Homeland Security

Office of Grants and Training

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FY 2006

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.

August 2006

August Highlights

- Final Planning Conferences: ICTAP assisted 29 sites with the final stages of their planning to prepare for the validation exercise.

- TICP Implementation Workshops: 19 sites took advantage of the ICTAP-led Implementation Workshops.

- TICP Validation Exercises: In August, the number of exercises increased to 22.

CASM WINS GOVERNMENT COMPUTER NEWS AWARD

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) ICTAP Program has been named a 2006 Government Computer News (GCN) Gala Award winner for outstanding use of information technology in government. The Communications Assets Survey and Mapping (CASM) tool was chosen from a field of nearly 150 candidates. The GCN Gala Awards recognize distinguished project teams and programs for sustained contribution and innovative use of technology in the field of government information technology.

CASM Interface

To effectively plan strategic and tactical communications with one another, agencies require a clear understanding of common elements and knowledge of communication shortfalls in their regions and jurisdictions. The ICTAP team produced

the CASM tool to link together an assortment of agencies as a cohesive unit to respond to an incident. The tool serves as the bedrock element for States and Urban Areas (UA) to inventory and visually display first responder communications assets. CASM's simple, graphical interface exposes interoperability gaps and displays solutions in a given region.

Provided at no-cost, CASM is a Web-based tool that an agency can populate with specific information about its policies and the communications hardware it uses. To date, approximately 5,000 agencies, representing 2,500 jurisdictions, have entered data into CASM.

The award announcement will be included in the October 9, 2006 print edition of *Government Computer News* and online at GCN.com.

EXERCISES

ICTAP continued to assist each site prepare for the Tactical Plan Validation Exercises (TVE) through the development stages with mid- and final planning conferences and the TICP Implementation Workshops. As evaluators, ICTAP personnel attended each of the 22 exercises held during August.

After each of the exercises, the ICTAP evaluators complete an

August 2006 Exercises		
Tampa, FL	West Virginia, VA	Puerto Rico
Phoenix, AZ	South Dakota	Cleveland, OH
Indianapolis, IN	Wyoming	Detroit, MI
Buffalo, NY	Vermont	Milwaukee, WI
Mississippi	Virgin Islands	Northern Mariana Islands
San Francisco, CA	Philadelphia, PA	
St. Louis, MO	Utah	Sacramento, CA
New York, NY	Oakland, CA	

Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG) that further illustrates what went well and what areas could use improvement. With the completed EEGs, the sites will receive an After Action Report and Improvement Plan. ICTAP will continue to work with sites to provide technical assistance and operational support in order to implement these suggestions.

APCO CONFERENCE

The 72nd Annual Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International Conference was held in Orlando, FL, August 6-10. The conference facilitated discussions on several new developments, such as the move to broadband, recent legislative events, and the debate on public safety's use of spectrum.

ICTAP hosted an exhibit booth and led a number of presentations at the conference. The three ICTAP seminars discussed the major interoperable communications lessons learned in the past year, tabletop and full-scale communications-based exercises, and the CASM tool.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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

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.