



NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL

National Public Safety Telecommunications Council First Quarter Report 2009

This Quarterly Report documents the activities of the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC), its Governing Board, Committees, and Working Groups for the First Quarter 2009. NPSTC is a federation of organizations whose mission is to improve public safety communications and interoperability through collaborative leadership.

Governing Board

During the First Quarter 2009, NPSTC held its quarterly Governing Board and Committee meeting by teleconference on February 11, 2009. Mr. Haller welcomed special guests, Kathleen Higgins, Office of Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC), Department of Homeland Security (DHS); Chris Essid, Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), DHS; and Jeff Cohen, Senior Legal Counsel to the Bureau Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Mr. Haller also welcomed new Governing Board representatives, Jack Doane, the alternate representing the National Association of State Technology Directors (NASTD), and Mike Lokatis, representing the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO).

On March 20, 2009, NPSTC also welcomed interested attendees at the International Wireless Communications Expo (IWCE) to an open meeting to exchange ideas and concerns, discuss current public safety telecommunications issues, and provide further information on NPSTC to those interested in learning more about the Council and its member organizations.

Filings on Regulatory Issues

On behalf of its member organizations, NPSTC made the following filings in the First Quarter 2009.

Digital Television (DTV) Transition Delay Letter, January 9, 2009. NPSTC developed a joint letter to the FCC with the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials – International (APCO), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to President Obama calling for an exemption to the DTV postponement until June 2009 that would permit 700 MHz public safety users to continue with plans for system implementations without delays.

Filed Comments with the FCC in Response to the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) regarding Digital Television Translators, January 12, 2009. NPSTC submitted Comments in response to the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding digital television translators. NPSTC concurs with the Commission's tentative conclusion that replacement translators should be licensed only on channels 2-59 and not on channels 60-69. NPSTC also recommended the Commission provide clarity on the issue that applications for digital replacement

translator stations must take account of land mobile operations in the 470-512 MHz band before being filed.

Petition for Rulemaking to Amend the Land Mobile-TV Sharing Rules in the 470-512 MHz Band, February 18, 2009. NPSTC submitted a Petition for Rulemaking to the FCC recommending that the Commission amend its rules which address land mobile/television sharing criteria in the 470-512 MHz band.

Ex Parte Communications, Revisions to Rules Authorizing the Operation of Low Power Auxiliary Stations in the 698-806 MHz Band, WT Docket No. 08-166; Public Interest Spectrum Coalition, Petition for Rulemaking Regarding Low Power Auxiliary Stations, Including Wireless Microphones, and the Digital Television Transition, WT Docket No. 08-167, February 23, 2009 and March 9, 2009. NPSTC, CTIA – The Wireless Association®, the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), and APCO filed two letters with the FCC during the quarter asking the Commission to take action to address low-power devices such as wireless microphones in the 700 MHz band.

NPSTC Comments on Proposed NTIA Guidelines to PSIC Funding. NPSTC submitted Comments to NTIA in response to the environmental guidelines proposed by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) affecting certain recipients of the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) funding. NPSTC believes the proposed approach is unnecessarily duplicative of established processes the FCC already has in place that apply to communications facilities, including those that will be funded by the PSIC Grant Program.

NPSTC also provided documents addressing the following issues.

High Level Consultative Commission (HLCC) Presentation. NPSTC coordinated with the State Department on the logistics for the High Level Consultative Commission (HLCC) presentation to take place this summer.

GAO Emergency Communications Follow-Up Study. The Government Accounting Office (GAO) requested a written statement from NPSTC to assist in completion of a report on interoperable communications to be submitted to the Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Innovation. Because NPSTC has been heavily involved in facilitating and advocating for the advancement of Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee (PSWAC) and the National Public Safety Coordination Committee (NCC) recommendations, the GAO requested that the NPSTC Governing Board and Committees prepare a response to the questions noted below. NPSTC submitted its response to GAO on March 3, 2009. The response includes a table which summarizes the previous PSWAC and NCC recommendations, progress made and remaining actions needed.

- Are there any particular recommendations that NPSTC considers the most important or key for addressing emergency communications vulnerabilities? If yes, which ones and why?
- To what extent have FCC, DHS, and other relevant federal agencies adopted or responded to the recommendations of the PSWAC and the NCC? What, if any, action remains outstanding for each recommendation?
- Would there be any value (i.e. effectiveness, accountability, transparency) in FCC, DHS, or other federal agencies tracking advisory groups' recommendations and each agencies' response to these recommendations?
- What are the key challenges that NPSTC has faced in advancing the recommendations of these two advisory groups?

Presentations

The following presentations were made during the February 2009 Governing Board and Committee meetings:

- Jeff Cohen, Senior Legal Counsel to the Bureau Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB), FCC, on current activities at the PSHSB and the FCC.
- Kathleen Higgins, OIC, on OIC programs including National Information Exchange Model (NIEM), Hospital Availability Exchange Language (HAVE) and Resource Messaging (RM) Standards, and the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS).
- Chris Essid, OEC, on Communications Unit Leader (COML) Training, Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) workshops, and technical assistance available through OEC.
- Lance Valcour, Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG), on recent activities and issues facing CITIG.
- Chief Harlin McEwen, Chair, Public Safety Spectrum Trust (PSST), on the 700 MHz NPRM.
- Bette Rinehart, Chair, Editorial Review Board, on FCC activities related to the 700 MHz and 800 MHz bands.
- Richard Reynolds, Vice Chair, National Regional Planning Council (NRPC), on NRPC activities.

Committee Action Items

At the February 2009 meeting, the Governing Board approved the following items recommended by the Chairs of the NPSTC Committees.

- At the request of the Spectrum Management Committee, approved filing a Petition for Rulemaking with the FCC asking then to initiate a Rulemaking to Amend the Land Mobile-TV Sharing Rules in the 470-512 MHz Band.
- At the request of the Technology Committee, approved closing an earlier action item to provide a comparison between P25 and TETRA. The recommendations, comparisons, and scope of the project were submitted to both P25 and TETRA, but representatives of each indicated that the scope was too broad. NPSTC does not have the resources to pursue this either at this time.
- Approved the recommendations of the NPSTC Executive Task Force constituted in November 2008 to conduct a critical review of NPSTC's mission and goals, the structure of the organization, support levels, meeting scope and meeting frequency, project priorities and resource requirements, and support options. [See further discussion of findings under Conferences and Meetings.]

At the March 2009 meeting, the Governing Board approved the following items.

- Revised the name of the Outreach Committee's "Membership Development" Working Group to "Participant Development. "
- Approved NPSTC support of a letter developed by APCO to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). NTIA has developed new environmental regulations that are different from the FCC regulations that would place an added burden on recipients of

Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) grant money. APCO and NPSTC encourage the NTIA to adopt the FCC regulations.

- Approved a change to the NPSTC organization chart to revise the name “Associate Member” to “Associate Organization.”

Meetings and Conferences

During the First Quarter, the Executive Committee (EC) and the Executive Director met in person and via teleconference to discuss program planning and future meetings. NPSTC holds monthly EC meetings and most of the Committees meet in teleconference monthly as well.

The Executive Director participated in the following meetings during the First Quarter 2009:

- Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) and the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) regarding border issues
- Governing Board Members regarding DTV transition extension
- NIIX steering committee to develop NIIX processes
- SAFECOM Executive Committee
- OEC to discuss Communications Asset Management Collection
- General Accounting Office (GAO) discussion

International Wireless Conference and Exposition (IWCE), March 16-20, 2009. NPSTC hosted an exhibit booth, provided by the conference venue and staffed with volunteers from the Governing Board; presented a panel, titled “Current Events within the Public Safety Communications Community” on March 18; and provided a National Interoperability Information eXchange (NIIX) training session to assist newly registered users and those seeking a refresher course. On March 20, the Governing Board hosted an open meeting, billed as a “brainstorming” session and “meet and greet” opportunity. Six individual and two group training sessions were facilitated at IWCE, for a total of 39 new users added throughout the month of March.

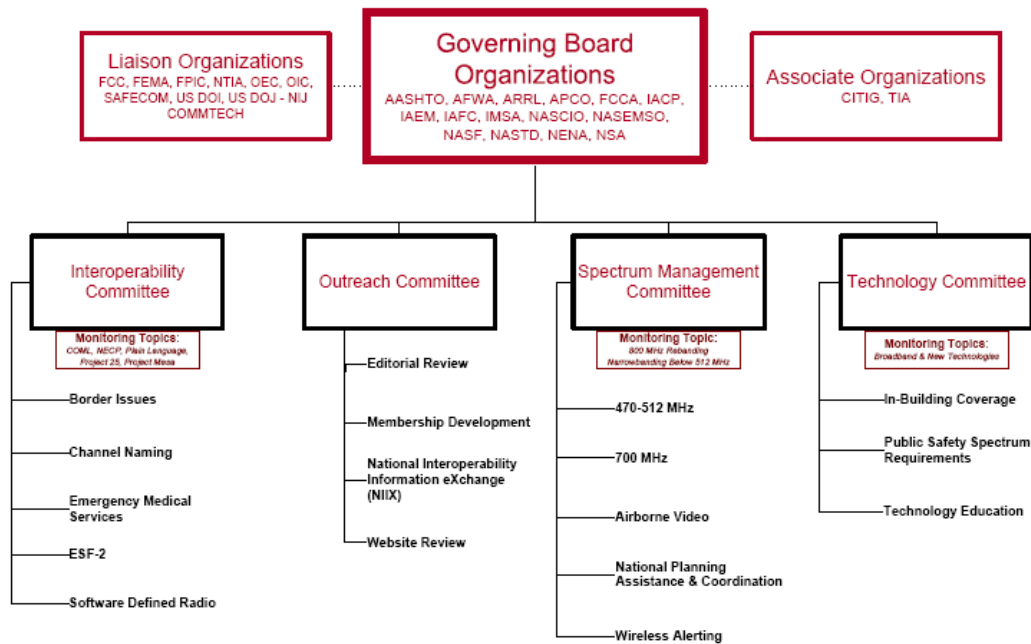
Tennessee Interoperability Conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 30-31, 2009. NPSTC participated in the Tennessee Interoperability Conference at the invitation of the Tennessee Emergency Management Association (TEMA), hosting an exhibit booth and presenting a NIIX presentation to introduce the NIIX collaboration tool and to offer recommendations on how the service may be used to assist the public safety community. Conference attendance included over 160 state and local first responders. Several attendees visited the booth with eight new users registered.

The following entities expressed interest in establishing a NIIX Community and user training: Rutherford County Emergency Management Agency, two communities; LaVergne Police, one community to assist training 9-1-1 Operators; Hamblin Red Cross, one community; and Tennessee Emergency Communications Association (TNECA), one community.

Weekly Executive Task Force Meetings. In November, the Governing Board commissioned an Executive Task Force to conduct a critical review of NPSTC’s mission and goals, the structure of the organization, support levels, meeting scope and meeting frequency, project priorities and resource requirements, and support options. The task force began meeting every Wednesday morning by teleconference on January 14, 2009.

- Committees and Working Groups: The goal for the first meeting was to review the Committees and Working Groups and determine whether they should be retained or dissolved, based on whether the Working Group would have an expected deliverable to be presented to the

Governing Board and whether NPSTC should be using its limited resources for that particular Working Group. Following the task force's thorough review and discussion of each Working Group and Committee, the Committee Chairs were invited to the second teleconference to share their thoughts on the missions and deliverables of each Committee's Working Groups. There was consensus that Working Groups that may be suspended and monitored and be reconstituted if the need arises later. For Working Groups that are dissolved, the task force recommended that Committee Chairs continue to monitor their particular issues and provide unbiased information on subjects such as Software Defined Radio or Project MESA activities to the Governing Board and NPSTC Participants. Following analysis and discussion, the task force reworked the organization chart [which has since been revised to reflect changes made at the March 2009 meeting].



As of March 20, 2009

- Governing Board Priorities:** The task force next addressed the NPSTC priorities identified by the Governing Board at the September 2008 meeting, discussing how to rank them by importance, and how much support would be needed to respond to each priority. The top priorities for 2009 were identified as: Border issues, spectrum for public safety assessment, outreach to public through appointed and elected officials, 700 MHz broadband, narrowbanding, and T-Band [470-512 MHz] rule changes. Following discussion, the Governing Board voted to add another priority: NPSTC supports all 700 MHz initiatives, narrowband voice and broadband.

NIIX

The National Interoperability Information eXchange (NIIX) provides the states virtual, secure communities for sharing documents and for supporting their statewide planning documents. The NIIX tool is offered to Communities of Practice related to the mission of NPSTC, OIC, and OEC that request the creation of NIIX communities to share and store documents. NIIX activities include meeting support, website maintenance, community page development, training sessions, outreach presentations, and customer service. The following highlights from the Quarter are shown below. [See also NIIX assistance provided in section on Conference Support.]

- Developed four new communities: Orion, Hampton Roads Region, NIIX Training, and Metropolitan Area Working Group, for a total number of 82 communities with 877 documents uploaded.
- Continued development for the Statewide Interoperability Committee (SWIC) national repository.
- Defined requirements for FCCA Community, in development mode.
- Completed Alabama Community.
- Created NIMS COML Training Community, pending final requirements. To be used for updated documents (e.g. the two errata sheets for the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide, samples of completed Mobile Guides), class rosters and course support material that can be distributed to all students who have completed the class.
- Discussed potential international community use of NIIX, especially for need to coordinate along borders with U.S. communities. The language standard would remain English.
- Created Gulf Coast Interoperable Communications Cooperative, pending final requirements and training for Coordinator.
- NENA has requested a NIIX presentation at their June 2009 meeting. NENA will provide NPSTC with a booth, which will allow more NPSTC and NIIX outreach possibilities.

Publications

npstc quarterly: Completed final version in March 2009 and posted to the home page of the NPSTC website. This is the new format for the quarterly newsletter, created to save costs in printing and distribution. The web-based newsletter provides the option of printing the entire newsletter or one article at a time.

NPSTC 2008 Annual Report: Completed final version and is posted on the home page of the NPSTC website. Copies have also been distributed via a mini-CD through each member association.

Article Repository: NPSTC maintains an article repository that includes a searchable database by topic on NPSTC newsletter articles and articles in other publications that refer to NPSTC or are written by NPSTC Participants.

Waiting for the Aftershock	Donny Jackson	Urgent Comms	Governing Board	Powell, Werner, Devine quoted in article of effect of economy on ps comms	Jan-09
NPSTC: Proposed P25 TETRA Comparison Dead in the Water	Donny Jackson	Urgent Comms	Technology	NPSTC quoted	Jan-09
McEwen Should Be Left in the Game	Glenn Bischoff	Urgent Comms	700 MHz	Article on PSST and NPSTC's IACP rep	Jan-09

NPSTC Asks for 700 MHz User Information Regarding DTV Delay	Editor	Mission Critical	700 MHz	Article on NPSTC request for 700 User Information	Jan-09
Canada Ponders Options for 700 MHz Public Safety Spectrum	Sandi Wendelken	Mission Critical	700 MHz	Article quoting GB rep from CITIG	Jan-09
Public Safety Groups Request Exclusion from DTV Extension	Editor	Mission Critical	DTV	Article referencing NPSTC, APCO, IAFC, IACP letter to Obama	Jan-09
Markey Circulates Draft Bill to Exempt Converter Box Coupon Program from ADA	Editor	TR Daily	DTV	Article referencing NPSTC, APCO, IAFC, IACP letter to Obama	Jan-09
Federal New Radio Program with Harlin McEwen Interview		Federal Radio News	700 MHz	IACP GB Rep Interviewed	Jan-09
Don't Throw the Baby out with the Bath Water	Glenn Bischoff	Urgent Comms	700 MHz	Audio interview on PSST with Werner, IAFC alt GB member	Feb-09
DTV Transition Slowed	Robert Gurss	APCO PS Comms	DTV		Feb-09
Two-Way Paging, Cost Effective and Valuable Resource for Public Safety	Doug Aiken	IMSA Journal	Paging	Article by NPSTC Vice Chair	Feb-09
Public Safety Hopes for Piece of \$787 Billion Stimulus Package	Donny Jackson	Urgent Comms	Governing Board	Article quote IACP GB rep	Feb-09
Hopefully the 700 MHz Plan Can Include More Outreach	Donny Jackson	Urgent Comms	700 MHz	Article quote IACP BB rep	Feb-09
Groups Urge FCC To Address 700 MHz Low Power Devices	Editor	Mission Critical	700 MHz	Article on NPSTC and other ps group filing	Feb-09
DTV Delay Forces Public Safety Wait Times	Sandi Wendelken	Mission Critical	700 MHz	Article quote Outreach Comm Vice Chair	Feb-09
NPSTC Asks FCC to Amend UHF Sharing Rules	Editor	Mission Critical	FCC	Article on NPSTC filing	Feb-09
Public Safety/CTIA Ask FCC for Relief in 700 MHz Band	Donny Jackson	Urgent Comms	700 MHz	NPSTC Chair quoted on filing	Feb-09
Obama Nominates Genachowski to FCC	Donny Jackson	Urgent Comms	FCC	IACP GB rep; APCO Participant quoted	Mar-09
Two-Way Paging, Cost Effective and Valuable Resource for Public Safety	Doug Aiken	npstc quarterly	Technology		Mar-09
What Is Frequency Coordination and Why Is it Required?	Dave Buchanan	npstc quarterly	Spectrum		Mar-09
Bridging Systems Interface: A VoIP Specification for Public Safety	Chris Paulson	npstc quarterly	Technology		Mar-09
How the Missions of OEC and OIC Support Homeland Security and Public Safety Communications	Jackie Bayless	npstc quarterly	Governing Board		Mar-09
OEC Sponsors National Conference on Emergency Communications	Jackie Bayless	npstc quarterly	Governing Board		Mar-09
Welcome to the Technology Education Library	Jackie Bayless	npstc quarterly	Technology		Mar-09
Regulatory Update	Bette Rinehart	npstc quarterly	Regulatory		Mar-09
Chairman's Column	Ralph Haller	npstc quarterly	Governing Board		Mar-09
700 MHz - Ready, Set, Go	Stu Overby	Mission Critical	700 MHz	Article by Spectrum Management Vice-Chair	Apr-09

10-Code Redux Again	Radio Head	APCO PS Comms	700 MHz		Mar-09
McEwen Must Stay	Charles Werner	Urgent Comms	Governing Board		Mar-09
Unrequited Love	Lynette Luna	Urgent Comms	P25 & Tetra		Mar-09

Website

Along with the routine website maintenance, NPSTC has updated its Committee Web Pages with revised volunteer information and volunteer request forms for the Technical Committees and Working Groups, and to reflect recent organization chart restructure. The website now features a Border Issues Information Web Page, a new ‘Hot Topic’ button for the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP), and completed the Technology Education Web Page: Completed an article for NG 9-1-1 article, an introductory message, and other material to be posted on the Technology Education web page.

The NPSTC website was referred to on the Private Wireless Forum Yahoo Group as a location to obtain the DHS National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG).

Committee Reports

Interoperability Committee

The Interoperability Committee welcomed new Vice Chair, Pam Montanari. See her biography at www.npstc.org. The Interoperability Committee monitors activities in the following areas in addition to supporting its Working Groups.

Project MESA NPSTC will not participate directly in Project MESA as it has in the past, but continue to monitor Project MESA meeting activities to follow progress and report on this international standards effort.

COML Update During the February Governing Board meeting, the Interoperability Committee reported on the status and background of Communications Unit Leader (COML) training provided by OEC. The role of COML, originally a wildland fire incident function, was expanded to all-hazards communications leader training. The Interagency Board (IAB) Communications Committee was a big driver in expansion of the role, which got initial funding from OIC to develop the curriculum now offered today. OEC assumed funding to continue the development of the COML training and to offer that training across the country. Student prerequisites and course descriptions are available at www.npstc.org.

GLOBAL Update The Committee Chair reported that he had attended the Security Working Group of GLOBAL [Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative] in February 2009. The group felt that the JDXN information exchange and focus on justice and law enforcement needed to expand to other communities in fire, EMS, transportation, and hospitals. The Chair would like to send a list of all NPSTC Governing Board member names and send it to GLOBAL as possible sources of feedback from the broader public safety community.

Interoperability Channel Naming Working Group

Work continued during the Quarter on the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accreditation process of *NPSTC’s Common Channel Naming Report*. There are two parts to the ANSI standard—the first part is the normative part, which defines the standard and how it was developed, and the second, the informative part, has supporting information and describes how the standard would be implemented. Changes referring to the A and the B Block will have to be made eventually, but these changes will be able to be made quickly once they are approved by ANSI.

Software Defined Radio (SDR) Working Group

The SDR Forum meets quarterly, with the last meeting held in San Diego, California, and jointly supported with the Joint Tactical Radio System (JTRS) Program. Decreased travel funding is an issue for the SDR Forum and they are meeting by teleconference currently.

ESF2 Working Group

The Working Group created to provide feedback on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA's) new Communications Annex and to provide input on appropriate participation on the Regional Emergency Communications Coordination (RECC) Working Groups, continues to advise FEMA of the need to focus more on local coordination rather than at the state level in developing the RECCWGs. A representative of the program said FEMA would like to seek NPSTC's assistance to coordinate development of local POCs and encourage more involvement with the RECCWGs.

Outreach Committee

During the First Quarter, the Outreach Committee, which comprises the Editorial Working Group, the Volunteer Coordination Working Group, and the Website Review Working Group, added the NIIX Steering Committee to its responsibilities. Further details of the work of the Outreach Committee are specified in the above reports on NIIX, publications, meetings, and the website.

The Outreach Committee was asked to help publicize the goals of the National Unified Goals (NUG) developed by the National Traffic Incident Management system. One of the goals is to encourage the use of plain language on the radio for incident management. The Committee has initiated contact with two representatives to learn how NPSTC can assist in this effort.

Spectrum Management Committee

Airborne Video Working Group

The Working Group is in the process of planning a survey of agencies that are using airborne video, inquiring about their successes and problems. Most agencies use media spectrum for airborne video. The Working Group also wants to assess whether agencies are using 4.9 GHz.

Wireless Alerting Working Group

The Working Group continues to draft a Petition for Rulemaking (PFR) asking the FCC to audit the two-way paging channels for usage, and, if there is un-used spectrum, to allocate it to public safety for paging. The Working Group is documenting the needs and plans to have a draft PFR by the June meeting.

470-512 MHz Working Group

During the Quarter, the Working Group developed and filed a PFR to the FCC to expand the area where land mobile use of TV channels 14-20 (called the T band) is allowed. The PFR proposes that the FCC adopt the same protection standards for DTV from the T-band land mobile operations on channels 14-20 as it adopted at 700 MHz. The recommended changes to rules on the T-band would expand the area where base stations could be located from 50 miles from center city coordinates to approximately 80 miles without interfering with TV reception. The current protection applied in the T band is obsolete and very conservative. It is based strictly on mileage separations. Deviations from these rules require filing of waivers, even when terrain or other factors help prevent interference to TV. The Commission faced a similar problem when it opened 700 MHz and

it then adopted rules for protection of DTV stations based on less conservative engineering criteria. Also, under the 700 MHz rules, an agency can introduce a separate showing that demonstrates the TV station's coverage contour is protected without filing for a waiver or acquiring a letter of concurrence from the TV station. The PFR essentially recommends those rules from 700 MHz also be applied to the T-band to protect existing incumbent television stations.

There have been many waivers issued in the New Jersey and New York area to use T-band channels outside the 50 mile radius, but use in the expanded area has a secondary status. By increasing the rule to allow operations out to 80 miles, this would provide these agencies primary status, according them additional protection from new stations that might come on the air in the future.

700 MHz Advocacy Working Group

The Working Group continued to monitor the DTV delay and the wireless microphone issue, filing letters and documents noted above in the Regulatory Filings section. This Working Group also drafted the responses to GAO and to NTIA for Governing Board approval noted in the Regulatory Filings section of this report.

Technology Committee

In-Building Working Group

Contributions from members of the Working Group on the Best Practices for In-Tunnel Communications have all been received and a draft is nearing completion. The white paper was requested as an addendum to the original In-Building Best Practices White Paper.

Technology Education Working Group

The five initial products the Working Group planned are complete and live on the NPSTC website. The group is ready to deliver more articles, slides, and information, and is seeking input on education areas of interest for white papers and presentations in 2009.

Future NPSTC Activities

The next Governing Board Meeting will be held on June 10-11, 2009, in Arlington, Virginia, at the Key Bridge Marriott. The venue will include a full meeting format for registered members and other public safety professionals. On November 19, 2009, NPSTC will hold a Governing Board Planning meeting at a member's complimentary venue, the Hall of States, Washington, D.C., with a half day designated for the NPSTC Committees to provide a brief summary of activities. The Committee meetings are open to the public and to participants joining via teleconference.