



Arkansas

Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Implementation Report

October 2012

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SCIP Implementation Report Overview

The Arkansas Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Implementation Report provides an annual update on the State's progress in achieving the initiatives and strategic vision identified in the SCIP. Further, this information will provide OEC with a clearer understanding of the State's capabilities, needs, and strategic direction for achieving interoperability statewide.

- **Part 1, "SCIP Implementation Update"** of the report has been completed by Penny Rubow, Arkansas' Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC). As required by Congress, States provide updates and changes to the status of their Statewide Interoperable Communications Plans in this section. Each State created a SCIP in 2007 and all have been regularly updated. The report sections match those required in the original SCIP, and extensive instructions were provided to the States to understand the requirements of these sections and assist in the development of their SCIPs. The initiatives within each report include milestones identified in the NECP which will be standardized, as well as State-specific efforts.

Part 1. SCIP Implementation Update

State Overview

Overview of the State and its interoperability challenges:

Arkansas, known as the Natural State, is home to several State parks, mountains, rivers, and lakes. Temperatures in the State vary during the year from lows of 15 degrees to highs of 100 degrees. The State has a population of 2,779,154 (2005 Census) and an area of 53,179 square miles. Major cities include Little Rock, Fort Smith, Fayetteville, Springdale, Jonesboro, North Little Rock, Pine Bluff, Conway, Rogers, and Hot Springs. No Federally recognized Native American tribes reside in Arkansas.

Arkansas is bordered by Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Oklahoma. Arkansas is also divided into six geographical regions: Ozark Mountains, Arkansas River Valley, Ouachita Mountains, Gulf Coastal Plain, Mississippi Alluvial Plain, and Crowley's Region. The State is divided into 75 counties, each with its own emergency manager. The State is further divided into 77 emergency management jurisdictions.

The State is located in the infamous "Tornado Alley". Arkansas averages 21 tornados each year and is ranked number 2 in the nation for risk of death from a tornado. Ice storms are prevalent in the northern tier of counties; power outages and property damage causing the greatest impact to the population. The New Madrid Seismic Zone extends from southern Missouri to northeastern Arkansas. It has the potential to produce damaging earthquakes and the possibility of a large earthquake in densely populated areas of the State is recognized by scientists and government officials.

The Arkansas Razorback football games draw the greatest crowds of any event in the State during the months of September through November. Each game draws crowds of approximately 54,000 to 72,000 fans. The Arkansas State Fair, held annually in October, draws a crowd of approximately 400,000 over a period of two weeks. The annual Arkansas Blues and Heritage Festival attracts a crowd of approximately 100,000. Riverfest, which is an annual art, music, and food festival, attracts more than 230,000 people each year.

Arkansas continues to make significant progress toward interoperability with the expanded use

of the statewide communication system, the Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWIN). This Project 25 (P25) compliant 700/800 megahertz (MHz) system was first developed in 2004, leveraging the assets of the Arkansas State Police (ASP). AWIN helped improved interoperability and compatibility for State and local agencies, and allows access to a tactical level of connectivity for every county's command structure.

The State has also taken steps to establish interoperability between the AWIN system and entities that maintain separate systems. A statewide effort using bridging equipment completed in May of 2012 allows state and local entities to operate and their separate systems but also be able to communicate with other first responders in the event of a multi-jurisdictional, or multi-disciplinary event. This system is also being used to establish interoperable communications with the State of Louisiana.

Vision and Mission

Overview of the interoperable communications vision and mission of the State:

The Arkansas Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) has a timeframe of **10 years (December 2007 – December 2017)**. The SCIP will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The goals developed during Arkansas's strategic planning session helped form the scope of work that the State plans to complete over the next 10 years. **The strategic initiatives within each goal are scheduled to be completed within the next five years.**

Vision: The State of Arkansas will lead the Nation in providing the ability for stakeholders to seamlessly exchange information on demand, in real time, and when needed in order to protect lives and property. Arkansas will achieve this vision by 2017.

Mission: The emergency response community will work collaboratively across disciplines, levels of government, and regions (including bordering States) to achieve Arkansas's interoperability vision. To do this, Department of Information Services (DIS), Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), and Arkansas State Police (ASP), in partnership with the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC), will help coordinate and provide resources to help the emergency response community pursue the goals, objects, and strategic initiatives in the SCIP.

Governance

Overview of the governance structure, practitioner-driven approaches, and funding:

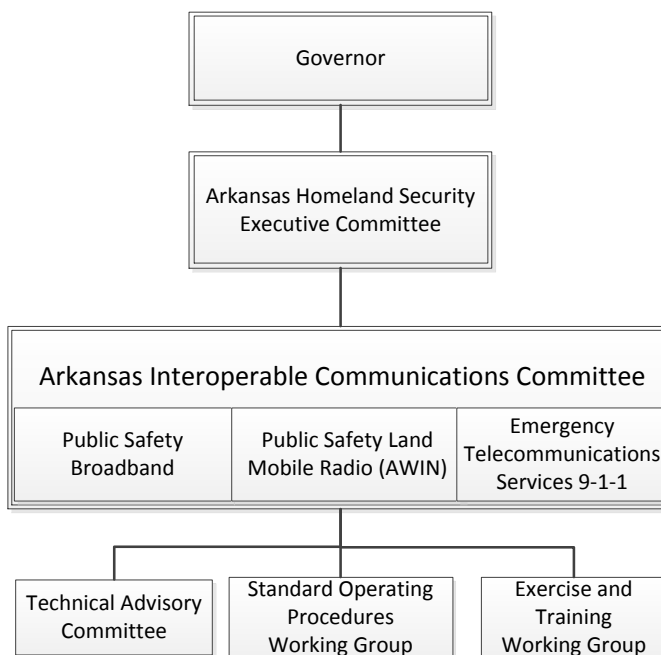
Arkansas recognizes the importance of governance. The State’s long-term goal to “continue to enhance cooperation amongst all stakeholders” represents the inclusion of a broad range of public safety disciplines, regions, and levels of government.

When developing the Arkansas SCIP, participants came together from a diverse group of public safety practitioners and stakeholders representing a cross-section of emergency response disciplines, regions, and levels of government within the State. These participants met during several stakeholder meetings and a single strategy session over a three month period, collectively using their varied skills and backgrounds to improve interoperability statewide. The result was a shared strategy to achieve interoperability across the State, a governance structure that will support the strategy’s implementation, and built-in support at every level.

ADEM and DIS used the existing governance structure for AWIN as a base from which to expand the input of local emergency response practitioners and key stakeholders. The resulting plan was built upward from the local level to the State level.

A variety of multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency agreements currently exist in Arkansas. State and local agencies use these agreements across a broad range of activities every day. ADEM measures compliance with NIMS on an annual basis to ensure that State and local public safety personnel have consistent approach to incident response.

Penny Rubow, Program Director of AWIN within DIS has been designated the Statewide Interoperable Communications Coordinator (SICW).



DIS is independent of any particular discipline and therefore is able to serve as a neutral facilitator within the diverse group of interests involved in statewide interoperability.

Penny Rubow, AWIN Program Director

Department of Information Services

Little Rock, AR 72203

501-682-5358

penny.rubow@arkansas.gov

Governance Initiatives

The AICC Executive Committee has established the following guiding principals in regards to governance of interoperable communications for Arkansas.

- Cooperation between all levels of government and all jurisdictions is critical for a successful interoperable communications program.
- The AICC Executive Committee will participate in relevant emergency response association meetings to inform members about topics and issues critical to interoperable communications.

The following table outlines the strategic governance initiatives, gaps, owners, and milestone dates Arkansas outlined in its SCIP to improve interoperable communications.

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started, On Hold)
G1-Ensure more effective communications with local elected officials by meeting in smaller groups. Hold at least two meetings in each Emergency Management Area.	AICEC/ADEM	12/2012	In Progress
G2- Educate decision makers and radio users of VHF/UHF narrowbanding requirements. Make this a topic of discussion during meetings with local officials described in G1.	AWIN	12/2012	In Progress

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started, On Hold)
G3- Develop Arkansas Field Operations Guide.	AICC WG	04/2011	In Progress
G4- Educate decision makers and radio users of 700 MHz narrowbanding requirements and the state's public safety broadband strategy when it's developed. Make this a topic of discussion during meetings with local officials described in G1	AICEC	12/2012	In Progress
G5 - Establish process to ensure that locals are keeping current lists of available alternate means of communications resources within their jurisdictions	ADEM	06/2012	Complete
G6 - Develop a strategy for addressing 700 MHz narrowbanding. Brief local officials.	AICC	06/2012	Complete
G7 - Incorporate COML personnel as part of the resources available for ESF2.	ADEM/DIS	06/2013	Not Started
G8 - Establish formal authority for the AICEC.	AICEC	06/2013	On Hold
G9 - Establish a funding subcommittee to coordinate with the Governor to identify options for a sustainable funding source to enhance interoperability.	AICC	06/2011	On Hold
G10 - Develop more participation by local members of the AICC. Invite additional county judges, County Sheriff's, and smaller municipalities.	AICC	06/2013	In Progress
G11 - Produce guidance regarding the	AWIN	12/2012	In Progress

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started, On Hold)
use of secured talkgroups on AWIN			
G12 - Ensure that the COML is included in the State's IMAT team.	AICC/ADEM	10/2011	On-Hold
G13 - Establish requirements for becoming a COML Trainer in Arkansas	ADEM	06/2013	Complete
G14 - Increase the use of MARS at the county and state level.	AICC	06/2013	In Progress
G15 - Develop shared talk groups with bordering States through emergency management for interoperable communications	AICC/AWIN	12/2012	In Progress
G16 - Develop process for inventory review in regards to equipment's end of life, change in technology and mandates. Provide this periodically to local officials and state agencies for budget planning.	DIS/AICC	06/2013	In Progress
G17 - Create a broadband working group (Arkansas Public Safety Broadband Network (APSBN) Working Group) with input from AICC by July 2012, to develop a plan, identify assets, and review RFPs	AICC	07/2012	Complete
G18 - Educate State, local, and county decision-makers about broadband, explaining the need, finances, and find funding for maintenance.	AICC	12/2015	In Progress
G19 - Stay abreast of developments from FirstNet group to align Arkansas plan to national public safety broadband planning efforts.	APSBN-WG	12/2015	In Progress
G20 - Coordinate planning for public	SWIC	12/2015	In Progress

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started, On Hold)
safety broadband with other States in the region/bordering States via NCSWIC organization			
G21 - Establish procurement policies for public safety communications equipment that comply with State/local requirements and codes	APSBN - WG	03/2014	Not Started

Standard Operating Procedures

Overview of the shared interoperable communications-focused SOPs.

The AICC formed a working group in 2009 to pursue the SOP initiative to ensure that all disciplines and regions had input to the process. The working group developed a standard template and a process for review and approval. AWIN staff worked with agencies during the pilot test of the template to ensure the usefulness of the template. ADEM rolled out the template statewide and continues to provide support to agencies completing the template. All agencies are required to comply with the SOPs that are developed and adopted by the AICC.

Executive Order 0403 established NIMS as the standard by which every incident in Arkansas is to be managed; all 77 emergency management jurisdictions have adopted NIMS. ADEM continues to conduct reviews of NIMS compliance across Arkansas against a baseline that was established in 2006. This on-going review provides information used to ensure that all SOPs are NIMS-compliant and that all SOPs comply with relevant Federal and State standards.

The participants in the State's three month strategic planning process created a long-term goal to "establish SOPs for all incidents from day-to-day to catastrophic events." While the initial timeframe of 12 months proved to be too little time to achieve this goal, Arkansas continues to work with agencies to develop SOPs that meet relevant Federal and State standards for all incidents to promote the adoption of a common process for responders to interoperate.

SOP Initiatives

The following general principals in regards to SOP's for interoperable communications for Arkansas are based on the SOP initiative discussed above.

- Public Safety organizations are encouraged to develop and maintain SOPs for all incidents from day-to-day to catastrophic events.
- Maintain an Emergency Communications Plan that bridges State agencies, local jurisdictions, and volunteer communication groups.
- Mutual Aid Channels are the corner stone of interoperability for Arkansas and should be incorporated into the SOP's for every discipline and every jurisdiction in the state.
- NIMS compliance should be evaluated on an annual basis.

The following table outlines the SOP strategic initiatives, gaps, owners, and milestone dates Arkansas outlined in its SCIP to improve interoperable communications.

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started)
S1- Develop SOPs and standard templates for the programming and use of State and national interoperability channels.	AICEC	10/2011	In Progress
S2 - Develop SOP for interoperable common terminology. Plain language common dictionary	AICC	06/2013	In Progress
S3 - Develop SOP on talkgroup use (talkgroup dragging)	AICC	06/2013	In Progress
S4 - Develop SOG to manage communications for large planned events, manage talkgroup use and send out notices for upcoming events. Planned events and then unplanned.	ADEM/AWIN	10/2012	Completed
S5 - Develop SOPs for public safety broadband features, functionality (applications) and limits that reflect FirstNet's guidance	ARSPB - WG	12/2014	Not Started
S6 - Develop PSBN SOPs on data and	ARSPB - WG	12/2014	Not Started

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started)
level of access allowed			
S7 - Develop SOPs on level of security for software applications and user access for the public safety broadband network	ARSPB - WG	12/2014	Not Started

Technology

Overview of the technology approaches, current capabilities, and planned systems:

Arkansas operates on one statewide shared radio system called AWIN. The radio system was originally designed to provide mobile radio frequency coverage throughout the State with emphasis placed on reception along interstates, highways, and roadways. Enhancements in the form of additional towers were made to the system in several areas throughout the State to improve portable coverage and increase capacity in areas that use AWIN as their primary radio system.

AWIN is a Motorola 700/800 MHz SmartZone 7.5, digital trunked P25 system that uses two zone controllers to manage trunking at 75 tower sites. Controllers are set up in a north and south support configuration and are located in separate geographical areas to provide protection against catastrophic failures. Most AWIN tower sites have five radio channels including the control channel. In areas with higher volumes of radio traffic, the number of available radio channels is increased to 17 channels to support additional radio traffic loading. AWIN has approximately 18,000 subscribers, primarily Motorola units.

Tower sites, dispatch centers, and master control sites are connected via a State-owned microwave backbone consisting of 109 tower sites. As part of the AWIN upgrade project, all of the State's analog data paths were upgraded to digital, allowing more efficient use of available bandwidth and support for multiplexing equipment. Arkansas understands the importance of interoperability for both data and voice. Arkansas currently has the capability to pass high-performance data over AWIN; the Little Rock and Fort Smith metropolitan areas have begun using this capability. The State also will include data as it implements the initiatives to increase the capacity of the statewide backbone and to provide backup capabilities during major

incident disaster recovery efforts.

The AWIN trunked radio system is the only statewide radio system available in the State. The decision to migrate to AWIN is left with each State and local agency and is primarily based on their needs and existing communications investments. The City of Fayetteville is currently in process of coming on to the system as a full time user and should be completely on AWIN in December of 2011. The city is adding one complete site to AWIN, and adding capacity to another site in support of their project. The City of Little Rock is finalizing plans to join AWIN and is expected to be on the system by mid-2013. This project will include a three site, thirty channel simulcast system that is fully integrated with AWIN. It is projected that by the end of 2013 17 of the 20 largest cities in the state will be using AWIN full-time.

Many State and local agencies maintain separate radio systems that support varying levels of interoperability with AWIN. There are 16 mutual aid talkgroups designated as “MAC Call” and “MAC 1 – MAC 15” available for use statewide. All AWIN users are required to have these mutual aid talkgroups programmed in their radios.

Arkansas used part of its Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) grant funding to bridge legacy systems with AWIN in key areas within the State. PSIC funds were also use to fund a statewide satellite radio system (ARSky) that provides for backup communications in the event that the AWIN system fails. Disaster recovery and continuity of operations concerns were addressed this year with the installation of a master site at the State Emergency Operations Center, and the establishment of a stand-by master site that can be place in service in 8 to 24 hours in the event of a catastrophic failure. Arkansas’s future interoperability plans include:

- Continued enhancement of the capacity of the statewide backbone.
- Identifying and implementing public safety broadband.

The following tables lists the major systems Arkansas and include those used for solely interoperable communications, large regional systems specifically designed to provide interoperability solutions, and large wireless data networks.

State System Name	Description	Status
AWIN	AWIN 700/800 MHz, P25	Existing

	compliant	
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Regional System Name	Description	Status
Little Rock 800 MHz System	Motorola Smart Net	Existing. Shared by a majority of agencies in the area.

Technology Initiatives

The AICC has identified the following general principles that drive Arkansas' technical strategy for interoperable communications.

- The State will keep abreast of new technologies for redundancy, disaster recovery, and continuity of operations to enhance, upgrade, or replace the current interoperability systems.
- The capacity of the AWIN system is paramount to ensuring adequate resources for all first responders. Capacity will be assessed regularly; shortfalls identified and additional capacity will be added as needed.

The following table outlines the technology strategic initiatives, gaps, owners, and milestone dates Arkansas outlined in its SCIP to improve interoperable communications.

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started, On Hold)
TE1- Secure 20 additional Mutual Aid Channels (MAC) and 10 secured MAC channels on AWIN.	ADEM	06/2013	In Progress
TE2- Complete development of and implement AWIN radio database.	DIS	06/2012	In Progress
TE3- Encourage local emergency coordinators to identify alternate communications resources within their jurisdictions (e.g., amateur radio, MARS, satellite phones, and other communications).	AICC	10/2011	In Progress
TE4- Develop a statewide public safety wireless broadband strategy that reflects	AICC WG	12/2012	In Progress

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status <i>(Complete, In Progress, Not Started, On Hold)</i>
Arkansas' requirements and needs as a rural state.			
TE5- Implement Over the Air Radio Programming on AWIN.	DIS	06/2014	On Hold (pending funding)

Training and Exercises

Overview of the diversity, frequency, and inter-agency coordination of training and exercises:

ADEM manages a training and exercise program for Arkansas's emergency management community. It maintains a training and exercise schedule for required and elective courses that meets Federal guidelines and conforms specifically to the requirements of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

Training

Training has been the largest initiative associated with NIMS since Executive Order 0403 established NIMS as the standard by which every incident in Arkansas is to be managed.

ADEM currently conducts training for new users on equipment usage and operations on behalf of AWIN. There is no other training available for interoperable communications in Arkansas beyond training on AWIN itself, which is viewed by many across the State as insufficient. Training is needed for all agencies that might become involved in a multi-agency response situation. Once the AICC adopts a set of SOPs, it will coordinate with ADEM to ensure that the training is incorporated in training and exercises for all emergency response personnel.

Exercises

While communications is an aspect of emergency response exercises taking place throughout the State, there are no communications-specific exercises. As these exercises are developed through SOPs adopted by AICC, they will be created by and for a cross-disciplinary and cross-regional membership.

Training and Exercises Initiatives

The AICC has identified the following general principles for Training and Exercises for interoperable communications.

- Exercises and Training should be cross disciplinary and cross regional in order to provide the greatest value for the state's first responder community.
- Training should be provided in a number of formats (in person, by video, one on one, etc)

The following table outlines the training and exercises strategic initiatives, gaps, owners, and milestone dates Arkansas outlined in its SCIP to improve interoperable communications.

Initiative	Owner	Milestone Date	Status (Complete, In Progress, Not Started)
TR1- Develop training on processes and the use of interoperability equipment, including bridging equipment.	DIS	12/2011	In Progress
TR2- Change certification requirements to recognize previously-trained COML instructors.	AICEC	10/2011	Not Started
TR3- Increase first responder participation across all disciplines during HSEEP exercises on an annual basis (post National Level Exercise).	ADEM	7/2012	Completed
TR4- Develop a strategy for training each agency and local jurisdiction on SOPs.	ADEM	10/2011	Not Started

Usage

Overview of the testing of equipment and promotion of interoperability solutions:

Arkansas is committed to ensuring that all practitioners are trained on, exercise with, and use available interoperability equipment and SOPs to the greatest extent possible as a step in the process of developing the SCIP.

Many local jurisdictions in Arkansas use varying interoperability systems on a day-to-day basis. The use of AWIN subscriber units by non-AWIN agencies is infrequent and only for large-scale

emergencies. Mutual aid is regularly used throughout Arkansas for day-to-day as well as larger events.

Usage Initiatives

The AICC has identified the following general principles for usage for interoperable communications.

- Usage should be tracked and analyzed by collecting after action reports from planned and unplanned events to identify areas for improvement.

No specific initiatives were developed for usage.

National Emergency Communications Plan Goals

The National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) established a national vision for the future state of emergency communications. The desired future state is that emergency responders can communicate as needed, on demand, and as authorized at all levels of government across all disciplines. To measure progress towards this vision, three strategic goals were established:

Goal 1—By 2010, 90 percent of all high-risk urban areas designated with the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)¹ are able to demonstrate response-level emergency communications² within one hour for routine events involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies.

Goal 2—By 2011, 75 percent of non-UASI jurisdictions are able to demonstrate response-level emergency communications within one hour for routine events involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies.

Goal 3—By 2013, 75 percent of all jurisdictions are able to demonstrate response level emergency communications within three hours, in the event of a significant incident as outlines in national planning scenarios.

As part of the Goal 1 implementation process, OEC required UASIs to demonstrate response-level emergency communications during a planned event. Additionally, as part of the State's SCIP Implementation Report update in 2010, OEC is requiring information on UASIs' current capabilities. The capability questions are presented in Part II. UASIs must complete and submit

¹ As identified in FY08 Homeland Security Grant Program

² Response-level emergency communication refers to the capacity of individuals with primary operational leadership responsibility to manage resources and make timely decisions during an incident involving multiple agencies, without technical or procedural communications impediments.

responses on the capability questions to the SWIC or SCIP POC. The data generated from these questions will assist OEC in its analysis of Goal 1 performance and in identifying national trends in urban area communications. Similarly, to prepare for Goal 2 implementation in 2011, States are being asked to develop a methodology for collecting capability and performance data Statewide (please see Part III).

Part 2 - County Communications Interoperability Capabilities Assessment Grid

The Capabilities Assessment Grids were completed by the counties in Arkansas and were submitted to the SWIC in 2011. The outcomes were reflected in the NECP Goal 2 Implementation Report.