

2014 Oklahoma Incident Responders Workshop

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Upcoming Events

August 12:
OKPSBN SW-Central
Region Awareness
Summit

August 18-21:
OK Emergency
Management
Conference

On Friday, February 21, 2014, the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management (OEM) facilitated the annual Oklahoma Incident Responders Workshop. The event was held at the Heart of Oklahoma Exposition Center in Shawnee, and dozens of first responders from various public safety agencies across the state were in attendance. One of the major themes of the workshop was the importance of utilizing the Incident Command System (ICS) during a public safety event. Chief of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol (OHP) Colonel Rick Adams spoke about the significance of ICS when developing current and future initiatives for the Patrol. Troy German of the OHP also highlighted a few ICS best practices during his presentation on Law Enforcement Strike Teams. An update on both Fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Strike Teams was also given.

A couple of new initiatives regarding school security in the state were highlighted during the workshop. OEM Director Albert Ashwood gave a School All-Hazard Assessment Program presentation, and Director Kim Carter of the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (OKOHS) spoke about the recent implementation of the Oklahoma School Security Institute (OSSI). John Comstock and Lucien Jones gave a communications update, emphasizing the results of the 2013 Association of



Troy German of the OHP addresses the audience at the 2014 Oklahoma Incident Responders Workshop

Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Radio Testing. They informed the group of four separate testing sessions (held in Ada, Woodward, Muskogee, and Lawton) in which several hundred public safety radios were tested for free. As a result of this testing, it was discovered that despite being programmed by paid vendors, the majority of the radios that were assessed were improperly narrowbanded, which can cause significant communication issues during mutual aid events. To view the slideshow presentations from this year's Incident Responders Workshop, visit www.ok.gov/oem.

COMT Course

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) delivered the 2014 Communications Unit Technician (COMT) Course for the state of Oklahoma on April 21st-25th, as part of the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP). Seventeen students representing multiple public safety disciplines from across the state participated in the course, which was held at the Oklahoma City Public Works Facility. Designed to provide introductory and refresher training for the COMT position, this course introduces public safety professionals to various communications concepts and technologies used during incident response and planned events, including interoperable communications solutions, LMR communications, satellite, telephone, data, and computer technologies. Course curriculum consisted mainly of lectures, discussions, and participation in hands-on activities which help students to develop the essential core competencies required for performing the duties of a COMT.

Participants are considered qualified COMT's upon completion of the course and most go on to serve as a local resource for their home agency and/or jurisdiction. However, it is the ultimate goal of the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (OKOHS) that individuals who successfully complete the COMT Course will elect to pursue state certification by completing a Position Task Book. Task books are initiated on the last day of the course and candidates have three (3) years from that day to complete each requirement, including the supplemental Oklahoma Competencies. Candidates must submit their completed task book to the COML Committee and the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) in order to receive an official state-certification. There are currently only 6 state-certified COMT's serving on incidents and planned events across the state. Their technical skills and



Students participate in the 2014 COMT Course



John Comstock gives a demonstration using a Tactical Communications Bridge (TCB)

experience have been called upon during countless large-scale public safety events, including tornadoes, floods, and wildfires. The expertise of our certified communications specialists has proven to be an invaluable asset to Oklahoma's public safety community, and the expansion of the COML/COMT program is crucial to their continued success. For more information on Oklahoma's COML/COMT program, please visit www.ioc.ok.gov.

COML Course

The Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security's (OKOHS) Interoperable Communications Division facilitated the 2014 Communications Unit Leader (COML) Course in Oklahoma City on July 15th-17th. Twenty-six students representing multiple public safety agencies from around the state participated in the course, which emphasized the importance of the Incident Command System (ICS) and the role that the COML plays within the ICS structure. A COML can be defined as a highly-trained, deployable resource whose mission is to enhance interoperability during complex public safety events by coordinating the communications aspect of an incident response. A COML must possess extensive knowledge of disparate communications systems in addition to the ability to effectively manage other members of a Communications Unit. The utilization of these skills can drastically improve interoperability among the many diverse agencies that would typically respond to a large-scale emergency event. In making this course available to Oklahoma's public safety practitioners at no cost, it is the objective of the OKOHS for those who successfully complete the course to go on to pursue state-certification, and continue to utilize their specialized knowledge as a COML to improve Oklahoma's emergency communications environment at both the local and state level.

At this time, there are a limited number of state-certified COMLs serving on incidents and planned events in the state of Oklahoma. For this reason, the OKOHS is dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the COML/COMT program, and typically offers high-level training opportunities like the COML Course on an annual basis. Oklahoma is fortunate enough to now have certified, in-state COML instructors to provide this training. This year's course was taught by three of Oklahoma's state-certified COML's, Lucien Jones, John Comstock, and Scott Walsh, and the curriculum consisted primarily of lectures, discussions, and group exercises. Students were also given the opportunity to tour several mobile communications and command

units, including Command-1, Command-2, STaR-1, and the Windtalker. Familiarization with these resources is just one of the many core competencies that are required of students who wish to pursue state-certification as a COML. In the state of Oklahoma, the COML credentialing process is similar to that of the COMT, with the addition of a set of tasks in the Position Task Book specifically related to the planning and management aspect of the COML role. Once a candidate has completed all tasks in the Position Task Book, including the supplemental Oklahoma Competencies, they become eligible to submit their Task Book to the COML Committee and the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) for approval.

The state of Oklahoma is no stranger to natural disasters and other emergency events, and the valued members of our public safety community are competent and equipped to respond to any type of disaster scenario that may come sweeping down the plains. The continuation and improvement of Oklahoma's COML/COMT Program is imperative to the enhancement of our state's overall emergency communications environment. To learn more about this initiative, please visit www.ioc.ok.gov.



Lead instructor, Lucien Jones, conducts a lesson during the 2014 Oklahoma COML Course.

E-SCIP

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) released an online version of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) called the e-SCIP in April, 2014. Designed to alleviate reporting challenges expressed by Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWIC) and various other communications stakeholders, the e-SCIP provides a streamlined process for states to develop and maintain their strategic plans. The technology is user-friendly, guiding users step-by-step in creating their SCIP, while still allowing for the document to be tailored uniquely to each state.

The e-SCIP also offers real-time reporting and tracking to monitor strategic goals and initiatives, as well as relative trends. In addition, the e-SCIP will be fully integrated with Communication Assets Survey and Mapping (CASM) NextGen Access Management Interface, which grants access to the CASM, e-SCIP, and SWIC tools with a single user name and password. State's that have already completed a SCIP revision workshop will be offered assistance with data population from OEC. Additional support (e.g., training, helpdesk) was released with the e-SCIP in April, 2014.

Announcements

- In April of 2014, Nicholas Carrao became the new Director of the Oklahoma Wireless Information Network (OKWIN). OKWIN is a 45 site, 800 MHz trunked public safety communications radio system, and is a partnership between the cities of Edmond, Norman, Shawnee, Tulsa, Owasso, and the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety (DPS). All infrastructure equipment is owned and maintained by the OKWIN partners. The system provides coverage to 70 percent of Oklahoma's population, and there are more than 520 agencies and 40,000 handheld and mobile radios currently operating on the OKWIN system. For general questions regarding OKWIN, contact Nick at ncarrao@dps.state.ok.us.
- The Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security (OKOHS) would like to welcome its 2 newest program managers, Jennifer Newell and Curtis Driscoll. Jennifer will be managing the newly adopted Oklahoma School Security Institute (OSSI), which acts as the central repository for the public and private elementary and secondary schools of the state. Schools can contact the OSSI for information on resources to enhance school security and assess risks and threats to school campuses. Curtis has replaced Gary Davis as the OKOHS Training and Exercise Coordinator. This department provides tailored training and exercises for Oklahoma responders to enhance the capacity of the state, as well as county and local jurisdictions to prevent, protect, respond, and recover safely and effectively to incidents of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and all-hazard events. To contact Jennifer or Curtis, please visit the OKOHS website at www.ok.gov/homeland.
- The OKOHS Training and Exercise Division now has a Facebook page! Please visit www.facebook.com/okohstraining to view the latest course offerings.

OKFOG Requests

The Oklahoma Field Operations Guide (OKFOG) is a pocket-sized communications quick-reference booklet for first responders. All public safety agencies in the state of Oklahoma may request copies of the OKFOG. Please send requests to IOC@dps.state.ok.us and include your name, agency, number of copies needed, and mailing address.

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Announcements Continued...

- The Oklahoma Wireless Information Network (OKWIN) has created a sign-up form for notifications regarding system outages, software updates, and testing operations. If you are a customer of OKWIN and would like to be added to the OKWIN notification distribution list, please visit www.ok.gov/okwin and click on the sign-up link located on the home page.



Interoperability Continuum

Governance	Individual Agencies Working Independently	Informal Coordination Between Agencies	Key Multi-Discipline Staff Collaboration on a Regular Basis	Regional Committee Working within a Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan Framework	
	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
Standard Operating Procedures	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
Technology	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
Training & Exercises	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
Usage	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs
	Individual Agency SOPs	Joint SOPs for Planned Events	Joint SOPs for Emergencies	Regional Set of Communications SOPs	National Incident Management System Integrated SOPs

Oklahoma has adopted the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum as a guide and directional goal to gain seamless communications interoperability across the state.

About the Oklahoma Interoperability Newsletter

The *Oklahoma Interoperability Newsletter* is designed to be a source of information, news, and updates for stakeholders committed to public safety communications interoperability in the state of Oklahoma. We hope that it will serve as a valuable resource for you. If you would like to contribute information to the newsletter, or for comments or suggestions, please contact Nikki Cassingham at ncassing@dps.state.ok.us or Kayla McCleery at kmccleer@dps.state.ok.us.