

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: CACP Executive

SUBJECT: Update on CITIG and "Joint" Resolution on Improving Public Safety Interoperability 2008-001

BACKGROUND

In early 2007, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP), Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) and Emergency Medical Services Chiefs of Canada (EMSCC) joined forces with the Canadian Police Research Centre (CPRC) to create the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG), an initiative that brings together representatives from public safety, industry, academia, government and non-governmental organization to collectively shape the future of Canadian public safety interoperability.

Since its inception, CITIG has made significant strides in raising awareness about one of the single most important issues facing first responders' today — public safety provider interoperability. In particular, the CITIG has created forums for the exchange of information and ideas and facilitated communications amongst Canadian public safety interoperability stakeholders.

Recent accomplishments

- Over 300 individuals have registered to become members of CITIG, primarily through the CITIG Web site at www.cprc.org/citig.
- The CITIG has become a forum for stakeholders to contribute their knowledge and expertise to the development of an "Interoperability Roadmap" for Canada. Funding from Public Safety Canada will enable the creation of a DRAFT Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan by March 31, 2009.
- As a result of research funding from the Canadian Police Research Centre, significant improvements to the state of interoperability in Canada's public safety sector have been realized.
- Eight regional CITIG Forums were held in Toronto, St. John's, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Saskatchewan and Moncton and Montreal.

- A very successful National Voice Interoperability Workshop was held in March 2008 in Ottawa selling out with 171 delegates from across Canada, the US and as far away as Australia.
- A Vendor Outreach Forum (VOF) was held at the Toronto Conventions Centre on October 8 and 9, 2008, in partnership with the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance (www.cata.ca). The Forum, with speakers from a broad spectrum of Public Safety, addressed all aspects of interoperability (voice, data, emergency management, in building location, etc.).
- CITIG is the first organization to become an international member of the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) in the United States.
- CITIG has now won both National and International awards (Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association & International Association of Chiefs of Police).
- With our partners from the CAFC and EMSCC, drafted a "joint" Resolution titled "Improving Public Safety Voice Communications Interoperability."

Follow-up to Passing of the Joint Resolution

The Joint Resolution was passed by all three Associations at their respective Annual General Meetings. EMSCC in Victoria last May, CAFC in Yellowknife this September and, of course, CACP in Montreal in August.

Since that time a great deal of work has transpired with CITIG, CPRC and Public Safety Canada (PS) continuing to take leadership roles.

Between October 20th to 24th, 2008 these organizations partnered to bring approximately 20 first responders from EMS, fire, police, provincial agencies and federal departments to begin developing the Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan (see further details below).

In order to make this "first of its kind" Workshop take place, PS developed a lengthy Statement of Work (SOW) and ensured that the best possible facilitators were identified and contracted to manage the sessions. CITIG identified subject matter experts from coast to coast to coast while CPRC funded and managed their travel and living contracts.

While this was happening a small working group, again from all partner agencies and associations (CACP, CAFC, EMSCC, CPRC, PS, and CITIG) began planning the Second National Voice Interoperability Workshop. The Workshop will take place December 7th to 10th in Toronto. As at November 21st, 2008 there were 190 registered delegates and it is expected to sell out at the 200 delegate mark.

Joint Resolution Signing Ceremony – December 8th, 2008, Royal York Hotel

A media event is currently being planned during the Second National Voice Interoperability Workshop, December 7th to 10th at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto. The Presidents of the CACP, CAFC and EMSCC have all confirmed their attendance. In addition, the new Minister of Public Safety, The Honourable Peter Van Loan, PC, has been invited to participate in the short ceremony. As at November 21st we had not yet heard back from his office if he will be able to take part.

The signing of this Joint Resolution is a major step towards our desire to improve public safety interoperability

The National Workshop itself will feature the unveiling of the first draft of the Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan among other highlights. The Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan was developed in concert with Public Safety Canada and the media event would be a unique opportunity to announce this very positive first step toward a cohesive and cooperative approach to Canadian public safety interoperability across multiple disciplines.

CONCLUSION

Public Safety Canada, the Canadian Police Research Centre and the Communications Interoperability Technical Interest Group remain committed to enhancing Communications Interoperability for all emergency responders and acknowledge that much work still needs to be done.

By working together with our partners from the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs and Emergency Medical Services Chiefs of Canada, we were successful in sheparding the approval by all three Associations of the "Improving Public Safety Voice Communications Interoperability."

Since that time, and no doubt in part as a result of this new found collaborative spirit amongst the Associations, we now have a DRAFT Canadian Communications Interoperability Plan. Clearly this is just the first step in a lengthy process that, by its very nature, requires input, feedback and expanded support from all levels of government remains paramount in achieving this vision. In particular, next steps including working with the Canadian Council of Emergency Measures Organizations (CCEMO) and the Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM), the key Federal, Provincial, Territorial (FPT) group that leads emergency management issues.

Having said that, one of the CCIP's primary goals is to improve daily interoperability between public safety partners. The rationale here is that if we can accomplish interoperability on a daily, non "emergency" basis, our ability to work together in major incidents and disasters will be greatly enhanced.

Moving forward, we are confident that, by working together, we can better serve our communities in improving public safety interoperability both in Canada and with our US Partners.

Prepared by:

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Dated: 21 November 2008