



OEC Technical Assistance

Providing Support and Services to the Stakeholder Community

The DHS Office of Emergency Communications Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (OEC/ICTAP) supports States, territories, urban areas, localities and Tribal Nations with 48 service offerings that help promote and advance interoperable emergency communications nationwide. Since 2007, OEC/ICTAP has completed over 700 Technical Assistance (TA) engagements in all 56 States and territories ranging from Communications Unit Leader (COML) training to engineering studies of microwave backhaul. In 2012, OEC/ICTAP is focusing on broadband systems and National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) Goal 2 support as national priorities. OEC/ICTAP service offerings support all five lanes of the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum. Service offerings are described in the 2012 TA Catalog available at: www.publicsafetytools.info.

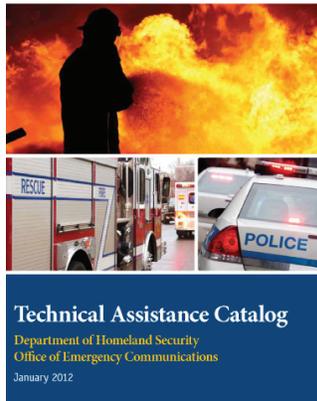
REQUESTING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

At the beginning of each calendar year, the OEC Technical Assistance Branch coordinates with Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (SWICs), who may submit up

to five prioritized requests. Requests are made by selecting offerings from the OEC TA Catalog and submitting a completed TA request form on line. OEC accepts or defers requests based on their impact on the State's Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP), the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), and the availability of OEC/ICTAP resources. TA engagements are spread throughout the calendar year to help States and SWICs with their internal planning and scheduling.

A TAILORED APPROACH

Providing technical assistance is another way for OEC to build relationships with public safety agencies



across all levels of government, and to better understand the needs of public safety practitioners. For OEC stakeholders, it provides an objective, third-party review of current practices, policies and procedures as well as technologies to help them assess both their capabilities and performance.

“OEC works to ensure that public safety partners at the State, local and tribal levels have the support and resources necessary to enhance their interoperability. One way we’re doing that is through the OEC Technical Assistance Program.”

– OEC Director Chris Essid

Prior to execution, OEC/ICTAP scopes each request to ensure the offered service meets the needs of the stakeholder. Many offerings can be customized or combined, and OEC/ICTAP encourages multi-discipline, multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, interstate and regional collaboration on requests, such as interstate communications exercises. This approach helps SWICs build relationships within their States and territories, with neighboring States, and helps OEC foster relationships across all levels of government. After completing a TA engagement, OEC/ICTAP solicits feedback and evaluation of its services in order to revise and improve the scope and focus of OEC TA offerings.

Train-the-Trainer in 2012

Based on feedback from stakeholders, OEC/ICTAP will initiate a train-the-trainer offering in 2012 for both Communications Unit Leader (COML) and Communications Unit Technician (COMT) workshops. OEC developed the COML course in 2008 in response to a need identified by first responders. To date, over 3,500 responders have been trained. The success of that program led to OEC's development of the COMT course in 2010.

Broadband and NG 9-1-1

Broadband System Support provides broadband waiver jurisdictions an on-line tool to collect data on the current state of their mobile data environments. In addition, this offering can support jurisdictions interested in potential for broadband emergency communications-based on varying levels of need including "Broadband 101" workshop; an RFP requirements Matrix for broadband technologies; and development of governance structures for public safety broadband. Broadband Systems Support, initiated in 2011, complements NG 9-1-1, a new offering in 2012, designed to help PSAPs and Emergency Operations Centers better assess and integrate next generation technologies into their daily operations.

Online Technical Assistance



In addition to on-site TA support, OEC makes available online tools and products that focus on technical assistance. These complement many of the 2012 TA Catalog offerings. The

Public Safety Tools site at <http://publicsafetytools.info> is a dynamic, interactive site which is regularly updated. Some examples of offerings include:

Narrowbanding:

The Narrowband License Status Tool searches to subset of FCC licenses subject to narrowbanding

requirements and produces reports to help stakeholders with FCC narrowbanding requirements. The Frequency Mapping Tool regularly downloads all FCC data for the public safety and the industrial/business frequency pools.

NECP Goal 2:

The Response Level Communications tool facilitates online reporting in response to NECP Goal 2 and provides stakeholders down to the county level a tool to track their interoperable communications capabilities and performance over time.

Communications Assets Survey and Mapping (CASM) Tool:

The Communication Assets Survey and Mapping Tool (CASM) is a secure, web-based application that allows authorized, registered users to track



communications assets. Some 42,000 State/local agencies store data about their land mobile radio systems in CASM. Release 1.5 displays interactive features using Google Maps. CASM outputs support development of tactical interoperable communications plans, field operations guides and ICS Form 217, "Incident Radio Communications Plan".

National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG):

Many OEC TA-related publications, including the NIFOG, have been tagged with a Quick Response code (QR code) which allows rapid access and download from the PStools site to a user's smart phone.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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