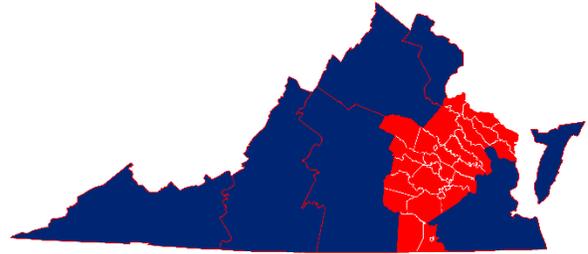


RPAC-I Region 1 Meeting

Friday, April 7, 2017

1000 hours

Eanes-Pittman Public Safety Training Center



Minutes

Attendees:

Carol Adams, Office of the SWIC	Kevin Pannell, VDEM
Eric Albert, Colonial Heights	Danielle Progen, VDEM
Chris Brackett, New Kent	Phil Puccio, Chesterfield
Cheryl Buchanan, Hanover	Kathy Robins, CVEMA/RRPDC
Denice Crowder, Dinwiddie	Ben Ruppert, Hopewell
Lori Dachille, VDEM	Mike Schlemmer, Louisa
Amanda Davis, VDH	Curt Shaffer, Hanover
Thomas Gagnon, SWIC	Charles Smith, Hanover, Chair
Denise Johnson, Prince George	Dorothy Spears-Dean, VITA
Marty McLain, DHS/DEC	Bill Purcell, SyTech/RIOS
Thomas Nolan, Powhatan	Cheryl Elliot, Fluvanna
Kevin Pannell, VDEM	

Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all and thanked them for coming. He introduced himself and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Minutes

The Chair invited a motion to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2017 meeting. Mike Schlemmer, Louisa, so moved, Chris Brackett, New Kent, seconded. Motion carried without further discussion.

SWIC Update

- COMLINC
 - **MOA Working Group** | Tom Gagnon reported that, among those present, Carol Adams, Cheryl Buchanan, and Charles Smith are in this group. The group is in the process of reviewing and updating the 2012 MOA. Mr. Gagnon plans to do a series of workshops this summer in each region to provide briefings on this agreement between the state and localities outlining maintenance, operations, and training for the COMLINC system.

- **Service Plans-Monthly Meetings** | Had a very productive meeting with SyTech at State Police on Friday, March 31, 2017. Situation has been improving with the increased attention to the system over the past year. Optimistic about funding. Stage is set for negotiations on year 2 of the state contract. These will be in June. Not expecting any big changes.
- **Quantitative / Qualitative Data** | Need to do a better job of explaining how valuable this asset is to the Commonwealth. SyTech has been very supportive in supplying quantitative data on how much it is being used. This helps to justify financial support for the system at the General Assembly. Hoping to do a phased or accelerated refresh of the system, either from Governor's budget or from grant funding. Will be working to engage the General Assembly in the hope of securing permanent funding in the state budget.
- **Training: Carol Adams & Bill Purcell** | Kudos to Carol Adams, Bill Purcell, and Cheryl Buchanan for working to get training out across the Commonwealth. Mr. Gagnon invited Carol Adams to report on this initiative. She reported that she has reached out to all DCJS training academies to arrange for 2 sessions per year, one in the spring and one in the fall. These folks take responsibility for reaching out to their PSAPs to offer the training. They have had a good response with classes filling up for these. They have classes coming up in Lynchburg, Disputanta, Central Shenandoah, Region 1 (Cheryl Buchanan coordinating this), and Fairfax (by locality in Northern Virginia because they don't have a regional academy.) Hoping that this training will become an embedded part of training academies every year. Cheryl Buchanan and Melissa Parsons are developing a webinar for refresher training that will be available to PSAPs anytime they need it. (First training still needs to be in the classroom where simulators are used.) Any locality that wants this training outside of the academy schedule, please contact Ms. Adams; she his happy to bring this 3-hour training to you at a time that works within your schedule.
- **Sustainment: Service Contract & Refresh** |
 - **RFI** | Mr. Gagnon reported that they will be issuing an RFI to verify that RIOS is still the best system for the purpose for the Commonwealth. He and Curtis Brown need to be prepared to testify to the General Assembly that they have done the research and determined that this is the case. RFI will be drafted once MOA Working Group project is done.
 - **Population-based Cost Sharing model starting June 2018** | Mr. Gagnon reported that he has been directed to look at a cost sharing model for COMLINC. This year will be the last that the system is grant-funded. Summer of 2018 subscribers will be asked to contribute an amount that is based on their population (rough estimate: \$4K to \$5K per locality.) This would include paying for 2 dedicated technicians working for VSP. Localities have the right to opt out of the program and return the equipment if they choose to.
 - **"Information Campaign": VML & VACO & GA** | Working to develop a narrative that shows that this system has an engaged advisory group, relevant MOAs, and a sustainable training program. Mr. Gagnon will be bringing information to both VML and VACO conferences. An additional communication channel is through VML and VACO members on the SIEC, Michelle Goudy and Pat O'Bannon.
- **Governance**
 - **SIEC continues to formalize** | SIEC met at VDFP on March 22 and a initiated discussion of developing the cost share program for COMLINC. Their next meeting is May 22, 2017 from 10 am to 2 pm at VDEM. This is a public meeting; everyone is invited. Secretary Moran, Chris Essid of the OEC, representatives of FirstNet and AT&T are scheduled to be there. Please let Mr. Gagnon know if you plan to be there.

- **2017 SCIP** | This project has been on the back burner in favor of some important projects that will be critical to updating the SCIP. Plan will be written later this year.
- **2017 State HSGP Guidance** | Mr. Gagnon invited questions from the group on this process, which is accelerated this year due to issues at the federal level.
- **State ID Plan** | This is about how your radio identifies itself to the network. With the migration to P25, there is a large enough block of available IDs that every locality in the Commonwealth can have a unique range of IDs without conflicting with any other locality's system. This plan eliminates need for localities to decide on radio IDs, ensures no conflicts over IDs, and is being adopted statewide.
- **State Nomenclature Plan** | This plan covers the names of the channels that appear in your radios and whether they are the same for all localities and radio systems across the Commonwealth.
- **FirstNet - Draft State Plan Review** | Mr. Gagnon reported that AT&T was awarded the FirstNet contract last week. On Tuesday, they held a webinar for SPOCs. FirstNet and contractor introduced themselves and laid out a plan for the next 6 months. There will be another webinar at the end of April and face to face meeting in May. We may see the draft plan at that point (contract stipulates that plans must be out within 100 days of award of contract.) Plan will be available for review through a restricted-access portal online. He will be seeking comments on the plan and is working on a methodology for doing this. Will let this group know how review/comment will be managed as soon as possible. Mr. Gagnon anticipates draft state plan by June and final by September. Vetting process will involve localities, the SIEC, state agencies (including Commerce, VITA, VDEM, VSP, Attorney General, General Services.) There *will* be a close vetting of plan before the decision is made to opt in or opt out. More to follow.
- **COMDEX 2017** | Scheduled for September 22 – 23 at 3 locations: Fort Pickett, Hungry Mother State Park, and Front Royal. There is a meeting in Richmond at Waller Depot on April 12, 2017 that will include representatives from the IMTs (Steve Parrott, Phil Puccio), Radio Cache (Greg Hunter), Virginia Defense Force. Goal is to provide a venue for locals who have completed COML and COMT training to get task books signed off. They will be spending an hour or so planning the exercise and an hour formalizing qualifications policy. Marty McLain, OEC, reminded all that the COML and COMT training is provided through the federal Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program. One of the ways they determine how much federal money to devote to such programs is the Nationwide Communications Baseline Assessment (SAFECOM Nationwide Survey), which is conducted every 5 years. This survey will be sent out to some 6,000 jurisdictions across the country in late summer/early fall this year. Mr. McLain urged all who receive the survey, to invest the 20 minutes it will take to complete and submit to help the federal government assess how communications/interoperability are faring across the country and where the needs are. The Chair suggested we make this survey a topic for review/discussion at a future RPAC meeting to leverage the full expertise of the group.

The Chair turned the floor over to Carol Adams and Bill Purcell, SyTech to talk about COMLINC and to conduct a demonstration of the system. Ms. Adams started by talking about the online training that she and her team are developing that can be accessed for police, fire, and/or EMS academies to show them the tool and its usefulness. Some facts about COMLINC:

- Not limited to PSAPs
- Statewide network, but only goes as far as your radio footprint.
- A gateway NOT a radio

- Requires signed MOA with VSP
- VSP manages and maintains
- Is a desktop application with a very simple user interface – a peer-to-peer mesh network
- Scalable and upgradeable
- Includes PSAPS, VSP, VDOT, Cache units, hospitals, EOCs
- If you are missing any COMLINC equipment, contact Carol.

Ms. Adams turned the presentation over to Mr. Purcell to demonstrate the system. He is a retired Battalion Chief from Charlottesville who has been with SyTech for 10 years. RIOS is just a tool to help you get your job done. It's deployed all over the world. Virginia is the most interoperable state in the U.S. Until P25 covers the entire Commonwealth, we need RIOS/COMLINC. Mr. Purcell then demonstrated the system for the group. He reminded all that training videos and other information are available on the [SyTech website](#). On the newer system, users can work from smart phones (RIOS Lite app). Need to remember that you should reach out to a locality if you want to patch to their system by COMLINC. There are around 159 sites to connect to around the state, including VDEM, VDOT, RHCCs, hospitals. System also has chat capability and VoIP. System has instant recall, allowing review/retrieval of conversations and can do full recording (stored on the local hard drive.)

The Chair thanked Ms. Adams and Mr. Purcell and reiterated to the group how important COMLINC can be to help you communicate across the Commonwealth. Be sure to contact the PSAP of any jurisdiction prior to patching into their system so that they can direct you what to patch to. Also, remember, it does not change the radio coverage in your jurisdiction or any other but it can tie those coverages together.

Agency and Locality Reports

Denise Johnson (Prince George) reported that they have terminated their relationship with the radio consultant from the first phase of the radio project and have put the project out to bid again. Interviewing will be on Wednesday.

Tom Nolan (Powhatan) reported that they are in the process of interviewing consultants now too.

Denice Crowder (Dinwiddie) reported that they have almost completed Phase 1 of their project and now are looking at user/subscriber equipment. Looking forward to Phase 2.

Had a major incident on Saturday at the Virginia Motorsports Park around 8 pm. Event had approximately 12,000 attendees. Fire, EMS, Comms, were not aware that the event was happening. Promoter had hired 6 units from Sheriff's Office to run security for the event. Incident started with a vehicle backfire followed by shots being fired. County RIOS was in the shop being worked on so was not an option. Were able to form patches with Chesterfield, Petersburg, Colonial Heights, Fort Lee, Prince George, and Hopewell. Had a LOT of help and it made a huge difference. Three patients transported to hospital with non-life-threatening gunshot wounds.

The county is in the process of building new Public Safety, Administration, and Human Services buildings.

Eric Albert (Colonial Heights) reported that they are big believers in COMLINC. He pushes the staff to reach out to other comms centers on this system during slow times to get more proficient and comfortable with the system. Still working with a replacement radio system.

Kevin Pannell (VDEM) introduced himself as the Disaster Response and Recovery Officer for VDEM Region 1. He has a background in Public Health, most recently with RAA, and is a member of the CVAHIMT.

Ben Ruppert (Hopewell) reported that they are considering moving their federal 800 interoperability channels to another tower to enhance redundancy (they are currently a 1 site system).

Amanda Davis (Virginia Office of EMS) reported that they have money. If you need any, give her a call. Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) provides \$3 to \$5 million per year for EMS projects. Funding cycle begins August 1, 2017 with a deadline of September 15, 2017. If you have any questions, contact her at amanda.davis@vdh.virginia.gov.

Dorothy Spears-Dean (Wireless Board) reported that FY19 PSAP grants application period opens July 1, 2017 and closes September 2, 2017. This year will be focused on NG911. Guidelines will be finalized May 11, 2017. Priorities are for Call Handling Equipment, NG911 GIS data preparation, and PSAP Education Program. They will be taking some legacy CAD system requests but this is the only year that will be the case. There are a number of technically outdated/non-vendor-supported CAD Systems (DaPro) in the Commonwealth. They intend to address this in its entirety this grant cycle.

Mike Schlemmer (Louisa) and Cheryl Elliott (Fluvanna) reported that they have been working on a regional radio project involving 6 localities (Louisa, Fluvanna, Albemarle, Greene, Madison, Orange) and are looking for grant opportunities to fund some components of the project. Louisa has gotten their final technical specifications sheet from Motorola. Will likely sign contract by end of month. Will be adding 2 sites. He invited Ms. Elliott to speak on the larger regional project. Fluvanna has been working on getting a radio system for 20 years. In 2015 they signed a contract with Motorola for a system to be finished by December of 2016. When they discovered that it would cost over \$500,000 to co-locate on commercial towers they chose to build 3 towers (one 250' and two 300') on county-owned property and added 1 250' NCT tower. Working with other localities, they have an L2 Core set up with 14 sites (instead of 10) on a VHF system. Greene and Madison are in the process of conducting needs assessment. They have determined that it would cost approximately \$300,000 to make the system a truly regional one. The participating localities would share the \$100,000 cost of annual maintenance. If they were to pursue individually, it would cost \$250,000 each for cores, and \$25,000 each for annual maintenance. They are looking for advice/guidance on how to secure the funding for this. Anticipate submitting application for the FY18 grant cycle. The participating localities represent 3 different RPAC regions. There is support for this project at the county administrator level. They do plan to participate in the Statewide Radio ID Plan and believe that they have all the frequencies they need.

Cheryl Buchanan (Hanover) glad to see renewed emphasis on COMLINC. It may be good to join the RPAC and COMLINC group meetings.

Curt Shaffer (Hanover) reported on the Capital Region Radio Project (Henrico, Chesterfield, Richmond, Hanover, RIC, and Colonial Heights and \$115 million). Building a lot of new towers, attending a lot of Planning Commission/Board of Supervisors/City Council meetings, design review, working with microwave vendor, applications to Region 42. Henrico and Richmond have application packages for new tower sites that will be addressed at APCO Conference in Virginia Beach in May. A lot of new technology being adopted early; programming over WiFi ("Radio Manager") has been successfully deployed by both Richmond and Henrico (allows programming radios wirelessly). Eric Albert is lead on new console furniture which includes Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, Colonial Heights, and the Airport Commission; a very complex and difficult process. Very pleased with the consultant on the project. Urgency of the project comes from the fact that, except for Hanover (on P25) the entire metro region is operating with a 3.X system which has been out of support by Motorola for quite some time. Working with the City of Chesapeake, which is decommissioning their 3.X system, to get support/parts as we need them. This project represents a lot of work by a lot of people across the region trying to expedite the cutover.

Marty McLain (OEC) announced that he had brought 8 – 10 copies of the latest NIFOG (National Interoperability Field Operations Guide) to hand out or leave with Tom Gagnon if anyone would like a copy.

Carol Adams (Office of the SWIC) announced that the next COMLINC Training is scheduled for next Thursday from 1330 to 4 pm at the Crater Criminal Justice Center in Disputanta/Prince George.

Deadline for FY17 SHSP project proposals to be submitted to the RPAC is May 4, 2017. The Chair asked if anyone is working on a communications-related project for this funding. No one present reported any such projects.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 pm. The next meeting will be Friday, June 2, 2017 at 10 am at Eanes-Pittman.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Robins