

Statewide Interoperability Governing Body  
Communications Unit Leader Committee

Certified State of Oklahoma Communications  
Unit Leader/Communications Unit Technician  
Recognition Procedure

February 2012

Version 1.0



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

This document describes the procedure for recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma Communications Unit Leader (COML) or Certified State of Oklahoma Incident Communications Technician (COMT). It is intended for those individuals who meet the recommended U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) All-Hazards COML/COMT guidelines for eligibility, training and experience and are requesting recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT.

## 1.2 Scope

A COML is defined by DHS as “a person that plans and manages the technical and operational aspects of the communications function during an all-hazards incident or event.” At larger incidents, the COML is a supervisor and manages subordinate positions within the Communications Unit. These positions include:

- COMT – Communications Technician
- INCM – Incident Communications Center Manager
- RADO – Radio Operators
- THSP – Technical Specialist

At smaller incidents, the COML may be the only person within the Communications Unit; therefore, an individual serving as a COML must have a working knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the subordinate positions within the Communications Unit.

A COMT is defined by DHS as “the person responsible for supporting the technical activities of the Communications Unit, (by) performing radio programming, maintenance and repair, gateway and cache radio management.” The COMT reports directly to the COML; however, in some situations the COMT may be required to manage the Communications Unit, should a COML be unavailable. Therefore, a COMT must have a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the COML.

The COML and COMT are critical roles within the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The federal government has allowed each state to determine how its COMLs and COMTs will be recognized. This document specifies the procedures necessary to be recognized as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT.

### **1.3 Local Jurisdiction or Agency-Specific COML/COMT**

Individuals interested in serving at the local jurisdiction or agency-specific levels are *not* required to adhere to the following recognition procedures or to complete a Position Task Book, unless required by their own agency. Once an individual completes the All-Hazards COML Course, they are considered qualified—unless proven otherwise—to serve as a local or agency-specific COML. Due to limited course sizes and limited offerings of COMT instruction, many individuals serve as a local jurisdiction or agency-specific Incident COMT without formal instruction. The recognition procedures outlined in this document are for individuals who wish to serve as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT.

### **1.4 Administration**

The Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (OKOHS) Training and Exercise Coordinator and the Statewide Interoperable Communications Planning Coordinator<sup>1</sup> are responsible for administering recognition for a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT. They are assisted by a statewide committee known as the Communications Unit Leader Committee. The COML Committee reviews Position Task Books and makes a recommendation for approval or for further development prior to approval. The chairperson of the COML Committee signs a document to certify that it has been reviewed by the COML Credentialing Subcommittee (CCSC). The Training and Exercise Coordinator signs the All-Hazards COML/COMT Task Book as the final state approval.

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<sup>1</sup> The OKOHS Statewide Interoperable Communications Planning Coordinator is referred to nationally as the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC).

## **1.5 Document Terminology**

The terms “shall,” “must,” “will” and “required” are used throughout this document to indicate required parameters and to differentiate from recommended parameters. Recommendations are identified by the words “should,” “desirably” and “preferably.”

## **1.6 Updates and Revisions**

The Training and Exercise Coordinator, the SWIC and the COML Committee will review and update this document as needed. Individuals requesting recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT are responsible for checking the Interoperable Communications Website<sup>2</sup> to obtain the current release of this document.

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<sup>2</sup> The Interoperable Communications Website is available at [www.ioc.ok.gov](http://www.ioc.ok.gov).

## **2 Certified State of Oklahoma COML Requirements for Recognition**

### **2.1 Overview of Requirements**

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML must:

1. Meet the prerequisites for COML training;
2. Complete the DHS-approved, NIMS-compliant All-Hazards COML Course;
3. Complete the COML Task Book (2011 version);
4. Complete the Oklahoma Competencies, which includes additional training; and
5. Submit evidence to the COML Credentialing Subcommittee (CCSC) that the above-referenced requirements have been fulfilled.

The CCSC will review the COML Task Book and take one (1), or a combination of, the following actions:

- Recommend for approval by the Training and Exercise Coordinator; or
- Invite the applicant to a CCSC meeting for further review; and/or
- Recommend further development.

### **2.2 All-Hazards COML Course Prerequisites**

The following are required COML Course prerequisites:

1. A public safety communications<sup>3</sup> background with exposure to field operations; this experience should be validated by the authority who supervises the applicant.
2. Fundamental public safety communications technology, supervisory and personnel management skills. These skills include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Knowledge of local communications and communications systems
  - b. Knowledge of frequencies and spectrum
  - c. Knowledge of technologies

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<sup>3</sup> Public safety communications is defined by DHS as “individuals who, on a full-time, part-time or voluntary basis, through technology, serve as a conduit and put persons reporting an incident in touch with response personnel and emergency management, to identify an incident occurrence and help to support the resolution of life-safety, criminal, environmental and facilities problems associated with the event.”

- d. Knowledge of local topography
  - e. Knowledge of system site locations
  - f. Knowledge of local, regional and state communications plans
  - g. Knowledge of local and regional Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TIC-P), if available
  - h. Knowledge of communications and resource contacts
  - i. Ability to promote teamwork
  - j. Awareness of personnel welfare, safety and risk management
  - k. Ability to maintain personnel documentation
3. Completion of the prerequisites prior to attending the COML Course.

### **2.3 All-Hazards COML Training**

To be eligible for Certified State of Oklahoma COML recognition, an individual must meet all prerequisites and attend an All-Hazards COML Course. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) originally offered an All-Hazards Type III COML Course based on a three-day curriculum. Beginning in June 2011, the course was expanded to a four-day, 32-hour curriculum. Oklahoma will recognize a completion certificate from either course.

### **2.4 All-Hazards COML Task Book**

Certified State of Oklahoma COML candidates are required to demonstrate satisfactory performance of each task in the COML Task Book. COML Task Book experience may include experience within the three (3) years prior to the candidate's completion of COML training. Each task must be witnessed by a qualified evaluator. Approval authorities for the COML Task Book requirements include: Incident Commanders and logistics section chiefs, individuals recognized as Certified State of Oklahoma COMLs and supervisory personnel or other individuals with relevant experience who are qualified to evaluate the requirement being approved.

### **2.4.1 Initiation of COML Task Book**

At the successful completion of the All-Hazards COML Course, students will be given a COML Task Book. The COML Task Book may only be initiated once the student has completed the All-Hazards COML Course. For students that attend an Oklahoma-based course, the COML Task Book will be initiated by the instructors on the last day. For students attending out-of-state courses, the COML Task Book will be initiated by the chairperson of Oklahoma COML Committee or his or her designee. COML Task Books must be initiated within one (1) month of completion of the All-Hazards COML Course.

### **2.4.2 Completion of COML Task Book**

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML have three (3) years from COML Task Book initiation to complete the process. Individuals may use a combination of the following to complete the COML Task Book:

- Planned events, exercises and incidents<sup>4</sup> up to three (3) years prior to COML Task Book initiation.
- Planned events, exercises and incidents occurring after COML Task Book initiation, up to three (3) years after COML Task Book initiation.

The COML Task Book must contain:

- The local jurisdiction, agency or COML Final Evaluator's verification that all tasks in the COML Task Book have been performed and are appropriately documented and that the candidate has performed as a trainee.
- The Agency Certifying Official's confirmation that the candidate has met all requirements for qualification as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML.

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<sup>4</sup> Individuals seeking recognition as both a Certified State of Oklahoma COML *and* a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT must complete both Position Task Books; however, the same planned events, exercises and incidents may not be duplicated in both Position Task Books.

### **2.4.3 Oklahoma Competencies/Position Task Book Supplement**

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML must complete a *Position Task Book Supplement* with Oklahoma-specific competencies. At present, there are eight (8) Oklahoma-specific tasks that must be completed in order to receive recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML.

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## 3 Certified State of Oklahoma COMT Requirements for Recognition

### 3.1 Overview of Requirements

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT must:

1. Meet the prerequisites for COMT training;
2. Complete the DHS-approved, NIMS-compliant COMT Course;
3. Complete the COMT Task Book (2011 version);
4. Complete the Oklahoma Competencies; and
3. Submit evidence to the COML Credentialing Subcommittee (CCSC) that the above-referenced requirements have been met.

The CCSC will review the COMT Task Book and shall take one (1), or a combination of, the following actions:

- Recommend for approval by the Training and Exercise Coordinator; or
- Invite the applicant to a CCSC meeting for further review; and/or
- Recommend further development.

### 3.2 All-Hazards COMT Course Description

The All-Hazards COMT Course is targeted for all local, regional, state and federal cross disciplinary emergency response professionals and coordination/support personnel with a communications background. Individuals who are assigned responsibility for a Strategic Technology Reserve (radio cache mobile communications vehicle or other deployable communications assets) are encouraged to attend. ***This course is targeted to students who have technical aptitude, but not necessarily strong technical experience.*** Students should leave the course with a strong foundational knowledge of incident communications processes and systems and some basic skills. Field experience in preparation to deploy as a single resource will be gained by the student after returning to his/her home agency during the Position Task Book process. The Position Task Book process will be explained during the course.

### 3.3 All-Hazards COMT Course Prerequisites

The following are required All-Hazards COMT Course prerequisites:

1. A public safety communications background with exposure to field operations. This experience should be validated by the authority who supervises the applicant.
2. Fundamental public safety communications technology awareness.
3. Basic knowledge of local communications and communications systems, frequencies and spectrum, technologies, local topography, systems site locations including knowledge of local, regional and state communications plans and communications and resource contacts.
4. Completion of the following current training courses:
  - a. **IS-700.** IS-700 explains the purpose, principles, key components and benefits of NIMS. The course also contains Planning Activity screens, allowing participants to complete planning tasks during this course.
  - b. **IS-800.** IS-800 introduces participants to concepts and principles of the National Response Framework.
  - c. **ICS-100.** ICS-100 introduces the Incident Command System (ICS); provides the foundation for more advanced ICS training; describes ICS's history, features, principles and organizational structure; and explains the relationship between ICS and NIMS.
  - d. **ICS-200.** ICS-200 provides training on, and resources for, personnel who are likely to assume a supervisory position within ICS.
  - e. **ICS-300.** ICS-300 is recommended, but not required, for eligibility to attend COMT training.

### 3.4 All-Hazards COMT Training

To be eligible for Certified State of Oklahoma COMT recognition, an individual must meet all prerequisites and attend an All-Hazards COMT Course. This course is a five-day, 40 hour curriculum. OKOHS must receive a copy of the completion certificate.

### **3.5 All-Hazards COMT Task Book**

The COMT Task Book requires a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT candidate to demonstrate satisfactory performance of each of its tasks. COMT Task Book experience may include experience within the three (3) years prior to the candidate's completion of COMT training. Each task must be witnessed by a qualified evaluator, and a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT candidate must serve under a COML during the planned events, exercises and incidents used to complete the tasks in the COMT Task Book. Approval authorities for COMT Task Book requirements include: Incident Commanders and Logistics Section Chiefs, individuals recognized as Certified State of Oklahoma COMLs and supervisory personnel or other individuals with relevant experience who are qualified to evaluate the requirement being approved. Certified State of Oklahoma COMT candidates have three (3) years following completion of COMT training to complete the COMT Task Book.

#### **3.5.1 Initiation of COMT Task Book**

As of February 2012, the current version of the All-Hazards COMT Task Book does not have an initiation page. A Position Task Book assigned to a prospective COMT in Oklahoma will have a supplemental cover page with an initiation document attached.

At the successful completion of the All-Hazards COMT Course, students will be given a COMT Task Book. The COMT Task Book may only be initiated once the student has completed the COMT Course. For students that attend an Oklahoma-based course, the COMT Task Book will be initiated by the instructors on the last day. For students attending out-of-state courses, the COMT Task Book will be initiated by the chairperson of Oklahoma COML Committee or his or her designee. COMT Task Books must be initiated within one (1) month of completion of the COMT Course.

#### **3.5.2 Completion of COMT Task Book**

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT have three (3) years from Position Task Book initiation to complete the process. Individuals may use a combination of the following to complete the COMT Task Book:

- Planned events, exercises and incidents up to three (3) years prior to COMT Task Book initiation;
- Planned events, exercises and incidents occurring after COMT Task Book initiation, up to three (3) years after COMT Task Book initiation.

The COMT Task Book must contain:

- The local jurisdiction, agency or COML Final Evaluator’s verification that all tasks in the COMT Task Book have been performed and are appropriately documented and that the candidate has performed as a trainee.
- The Agency Certifying Official’s confirmation that the candidate has met all requirements for qualification as a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT.

### **3.5.3 Oklahoma Competencies/Position Task Book Supplement**

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT must complete a *Position Task Book Supplement* with Oklahoma-specific competencies. At present, there are six (6) Oklahoma-specific tasks that must be completed in order to receive recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COMT.

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## **4 Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT Review and Recognition Process**

### **4.1 Review Process**

Individuals seeking recognition as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT must submit the following to the CCSC:

- Confirmation that all prerequisites have been achieved.
- One (1) copy of the certificate of completion for the NIMS-certified All-Hazards COML/COMT Course.
- One (1) copy of the *completed* All-Hazards ICS COML/COMT Task Book which includes the Oklahoma supplement, the Final Evaluator's Verification and the Agency Certification.
- Contact and affiliation information needed to add the candidate as a COML/COMT to the Oklahoma ICS COML/COMT Resource List.

The COML Committee will review the candidate's submitted materials. The purpose of the review is to confirm that the candidate has met all prerequisites, completed training and completed the Position Task Book. The COML Committee may make additional inquiries to the candidate's home agency if further information is needed to clarify elements of the work reflected in the Position Task Book. Additionally, the CCSC may require that the candidate participate in an interview with the CCSC. As a result of the interview process, the candidate may be required to provide additional documentation of experience, training or competencies prior to certification. The COML Committee may also provide the candidate's home agency with any observations the COML Committee deems relevant to the candidate's ability to meet state or nationally-established COML/COMT standards.

### **4.2 Recognition Process**

Once the review is satisfactorily completed, the COML Committee will recommend to the OKOHS Training and Exercise Coordinator that final approval be made. The Training and Exercise Coordinator will sign the Position Task Book as the Final Evaluator. OKOHS will then take the following actions:

1. Advise the candidate's home agency that the candidate is recognized as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT.
2. Issue the candidate a document confirming the designation.
3. Advise the Oklahoma Emergency Management Office to add the individual to the Oklahoma ICS COML/COMT Resource List.

The Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT designation remains current for three (3) years from the date of credential issuance or until the home agency of the COML/COMT formally removes its Agency Certification. Status as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT is dependent upon the continued affiliation of the individual with the agency providing the Certification and the agency's concurrence that the COML/COMT continues to be qualified by the agency. The Agency Certifying Official may withdraw the Agency Certification at the agency's discretion by formal written notice of such withdrawal to the Training and Exercise Coordinator. A copy must also be provided to the state SWIC. If a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT moves to a different agency, the COML/COMT must request a Change of Affiliation and provide an Agency Certification from the new agency. The Change of Affiliation will not affect the credential renewal date.

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## **5 Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT Renewal Process and Record Maintenance**

### **5.1 Renewal of the Certified State of Oklahoma COML /COMT Designation**

After a period of three (3) years, a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT seeking renewal of their designation must submit a renewal request to the OKOHS Training and Exercise Coordinator. A Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT must provide evidence that they served as the COML/COMT during an incident within the three (3) years after their designation and prior to their renewal. To be considered for renewal, a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT must submit the following documentation:

- A credential Renewal Request.
- At least one (1) ICS-214 Unit log from an incident, planned event or exercise.
- Certified State of Oklahoma COMLs must submit at least one (1) ICS-205 that they developed from an incident, planned event or exercise.
- An Agency Certification affirming that they have adhered to professional and competency standards and are qualified by their home agency.

Participation in continuing education in public safety communications as a student or instructor is strongly recommended for all individuals recognized as a Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT, and individuals are encouraged to participate regularly in exercises and planned events to keep their skills current.

### **5.2 Submission, Maintenance and Referencing of Certified State of Oklahoma COML/COMT Records**

Centralized record keeping for Certified State of Oklahoma COMLs and COMTs will be provided by OKOHS, which will also maintain the Oklahoma ICS COML/COMT Resource List. Instructions for submitting COML/COMT applications for recognition by the OKOHS Training and Exercise Coordinator and the SWIC and inclusion in the Oklahoma ICS COML/COMT Resource List will be provided on the Interoperable Communications Website. Change of Affiliation and Renewal Requests will also be provided there. Because the statuses of COMLs and COMTs continually change, it is recommended that Urban Areas and regions generating and updating TIC-Ps

and/or data in the Communication Assets Survey and Mapping (CASM) Tool refer to the Oklahoma ICS COML/COMT Resource List as the appropriate source of information.

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