

Nebraska Public Safety Communications Council

Minutes

December 12, 2012, 10:00 am CST

Governor's Residence, Lower Level, 1425 'H' Street, Lincoln, NE

Meeting comes to order

1. Introduction of voting members present

First Name	Last Name	Agency	Attendance
Al	Berndt	NEMA	X
Dave	Boeckner	League of Municipalities	X
Mark	Conrey	Tri-County PET Region	X
Pat	Gerdes	Southwest PET Region	
Tim	Hofbauer	East Central PET Region	X
Adam	Matzner	State Fire Marshal	X
Matt	May	Northeast PET Region	X
Tom	Nutt	NACO	X
Pete	Petersen	North Central PET Region	X
Ray	Richards	Panhandle PET Region	X
Jon	Rosenlund	South Central PET Region	
Ray	Ryan	Southeast PET Region	X
Tom	Schwarten	NSP	X
Jayne	Scofield	OCIO	X
Rick	Sheehy	Lt. Governor	X
Craig	Stover	Game and Parks	X
David	Webb	NPPD	X

2. Introduction

Governor Heineman created the Nebraska Public Safety Communication Council (NPSCC) through Executive Order No. 12-01. NPSCC integrates two previous organizations – the Nebraska Council of Regions (NCOR) and the Nebraska Wireless Interoperability Network Council (N-WIN) – in order to better coordinate and integrate the public safety communication system. This meeting was to discuss the bylaws and coordination of NPSCC.

Discussion Items

1. Expectations for Council – Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy

The Executive Order established the members of NPSCC including two new representatives from the Nebraska Association of County Officials and the Nebraska League of Municipalities. The Executive Order combines many points of NCOR and N-WIN, including: provide for policy-level direction related to the planning and decisions regarding development, operation and sustainability of interoperability in the State of Nebraska; provide leadership regarding the development of public safety communications within Nebraska; adopt bylaws for the operation of the Council; promote interoperability for public safety communications within Nebraska, and with border states; provide recommendations for the development of protocols, standard operating procedures and guidelines for use of public safety communications systems in Nebraska; coordinate and provide planning, training and exercise opportunities related to communications interoperability for all necessary and authorized public safety practitioners; establish working groups, as required, to meet the needs of providing interoperability within Nebraska. NPSCC will provide guidance on recommendations that come from these

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working groups; and develop recommendations and strategies for best utilization of public funds, including grants, to improve public safety communications in Nebraska.

NEMA and the Public Policy Center will serve as support organizations.

2. Bylaws – Discussion of items to include for approval next meeting

Draft bylaws combining previous N-WIN and NCOR bylaws were distributed to members for discussion.

Article I: Declares the name of the council and dictates that the NPSCC reports to the State Homeland Security Director or State Wireless Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC). (Previously this role had been given to the Lt. Governor; however, since the Lt. Governor may not always be the State Homeland Security director or SWIC, this statement was changed to reflect the potential for changing roles.)

Article II: States the purpose of the Council and is replicated from the Executive Order.

Article III: Specifies membership of the Council and is replicated from the Executive Order. In order to prevent members from coming up for renewal at the same time, membership in the NPSCC will be staggered. This will require some members to initially serve a one year term in order to achieve rotation.

Article IV: The Chair will select a Vice Chair to serve in the absence of the chair.

Articles V and VI: Two-thirds of the Council must be present for quorum (11 of 16 members). The Council will use a roll call system of voting with a simple majority of those present needed for a measure to pass. A member must be present to vote. Video conferencing may be available for some meetings to those who cannot attend the meetings in person; those utilizing the video conference will have the same voting rights as those physically present at the meeting.

Article VII dealing with sub-committees will be removed from the bylaws.

Article VIII: Changes in bylaws will require a vote of 2/3 of membership.

The Public Policy Center will re-draft the bylaws to include the proposed changes. The revised draft bylaws will be distributed prior to and presented for a vote at the next NSPCC meeting.

Information/Reports

1. Region and State Reports

a. Panhandle Region – Ray Richards

The Panhandle Region was set out as the Pilot Region for the Nebraska Regional Interoperability Network (NRIN) project. The equipment is not currently being used, but it is working. The Panhandle is paying \$8,400 in lease money on two towers; this money has been budgeted through their PET committee. Once the system comes online, Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) will waive the lease fee. The Panhandle is not using the Paraclete System for interoperability. A link to the equipment has not been established and issues with the equipment have prevented the Paraclete System from progressing in Scottsbluff County. However, the Paraclete system is expected to be repaired and active shortly.

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b. Southwest Region – Pat Gerdes (report read by Denise Bulling)

NRIN is currently installed in Grant, Imperial, Stratton, and Trenton and partially installed in Benkelman. All MOU's are in place at these sites. In order to complete the Southwest Region, McCook Public Power needs information about the equipment that will be installed so a contract with the Red Willow County Sherriff can be created. No infrastructure is in place to add Furnas County into this system. Cambridge Pinpoint site may be replaced by a new tower on Game and Parks property; however, additional funds will be needed to complete this tower. Perkins and Furnas County have the VHF/UHF Base Stations installed and operable. Dundy County will have the equipment installed in the NRIN cabinet and will utilize the NRIN System to control these frequencies. Red Willow County is expected to be the next county upgraded for NRIN.

c. North Central Region – Pete Petersen

The NRIN pilot project includes portions of the North Central region. The region is currently on a hold due to equipment issues; once the contractor fixes these problems, radio equipment will be placed on this system. The region is ready to do data testing with NPPD and camera monitoring. The North Central region continues work with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) to manage and monitor the network for the region. Recently, a test with a Motorola Consolette, a device that allows for the connection of the Statewide Radio System with local frequencies, was conducted successfully.

d. South Central Region – Jon Rosenlund (via email)

The South Central region has NRIN towers in 27 locations in each of its 15 counties. To connect with the Southwest region, the Cambridge Pinpoint site will be replaced by a new tower on Game and Parks property with \$70,000 in funding from the 2011 grant. Additional funds will be needed to complete this tower. NEMA has approved a new tower in Curtis, Nebraska. It will be built next to an existing tower at the UNL School of Technical Agriculture. An annual lease of \$10,000 is required by KRVN Radio to link the Lexington Dispatch, Cozad, Atlanta NET, and Cambridge Pinpoint replacement. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) are done for the Alma Dispatch, Clay Center, GI Dispatch Tower, Aurora Elevator and Aurora Dispatch; they are needed for the Axtell Elevator, Buffalo County Sheriff Tower, Minden Water Tower, Minden Dispatch, and two towers in Hastings. A MOU is expected from the OCIO for the Giltner NET. The OCIO has yet to approve the Atlanta NET.

e. East Central Region – Tim Hofbauer

The East Central region is working to identify sites, getting MOU's signed. A storage facility in Lincoln has been located as part of the NRIN project. Equipment may be arriving after the first of the year with installation starting next spring. The East Central region will be releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to request quotes on a 911 regionalization system that will share equipment across the region. Depending on reliability, NRIN may serve as the primary or back-up for communications. Two interoperable base stations have been installed; they are not operable, but should be connected to the NRIN system by next spring or summer. An additional station is proposed for the Northeast part of the region. The East Central has five Paraclete boxes in place with good coverage.

f. Southeast Region – Ray Ryan

The Southeast Region has identified most of the towers for the NRIN project with the exception of the Beatrice area. Equipment will be ordered in January. Six base stations have been installed in Seward,

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Fillmore, Jefferson, Lancaster, Cass and Richardson Counties. Motorola consoles have been installed at several 911 centers. Programming and operations need to be confirmed for these stations before they can be used. Several Paraclete boxes have been installed in the region.

g. Northeast Region – Matt May

Confusion across the region has prevented some NRIN stakeholders from committing to the project. One console under the Statewide Communications Project has been installed. Three-quarters of the mutual aid frequencies have been implemented. These channels have been used and were successful in coordinating inter-state and state actors.

h. Tri-County Region – Mark Conrey

Several inoperable challenges have been addressed in the last year. The microwave system is up and providing good connection. A significant issue occurred with Iowa switched over to a next generation system, and 911 calls could not be transferred from Iowa to Nebraska. The Tri-County Region implemented a viper with Washington County as a work-around to transfer calls from Iowa and back. This work-around will function proving that other counties can operate off a single system. The next step is to connect the viper in Pottawatomie County with the viper in Douglas County so calls can be routed through either county and delivered to multiple counties.

A RAVEN switch is being used on a VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) network that has been successfully tested with the State Patrol, Sarpy County, and Douglas County and will hopefully be extended to Pottawatomie Country.

2. Statewide Communications Project Updates

a. Statewide Radio System – Jayne Scofield, OCIO

The Statewide Radio System is a partnership between NPPD and the OCIO. It has been completely built and is operational. State users include: the State Patrol, Fire Marshal, Game and Parks, Corrections, Roads, Agriculture, Motor Vehicles and NEMA. Non-state users include: NPPD, Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, LES, US Marshals, US Fish and Wildlife, and Lincoln County Emergency Management. Burt County is in the process of being brought onto the system.

In the middle of October, Motorola replaced 29 fiberglass antennas resulting in fewer issues and better service. Coverage testing was completed during November. The Statewide Radio System expects to get this data back from Motorola by the end of January.

The State and NPPD go through a comprehensive biennial budget process, and all agencies have been briefed on the budget for their retainers. Monthly Users' Group meetings have been well-attended and informational.

b. Nebraska Regional Interoperability Network (NRIN) – Sue Krogman, NEMA

The project has been contracted and sub-contracted, so when the equipment arrives the installation process will be highly efficient. EHP's (Environmental and Historical Preservation forms) are being returned in a timely manner with all necessary information. Routers in the Panhandle were replaced with more robust ones. The OCIO has been added to the group of regional representatives.

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c. Common Usage Channels Project – Pete Petersen, North Central Region

The North Central region is waiting for the installation of seven Mutual Aid Channels into the microwave to connect them to the dispatch centers that will be controlling them. The installation should take place in January. A consolidated list of the Common Usage Channels in Nebraska should be compiled by NEMA. The fires this summer highlighted the need for additional training with initial responders.

d. Paraclete Project – Alisia LeMay, NEMA

Six of the seven Paraclete boxes in the Southeast region are working and in use; the Johnson County box is under repair. New priorities are set for the upcoming year with the addition of IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert and Warning System) to the Paraclete program. The Paraclete systems will be upgraded to 8.0, which will include the IPAWS system; in addition, Paraclete will be added to the counties that do not have black boxes with the addition of MOU's. The State Patrol boxes will be examined, and the State Patrol will be integrated into the system and receive training and orientation. All counties – with the exception of two – are on the Paraclete system and these counties should be integrated soon.

Discussion Items

1. Sustainability of Communications Project – Lt. Governor Sheehy

It is important to continue to sustain programs and infrastructure that have been put into place even as federal funds continue to decrease. Since the NPSCC is a statewide organization, regional representatives are expected to communicate information after the meetings back to their regions. An inter-local agreement to establish local, regional, and statewide collaboration for governance and finances, though homeland security grant funding may assist in financial obligations. Work with the OCIO is being done to evaluate whether the NRIN system can be operationally managed and monitored by the same technical operations group that manages the Statewide Radio System. Each dispatch center is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the system they are using.

2. NPSCC representation for the Region VII Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECCWG) - Mark Conrey

The current member states of Region VII are Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Nebraska. The group is looking to increase membership to 40 non-federal members and three non-voting federal members. The group meets every six months in Kansas City. The meetings are informative and include briefings from Washington, D.C. Members are given the opportunity to coordinate with their counterparts in the other states and engage with federal agencies. Travel expenses are paid for by FEMA. The next meeting will be held in February. If NPSCC members are interested in becoming a RECCWG member, email the Lt. Governor and Al Berndt.

Action Items

1. Establish Nebraska State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC) as a working group of NPSCC

The State Emergency Communications Committee operated as a subcommittee of NCOR since April 2011. The SECC operates according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and includes representatives from NEMA, local emergency management, State Patrol, Radio, Television, Cable Systems, and the National Weather Service. The SECC writes and maintains the state Emergency Alert System (EAS) plan. With the introduction of new technologies, such as IPAWS and CMAS, the SECC seeks to continue collaboration and partnership with NPSCC in order to share information and improve emergency communication. In the past, the SECC has

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provided NCOR with regular status updates. The SECC is seeking to transfer its status as a working group from NCOR to the NPSCC.

The state EAS plan is still pending with the FCC; new items added to the state plan include CMAS (Commercial Mobile Alert System) and CAP (Common Alerting Protocol); the main focus of these programs is to provide alert information to the general public.

Ray Richards made a motion to establish the SECC as a working group under NPSCC. Matt May seconded the motion; the motion passed by roll call vote.

Comments

1. Member comments

If any member needs assistance with their interoperability mutual aid testing or needs assistance contacting their regional state patrol officers, contact Pete Petersen.

Brochures for the NRIN system are available for distribution to local elected officials and people who may not be familiar with the project. This brochure is designed to give those making decisions on the NRIN system the technical knowledge to progress the project. Feedback on improving the brochure is encouraged.

2. Public comments

No public comment.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be targeted for the first quarter of next year. An email will be sent with prospective dates. The location for the next meeting was discussed for the possibility of video conferencing and will be announced once a location is determined.