

Annual Public Safety Interoperability Workshop Ends on a High High Note

The Fifth Canadian Public Safety Interoperability Workshop – the flagship event of the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) - again brought together a broad base of public safety and emergency management practitioners to develop a mutual understanding of the key voice and data interoperability issues facing today's public safety sector. Held from December 5 to 7, 2011 in Ottawa, the nearly 300 delegates came away with real-world insights, practical knowledge, and a common sense approach to moving forward while attending sessions on the hottest interoperability issues facing public safety today and while being “put to work” during extensive break-out sessions.

The Workshop delivered on its theme of “From Results to Successes!” and participants (delegates, sponsors and exhibitors) widely regarded this year’s Workshop as the most successful event to date. Emerging from the Workshop was recognition that responders and partners were galvanized and well-positioned to address 700 MHz broadband spectrum challenge. There was also wide-spread agreement that land mobile radio voice interoperability remains a significant area of concern – more must be done to raise awareness about the issue and help mobilize leadership to operationalize impending technological advances. Participants also identified the need to strengthen links between responder community and national research efforts.

Overall, it was clear that CITIG has come a long way in five years. Building on that success, the three Chiefs associations, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP), the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) and Emergency Medical Services Chiefs of Canada (EMSCC) announced that they will be transitioning the day-to-day operations of CITIG to the Associations as of January 1, 2012. The Canadian Police Research Centre (CPRC), a key supporter and contributor to the success of CITIG, will gradually take a less active role and reposition its interoperability work primarily into the technology, test and evaluation domain.

Despite the changes in governance, CITIG will remain the unified voice of the responder community. The CACP, CAFC, EMSCC and CPRC and the more than 850 volunteer members from the responder community, all orders of government, non-governmental organizations, associations, academia and industry continue to be committed to CITIG

and to work together to improve public safety interoperability in Canada.