



July 2009 Edition

Multi-Band Radio Pilot Sites Demonstrate Technology in Real-World Scenarios

On July 1, 2009, the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced 14 lead organizations that will take part in an upcoming pilot phase of testing and evaluation for the Multi-Band Radio project. Scheduled to begin in the fall of 2009, and continuing



into the spring, each agency will conduct a minimum 30-day pilot designed to focus on the capabilities and effectiveness of the radio technology. Users from multiple entities will participate; primarily, they will serve in a command-and-control role or in the special operations division. The pilot phase provides a unique opportunity for agencies to access the radio and implement it in their daily operations.

The agencies and sites were chosen to represent a broad range of communication environments. Factors such as operating bands, partner agencies and disciplines, interoperable conditions, and geographic landscapes were considered when selecting pilot sites. The 14 lead organizations in the pilot are: 2010 Olympic Security Committee (Blaine, Washington, and Vancouver, B.C., Canada), Amtrak (Northeast Corridor), Boise Fire Department (Boise, Idaho), Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada), Customs and Border Patrol (Detroit, Michigan), Federal Emergency Management Agency (Multiple Locations), Hawaii State Civil Defense (Honolulu, Hawaii), Interagency Communication Interoperability System (Los Angeles County, California), Michigan Emergency Medical Services (Lower Peninsula Areas), and Murray State University (Southwest Kentucky). Results, findings, and lessons learned will be published in a comprehensive report in 2010.

Stakeholders Collaborate to Enhance the CMAS RDT&E Program

On July 30, 2009, the Command, Control and Interoperability Division (CID) within DHS hosted the first Commercial Mobile Alert Service (CMAS) Forum in Crystal City, Virginia. The CMAS Forum convened key stakeholders within the alerts and warning community to address critical issues and determine next steps for the CMAS research, development, test and evaluation (RDT&E) program. The Forum featured a panel presentation, guest speakers, and breakout sessions. Initially, most public alert and warning systems consisted of messages that interrupted regular broadcasts over television and radio to provide emergency information to the American public. Since well



over 80 percent of the American population now subscribes to commercial mobile services, CID is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to enable a national alert and warning system that delivers geographically targeted, timely, and effective alert messages to mobile devices for mobile subscribers.

Virtual USA Initiative Moves Full Speed Ahead

On July 22-24, 2009, homeland security and emergency management leaders from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, along with representatives from CID, the DHS First Responder Technologies program, and the National Guard, participated in a planning session for the Southeast Regional Operations Platform Pilot. The Pilot is part of CID's Virtual USA strategic initiative, which seeks to drive a technical and cultural shift in how the Nation shares information during emergencies. Virtual USA will create a virtual nationwide capability, enabling the sharing of information when needed, on demand, and as authorized, capitalizing on the latest emerging technologies. The meeting brought the Pilot's operations and technical working groups together to critically plan in preparation for a demonstration on October 21, 2009. During the demonstration, a simulated storm front moving through the region will demonstrate the importance of information sharing during an emergency. As a result, states will be able to share relevant data in real time, regardless of its respective visualization platform. The ability to seamlessly share information will be an important building block to future Virtual USA efforts.

Save the Dates

- In celebration of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials' (APCO) 75th anniversary, the APCO International Annual Conference will be held from August 16-20, 2009, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Conference provides participants with the opportunity to learn more about local, state, and Federal emergency communications initiatives. The Conference will also feature cutting-edge technologies from over 350 companies. More information is available at <http://www.apco2009.org/>.
- On August 25-29, 2009, the International Association of Fire Chiefs is hosting the Fire-Rescue International Conference. Held in Dallas, Texas, this conference will gather over 13,000 fire and emergency response leaders from around the world. With over 650 exhibitors, full-day seminars, and workshops to choose from, participants will have a wide variety of opportunities to discuss new trends and cutting-edge technologies in the field of emergency response communications. For more information, please visit <http://www.iafc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=356>.
- On September 16-17, 2009, the Public Safety Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Working Group is hosting a Roundtable discussion in Washington, D.C. The VoIP Working Group, led by OIC and the Public Safety Communications Research Program within the U.S. Department of Commerce, works to define and clarify expectations for VoIP in the public safety environment. At the Roundtable, Working Group members and practitioners from all disciplines will convene to review the new Bridging Systems Interface (BSI) Core 1.1 Profile and collect feedback on the BSI Best Practices document. Additionally, the Working Group will engage practitioners in a discussion regarding user needs in order to determine the Group's next steps. The Working Group is looking for additional practitioners with VoIP experience and an interest in the Group's mission to participate in the Roundtable. For more details on the VoIP



Roundtable, please contact VoIP_Working_Group@sra.com or visit <http://www.safecomprogram.gov/SAFEKOM/currentprojects/voip/>.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security established the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) in 2004 to strengthen and integrate interoperability and compatibility efforts in order to improve local, tribal, state, and Federal emergency preparedness and response. Managed by the Science and Technology Directorate's Command, Control and Interoperability Division, OIC is committed to developing technologies and tools—methodologies, templates, models, and educational materials—that effectively meet the critical needs of emergency responders in the field.

The Interoperability Bulletin provides updates about OIC-related initiatives, accomplishments, and opportunities. This Bulletin is distributed to stakeholders monthly.

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