

# Public Safety Interoperable Communication (PSIC) Grant Program

*Focus Group Meeting*

*May 17, 2007*



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# Focus Group Objectives

- To solicit State and local feedback on the overall FY 2007 PSIC Grant Program
- To discuss key issues and obtain input
- To outline considerations for the overall process and program guidance



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# Agenda

- PSIC Grant Program Overview
- Grant Guidance working session
  - Discussion of program and application requirements, allowable and unallowable costs
- Investment Justification working session
  - Discussion of Investment Justification and template, assessment criteria, template upgrades, and performance measurement
- The funding formula and allocations are outside of the scope of the day and cannot be discussed

# PSIC Background

- The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 provided the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) the authority to establish a \$1 billion grant program for public safety interoperability communications
- The funds are borrowed from the anticipated auction proceeds of the 700 MHz spectrum
- The Call Home Act of 2006 requires all funding to be awarded by September 30, 2007
- Through an MOU, NTIA partnered with DHS (NPD)
  - DHS will provide grants-related administrative services and expertise
  - NTIA retains approval authority
- Total of \$958.9 million in funding is available for grant awards



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# PSIC Goals and Objectives

The program will not dictate a technology or an approach for interoperability solutions. However, we are considering two goals and five objectives for the PSIC Grant Program

## Goals

- Achieve meaningful and measurable improvements in the state of interoperability for public safety communications; and
- Fill interoperability gaps identified in the Statewide Plans

## Objectives

### Technological

- Adopt advanced technological solutions
- Improve spectrum efficiency
- Use cost-effective measures

### Geographical

- Improve communications in areas at risk for natural disasters
- Continue to improve interoperability efforts in urban and metropolitan areas



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# Key Features of PSIC Grant Program

- **Awardees:** Funding will be awarded through the 56 State and Territory Administrative Agencies (SAA)
- **Period of Performance:** PSIC grants will be awarded no later than September 30, 2007 and the period of performance will end on September 30, 2010
- **Statewide Planning:** Up to 5 percent of the total funds allocated to a State or territory will be available at the time of the award to support the completion of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans (Statewide Plan)
- **Technical Assistance:** DHS technical assistance will support grantees with planning and implementation of PSIC awards
- **Technical Review:** Remaining funds (95 percent) will be contingent upon submission, technical review, and approval of a Statewide Plan and Investment Justifications
- **Use of Funds:** Funding can be used for “acquisition of, deployment of, or training on” interoperable communications systems that use or enable use with the 700 MHz frequency band
- **Match:** PSIC includes a statutory requirement of not-less-than 20 percent match

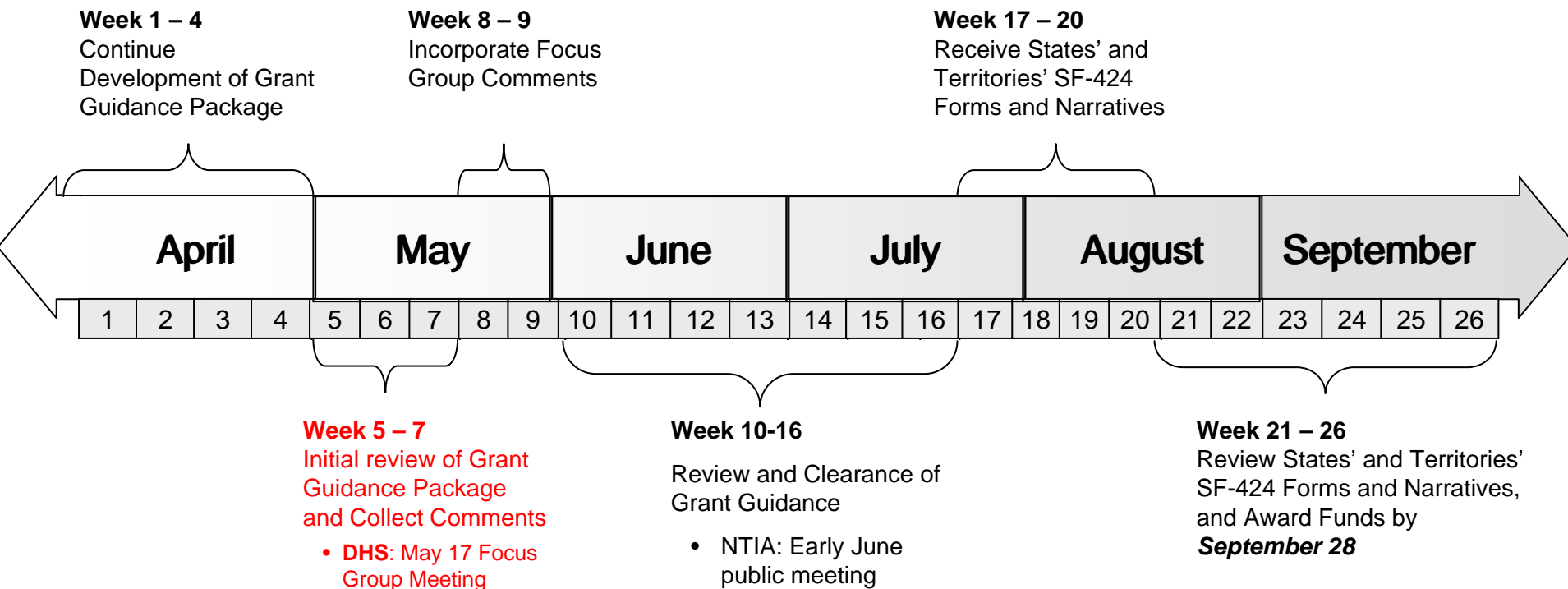


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# Current Timeline of PSIC Activities to Meet Call Home Act Requirements

April through September 2007



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# Statewide Plans and PSIC

- FY 2007 HSGP requires States to develop and adopt a Statewide Plan
- Proposed PSIC projects to receive funds should align with the goals and gaps identified in the Statewide Plan
- Statewide Plans must incorporate the three PSIC criteria:
  - Description of how public safety agencies operate on or interoperate with the 700 MHz frequency band, via voice, data, and/or video signals;
  - Description of how local and tribal government entities' interoperable communications needs have been included in the planning process and how their needs are being addressed, if applicable; and
  - Description of how nongovernmental organizations' interoperable communications needs have been included in the planning process and how their needs are being addressed, if applicable
- This criteria was released to State teams at the Statewide Planning Workshop sponsored by the National Governors Associations (NGA) and DHS on March 21, 2007



# Urban/Metropolitan Areas and PSIC

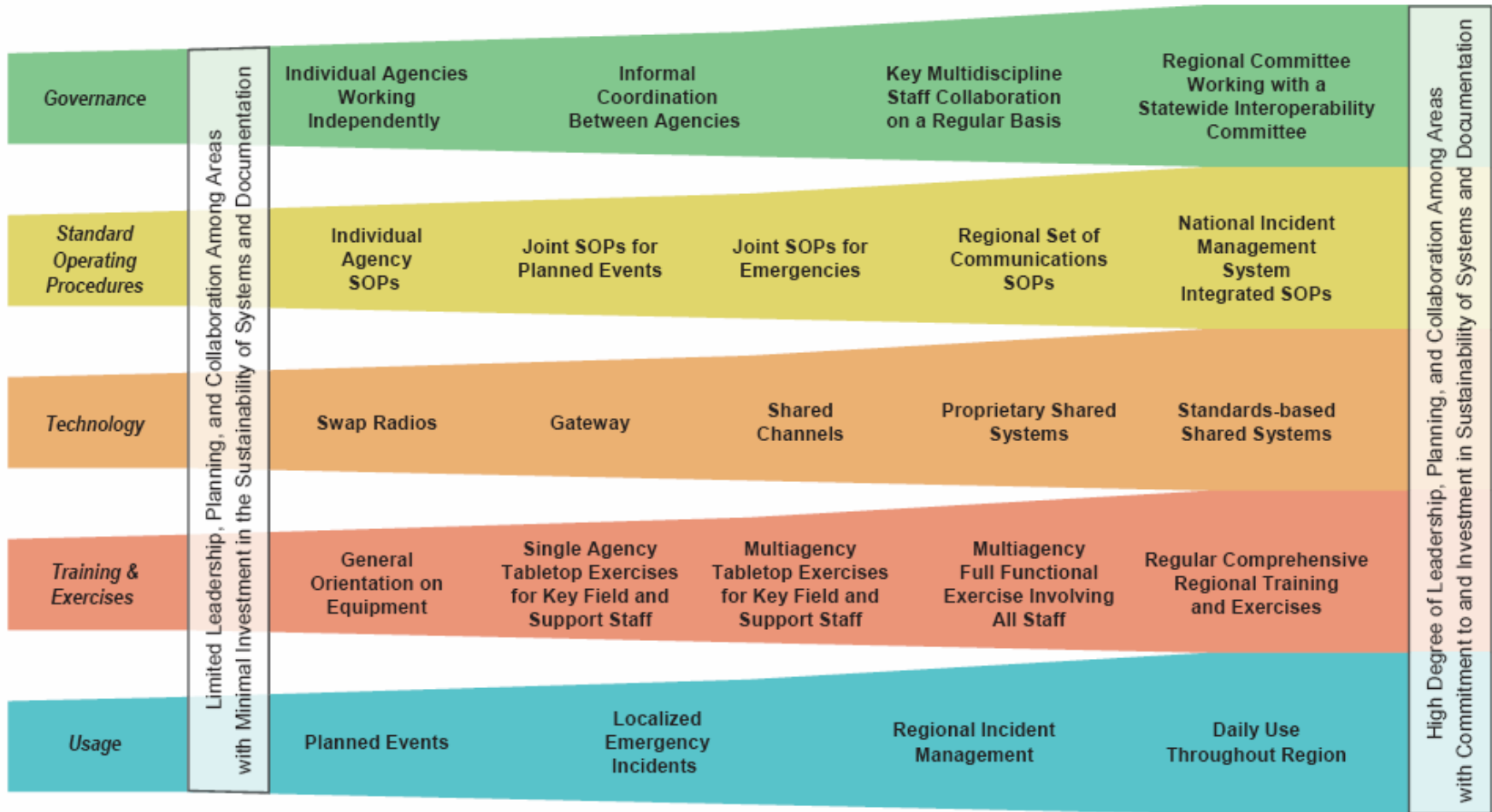
- One of five key objectives of the PSIC Grant Program is to continue to improve interoperability efforts in urban and metropolitan areas
- Statewide Plans should address the expansion and improvement of these areas' existing Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICP)
- The recommendations of the TICP initiative (e.g., after action reports, scorecards) are to be considered and addressed in any investment justifications submitted for PSIC funding to those areas



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# SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum



# Continuum Alignment to Statutory PSIC Requirements



<b>Description</b>	<p>Acquisition requires that technical and financial planning, as well as procurement and system design activities, occur to ensure that the interoperable communications systems and equipment (e.g., swap radios, gateways, shared systems) being acquired meets the needs of public safety agencies.</p>	<p>Deployment requires that communications equipment is built out, standard operating procedures are developed for its use, and service level agreements are developed for the interoperable communications equipment.</p>	<p>Training requires that public safety agencies understand how to use the interoperable communications equipment, and that exercises and drills take place to validate the effectiveness of the communications system to ensure efficient and effective interoperable communications is in place.</p>
<b>Continuum Alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Governance</li> <li>▪ Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Governance</li> <li>▪ SOPs</li> <li>▪ Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training and Exercises</li> <li>▪ Usage</li> <li>▪ SOPs</li> </ul>

- Achieving interoperability requires an understanding of interrelated and critical activities that must be completed to successfully deploy and use new communications equipment
- Such support activities align with the lanes of the Interoperability Continuum and provide broader context for understanding the complexities associated with the technology acquisition, deployment, and training

# Grant Guidance Working Session

# Guidance Structure

- PSIC guidance uses the structure of the federal funding opportunity (FFO) announcement structure, which is different from the previous HSGP guidance documents
  - Program Description
  - Award/Funding Information
  - Eligibility Information
  - Application and Submission Information
  - Application Review Information
  - Award Administrative Information
  - Allowable and Unallowable Cost Guidance
  - Other Information



# Program Guidance and Application Kit

## Questions for consideration to ensure that important information is easily understood in the guidance

- What challenges have you had in understanding previous guidance?
- What are the top three information points when you first read grant guidance?
- How can the guidance be structured to be user-friendly and easier to understand?
- Are the Program Funding Goals (Technology/Geography) clear?
- Is the Limitation on Project Scope clear?

# Eligible Applicants Section

- The PSIC grants will be awarded to the 56 States and Territories
- The Governor of each State has designated a State Administrative Agency (SAA) to apply for and administer the funds under the PSIC Grant Program
- The SAA is the only agency eligible to apply for PSIC funds. The SAA is responsible for obligating PSIC funds to eligible pass-through public safety agencies



# Eligible Applicants Discussion

- Gaps
- Issues
- Suggestions



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# Match Requirements Section

- The public safety agency receiving the PSIC project funds is required to meet the 20 percent match requirement
- The SAA is required to document the 20 percent match requirements for each individual project that receives PSIC funds
- The documentation must demonstrate that matching funds are from non-federal sources
- The only exception to this previous statement is that funds used for training activities do not require a 20 percent match
- Issue: match requirement through cash or in-kind source (in-kind sources are defined in Federal OMB Circular A-87)



# Match Requirements Discussion

- Gaps
- Issues
- Suggestions

# Pass-Through Requirements Section

- Each State will make no less than 80 percent of the total award amount available as a pass-through to local government, tribal government entities, or nongovernmental public safety agencies
  - District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island have no pass-through requirements
  - Puerto Rico has a 50 percent pass-through requirement
- However, each State and Territory may retain some or all of the pass-through for expenditures made by the State on behalf of the pass-through local entities through a formal Memorandum of Understanding with local entities that specifies the amount and intended use of the funds

# Pass-Through Requirements Discussion

- Gaps
- Issues
- Suggestions



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# Allowable and Unallowable Cost Guidance

- Allowable costs must align to the statutory requirements of acquisition, deployment, and training
- Specific allowances that we are reviewing today address
  - Technology requirements
  - Management and Administration (M&A)
  - Operations and Maintenance (O&M)
  - Training
- Unallowable costs to be reviewed include
  - Hiring of public safety personnel
  - Certain construction and renovation



# Technology Requirements

- What are the impacts of technology requirements on construction?
- How can the guidance better emphasize adoption of emerging technologies?
- What are the important SAFECOM Grant Guidance technical concepts that should be specifically emphasized in the PSIC guidance?



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# Technology Requirements Discussion

- Gaps
- Issues
- Suggestions



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# Management and Administrative (M&A) Section

- PSIC has allowable M&A costs for States and Territories
- Issue: percentage of total allocation that the States and Territories can retain to use for M&A
- These State and Territory M&A funds would be included when accounting for the total funds retained by the State and Territory



# M&A Discussion

- Gap
- Issues
- Suggestions



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# Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Section

- What types of operating expenses and maintenance costs should be considered for the allowable versus unallowable categories?
- How should applicants demonstrate the sustainability of operating expenses beyond the grant period?

# Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Discussion

- Gap
- Issues
- Suggestions



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# Investment Justification Working Session

# Investment Justification Overview

- All States and Territories will be required to develop Investment Justifications to request FY 2007 PSIC funding
- The Investment Justification provides a template for applicants to outline which initiatives, identified in their Statewide Plan, they wish to address in the near-term using FY 2007 PSIC funding
- Issue: number of Investment Justifications that the States and Territories will be allowed to submit

# PSIC Investment Justification

The Investment Justification Template may ask for the following project information/metrics:

IJ Component	Review Criteria
<b>Project Narrative</b>	Problem, proposed solution, expected outcomes
<b>Baseline</b>	Historical funding, description of need, stakeholder involvement
<b>Strategy</b>	Consistency with Statewide Plan, consistency with PSIC technological and geographical objectives
<b>Funding Plan</b>	Estimated costs, concurrent funding sources, and matching funds
<b>Milestones</b>	Specific project milestones
<b>Project Management</b>	Proposed management structure, contract management approach, roles and responsibilities
<b>Investment Challenges</b>	Up to 5 expected challenges, level of impact, mitigation strategy
<b>Impact</b>	Specific outcome metrics, cost-effective measures, long-term sustainability approach



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# Investment Justification (IJ) Template

## Questions for consideration:

- Does the investment justification clearly align to the PSIC goals (i.e., technological and geographical)?
- Is the IJ layout/format used in HSGP user-friendly? How can it be improved/modified for PSIC?
- Does the template enable you to effectively convey your need?
- Should Investments be prioritized?
- What additional instruction is needed for SAAs to collect IJs from local entities?

# IJ Discussion

- Gaps
- Issues
- Suggestions



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# DHS and NTIA Note of Appreciation

A special note of thanks to acknowledge our participants in today's focus group who volunteered their time and expertise



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