



U.S./Canada Interoperable Communications Workshop

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NPSTC is a federation of organizations whose mission is to improve public safety communications and interoperability through collaborative leadership.

Meeting Information



- **Inaugural Workshop Co-Hosted**
 - U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency (OEC)
 - Public Safety Canada – CITIG
- **May 13-15, 2009**
- **Niagara Falls, New York**

Meeting Summary



- **Attendees**
 - U.S. and Canadian users and officials from all levels of government
 - NPSTC Associate Member – Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG)
 - NPSTC Executive Director
 - Border Issues Working Group Representatives
- **Goals & Strategy**
 - Panels and breakout sessions
 - To jointly identify and formally document “best practices” and “action plans” for improving cross border interoperable communications
 - Provide direct input regarding future actions plans

Issues & Challenges



- **Issues with Line “A” Region interoperability on both sides of the border**
- **Regional changes needed to facilitate obtaining spectrum for development of interoperable radio networks**
- **U.S. Set-a-Side Channels in the VHF & UHF Spectrum**
 - Not coordinated with Canada
 - 800 MHz spectrum originally harmonized with Canadian channels changed by rebanding
 - 700 MHz channels are being internationally discussed to ensure alignment, however, not an optimal choice for public safety users in many of these regions

Solutions



- **First Responders Ad Hoc Solutions**
 - Developed in the interest of protecting lives and property
 - Not officially sanctioned but still in use on daily basis
- **Cultural Changes**
 - Need official buy-in on solutions
 - First Responder voices heard prior to decisions
 - Improved U.S./Canadian Coordination & Communication
 - Move from conceptual possibilities to a current reality

Meeting Conclusions



- **Develop White Paper**
 - Describe Industry Canada (IC) and the FCC engineering models used in spectrum management
 - Standardize engineering models between both countries and applicants
- **Spectrum sharing is too conservative for spectral efficiency**
- **U.S. / Canada 1952 Convention Review Required for Relevant Application**
- **IC Study on VHF and UHF Spectrum**
- **Application Notifications from IC regarding Harmful Interference Anticipated (HIA)**

U.S & Canada Convention – 1952



Convention Between Canada & the United States of America Relating to the Operation by Citizens of Either Country of Certain Radio Equipment or Stations in the Other Country

Article II

The respective countries agree that mobile radio stations properly licensed in one country are permitted to be operated in the territory of the other country (except that the provisions of this Article do not apply to ship or aircraft stations and are not intended to change or modify the terms of any agreements or treaties relating to such stations) subject to local operating conditions and regulations, as follows:

- Mobile radio units installed in public safety vehicles, in vehicles employed in the operation or maintenance of a pipe line or other industrial facility extending across the border, or in vehicles regularly engaged in the public carriage of persons or goods between the two countries, may be operated in the course of normal rendition of service, by persons properly authorized by either country, for communication with those radio stations of either country that are licensed to be operated in the same type of radio service. For security purposes or to assure familiarity with domestic radio regulations and procedures, each country may require the registration or examination of citizens of the other country and the issuance of a permit extending the privileges stated above.

Special Thank You



- **OEC and Public Safety Canada – CITIG**
 - First ever opportunity for public safety to discuss issues with the regulatory bodies on the both sides of the border
 - Agreement for all regulatory representatives to review policies and procedures that impact public safety
 - Agreement to make simple changes to make the process easier for all public safety user
 - Agreement to future meetings, as sponsorships are available