



OEC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Providing Support and Services to the Emergency Communications Community

The Department of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) supports Federal, State, tribal, territorial, and local organizations by providing over 50 technical assistance (TA) offerings designed to promote and advance interoperability, resiliency, and survivability of emergency communications nationwide.

Since its inception in 2007, OEC has completed over 1,000 TA engagements in all 56 States and territories, ranging from Communications Unit Leader (COML) training to microwave design analysis. As a priority for 2014, OEC will continue to focus on providing Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN)/FirstNet awareness and planning support to State, local, territorial and tribal communities. OEC will also continue supporting Emergency Support Function for Communications (ESF#2) of the National Response Framework by providing communications threat assessments and mitigation services.

REQUESTING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

At the beginning of each fiscal year, OEC coordinates with Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs) for each State, who may submit up to five prioritized requests for technical assistance. SWICs select offerings from OEC's TA Catalog and submit a TA request form online through the Public Safety Tools site (www.publicsafetytools.info). OEC is currently accepting TA requests for FY 2014.

A TAILORED APPROACH

Technical assistance provides stakeholders with an objective, third-party review of current communications practices, policies, and procedures, as well as technologies to help assess both capabilities and performance. Many offerings can be customized or combined, and OEC encourages States to collaborate across disciplines, agencies, and jurisdictions. This approach helps SWICs build relationships not only within their States and territories, but also with neighboring States. It also helps OEC foster relationships across all levels of government. After completing a TA engagement, OEC solicits feedback and evaluation of its services in order to revise and improve the scope and focus of the offerings.

OEC TA services fall into the following general categories:

- Governance
- Standard Operating Procedures & Communications Support
- Communications Unit Training & Support
- Communications Exercise & Operations Support
- Broadband Support to NPSBN/FirstNet
- Communications Systems Engineering Support
- Tactical Communications Enhancement Support
- Regional Communications Enhancement Support
- Tribal Nation
- Communications Assets Survey and Mapping (CASM) Tool Support

Availability of OEC's State and Local TA Services

TA services are supported by Federal funding and are provided at no cost to the requesting agency. Due to funding constraints, OEC will collaborate with

requestors to prioritize requests and defer less urgent requests until future review cycles. OEC will work to ensure each State and/or territory receives support.

COML and COMT Train-the-Trainer

In response to stakeholder demands, in 2012 OEC initiated train-the-trainer offerings for COML and Communications Technician (COMT) workshops. To date, OEC has trained over 5,000 responders through these courses.

Broadband

OEC has recently updated the TA catalog with a section of offerings focused specifically on assisting States with preparation and planning for deployment of the NPSBN. Service offerings in this category will assist State/Territory, tribal, regional and urban areas in understanding public safety broadband technology and support their planning for participation in the NPSBN. Since OEC introduced the first broadband TA workshop in 2011, FirstNet has continued to identify the requirements and planning necessary for the deployment of the network. To meet the needs identified by FirstNet, OEC has evolved its one broadband workshop into four separate broadband focused TA offerings. These four offerings focus on broadband overview and education, broadband governance, broadband planning, and broadband engineering and data collection.

Dispatch Operations and Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1)



In an effort to reach out to first-line responders at Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and dispatch centers, OEC initiated a dispatch operations workshop in 2012.

This workshop complements the Public Safety Communications Center Continuity of Operations (COOP) offering for PSAPs by helping PSAP managers assess operations and readiness, and focus on current best practices and trends in public safety

communications centers. The NG9-1-1 offering, also introduced in 2012, is designed to help PSAPs/dispatch centers assess and integrate next generation technologies into their daily operations.

Auxiliary Communications



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Amateur radio operators serve as a unique resource to public safety in times of natural disasters and other emergency. The OEC TA auxiliary communicators workshop helps amateur radio volunteers understand the Incident Command System (ICS) response structure and

how their capabilities may support State emergency operations.

Threat Assessments and Mitigation Support

OEC provides communications threat assessments and mitigation support to assist in preparing and responding to natural and man-made disasters. Threat assessments characterize the impacts on communication systems due to a disaster or crisis and provide support on how to mitigate, recover, and restore communications.

NEW OFFERINGS

OEC's TA Catalog reflects new offerings as they are introduced. New offerings are frequently based on feedback from stakeholders during the delivery of current offerings. Have new ideas on offerings? OEC encourages its stakeholders to provide feedback and ideas for new offerings at OEC@hq.dhs.gov.

ONLINE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In addition to on-site TA support, OEC provides online tools and products that focus on technical assistance and complement many of the TA Catalog offerings. The Public Safety Tools site at www.publicsafetytools.info is a dynamic, interactive site which is regularly updated.

VISIT WWW.PUBLICSAFETYTOOLS.INFO FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact OEC@dhs.gov or visit www.dhs.gov (keyword OEC).