



Homeland
Security

Office of Grants and Training

Tracy Henke, Assistant Director

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ICTAP Bulletin

Connecting First Responders, Keeping America Safe



The Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) provides free technical assistance to enhance interoperable communications among Federal, State, and local emergency responders and public safety officials in cities and States that have received grants from the Office of Grants and Training (G&T) in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Preparedness Directorate.

May 2006

May Highlights

- **Tactical Plans Submitted:** 65 of 65 ICTAP-supported sites submitted their TICP on time.
- **Tactical Interoperable Communications Conference:** The G&T Exercise Division brought representatives from each UASI site to Washington DC for a two-day exercise planning conference.
- **Validation Exercises:** Anaheim/Santa Ana, CA; Baton Rouge, LA; Long Beach, CA; and Los Angeles, CA held their validation exercises.

Tactical Interoperable Communications Conference

On May 8-9, 2006, the Office of Grants and Training (G&T) Exercise Division hosted a conference for all Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) sites on tactical interoperable communications. The conference drew attention from all levels of DHS, with Secretary Michael Chertoff, Under Secretary George Foresman, and Assistant Secretary Tracy Henke speaking to the Federal, State, and local attendees.

The conference gave the UASI representatives an opportunity to hear directly from DHS about the importance of interoperable communications and the Secretary's dedication to improving the current situation across the country. During the first day of the conference, the attendees learned more about the Exercise Division, the plans for the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) validation through a limited full-scale exercise, and the independent assessment



Secretary Michael Chertoff, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

and validation approach for each exercise. The second day of the conference was mainly devoted to breakout sessions for the sites. Each site worked with a representative from the Exercise Division and their ICTAP site manager to begin planning their validation exercise. Together they determined the overarching exercise capabilities and objectives for their specific region.

The exercise process continues with a Mid Planning Conference, a Final Planning Conference, and a TICP Implementation workshop before the actual event. Both the Exercise Division and ICTAP will continue to work closely with each site to prepare them for the validation exercise.

TICP PEER REVIEW PANEL

After the plans were submitted, DHS organized several peer review panels to evaluate the real-world applicability and usability of the TICPs. The panels consisted of five subject matter expert peers, most of whom helped to write their own region's plan, and two DHS ICTAP representatives. The sessions lasted two days and each panel evaluated, on average, 15

plans. The tactical plans were measured against the relevant communications aspects of the Capabilities-based Planning task list.

As the results from the peer review panels are released, the ICTAP site managers will continue to work with their sites to help them prepare for the exercise. If a site should receive a "Needs More Information" recommendation, they can contact their site manager directly or, if they haven't already done so, submit a technical assistance request to DHS. All sites must address the missing information before exercising their plan.

Exercises

Five of the seventy-five Urban Areas (UAs) recently conducted their Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) Validation Exercises. The exercises proved to be a valuable source of information that will increase interoperability efforts throughout the regions.

During the exercises, representatives from the G&T Exercise Division, the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP), and subject matter

experts from around the country worked together in several 2-person evaluation teams to observe and evaluate the effectiveness of local communications equipment and practices and procedures.

Louisville, KY

On April 22, 2006, the Louisville UA conducted its exercise at the annual "Thunder Over Louisville" air/fireworks show, which drew a crowd of approximately 800,000 spectators to the banks of the Ohio River.

Anaheim/Santa Ana, CA

On May 3, 2006, the Anaheim and Santa Ana UA conducted an exercise at the Orange County Fairgrounds simulating a bus hijacking involving 28 agencies and sub-agencies.

Los Angeles/Long Beach, CA

On May 24, 2006, the Los Angeles and Long Beach UA conducted their exercise, simulating the shoot-down of a civilian jet taking off from Los Angeles International Airport.

Baton Rouge, LA

On May 24, 2006 the Baton Rouge UA conducted their TICP Validation Exercise as part of a planned Hurricane Response Exercise.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

For more information on ICTAP, visit the program's Web page at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/ta_ictap.htm. For general information on ICTAP or other initiatives of the Office of Grants and Training (G&T), please contact the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk at 1-800-368-6498 or askcsid@dhs.gov.