April 2015

The NPSTC Support Office provides reports to the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) and the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) highlighting the recent achievements of NPSTC's Committees and Working Groups. This brief is intended to keep the NPSTC Governing Board members up to date on NPSTC's ongoing efforts to improve public safety communications and interoperability.

Interoperability Committee The Interoperability Committee met on April 28 to hear updates from their Working Groups: Border Issues, Radio Interoperability Best Practices, Common Channel Naming, 700 MHz Deployable Trunked Systems, and Emergency Medical Service (EMS). The meeting included a synopsis of the Common Channel Naming report that is currently in final editing for presentation to the NPSTC Board and a lengthy discussion on the issues, challenges, and potential directions moving forward for the newly transferred 700 MHz Deployable Trunked Systems, as well as a general update on the recent D.C. Metro incident pending release of the final report.

Radio Interoperability Best Practices Working Group: Radio programming at the scene of a large scale incident is a challenge. NPSTC is developing a set of best practices for radio programming, to include programming guidelines, verification, testing, and training. **UPDATE**: This group met on April 9. There were also meetings of the smaller sub-groups that are developing the individual Best Practice Statements and reviewing sections of the report that will accompany the statements when they are published. Best Practices #1 and #2 contributions are complete and being developed into a presentation for the NPSTC Governing Board. A new Best Practice #13 addressing Encryption has been added to the original list. The group continues to meet in an altered meeting schedule that has been developed to allow simultaneous concentrated efforts by small groups focusing on the report and the remaining 11 Best Practice Statements assigned to individual members of the group for initial build-out and presentation to the entire group.

Border Issues Working Group: This group meets on a recurring basis to review cross border public safety communications issues, and monitor and recommend positions on frequency coordination and interoperability with Mexico and Canada. **UPDATE**: The Working Group met on April 7. The group continues outreach efforts to distribute the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG)-NPSTC Cross Border Communications Report white paper to the list of organizations, agencies, governing bodies, and entities originally identified with the request that recipients forward it to any interested parties. It has also been picked up by several media outlets, generating extensive interest and conversation, all very positive. Representatives of the group presented the report at the CITIG Regional Meeting and at the Canada – U.S. (CANUS) Bi-National CIWG Meeting in Washington, D.C. on April 29.

Channel Naming Working Group: The Channel Naming Working Group is modifying the existing standard to include new 700 MHz air-to-ground channels. Three projects are underway: Identification of standardized channel names for 700 MHz interoperable air to ground frequencies; identification of channel names for additional 700 MHz interoperability frequencies; and creation of a best practices guide for naming state designated interoperability channels. **UPDATE:** The Common Channel Naming Working Group met on April 16 to incorporate comments received during the review process and give final group approval on the APCO ANSI Channel Naming Standard 2015 document. The report is now in the final formatting and editing process and will be presented to the NPSTC Governing Board in early May for approval before distribution to APCO for the vetting process.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Working Group: The EMS Working Group meets monthly to review issues impacting public safety communications in the Emergency Medical Services arena. Narrowband voice and broadband data issues are discussed and the group recently completed an EMS Broadband Applications list for the FirstNet Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC). **UPDATE**: The EMS Working Group met on April 2 and 30 to continue work on the current Video Use in EMS project. The meeting included a presentation on the use of EMS video in prehospital situations, centering on technical and policy challenges to efficient enforcement. The *NPSTC EMS Telemedicine Questionnaire - Assessing the Impact of Prehospital Video,* published on March 26 to gather input from public safety and EMS stakeholders as part of the group's research was closed on April 24 with 679 responses. A preliminary breakdown and overview of the results was provided to the group during the April 30 meeting. A full report will be provided to the NPSTC Governing Board in May, following more detailed analysis by staff. The data will be examined to see if there is a difference between how EMS plans to use video and how hospitals and physicians view these new broadband services. The report will also examine the impact of non-live video streams, including the transmission of video clips and still images.

Spectrum Management Committee: The Spectrum Management Committee met on April 10. A review of items currently pending with the FCC was provided along with updates from the groups under their umbrella including the NPSTC Interference Protection Working Group, a new group. Initial projects for the group include addressing the LED Lighting Interference Survey results and the FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding full power, interstitial 12.5 kHz "offset" channels in the 809-817/854-862 MHz band.

FirstNet Second Public Notice: On March 9, 2015, FirstNet approved a Second Public Notice, subsequently published in the Federal Register. Comments on the Second Public Notice were due April 28, 2015. The Spectrum Management Committee reviewed the complex 60-page Second Public Notice, summarized the issues on which comments were being sought, and prepared some initial bullet point recommendations for NPSTC comments. The summary and initial recommendations will be discussed by the NPSTC Executive Committee and the outcome of that discussion will provide guidance on which the Spectrum Management Committee will draft comments for Governing Board approval and submission to FirstNet. In general, NPSTC agreed with many assumptions offered by FirstNet regarding device and network connectivity. NPSTC also expressed the need for FirstNet to provide state governments with a comprehensive plan prior to asking that they enter into a contract for services.

FirstNet Third Public Notice: FirstNet released a Third Public Notice seeking additional input on the phrase "public safety entity." NPSTC is currently reviewing this notice to determine what additional input may be warranted.

FirstNet Draft RFP: FirstNet released the Draft RFP on April 29 which includes more than 266 pages of material. FirstNet is seeking feedback from public safety and industry on the draft RFP and associated business plan assumptions. NPSTC has begun to review the RFP.

FCC Proposal to Eliminate Field Offices: NPSTC learned of an FCC proposal to eliminate over two-thirds of its field offices as part of its proposed FY2016 budget. Personnel in the field offices investigate interference, including interference to public safety communications. The Spectrum Management Committee drafted some points of concern regarding the proposed field office closures. NPSTC, along with representatives from the broadcast and commercial carrier industries, will be participating in discussions with FCC personnel to express concerns about the proposal. NPSTC has prepared a report which outlines important interaction and field support by the FCC to assist public safety agencies with interference issues

700 MHz Deployable Channel Selection Task Group: The FCC encouraged the National Regional Planning Council (NRPC) and NPSTC to identify specific Reserve Channels to support deployable trunked systems on a nationwide basis that can be incorporated into regional plans within 3 months from the publication of the 700 MHz Report and Order in the Federal Register which occurred on December 2, 2014. NPSTC has established a joint Work Group with NRPC to identify eight deployable channels. Other challenges will be to standardize a system ID for deployables and guidance to minimize interference for close spaced incidents. **UPDATE**: This Task Group met on April 9 and 23. The

FCC has approved the final channel assignments as recommended by the group for nationwide deployable channels. The group has transitioned from the Spectrum Committee to the Interoperability Committee as discussion continues regarding issues to be addressed in the operational requirements/guidelines section of the project including system naming, how to handle adjoining systems and changes to the standard among other topics.

Technology and Broadband Committee: The Technology and Broadband Committee met on April 15 to hear updates from the Local Control Working Group, the Deployable Systems Working Group, the Priority and Quality of Service Working Group, the Radio Programming Compatibility Requirements Working Group, and the Video Technology Advisory Group. Additional information was provided regarding the FirstNet Second Public Notice and the status of several other topics being considered by the FCC. Members were advised the Project 25 Compliance Assessment Program (P25 CAP) website is now operational with posted questions that are still open for comment.

Priority & Quality of Service (P&QoS) Working Group: The P&QoS is refreshing the 2012 NPSTC Report regarding Priority & QoS issues in public safety LTE and is also examining the impact of technological improvements that have occurred in the past 2 years. The P&QoS consists of nearly 50 volunteers from the first responder and industry community. **UPDATE:** The entire P&QoS Working Group met on April 8 and 22 to resume work on their original project. Sub-groups who have volunteered to develop individual chapters of the final report also met individually throughout the month. The group chair met on April 14, 21, and 28 with the Chairs of the Deployable Systems Working Group to discuss overlapping areas of concern between their individual projects to reach a consensus on recommendations. A presentation was given to the FirstNet Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) on April 1 detailing the work of the P&QOS group. The presentation included a review of P&QOS issues, and articulated a framework for public safety priority capabilities. The presentation generated a great deal of interest and conversation by PSAC members. The information within the presentation was given approval for distribution beyond the PSAC and has been posted on the NPSTC website with the note that it is an interim update focused specifically on a set of issues that the PSAC is reviewing for FirstNet and should not be viewed as a comprehensive report on P&QoS.

Local Control Working Group: This Local Control Working Group is refreshing the 2012 NPSTC Local Control Report on public safety issues with LTE deployments. The group consists of over 50 volunteers from the first responder and industry community. **UPDATE:** The Local Control Working Group met on April 1, 15, and 29. Submissions to the report by individual members were presented and discussed by the group. Comments are currently being incorporated into the document for publication tentatively in July.

LTE Deployable Assets Working Group: This LTE Deployable Asset is a joint effort of DHS and Canada's Centre for Security Science to study public safety LTE deployable assets that will operate along jurisdictional boundaries. **UPDATE:** The group met on April 14, 21, and 28. Presentations were given by various vendors to educate the group on the array of deployable technology that is available. An Operational Requirements Spreadsheet is being developed to accompany the final report. Individuals within the group have adopted a set of existing broadband documents to review which may impact the completed use cases. These use cases are a baseline component for the report. The review teams will also be noting requirements relevant to the group that are not included in the current set of use cases.

LTE Global Standards: The Open Mobile Alliance (OMA) hosted a meeting in Montreal in 2014 to discuss the standards process for voice operations. TETRA Critical Communications Association (TCCA), TCCE, and PSCR were present and agreed that all standards development should be done within 3GPP. OMA will finalize their work and submit it to 3GPP. There was a 3GPP meeting held in Scotland to organize the process where participants created a new working group, SA6, within 3GPP, which will be the home for public safety applications. 3GPP Release 13 is still focused on mission critical voice PTT and Release 14 will focus on mission critical data, looking at specific services such as mission critical video. Any unfinished work from Release 13 will carry over into Release 14; both intended to be complete by 2016. **UPDATE**: The new SA6 Working Group has established a web portal on the 3GPP website that

will include all information on public safety activities. OMA has provided a release allowing 3GPP to incorporate OMA's work on push-to-talk standards, which may become the basis for public safety mission critical voice operations. An SA6 meeting is planned for May 25-29.

Radio Programming Compatible Requirements (Radio PCR) Working Group: The Radio PCR Working Group is focused on the impact to public safety agencies caused by the mandatory use of dissimilar radio programming software systems in the P25 environment. The group includes several public safety radio system vendors and public safety stakeholders. The Radio PCR Programming and Management (PAM) Tool has been created to normalize the disparate naming conventions used by each manufacturer. This tool provides information to help agencies program P25 radios from different vendors and will also help with the programming of multi-vendor P25 radios at the scene of a large-scale incident. **UPDATE:** The group met on April 2 to receive an update on revisions to the new version of the PAM tool and to discuss progress on interest from DHS. A letter was sent to DHS S&T on April 3 addressing questions related to the possibility of automating the PAM tool to better assist the first responder community and a vision of the PAM Tool project moving forward. Work continues on enhancements for the new version's scheduled distribution, including work on upgrades which will allow customer entered data to be easily migrated into subsequent versions of the PAM tool.

VTAG Working Group: The Video Technology Advisory Group on April 22 to hear an update on current activity in the DHS Video Quality in Public Safety (VQiPS) Working Group and their new Policy Committee. Information was distributed regarding the upcoming VQiPS Workshop in June and the recent Telemedicine Questionnaire Survey conducted by the Emergency Medical Working Group which garnered a large number of responses regarding the use of video in the EMS environment.

NG9-1-1/FirstNet Task Group: This Task Group is co-chaired by APCO and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and is creating a two-page outreach document which provides a high level overview of the interaction between the new NG9-1-1 network and the FirstNet public safety broadband network. **UPDATE**: A draft document has been created document has been circulated to the Task Team for review and comment. This information will be presented to the NPSTC Governing Board at the May meeting in Washington D.C. and final edits will be incorporated into the report.