Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State Interoperability Executive Committee
Charter
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Introduction

It is necessary for public safety organizations to communicate or share critical voice or data information with other jurisdictions in day-to-day operations, natural disasters, emergency response scenarios, and terrorist incidents. Failure to accomplish the mission in each situation can result in the loss of lives and property.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) is committed to cooperatively addressing the challenge of communications interoperability. This document describes the purpose, authority, outcomes, operating principles, membership, and management by which the SIEC will achieve success.

Purpose

The SIEC exists to address the challenges facing interdisciplinary communications across multiple jurisdictions and levels of government. It was established to create a centralized interoperable communications planning and implementation capacity for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) has been charged, through the direction of the Secretary of Public Safety and Security, whose office serves as the State Administrative Agency (SAA) for Homeland Security grants, with developing a five-year plan for enhancing interoperable communications in the Commonwealth. The SIEC shall advise the Secretary, and the Office of Interoperable Communications through the State Interoperability Coordinator, on matters of interoperable communications in the Commonwealth.

This committee provides a forum for each jurisdiction and/or agency to discuss related public safety communications initiatives that may or may not impact the work of this committee. This helps ensure individual projects have an opportunity to align with the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP).

The SIEC has developed and approved the following vision for interoperability in the Commonwealth:

> **"Stakeholders optimally share critical information in a rapid, efficient, simple, reliable, and sustainable way utilizing a variety of video, voice and data technologies by following common protocols."**

To move this vision forward, the Statewide Communications Interoperability Executive Committee has established the following as its mission:

> **"Develop, implement and oversee common approaches, strategies, plans and procedures to achieve day- to-day communications interoperability between all stakeholders. This mission will be accomplished through best practices, common procedures, allocation of necessary resources, and training and exercising."**

Authority

This committee has the authority to evaluate the state of both current and emerging communications interoperability in Massachusetts, create a plan for statewide communications interoperability, oversee implementation of the plan, and develop appropriate policies, procedures, and guidelines. Therefore;

- This committee can make recommendations to help direct the use of Homeland Security grants through the SAA, and other appropriate grants and funds, that seek to improve public safety communications and interoperability in the Commonwealth.
- This committee can make recommendations to the Office of Interoperability, through the State Interoperability Coordinator, to help direct the implementation of interoperable communications programs in the Commonwealth.
- This committee shall continue to work to identify additional sources of funding allotted through cross-discipline and cross-jurisdictional coordination and collaboration.
- The members of the committee are appointed or designated in accordance with the directives of Executive Order 493, and though individual members may represent one particular discipline within a jurisdiction, region or agency; they will represent the overall interests of all disciplines in the jurisdiction or region while serving on the committee.

Outcomes

The desired outcomes that the committee will accomplish are listed below:

- Utilize the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP), the SCIP Action Plan, and the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) as a framework to better understand the current baselines of

communications interoperability, and to implement each step towards interoperability in the Commonwealth, with our neighbor states, and federal partners.

- Task necessary working groups to identify and recommend technologies, operating procedures and other resources that will enhance the communications interoperability capability in the Commonwealth.
- Create a Statewide Communications Interoperability Strategy, Spending Plan, and bridge Regional Plans with the statewide strategy.
- Manage implementation of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) and the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP).
- Create statewide best practices, policies, procedures, and protocols for communications interoperability and incorporate them with existing local, regional, state, inter-state and national interoperability agreements and standards.
- Establish training baselines and ensure the training of key communications personnel—especially dispatchers and dispatch center supervisors as well as technical communications support staff.
- Ensure training opportunities supporting communications interoperability are available to all necessary and authorized public safety practitioners.

Operating Principles

The SIEC will govern the implementation of the statewide plan using the following operating principles:

- Consider the unique needs of each jurisdiction and region, recognizing and respecting these needs, and work to bridge the needs of the state and regional interoperability plans.
- Maintain an interdisciplinary focus.
- Reach out and engage subject matter experts and stakeholders to support the identified areas of interest to the SIEC.
- Use a balanced and phased approach to interoperability.
- Ensure the strategic initiatives work within the SCIP goals and strategies.
- Identify matters within the SIEC's purview, apply resources toward those matters, and reach out in areas where the SIEC may be able to assist.

- Keep in mind the needs of front line personnel who depend on interoperable communications to protect and serve the public.
- Work to achieve a balance between governance, operating procedures, technology, training and usage as articulated in the SafeCom Interoperability Continuum.
- Distribute responsibilities of managing communications interoperability so that it does not rest on any one individual, agency, or technology.
- Ensure a collaborative approach in dealing with the issue where both state and statewide interests are represented.
- Align regional and/or state systems to create a system-of-systems approach.
- Use plain English to eliminate confusion or misunderstanding.
- Speak with one voice when reporting externally.
- Maintain the sense of urgency, and remember lessons learned that past disasters, such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, have brought to the issue of interoperability.
- Keep the issue of communications interoperability on the forefront in our jurisdictions, and continue to educate our elected and appointed officials as administrations change.
- Consider security needs during the planning of future communications solutions.

Membership

The following table outlines the jurisdictions/disciplines and the respective members that will represent this committee per Executive Order 493:

Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee Membership
Voting Members (29)
Secretary – Executive Office of Public Safety and Security

Secretary – Transportation and Public Works
Secretary – Energy and Environmental Affairs
Commissioner – Public Health
Chief Information Officer of the Commonwealth
Executive Director – Criminal History Systems Board
Executive Director – Statewide 911 Department
Director – Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
Adjutant General – Massachusetts National Guard
Director – Massachusetts Office of Business Development
Chair – Western Massachusetts Homeland Security Council
Chair – Central Massachusetts Homeland Security Council
Chair – Northeastern Massachusetts Homeland Security Council
Chair – Southeast Massachusetts Homeland Security Council
Chair – Metro Boston Homeland Security Region (UASI)
Colonel – State Police
State Fire Marshall
Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association
Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association
Massachusetts Municipal Association
Local Emergency Service Providers (EMS)
Local Health Officials
Local Transportation Agencies (to include DPW)
Local Emergency Management Agencies
Public Safety Dispatch Communications
Non-Governmental Charitable Organizations
State Legislators
Tribal Government
Relevant Federal Agencies

- Members shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years. If, in the course of a term, the appointed official changes, the appointed officials or designee shall continue to serve in their seat until the appointed official changes the designee, in writing, to the Chair of the SIEC.

- The Secretary of Public Safety and Security, as the Chair of the SIEC, may make recommendations to the Governor on the appointments of those SIEC seats, pursuant to Executive Order 493, that are not defined by an individual's role, but rather defined by an association or particular stakeholder group.

- Where applicable, the SIEC shall conduct meetings in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meetings Law.

- The officers of the SIEC shall be a Chair. Future officer positions will be determined and approved by the SIEC.

- All officers must be voting members of the SIEC.

- Besides the Chair (who is determined by Executive Order 493), other officers shall be elected by the members at their first meeting and, thereafter, officer elections be held every two (2) years at the end of the year.

- The officers shall hold office until the meeting held within two (2) years from the adoption of this charter or until their successor, if any, is chosen or in each case until he or she sooner dies, resigns, is removed, or becomes disqualified.

- Each appointed member shall have one (1) equal vote on the SIEC.

- Voting members are to be responsible for representing their jurisdiction/region/state agency. Under the guidance of Executive Order 493, the named voting member may choose to have a designee from their organization to serve on the SIEC in their place, representing the jurisdiction/region/state agency. This designee's name and position must be submitted, in writing, to the Chair of the SIEC.

- A voting member, or their designee, may submit a single alternate member, who may serve as a voting member in the absence of the voting member or designee. The name and position of the alternate must be submitted, in writing, to the Chair of the SIEC prior to the alternate making any vote on the SIEC. Without such prior notification, the alternate's vote will not count when determining if a quorum has been established or be allowed to participate in votes during the meeting.

- The committee may add ad hoc members as necessary. These members may come from local (including surrounding jurisdictions), regional, state, tribal, or Federal public safety agencies or planning organizations. An ad-hoc member may sit on the committee on a temporary basis as needed.

- Every effort should be made by SIEC members and their alternates to assure the public that no conflicts of interest exist in the management of

SIEC business and that those cases that do occur from time to time shall be disclosed to the SIEC chair and that appropriate action have been taken to avoid and abstain from conflict of interest situations. The general standard of conduct is to avoid any action that might result in or create the appearance of using public office for private gain; or giving preferential treatment to anyone; or impeding governmental efficiency or economy; or the loss of independence and impartiality in the decision-making process; or making decision outside of the official decision-making process; or creating a lack of public confidence in the integrity of the SIEC.

- In voting on any issue the member must identify himself/herself and the agency which he/she represents. A member may not vote on issues that directly impact the entity or grant money toward the entity, of the agency they represent and/or are employed by.

Decision Making

The SIEC will use the following measures when deliberating or making decisions:

- Each jurisdiction/region (appointed seat) has one (1) vote to be cast by its voting member. If the voting member is unable to attend, the named alternate voting member may cast the vote for the jurisdiction/region.

- The SIEC will utilize Roberts Rules of Order for deliberation at its meetings and sub committee meetings.

- Simple majority rules. All decisions and recommendations approved by a simple majority will be considered a decision or recommendation of the committee when presented to the EOPSS for consideration. As much as possible, the majority opinion will be reflected.
- Committee members are free to express to their authorizing body or office how they voted/stood on the position.
- A two-thirds majority vote is required for charter amendments.
- Committee members will be held accountable through their authorizing body or office. The authorizing body or office has the final decision in all matters related to committee participation
- Decisions and recommendations of the committee will be reported to the authorizing body or office through the committee chair.
- This committee will report status, actions, and recommendations to a larger audience through following a communications plan developed in

partnership with EOPSS management. This communications plan will be developed independent of this charter.

COMMITTEES OF THE SIEC

- The SIEC shall have an Executive Management Committee, three (3) Standing Committees, and may, as needed, create other Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Recognizing the need for governance, leadership, and the expedient implementation of business, the SIEC shall have an Executive Management Committee.
- The Executive Management Committee shall be responsible and accountable for aligning over-arching interoperability strategies and plans, and maintaining fiduciary and fiscal compliance so business continues in an expedient and efficient manner.
- The Executive Management Committee shall be composed of nine (9) members: the five (5) designees of the Homeland Security Regions, the three (3) Chairs of the Standing Committees of the SIEC, and the Chair of the SIEC. The Chair of the SIEC shall also Chair the Executive Management Committee.
- The Executive Management Committee quorum for voting shall consist of at least five (5) of the nine (9) voting members.
- Each Member of the Executive Management Committee shall have one equal vote, pursuant to the business of the Executive Management Committee. Should any vote reach a tie, the Chair of the SIEC shall cast the tie-breaking vote.
- If the SIEC does not reach a quorum in their regular meetings, and thus cannot vote on a particular piece of business, the Executive Management Committee may, for the purpose of expedient and efficient continuation of business, vote on the matter.
- The SIEC may relegate an issue or topic to the Executive Management Committee for a vote, in the case of dispute resolution, finance resolution, budget alignment or other such topics.

STANDING COMMITTEES

- The SIEC shall have three (3) Standing Committees, each composed of voting members of the SIEC. In order to maximize input from stakeholders, Advisory members may be appointed by the Chair of the SIEC, who are not SIEC-members, but only SIEC members shall vote.
- The three (3) Standing Committees of the SIEC shall be: the Radio Frequency (RF) Communications Standing Committee, the Data Communications Standing Committee, and the Operations Standing Committee.
- Upon establishment of Standing Committees, the voting members shall cast a ballot suggesting to the Chair of the SIEC the appointment of the Standing Committee's Chairperson. The Standing Committee Chairperson shall oversee the Standing Committee's operation and serve on the Executive Management Committee of the SIEC representing the interest of their group.

WORKING GROUPS

- The SIEC, Executive Management Committee, and/or Standing Committees may, from time-to-time, create Working Groups of subject matter experts to provide input towards certain phases or projects of interoperable communications.
- Working Groups may be composed of both SIEC and non-SIEC members for the purpose of providing subject matter expertise in a particular area. All recommendations of Working Groups shall serve as recommendations communicated to the Chairs of the respective SIEC, Executive Management Committee or Standing Committee by which they formed.

Logistics

- The SIEC will meet on a minimum quarterly basis in order to promulgate the statewide communications interoperability plan. The SIEC may also decide to meet as necessary to implement the initiatives set forth in the plan.

- The committee will meet at locations arranged by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, through the Office of Interoperability.

Signatures

Role	Signature	Printed Name	Date