

## **NPSTC Presents Fourth Richard DeMello Award to Don Root**

The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC's) Governing Board was pleased to present the fourth annual Richard DeMello Award at the Radio Club of America's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala celebration to Donald E. Root, Jr., Assistant Manager, Wireless Services Division, San Diego Sheriff's Department.

"Don has been a tireless worker for public safety communications over many years," says NPSTC's Vice Chair, Chief Douglas Aiken, International Municipal Signal Association (IMSA). "He has worked at the state and local level and been a huge contributor. Don has lead initiatives that were adopted in federal rules and become requirements for the betterment of communications. He works many volunteer hours above and beyond a demanding full time work schedule."

Mr. Root's leadership in NPSTC has been impressive in the depth and breadth of the knowledge he brings to the public safety forum. "Don understands the technical and operational side of public safety communications and brings his personal work experience to his volunteer work allowing for all involved to be educated and to make the right decisions for first responders," says Ralph Haller, NPSTC's Chair. A notable achievement was his co-chairmanship of the NPSTC Common Channel Naming Task Force, which resulted in a guide that will become an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard, and which has the distinction of meeting one of the milestones of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP).

Mr. Root has extensive experience in public safety telecommunications and warning systems governance, design, implementation, and operations. Currently he manages operations for the San Diego County – Imperial County Regional Communications System, an 800 MHz trunked radio network serving 20,000 users and covering approximately 9,000 square miles along the U.S.–Mexico border. From 1984 to 2006, Mr. Root was with the Telecommunications Branch of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES). While with OES, Mr. Root held positions from field coordinator to Chief of the Telecommunications Branch, and worked at locations covering all areas of California.

While at OES, Mr. Root also served as California's Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, managing the state's Mutual Aid Communications and Interoperability programs, and organizing the California Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee. Mr. Root was responsible for the design and implementation of communications augmentation systems for nine disasters and multiple planned events throughout California, including the 1984 Summer Olympics, 1992 Los Angeles Riots, 1994 Northridge Earthquake, 1994 World Cup Soccer semi-finals and finals, numerous widespread flooding events, wildfires, Year 2000 contingencies, and political conventions.

In 1992, Mr. Root was the first emergency management official appointed to the FCC's Emergency Broadcast System Advisory Committee, and worked with the FCC and the broadcast

industry through the development and implementation of the Emergency Alert System in 1997. He was a participant in the interoperability subcommittees of the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee (PSWAC) in 1996-97, and the Public Safety National Coordinating Committee (NCC) in 1999-2003. Mr. Root was the Convener of the Northern California (Region 6) 700 MHz Regional Planning Committee, served as Vice Chair of the Southern California (Region 5) 700 MHz Regional Planning Committee in 2008-2009, continues as a member of the California Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee' Southern Planning Area subcommittee, and is also a member of the SAFECOM Emergency Response Council.

Mr. Root is a Life Member of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), a Senior Life Member of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO), and a member of the Radio Club of America (RCA).

### **DeMello Award Sponsors**

Thanks to EADS Secure North America Networks for their generous support of this year's award. NPSTC's Governing Board also thanks RCA, Doug Sharp, Jack Daniel and past DeMello sponsors for their generous support: Ericsson, Motorola, and GEOCOMM. Past DeMello Award winners are Chief Harlin McEwen, John Powell, and Chief Charles Werner.

### **Award Named To Honor DeMello's Achievements**

The Richard DeMello award was named to honor the achievements of DeMello, one of the founding fathers of NPSTC. He was a frequency coordinator for the Forestry Conservation Communications Association (FCCA), the 700 MHz Regional Planning Committee Chair for Region 21, Michigan, a Life Member of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials – International (APCO), and a member of RCA.

Mr. DeMello served on the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee (PSWAC) and on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC's) Public Safety National Coordination Committee (NCC). Marilyn Ward, Executive Director, NPSTC, said that Mr. DeMello was instrumental in bringing all of the frequency coordinators together in NPSTC. "Richard believed that we should continue the work of PSWAC and develop a broader group of all levels and disciplines of public safety to work on consensus agreements on FCC filings," Ms. Ward said. "He remained a steady guiding force as NPSTC matured from its infancy into a mature consensus body."

### **Radio Club of America**

RCA was formed by a small group of dedicated radio amateurs and experimenters in 1909. The Radio Club of America counted among its membership the very best in the radio communications industry, including the pioneers who shaped the industry.