ISICSB

911 Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board

John R. Benson
Homeland Security &
Emergency Management Division

Tom Berger
Fire Department (Volunteer)

Tom Boeckmann
Department of Public Health

Bridget Edson
Municipal Police Department

Judy Flores
Communications Center Manager

Mark T. Frese
Fire Department

Ted Kamatchus
Sheriff's Office

Tom Lampe
Department of Public Safety

Clinton McClintock
Municipal Police Department

Dina McKenna
Sheriff's Office

Ron Miller
Member-At-Large

Sandy Morris
Communications Center Manager

Jason Sandholdt
Department of Natural Resources

Patrick Updike
Department of Corrections

Robert A. Younie
Department of Transportation

Legislative Members
Senator Tom Hancock
Senator Joni Ernst
Representative Bob Kressig
Representative Joel Fry

Jim Bogner
Iowa Statewide Interoperability
Coordinator

Report to the Iowa Legislature on the Status of the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board (ISICSB) Calendar Year 2011

Overview

During the first session of the 82nd General Assembly, the Iowa Legislature established a new Iowa Statewide Interoperability Communications System Board (ISICSB). 2007 Iowa Acts, House File 353, created Iowa Code Section 80.28, which addresses the membership of the Board, with Section 80.29 identifying its duties, as follows:

> "A statewide interoperable communications system board is established, under the joint purview of the department and the state department of transportation. The board shall develop, implement, and oversee policy, operations, and fiscal components of communications interoperability efforts at the state and local level, and coordinate with similar efforts at the federal level, with the ultimate objective of developing and overseeing the operation of a statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system. For the purposes of this section and section 80.29, *"interoperability"* means the ability of public safety and public services personnel to communicate and to share data on an immediate basis, on demand, when needed, and when authorized."

Legislative Report - 2011

The ISICSB has been in existence for four years.
The current Chair and Vice-Chair are as follows:

Chair: Dina McKenna, Story County Sheriff's Office,
(515) 382-7469, dmckenna@storycounty.com
Vice-Chair: Thomas Lampe, Iowa DPS/ISP,
(515) 725-6113, lampe@dps.state.ia.us

During this calendar year, there were five (5) local/state and three (3) legislative member changes in the Board.

Current ISICSB Members

Local Representatives

Name	Position	City
Judy Flores	Communication Center Manager (replaced Wendi Hess of Woodbury County)	BlackHawk County
Sandy Morris	Communication Center Manager	Des Moines
Bridget Edson	Municipal Police Department (replaced Jeremy Logan of Olewein)	Fayette County
Clinton McClintock	Municipal Police Department (replaced Roxanne Warnell of Tama County)	Cedar Rapids
Tom Berger	Fire Department	Epworth Volunteer Fire
Mark Frese	Fire Department	Davenport
Ted Kamatchus	County Sheriff	Marshall County
Dina McKenna	County Sheriff	Story County
Ron Miller	At-Large Member	Fairbank

Representatives	State Agency
John Benson	Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division
Tom Boeckmann	Department of Public Health
Thomas Lampe (replaced Todd Misel)	Department of Public Safety
Jason Sandholdt	Department of Natural Resources
Patrick Updike (replaced Mike Dreke)	Department of Corrections
Robert Younie	Department of Transportation

Legislative Ex-Officio Members

Senator Tom Hancock
Senator Joni Ernst (replacing Shawn Hammerlinck)
Representative Joel Fry (replacing David Tjepkes)
Representative Bob Kressig (replacing Kerry Burt),

Communications Interoperability Efforts

The ISICSB holds public meetings monthly, typically on the last Wednesday of the month, except for a combined November-December meeting due to the holidays. The ISICSB maintains a web site at www.isicsb.iowa.gov where its activities and information is posted.

During 2011, the ISICSB addressed its legislative mandates, as noted below:

1. *Implement and maintain organizational and operational elements of the board, including staffing and program activity.*
   - The ISICSB finalized its organizational structure, as depicted in Appendix A, and expanded its committees to include non-Board members, such as representatives from statewide organizations not already represented on the ISICSB, such as APCO (Association of Public Safety Communications Officials), NENA (National Emergency Number Association), and the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division 911 Program Manager.
   - With the assistance of the Departments of Public Safety and Transportation, the ISICSB prepared the initial Administrative Rules to support the Board's mission. A public hearing was held on 6/29/11, with the Rules being subsequently approved by the Legislature's Rules Committee, and effective October 1, 2011.
   - From Federal grant funds, the ISICSB hired an assistant for the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) to facilitate outreach and support office operations;

2. *Review and monitor communications interoperability performance and service levels on behalf of agencies.*
   - The ISICSB has been active in educating and coordinating the FCC Narrowbanding mandate throughout Iowa to ensure each license holder is aware of the requirements to comply by 12/31/2012, which included informing jurisdictions of the narrowbanding schedule that the Department of Public Safety/Iowa State Patrol prepared regarding the state mutual aid and law enforcement aid interoperability channels.
   - The ISICSB and the E911 Council and Program Manager have coordinated their activities and scheduled their meetings at the same location following one another to ensure greater coordination regarding interoperability. As an example, the ISICSB is using some of its grant dollars to fund a 911 Feasibility Study in 2011 to take an in-depth look at the state's 911 PSAPs (Public Safety Answering Points) in order to explore best practices, greater efficiencies, and service levels. A final report of this study is due in February, 2012.
   - The ISICSB participated in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) Goal 2, which consisted of surveying every county in the nation on its interoperability performance levels. Unfortunately, only 67 of Iowa's 99 counties participated in this interoperability assessment. The ISICSB continues to try to get the remaining Iowa counties to participate in this county-by-county assessment to obtain an accurate picture of Iowa's interoperability capabilities and performance. A statewide summary graphic is contained in Appendix B.
   - The ISICSB is involved in the Tri-State Planning Group (Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), which held an tri-state interoperability table top exercise this past year and will follow-up with a full-scale tri-state communications exercise in March, 2012 to test and evaluate interstate interoperability to be used in developing regional and statewide Tactical Interoperability Communication Plans (TICPs).

3. ***Establish, monitor, and maintain appropriate policies and protocols to ensure that interoperable communications systems function properly.***
   - The ISICSB has taken the position of supporting the national initiative of using Plain Language in radio communications throughout Iowa. The ISICSB Operations Committee is finalizing a suggested policy for statewide migration to this national standard, as well as adopting standard channel nomenclature (naming channels with standardized names). The lack of any enforcement authority is seen as a hindrance to this effort.
   - The ISICSB had previously held a workshop on developing SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) to be implemented when a statewide interoperable communications system is built.
   - The NECP Goal 2 results will be used to address deficiencies in protocols and establish future policies to improve interoperability, as will suggestions from our Outreach Committee's efforts.

4. ***Allocate and oversee state appropriations or other funding received for interoperable communications.***
   - The ISICS established a Finance Committee to oversee and seek funding. The Committee consists of the Chair, SWIC, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, 911 Program Manager, and the four ex-officio legislators. To date, the only funding received by the ISICSB has been from federal grants, which are due to expire in May, 2013.
   - The finance Committee determined that the ISICSB will certainly require state funding to progress towards statewide interoperability through the building of a common 700 MHz statewide land mobile radio (LMR) communications backbone. Such a project cannot progress without it.
   - Additionally, Iowa is one of twenty-one jurisdictions (one of seven states) to be granted an FCC license to build a public safety high speed wireless network, as part of a nationwide network. The purpose of such a network is to facilitate public safety exchanging critical data (video from patrol cars, Amber alert photos, disaster scenes like floods, fire scenes, etc.) real-time. The ISICSB applied for, but did not receive federal funding to initiate this network, as it has not acquired any state funding to date, and did not have the 20% matching fund requirement.

5. ***Identify sources for ongoing, sustainable, longer-term funding for communications interoperability projects, including available and future assets that will leverage resources and provide incentives for communications interoperability participation, and develop and obtain adequate funding in accordance with a communications interoperability sustainability plan.***
   - The ISICSB needs this critical funding from the legislature to address this mandate.
   - The ISICSB Finance Committee met several times in early 2011 in an attempt to identify sources of funding.
   - Additionally, ideas were solicited from participants at the Board's six outreach workshops in 2011. As a follow-up to the workshops, the ISICSB conducted a survey and determined that most respondents favored using 911 fees and gambling/lottery revenues to fund interoperability in Iowa.
   - The ISICSB will hold a Funding Workshop in January, 2012 to further generate initial capital expenditure and operational expenditure funding ideas to be considered by the Legislature.

6. *Develop and evaluate potential legislative solutions to address the funding and Resource challenges of implementing statewide communications interoperability initiatives.*
   - (See # 4 and #5 above.)

7. *Develop a statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system that allows for shared communications systems and costs, takes into account infrastructure needs and requirements, improves reliability, and addresses liability concerns of the shared network.*
   - The ISICSB hired an independent engineering consultant who developed a statewide Master Plan in 2009, as mandated above. It is on our web site at: http://www.isicsb.iowa.gov/documents/planning_efforts/Executive_Summary.pdf However, without the required funding, the ISICSB has been unable to implement this plan.
   - The ISICSB has partnered with the Minnesota statewide board to utilize some of Minnesota's federal funding to purchase radios for the Iowa counties bordering Minnesota that will allow interoperability between the Iowa and Minnesota adjacent counties.
   - The ISICSB secured Federal assistance in acquiring and implementing a Communications Assets and Survey Mapping (CASM) tool which will allow the ISICSB to develop a statewide database identifying communications assets and frequencies (channels) used for ready access during emergencies and disasters to facilitate communications interoperability.

8. *Investigate data and video interoperability systems.*
   - As one of the twenty-one FCC broadband licensees, the ISICSB has aggressively explored the latest industry developments in a high speed data network (4G) that would utilize data and video interoperability systems. The ISICSB has been extremely involved nationally in the development of national interoperability broadband frameworks and protocols, which would allow interoperability not only within Iowa, but with its adjacent states and the national network. The ISICSB's SWIC is part of a national Operators Advisory Committee investigating these systems.

9. *Expand, maintain, and fund consistent, periodic training programs for current communications systems and for the statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system as it is implemented.*
   - The ISICSB has established an Outreach Program which includes forming Regional Interoperability Committees (RICs), holding meetings in each of the homeland security regions throughout the state, providing education and training in public safety interoperable systems, updates on the ISICSB's planning efforts for build-out a statewide system, and soliciting input from the RICs.
   - The ISICSB has sponsored two Communications-Leader (COM-L) classes for public safety officials, providing them with the training and tools to create interoperability solutions in emergencies, disasters, and special events.
   - The only funds available to the ISICSB at this time are from expiring federal grant programs. Maintaining consistent or even periodic training will require at least some level of legislative funding.
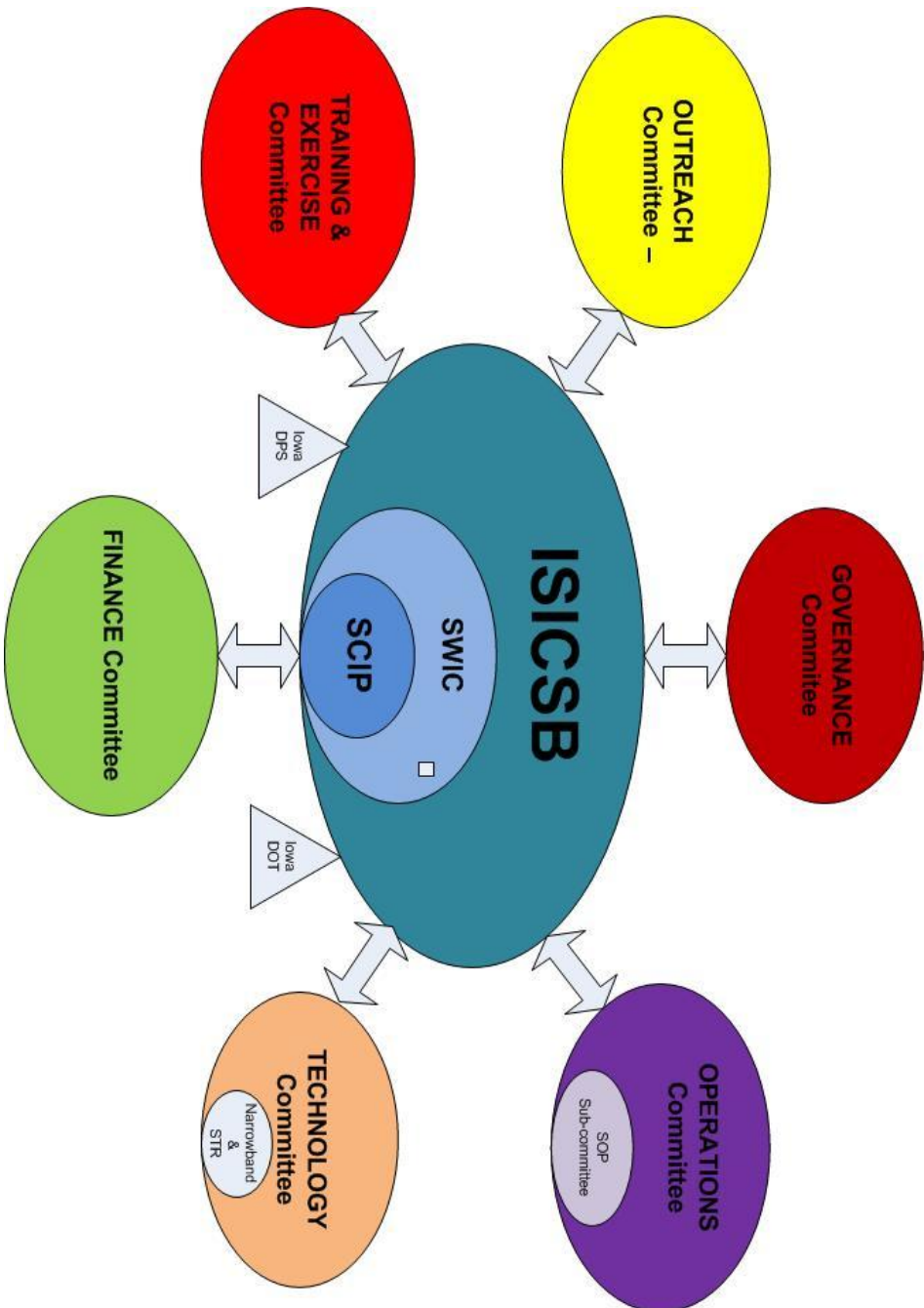
- The ISICSB established Facebook and Twitter accounts to use the social networking sites to better inform, educate, and keep stakeholders updates on interoperability efforts on a timely basis.

10. ***Expand, maintain, and fund stakeholder education, public education, and public official education programs to demonstrate the value of short-term communications interoperability solutions, and to emphasize the importance of developing and funding long-term solutions, including implementation of the statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system.***
    - The only funds available to the ISICSB at this time are from expiring federal grant programs. Maintaining or expanding education and training will require at least some level of legislative funding.
    - Long-term multi-year implementation and funding solutions are being sought. The ISICSB endorses a seven year implementation and long-term funding solution. Rather than individual interests each approaching the legislature for funding, the ISICSB promotes establishing a single multi-year interoperability fund to address narrowbanding, PSAP development, and overall interoperability within the state of Iowa, which would promote coordination, solution uniformity, and greater efficiency in public safety communications initiatives.

11. ***Identify, promote, and provide incentives for appropriate collaborations and partnerships among government entities, agencies, businesses, organizations, and associations, both public and private, relating to communications interoperability.***
    - The ISICSB has collaborated with the Minnesota statewide board to utilize some of Minnesota's federal funding to purchase radios for the Iowa counties bordering Minnesota that will allow interoperability between the Iowa and Minnesota adjacent counties.
    - In July, 2011, the ISICSB issued an RFI (Request for Information) to identify and explore appropriate collaborations and partnerships, both public and private. The ISICSB Technical Committee anticipates completing their analysis of the RFI responses in early 2012.

12. ***Provide incentives to support maintenance and expansion of regional efforts to promote implementation of the statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system.***
    - As noted in #9, the ISICSB has established Regional Interoperability Committees (RICs) in order to expand their regional efforts and promote statewide interoperability regionally. The Outreach Committee is already planning additional regional outreach workshops for 2012, and scheduling ISICSB meetings to be held in the state's regions in 2012 (April in Region 4, June in Region 5, August in Region 3, and October in Region 2.)
    - Additionally, the results of the NECP Goal 2 will be analyzed to promote and find solutions for greater interoperability.

13. ***In performing its duties, consult with representatives of private businesses, organizations, and associations on technical matters relating to data, video, and communications interoperability; technological developments in private industry; and potential collaboration and partnership opportunities.***
    - The ISICSB regularly consults with industry, organizations, associations, and is closely collaborating with the Federal government testing facility in Boulder, Colorado run by the Public

Safety Communications Research (PSCR), National Institute of Science Technology (NIST), Department of Commerce regarding the above technical matters. The ISICSB considers it extremely important to use taxpayer money wisely and effectively in Iowa's interoperability efforts and wants to 'get it right the first time.'
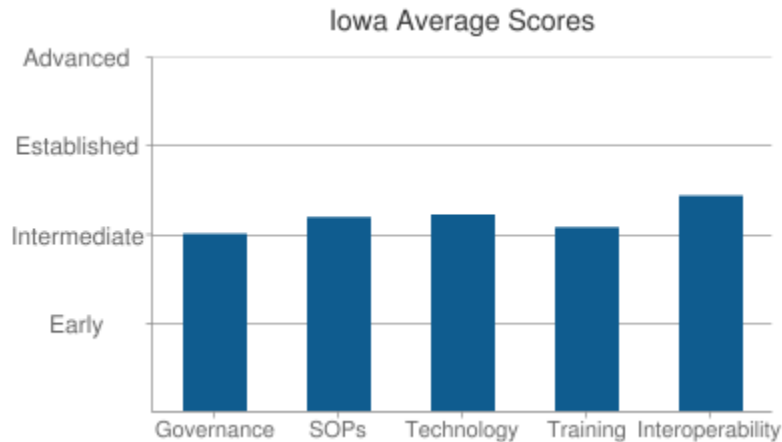
14. ***Submit a report by January 1, annually, to the members of the general assembly regarding communications interoperability efforts, activities, and effectiveness at the local and regional level, and shall include a status report regarding the development of a statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system, and funding requirements relating thereto.***
   - This report complies with the first requirement.
   - The ISICSB prepared and submitted its 2011 SCIP (Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan) to the Department of Homeland Security / Office of Emergency Communications outlining its planned short-term and long-term interoperability strategic plan. It can be accessed at: http://www.isicsb.iowa.gov/index.html
   - The ISICSB continues to explore ways to build-out such a high-speed broadband network, in conjunction with the statewide master plan of LMR or voice network.
   - Plans for the development of a statewide integrated public safety communications interoperability system have been accomplished, and initial funding requirements furnished to the legislature. In July, 2011, the ISICSB issued an RFI to further refine and identify funding requirements.
   - With the emergence of public safety wireless broadband within the last two years, the ISICSB will be developing funding requirements for that initiative in 2012.

Appendix B

Iowa Average Scores

Areas of Interoperability Measured were:
Governance (documented procedures related to assisting or communicating with each other, like mutual aid agreements)
SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures used in communications, channel usages, etc.)
Technology (sufficient equipment and on frequencies that would allow communication with other agencies, when needed)
Training (trained in the use of their communications equipment)
Interoperability (able to communicate with other first responder agencies when needed, either routinely or in emergencies)

The Interoperability rating scale in the attached graphic is as follows:

Early – meaning first responders seldom have interoperability unless advanced planning is possible;
Intermediate – meaning first responders are regularly able to communicate for emergency events, and in limited fashion for day-to-day communications;
Established – meaning first responders are interoperable regularly and easily for all day-to-day, task force, and mutual aid events;
Advanced – meaning regularly able to communicate for all day-to-day and out-of-ordinary events across an area on demand, in real time, when needed, as authorized.