



**Homeland  
Security**

*Office of Grants and Training*

# 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 U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Grants and Training (G&T).

**February 2007**

### Highlights

- DHS/NTIA MOU Signed for PSIC Grant Program
- SAFECOM Releases Draft Statewide Interoperability Plan Guidance
- Statewide Interoperability Planning Conference scheduled for March 21-23, 2007 in Los Angeles, CA

### DHS/NTIA SIGN AGREEMENT ON PUBLIC SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM

On February 16, 2007, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Grants and Training and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will have DHS administer the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Grant Program. The PSIC Grant Program will provide funding to qualified States and Territories in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 to enable and enhance public safety agencies' interoperable communications capabilities. This program is being implemented by DHS and NTIA in accordance with the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and Call Home Act of 2006. DHS is providing this information in anticipation of the release of grant guidance in the coming months and issuance of grant awards by September 30, 2007, pursuant to the Call Home Act of 2006.

As directed by Congress and consistent with the MOU, NTIA through DHS will award approximately \$960 million in grants to qualified States and Territories in FY 2007 to capitalize on the auction and reallocation of radio spectrum for use by public

safety agencies. Funds (up to 5 percent of the total) will be available at award to ensure that Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans include consideration of the PSIC Grant Program requirements. The the remaining funds will be contingent upon submission and Federal/peer review of the Statewide Plan and investment justifications.

Funding can be used for the acquisition of, deployment of, or training for, the use of interoperable communications systems that use or enable interoperability with communications systems that support the 764–776 MHz and 794–806 MHz frequency bands as well as other available technologies to advance overall public safety interoperability, so long as those technologies will enable first responders to interoperate with the 700 MHz band in the future.

Additionally, the PSIC grant program includes a statutory not-less-than 20 percent match from States.

The grants will be awarded no later than September 30, 2007 and the period of performance is 36 months. All States and Territories may submit preliminary Statewide Plans by September 30, 2007 for a mid-term review, and the final plans are due by November 1, 2007.

### **SAFECOM RELEASES DRAFT STATEWIDE INTEROPERABILITY PLAN GUIDANCE**

To assist the process of developing a statewide communications interoperability plan and to ensure that all States include the essential components of a statewide plan, the SAFECOM and Disaster Management (DM) programs created a set of criteria. The criteria were formulated with input from State and local participants and are organized into ten categories:

- Background
- Strategy
- Methodology
- Governance
- Technology
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Training and Exercises
- Usage
- Funding
- Implementation

The criteria describe the critical information that should be included in a detailed and complex statewide communications plan. While the intention should be for every State's statewide plan to address each criterion listed, it is understood that not all criteria will be satisfied in every statewide plan. As a minimum, it is expected that every statewide plan submitted will have a complete governance structure defined for their communications interoperability efforts and a complete capabilities assessment report.

A final version of the Statewide Interoperability Planning Guidance, as well as the Template and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), will be released at the March 21-23, 2007 Conference. The Statewide Planning Workshop for Public Safety Communications Interoperability will be hosted by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC); each State will receive 5 invitations for members of their public safety community.

#### **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

For more information on ICTAP, visit the Web page at:

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/ta\\_ictap.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/ta_ictap.htm).

For general information on ICTAP or other G&T initiatives, please contact the Centralized Scheduling and Information Desk at 1-800-368-6498 or [askcsid@dhs.gov](mailto:askcsid@dhs.gov).