

ILLINOIS: A STATE OF INTEROPERABILITY

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Overview

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The Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan, or SCIP, serves as the operational blueprint for the conceptualization, procurement, implementation, and usage of interoperable communications by Illinois' public safety agencies and non-governmental/private organizations. The development of the SCIP was a cooperative effort by a consortium of federal, state, and local public safety practitioners working through the Illinois Terrorism Task Force's Communications Committee and the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee. Biannual reviews/updates to the SCIP will be conducted under the auspices of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.

Interoperable communications has been a priority in Illinois for more than 40 years. The nation's first statewide emergency radio network – the Illinois State Police Emergency Radio Network, or ISPERN - was established in Illinois in 1965. From that modest beginning, Illinois has grown to become a "State of Interoperability" as evidenced by its cross-disciplinary communications networks that support a robust mutual aid environment second to none in the United States.

Responding to Illinois' mandate to make interagency communications for public safety practitioners a top priority, the Illinois Terrorism Task Force in 2006 initiated the deployment of ten Illinois Transportable Emergency Communications Systems around the state. The ITECS can be taken to a disaster scene anywhere in the state and are used to provide local interoperable communications capabilities among the various response agencies, negating the need for those agencies to acquire and maintain individual caches of expensive equipment. Additionally, 16 mobile command vehicles have been placed throughout the state to provide working space for decision makers from response agencies at an incident scene as well as communications gear that allows those agencies to talk to one other using their own radio frequencies.

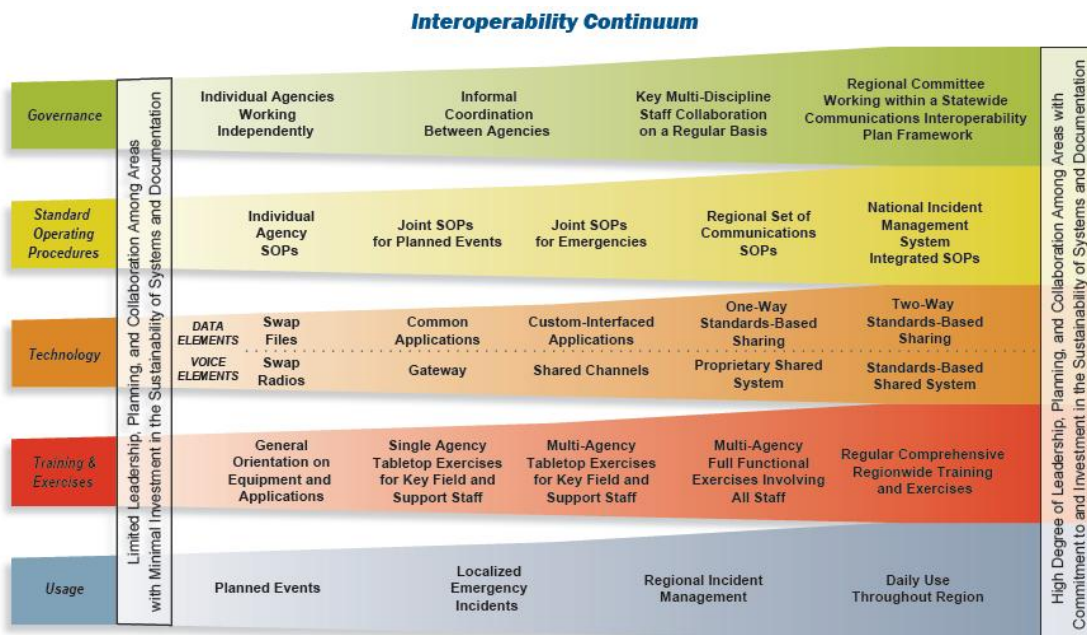
The SCIP is much more than a user's guide to radio communications. The plan outlines Illinois' interoperability vision, its mission, and the goals, objectives, and strategic initiatives that will be employed to achieve that vision. It establishes standard operating procedures that will be followed by public safety practitioners when responding to disasters or significant incidents and underscores Illinois' adherence to the tenets of the National Incident Management System. The plan sets forth the methodology that will be used to assess Illinois' current interoperable capabilities, defines the governance role of the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee, and details funding strategies to achieve Illinois' interoperability vision.

Most importantly, however, the SCIP demonstrates Illinois' uncompromising commitment to bring communications interoperability to all of its governmental/non-governmental public safety agencies.

Communications interoperability is a critical component of Illinois' disaster emergency preparedness strategy. Through its SCIP, Illinois ensures its public safety agencies have the knowledge, training, and equipment they need to effectively and efficiently communicate across disciplines when responding to requests for service from the people of Illinois or another state. The Illinois Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) adopted a resolution in 2009 that supports the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Project 25 initiative and its standard setting process for digital radio interoperable communications systems for responders. Additionally, Illinois is actively engaged in activities to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP). Illinois is proud of its progress made in achieving interoperable communications and looks forward to the exciting expansion of this capability throughout the public safety spectrum in the years to come.

The following document, known as SCIP Version 2.0, is based on Illinois' original SCIP written in 2007. Version 1.0 of the SCIP, containing more than 900 pages, was developed pursuant to the guidelines set forth by the Department of Homeland Security's SAFECOM program. This updated version is presented to highlight the salient features of Illinois' interoperable communications plan for use by emergency responders, planners, and policy makers.

Illinois' SCIP is guided by SAFECOM's Interoperability Continuum, shown below.



Developed with practitioner input, the Interoperability Continuum is designed to assist emergency response agencies and policy makers to plan and implement

interoperability solutions for data and voice communications. The five critical elements identified in the continuum serve as a framework in Illinois' SCIP for the design and administration of user-oriented interoperability applications.

Readers wishing to learn more about any of the topics and/or sections contained in this version of the SCIP are encouraged to contact the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator at ema.scip@illinois.gov. An electronic copy of SCIP Version 2.0 is available by accessing the website www.ready.illinois.gov.

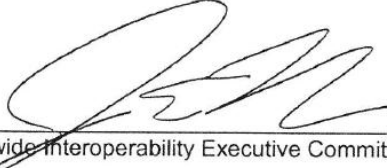
The Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) was developed under the auspices of the Office of the Governor by the Illinois Terrorism Task Force Communications Committee and the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee. Partnering in the endeavor were representatives from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Illinois Emergency Services Management Association, the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, and the Communications Committee from the Chicago/Cook County Urban Area Working Group. This cross spectrum of public safety practitioners ensured the interests and needs of their local agency members were addressed in the development of the plan which serves to advance the state of interoperability throughout Illinois.

With the completion of Version 2.0 of Illinois' SCIP, the interoperability vision of the state has been furthered, and the goals, objectives, and strategic initiatives needed to achieve that vision have been redefined. The responsibility for the realization of that vision is shared by all of Illinois' public safety agencies who, through resource management, interagency collaboration, and participation in mutual aid partnerships, will work collectively to expand interoperability among governmental and non-governmental agencies alike.

The signatures below represent an endorsement of Illinois' Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan and a pledge on behalf of the agencies/organizations represented by these stakeholders to actively support and work to expand interoperable communications in Illinois.



Illinois Terrorism Task Force



Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee



Illinois Emergency Management Agency



Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System



Illinois Emergency Services Management Association



Illinois Department of Public Health



Mutual Aid Box Alarm System



Chicago/Cook County Urban Area Working Group



Chicago/Cook County Urban Area Working Group