

MEETING SUMMARY – NEWCOM (User Group) meeting on Thursday, December 6, 2007 - DRAFT

The meeting started with introductions of each person present. 7 of 16 NEWCOM counties were present. 16 total were in attendance.

Homeland Security Regional Exercise Grant

Ken Kortenhof, Oneida County gave an overview of a Homeland Security grant program that provides funds to design, develop, conduct, and evaluate exercises to test the plans and capabilities of Wisconsin's emergency response community. Ken felt that this would be a great opportunity to test NEWCOM's MARC / WISPERN radio equipment on a regional emergency response. Ken will consult with WEM to determine possible grant exercises for the NEWCOM region. There are two deadlines for grant submittal, January 31 or May 29, 2008. Ken will work with Andy Faust to complete a grant application for the NEWCOM group for the January 31, 2008 deadline.

Overview of Minnesota trunking project – field trip site visit

Andy Faust gave a summary of the NEWCOM field trip to Minnesota. Eight NEWCOM members, four State Patrol, and two from Pierce County for a total of fourteen made the trip. The trip started with round table discuss of lessons learned developing a regional 800mhz trunking communication systems. An overview of their Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) and how they facilitate and coordinate the regional radio system was presented. Then a tour of the Hennepin County Communication Center followed.

In the afternoon we attended a panel discussion of how the regional radio system and governance board was created and how the system preformed during the August 2006 Highway 35 bridge collapse.

NEWCOM's position on the Statewide VHF P25 trunking backbone system concept

David Spenner from OJA, Homeland Security Project Manager Communications Interoperability was at the meeting to answer questions about the Statewide VHF trunking backbone system concept. NEWCOM had many questions and concerns about the state's proposal. Mr. Spenner did a good job of answering questions from the group. There seemed to some general level of miscommunication between the state and the local agencies on this project. Some of this happened because of the short timeline of this project and state just not having all the answers on the grant guidelines throughout this process.

NEWCOM decided that a letter in support of the state's proposal be drafted. This letter would include that no grant monies could be spent until the following items were addressed:

1. **Users governance group** is created that is made up of 1/3 local municipal government users, 1/3 county government users, and 1/3 state government users.
2. Technical system design to meet statewide capacity.
3. Addresses the need for continuing funding and maintenance of this project.
4. **The users governance group to have authority to direct projects and make money decisions.**

NEWCOM User Group felt that they could get the NEWCOM Board support of this project if these above items were addressed. Andy Faust was asked to draft a letter stating that if the above items are addressed a letter of support would be proposed at the next NEWCOM Board meeting to support partnering with the state on this project.

Other Business

None