

Meeting Minutes
State of California
PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
(AB 2018)

March 18, 2003

Department of General Services
Telecommunications Division
601 Sequoia Pacific Blvd., Rooms 108 A/B
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attendees

Robert Foster – Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
Clothilde Hewlett – Department of General Services, Telecommunications Division (DGS-TD)
Peter Jensen – Youth and Adult Correctional Agency (YACA)
Dallas Jones – Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES)
Richard Kai – Department of the California Youth Authority (CYA)
Sonke Mastrup – Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
Larry Orcut – Department of Transportation (DOT)
Max Santiago – California Highway Patrol (CHP)
Daniel Smiley – Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA)
Andrea Tuttle – Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF)
Steve Verigin – Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Others Present

Ron Barnes – YACA	Kim Ismail – DOJ
Diane Beaumont-Rice – DPR	James Jack – Senator Bruce McPherson's Office
Carol Biancalana – EMSA	Brad Kane – Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
Al Castillo – DOJ	J. Clark Kelso – Office of Information Technology
Ernylee Chamlee – CDF	Greg Laret – DFG
Reggie Chappelle – CHP	Marla Marshall – San Diego County Sheriff's Department
Randy Chinn – Senator Debra Bowen's Office	Maureen McNeil – EMSA
Glen Craig – California Alliance of Public Safety Communication	Ferdinand Milanese – DOT
Corey Cummings – CDC	Ramon Murillo – DWR
Bill De Camp – DGS-TD	Curt Munro – San Diego County Sheriff's Department
Richard Engelsen – DFG	Vicky O'Kelly – YACA
Jim Fernandes – CYA	John Penido – California Fire Chiefs Association
Sonny Fong – DWR	Renato Peruzzi – DGS-TD
David Ford – Assemblyman George Nakano's Office	Scoop Sairanen – DGS-TD
Victor M. Garcia – DWR	Steve Soto – DPR
Frank Goddard – CDF	Ernest Van Sant – CDC
Gary Grootveld – DGS-TD	Max Vanzi – Senate Office of Research
Barry Hemphill – DGS-TD	Ross Warren – DGS Office of Legislation
	Dana Wilkerson – CYA

1. Call to Order

Introductory Comments

The meeting convened at 9:05 am. Barry Hemphill, Deputy Director, Department of General Services and J. Clark Kelso, State Chief Information Officer, welcomed the invited attendees and all others present. Clark Kelso stated that Governor Gray Davis designated both he and George Vinson, the Director from the office of Homeland Security, to convene this first meeting. However, due to state security issues, George Vinson was unable to attend.

Since September 11, 2001, the need for a statewide shared wireless public safety communications system has been elevated in importance, and with the passage of Assembly Bill 2018, there has been support from legislation to move forward with the interoperability plans. Today's meeting is designed to continue what the Department of General Service's Public Safety Radio Integrated Systems Management (PRISM) Committee started ten years ago.

2. Review of Past Activities

Presentation regarding the history of the development of an interoperable public safety radio system for state and local agencies in California.

Scoop Sairanen gave a PowerPoint synopsis of the PRISM Program revealing important progress made to date as well as enumerating the various geographic (and cost) scenarios prepared for the Department of Finance consideration up to and including the last proposal for all twelve agencies to join the Sacramento County trunked radio system.

3. Member Comments Regarding Past Activities and Future Needs

Discussion by members of the committee regarding past accomplishments and what they want considered for further assessment.

Clark Kelso asked the members if past activities and future needs serve each department, and how much communication is needed on a daily basis? Clark asked for comments from all the attendees at the table.

Daniel Smiley, Chief Deputy Director, Emergency Medical Services Authority

Medical response teams are the 2nd largest system in the state (after law enforcement and fire). Medical care response is performed on a daily basis, and disaster response is performed on an as needed basis. The equipment (ambulances) used is owned by both the public and private sectors. Law enforcement and fire departments share their common communications system with EMSA. EMSA's goal is to move forward and have a new radio system that will enable interoperability between EMS provider entities, and between EMS providers and as many pertinent agencies throughout the state (as feasible) by 2015.

Sonke Mastrup, Deputy Director, Department of Fish and Game

DFG's concerns include coverage and interoperability when communicating with other agencies. It's supports a system that can provide coverage where needed, and interoperability with other agencies when needed.

Steve Verigin, Acting Chief Deputy Director, Department of Water Resources

There are two categories of concern; DWR is in charge of dams, pumping plants, earthquakes, floods, and anti-terrorist issues. The other category is state police, local police, fire, and local reclamation emergency services. The system in place now is not a reliable system. Cell phones are most often used and do not work very well over difficult terrain. There is a command center of sorts, however with water projects spread out over the state, the resources that are available are not adequate.

Max Santiago, Assistant Chief, Department of California Highway Patrol

The PRISM Strategic Plan does not meet the CHP's business needs. PRISM was based upon the premise that the state would build a statewide interoperable radio system, which local agencies would agree to join. Local agencies have not waited for the state, and have built or will build regional systems. The CHP has an immediate need to communicate with local law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical personnel, while maintaining the ability to communicate with other CHP personnel as we travel throughout the state. The CHP is developing an in-car interoperability solution, as well as a gateway/black box solution, which would provide interoperability with local agencies at each of our 24 communications centers.

Barry Hemphill, Deputy Director, Department of General Services

DGS's primary purpose is to assist public safety agencies in fulfilling their wireless voice and data communication requirements.

Robert Foster, Superintendent of Public Safety, Department of Parks and Recreation

P&R works daily with CHP and CDF, working in difficult terrain. The Strategic Plan would work perfectly, and today's digital trunked radio systems have matured sufficiently to succeed yesterday's analog-based technologies.

Peter Jensen, Undersecretary, for Youth and Adult Correctional Agency

YACA has needs that must be met on a daily basis, not per incident. There are numerous institutions, fire teams, tens of thousands of inmates, and thousands of parolees. When prisoners are transported from the northern part of California to the southern part of California, drivers are often traversing terrain where communication is limited or non-existent. It is crucial that YACA be able to communicate with law enforcement whenever necessary. The Strategic Plan would work perfectly for YACA.

Andrea Tuttle, Director, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

CDF needs to retain VHF capability especially to ensure adequate radio coverage in mountainous terrain. CDF already has an established interoperability system among our local and federal cooperators, but is interested in improvements to expand interoperability with other agencies as new capabilities come along. Some phases advocated by the Strategic Plan may be in conflict with the needs of CDF. A note of caution should be used when encouraging agencies to move forward so that the current operational capabilities of CDF are not harmed during the transition to new technologies. CDF did emphasize it wants to be a constructive partner.

Dallas Jones, Director, Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Long-term and short-term communication systems are needed. The system in place now is outdated. OES needs to be able to communicate with all state and local agencies, as well as federal agencies in times of emergencies. Interoperability can be solved, and the PRISM Strategic Plan was going in the right direction.

Richard Kai, Chief Deputy Director, Department of the California Youth Authority

The system in use is out dated, and the need to upgrade to a modern interoperable 700/800 MHz radio communications system is vital. There are numerous institutions, fire camps, transportation crew, gang apprehension units, and mutual aid units that have to rely on cell phones and local law enforcement for assistance in communication. One integrated system for all is needed; this is vital to safety.

Larry Orcut, Maintenance Division Chief, Department of Transportation

DOT has been waiting to change to an 800 MHz system for 15 years. To date DOT has spent \$130 million, and the system is still not completed. A decision to partner with the California Highway Patrol is being considered. Clark Kelso asked if the PRISM Strategic Plan met DOT's business needs. Larry replied no.

4. Continuation of the Former Advisory committee as a "Working Group"

Should the Advisory Committee established under the authority of the Director of General Services be retained as a "working group" to provide input to the new committee established by AB 2018? In addition, the committee may wish to appoint two committee members to act as liaison to the working group.

A question was asked as to what the role of the Working Group would be. The reply was the Working Group would gather information from the departments and federal and local agencies regarding technical support, information sharing, frequencies, cost of resources, etc. This information would then be presented to the Strategic Planning Committee who is empowered to make the decisions. DGS made a motion to retain the former Advisory Committee as a Working Group to the new committee, OES seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

The second issue (In addition, the committee may wish to appoint two committee members to act as liaison to the work group.) was suspended and will be addressed in a future meeting.

5. Discussion of Best Approach for Consultation with other Entities and Organizations

The committee will discuss how best to seek input from the organizations and entities with which it is required to consult.

Clark Kelso opened the discussion regarding consultation with the public safety agencies. He asked if there should be a designated agency representative to serve on the Working Group. Although there is no formal contract, a letter to the agencies could be drafted. It was commented that a person from the Working Group should be assigned as a liaison to each agency's administrator. Also questioned was whether any federal partners would be invited to attend the meetings and/or serve on the committee. It was the consensus that federal agencies should be invited to attend the meetings, as their involvement is important. It was noted that the local and federal agencies have a lot to offer and their missions are parallel to the state's mission.

The order of agenda items 6 and 7 was reversed.

6. Election of Committee Chair

There was much discussion regarding the election of a new chairperson, and whether someone from DGS should be considered. It was decided that DGS should continue to serve in a support role. DPR made a motion to nominate Dallas Jones of OES as the new chairperson of the Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning Committee, DGS seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously. Clark Kelso turned the meeting over to Dallas Jones.

7. Identify Issues for Clarification and Future Action

Discussion and prioritization of future issues.

Dallas Jones, new chairperson, stated the committee members should work as a liaison with other organizations and include them in the Strategic Planning Committee Meetings. The goal is to make all systems compatible and to keep abreast of new technologies. Attending seminars and conventions is very important. Travel (with the state budget constraints right now) is very limited and approval to attend for some important meetings will need to be sought. It was decided unanimously that the committee should meet as needed, and advance notice would be given prior to meeting.

Clark Kelso stated if the current approach has not been beneficial to CHP, CDF, and DOT, then the Strategic Planning Committee needs to optimize the best plan for all agencies in order to have interoperability now and in the future.

Several members stated they would like to see more agencies and vendors participating in the Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning meetings. Clark Kelso agreed. APCO and independent vendors are interested. There was some discussion regarding states that use private vendors and a lease back option, or local agencies using their funding for buy-ins, bond issues, and federal funding. Several options being considered are grant money, partnering with local agencies, homeland security funding, the private sector, and bond issues. All were in agreement that better guidelines are needed

8. Public Comments

Comments from the public will be heard.

James Jack from Senator Bruce McPherson's Office asked about the accumulation and purchase of interoperability equipment. Scoop Sairanen stated that the budget allows for maintenance only at this point, and there are no major upgrades being performed at this time. James suggested the goal should be to build towards systems and regions that are already established. Scoop explained that many larger counties employ technologies that are compatible with each other, while others employ technologies that are not, and that is a problem. Clark Kelso asked if a regional approach is the goal. Scoop answered yes. Dallas Jones asked if portable equipment is available, and has this been researched. Scoop replied that yes, he attended the Raytheon show, and some equipment is acceptable in confined (footprint) regionalized areas only. Larger areas would present a problem.

John Penido representing the California Fire Chiefs Association commented they have a great need for interoperability, and is glad to hear that the focus is being geared toward all local agencies. John also mentioned that the L.A. County area is using a wide-area patch, a gateway that was built to accommodate all pertinent bands. He reported this project was completed in nine months, and is due to go live March 31, 2003. John expressed an interest in and would like a seat as a member of the new Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning Committee.

9. Closing Comments

Committee members will have the opportunity for closing comments.

Dallas thanked everyone for attending this first meeting, and commented that a great deal was accomplished this morning. He asked for any closing comments. There were none.

10. Next Meeting Date and Time

The next Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning Committee meeting will be announced at a later date. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.