littleton Regional Healthcare pleaded for coverage for the hospital, and they should be a first priority for safety, and that currently nobody is providing this service to them. AT&T answered that they have written down Littleton and will look into and get back to them.

- **Verizon**

Skip Christenbury stated that the coverage map shows primary coverage through Stafford and Rockingham counties but this isn't the case, and the coverage maps aren't accurate. What is the process to resolve discrepancies? Verizon answered that as we work with you, we will address concerns. They have a commitment to the state. They made note of the coverage concerns in Littleton. They are committed to trying to fix this. The local teams are trying to address concerns in Bristol as well. They are trying to get a signal into the town to cover the town hall and the police department. The high school is a challenge too, and they can't promise if it will be in the budget next year.

Tom Andross stated that Verizon did not submit to FirstNet or NH's RFPs, and asked for clarification on why they didn't bother to submit to those proposals. Verizon answered that they had no intention to build out on band-14, they already have a robust spectrum. As far as they're concerned NH is free to keep the spectrum, or give it to AT&T. Verizon is already established here and now public safety has the option to stay with Verizon. Interoperability has to be worked out in terms of how the Verizon core will interoperate with FirstNet core.

Carol Miller asked for clarification on their problem with LRA and Wireless Partners, and how they intend to address that with public safety? Currently three zip codes are being restricted from buying Verizon services. Verizon answered that consumers who live in those zip codes can't sign up for new service. Public safety and the government will not be impacted, they still can get service. Contact Verizon directly and they will get you access.

Bill Dowey stated that Bristol had an emergency two years ago, and that there are other regions north of Concord where there are a lot of underserved areas. He wants to ensure that other areas of the state will be built out. What is the schedule? Verizon answered that they have a plan but it's a matter of when is the right time to execute, and it's a matter of budgets. There is only so much money to cover all of New England, and there are a lot of factors to consider such as ability to get access to power, and how sometimes roads even need to be built into areas to get coverage. Bill asked if their plan will be completed in 5 years? Verizon stated that they won't promise what we can't deliver.

Henry asked how many other hospitals don't have coverage? Verizon answered that they are testing coverage in NH hospitals. They would welcome hospitals to reach out to them so they can see who needs coverage so they can begin to address these areas.

Terry LaValley asked in an opt-in scenario between a state agency who utilizes the FirstNet plan and another agency who remains a Verizon customer, what will the end user experience? What features would they lose? Verizon answered that the Verizon user will still have priority and preemption. Their plan moves forward whether states opt-in or opt-out and it starts this month. Terry asked about MCPTT and the hardening of sites to public safety grade, do the same promises of FirstNet come with the Verizon solution? And regardless of opt-in or opt-out, will the devices work seamlessly amongst neighbors? Verizon answered that their goal is to work toward interoperability but they need to have FirstNet on board to work this out. Details are being worked out. Verizon is building a core.

Art Durette asked about a public safety bring your own device policy for Verizon customers, will they be allowed to have this plan? Verizon answered that if the phones are used for work, yes.

Steve Shea asked if Verizon will be offering priority and preemption on different tier levels? Verizon answered that the criteria needs to be set by public safety, and they are working on definitions. Verizon has 43 emergency response teams. Deployables will be up to state input. 92% of cell sites are currently up in running in hurricane areas. They have six dedicated multi-sector cell sites in New England. Their number of deployables is flexible.

Mike Saltzman stated that the ecosystem of apps that public safety needs won't be available across two different vendors, and that there is a lack of a nexus between Verizon and FirstNet which is making this all very difficult. Verizon answered that interoperability is key. Why should access be limited to apps that are FirstNet dependent? Public Safety deserves to have all access to whatever is available. Conversations are ongoing to work on interoperability.

- **Rivada**

Skip Christenbury stated that the term opt-out has a negative connotation. The chiefs in his community have Verizon and it's a hard sell. Is Rivada willing to work with Verizon? What do I tell my chiefs? Rivada answered that they are not a competitor to Verizon, Rivada's mission is to build a band-14 network. They are willing to work with Verizon to collaborate to make sure the chiefs get what they need.

Rivada stated that they give credit to Verizon for not bidding because they didn't want to warehouse the spectrum. As well as not committing to promises that they can't deliver on. Rivada is not seeking to displace Verizon, and yes they will collaborate with Verizon. They are not asking you to give up your current carrier, in order to get FirstNet services. AT&T stated they are coming to NH whether you opt-in or opt-out. There is no risk in terms of public safety being served because we have a competitive market. The SIEC cares about governance, and you need to remember that without a contract you have no teeth. Under an opt-in scenario there will be no contract between the state and FirstNet/AT&T. Without a contract you're dependent upon taking your concerns to Washington DC, a contract puts you on equal footing. Under an opt-out scenario you are not leaving FirstNet, the NH core has to interoperate with FirstNet's core. Eric will come up and visit the hospital in Littleton to ensure there will be coverage under a Rivada plan.

Steve Kropper asked how many towers are loaded? Rivada answered that they worked with E911 to determine site availability. Until a structural analysis occurs they won't know.

Carol Miller asked does Rivada Network operate any networks today? Rivada answered that they have deployables in use by the National Guard. The company does not operate a network today. However, the Rivada team has deployed networks all over the globe, as have their partners.

Bill Dowe asked if Rivada was prepared to bond to provide in underserved areas within specified time period? Rivada answered, yes.

Arlene Crowell stated that her office regularly dispatches, and they know where the holes are. When it comes time to build, will you consult us? Rivada answered that they have an initial statewide plan, and that capacity will be added. Ed has been working with the dispatchers to make sure it's improving. They plan to adjust as they go along. They want to go out and ride with your people to be informed of where the holes are. Governance is the emphasis, along with a purpose built public safety network. In an opt-out scenario the committees and working groups will have an active say in how the network gets built

X. Next Meeting

September 26, 2017

Time: Non-public session from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM

Public session begins at 10:30 AM

Location: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Department of Safety, 33 Hazen Drive in Concord

XI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.