

# MONTHLY UPDATE



## DIRECT FROM DANA

Where is summer going? Seems like the last of the snow just melted, the days are already getting shorter, and there is a chill in the morning air. Looking back on our 2020 progress plan, the “unplanned” has certainly taken precedence over anything that had previously been identified as a “planned” activity. Similar to what all of you have been experiencing, the Emergency Communication Networks (ECN) team continues to react and realign priorities to respond to needs that erupt during these unprecedented times.

After learning COVID-19 would not permit us to host our quarterly in person Regional Leadership Meeting in July, we strived to find an abbreviated, yet productive, alternative. We were pleased to have more than 60 attendees participate in our first virtual stakeholder engagement sessions on July 27. We hosted a two-hour morning session, repeating that with a two-hour evening session. In addition to providing a brief ECN update, the focus of these sessions centered on Improvement Planning and Strategic Planning. Anticipating we will remain in isolation through the end of the year, our fourth quarter Regional Leadership Meeting will likely follow this same virtual format on October 26. Mark your calendars!

Many of our successes in Minnesota’s public safety arena have been the direct result of networking together and meeting face-to-face, with the pre and post-meeting informal conversations garnering as much productivity as the actual meeting. We all miss this interaction and look forward to being able to reconvene in person; however during the interim, it is essential we embrace meeting virtually in the interest of keeping the programs for all four of our emergency communication networks moving forward. The situations we are encountering in Minnesota and across the nation exemplify the need for robust, reliable and sophisticated platforms for 9-1-1, land mobile radio, wireless broadband and integrated public alert and warning. Together, we are smarter than any one of us individually and we must continue to work together toward our common goals.

Speaking of common goals, our next three-year strategic planning session is right around the corner. In sync with the prior two rounds of strategic planning, our statewide two-day session will occur at the end of March or early April 2021. The Steering Committee already has this initiative on its radar. Commissioner Irene Fernando, chair of the Steering Committee, attended both stakeholder engagement sessions on July 27 and addressed the desire to host regional strategic planning sessions in advance of the statewide session. This is in response to five regions identifying regional strategic planning as a priority. Judy Plante, professional facilitator and the facilitator for both of our previous strategic planning sessions, is looking forward to incorporating regional strategic planning sessions as the pre-cursor for the 2021 statewide session. The costs associated with facilitating the regional and the state strategic planning will be supported by ECN. With guidance from the Steering Committee, ECN has already met with Judy Plante. She is developing an appropriate format for meeting virtually with each of the regions, supported by their respective Regional Interoperability Coordinator (RIC), and with the ECN team to prioritize their respective needs in order to better aggregate those individual priorities into a single statewide plan. Stay tuned for more information as this plan comes together.



August 2020

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## 9-1-1

The job posting to fill the 9-1-1 Program Manager position closed on August 14. We hope to receive a pool of qualified and enthusiastic candidates who have an interest in leading and managing our 9-1-1 program going forward.

We hope to be nearing the finish line for announcing the request for proposal (RFP) for professional and technical consulting services for continued support for Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) migration. Our previous contract expired in April 2020. We are eager to have this RFP awarded and a team of subject matter experts on board to support us for the next five years.

OnStar is offering an enhancement to its telematics services previously limited to GM vehicles. Please watch [YouTube video](#) for the most updated information about the new OnStar Guardian mobile app.

ECN is very close to making a formal aware to a prospective vendor interested in managing our Ingress Networking Rehoming (in accordance with the specifications defined within our RFP) after many weeks of comprehensive contract negotiations.

RapidDeploy continues to be evaluated by Minnesota regions for usability. We are actively preparing for participation from several regions by developing the authoritative location connectivity, as well as negotiating installation of necessary equipment to support the efforts. It is our expectation that this tool will be in service late in the third quarter of 2020, with more active installations as requested.

### GIS

The NG9-1-1 Program's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team continues to make progress on the new communication website. The goal is to create a one stop location for the Minnesota NG9-1-1 GIS Program. Content will be available for the public, stakeholders and local data providers. The focus of the initial release will be public content such as a status dashboard. This site will help address the level of community engagement and

transparency the program delivers for the state. No release date was available at the time of this newsletter.

The NG9-1-1 Program is collating responses to the feedback received during the review of the Minnesota NG9-1-1 GIS Implementation Roadmap. The responses will be rolled up into the Roadmap, where applicable. In addition, all responses will be available in a separate document. These documents will be available on the communication website mentioned above.

ECN and the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo) staff are active contributors and participants in National Emergency Number Association (NENA) committees and workgroups. MnGeo staff are on the NG9-1-1 GIS Data Model V2 (Data Structures) and the NG9-1-1 GIS Data Transition (Data Management) working groups.

More information about the GIS project can be found on ECN's NG9-1-1 [GIS Project website](#).

[Norm Anderson](#) (651-201-2483 or 651-201-7559) is the GIS Project Manager for ECN and MnGeo. [Akiko Nakamura](#) (651-201-7558) from our office is also working on the project, so please feel free to reach out to either one of them with questions related to the GIS project.

### COOP Plans

The Continuity of Operations (COOP) Tabletop Exercise Final Planning Meeting (FPM) was held via WebEx on August 6. Objectives were identified and reviewed.

The COOP Tabletop Exercise will be held on September 17, from 9 a.m. until noon. Due to COVID-19, it will be held virtually instead of in-person, as originally planned.

The exercise will include several scenarios and incorporate discussion about various technologies, which should prove to be fruitful for public safety answering points (PSAPs).

If you have not yet signed up but wish to participate (or if you need the link for the WebEx meeting), contact [Cathy Anderson](#) (651-201-7548).

Personnel outside the PSAP who might be involved with an incident where you would initiate your COOP (fire

chief, finance officer, etc.) are also welcome to participate.

## ARMER

### SUA Status

At its June 2020 meeting, the Statewide Emergency Communications Board (SECB) voted to accept a proposal from Motorola Solutions for a five-year System Upgrade Agreement (SUA) for Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response (ARMER). This approval process is defined in SECB standard LMR-37 (4.12.0). It allows the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to enter into the contract with Motorola Solutions and to bill local ARMER infrastructure owners for a proportional share of the SUA cost. The contract is on schedule to be executed on time and will be in effect from 2021 through 2025.

### LMRC Authorized to Approve Certain Items

The Land Mobile Radio Committee (LMRC) and its predecessor, the Operations and Technical Committee, has long been empowered by SECB to make certain decisions about the technical operation of ARMER without having to bring those items to the SECB for approval. In June, the SECB added three more items to that list. The LMRC may now approve the following eight ARMER-related requests without SECB ratification:

- Additional radio IDs for participant entities
- Additional talkgroup IDs for participant entities
- Use or lease spare radio tower space
- New radio makes and models permitted for use
- Conventional resource ARMER enhancements
- Network transport changes (new)
- Console changes (new)
- Network terminal additions (new)

## Wireless Broadband - FirstNet

### Committee and Workgroup Update

The monthly Wireless Broadband and Applications Committee (WBB&A) met on June 16. Televate presented survey findings and the results of their analysis of the network requirements re-categorization. This research will set a foundation for the committee's work going forward. The survey resulted in a recommendation that the following findings be addressed over the next several months:

- Coverage
- Funding (including Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) guidance)
- Situational awareness
- Interoperability of applications

The combined Standards and Applications workgroups met on July 31 to address some of the findings from the survey, which included creating the Basic Application Best Practice Guide. Additional meetings have been set for the last Friday of each month with the next meeting on August 28.

This project is paving the way to establish interoperability across the program. Public safety partners interested in shaping the future of this program are encouraged to join the workgroup. Reach out to the committee chairs or [Melinda Miller](#) (651-201-7554), Program Manager, to be added as a member or, receive meeting and progress notifications.

Are mobile apps your thing? We need you!

Televate presented the Best Practice Guide Outline at the first meeting of the workgroup. The outline noted the topics that should be addressed when building a best practice guide for basic applications. The presentation and outline were included in the workgroup packet, but if you would like a copy, contact [Melinda Miller](#) (651-201-7554). The workgroup is looking for feedback on the outline, so please send your feedback to the program

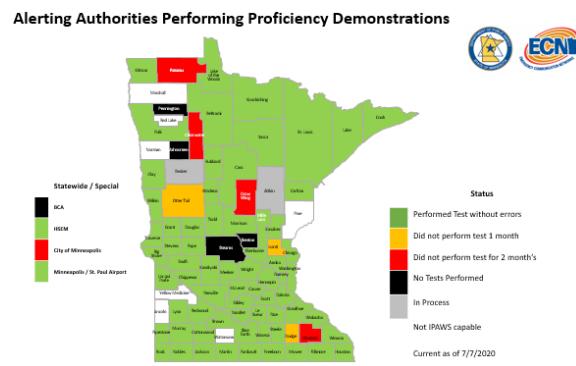
manager, [Melinda Miller](#) (651-201-7554), or the workgroup chair, Melissa Reeder.

## Updates to the Website

The [Carrier Evaluation Checklist](#) has been added to the ECN website under [Wireless Broadband Reports](#). Mission Critical Communications highlighted the checklist in July, noting that it was a most read article. How has it helped you? ECN would like feedback. Did the checklist work effectively? Are there issues not addressed that should be added? Or, just a quick comment that you used it. Contact [Melinda Miller](#) (651-201-7554).

The FirstNet adoption map has been updated in HSIN for registered members, too.

## IPAWS



## Jurisdictions performing FEMA Proficiency Demonstrations: 3rd Quarter (April - June)

Third quarter results have been released from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which are significantly better than second quarter. Below is a breakdown (the first number is this quarter and the second number is from last quarter for comparison):

- Sent all three months: 83%, up from (68%)
- Missed one month: 3%, down from (14%)
- Missed two months: 6%, up from (2%)
- Had hold from FEMA (Aitkin and Becker): 2%, up from (1%)
- Did not perform them: 6%, down from (16%)

## TOE (911 – Telephone Outage Emergency)

TOE was voted down in the last Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Committee meeting. The members felt the code would be a moot point since it never displayed to the public in Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs). The guidance stays the same as it currently is to use the Civil Emergency Message (CEM).

Alert, Warning and Notification Best Practices Guide 2.0 is one step closer to being published. It goes before the committee in September for approval with online training following shortly after.

Any questions can be directed to [John Dooley](#) (651-201-7099).

## Interoperability

### Conventional Interoperability Plan

ECN and MnDOT are collaborating to execute the 2020 [Minnesota Land Mobile Radio Conventional Interoperability Plan](#). Updates to the state VHF resources have been made in the southern regions of the state and will migrate north. ECN has met via teleconference with PSAP leadership and ARMER system administrators to discuss updates to the statewide VHF interoperability network of tower sites. Dispatch console programming guidance and dispatcher education will be shared with regions as the rollout occurs. A dispatcher reference guide is available on the Training Resources section of the [ECN Training website](#).

### Interstate Interoperability Workgroup

The Interstate Interoperability Workgroup presented two land mobile radio interstate interoperability documents—a best practices guide and a technology plan—to the Interoperability Committee and the Land Mobile Radio Committee. Both approved the documents will be presenting them to the SECB in August for approval.

### LTE-LMR Workgroup

The LTE-LMR workgroup met monthly since November and had nearly completed its work on a standard to prescribing how a Push-to-Talk over Cellular (PoC)

technology may interface with the ARMER network. At its June meeting the workgroup felt that the standard they had drafted was too narrowly focused and decided to take a fresh look from a broader perspective. The workgroup has drafted new language and will look to refine their work at its next meeting in August.

## Resources

ECN will use this new Resources section to share information that it thinks you will find useful. These items will also be posted to the [ECN Training webpage](#) as Upcoming Training Opportunities or Resources:

- 8/19 Webinar: [Make the most of your organization's investments: Lifecycle Planning for Emergency Communications](#)
- 9/17 Webinar: [EXERCISE! EXERCISE! EXERCISE! Learn how to turn evaluations into real-world communications improvements.](#)
- [Communications Resiliency](#) (RF interference & cyber resiliency resources)
- [Succession Planning Resources For Public Safety Communications Guide](#)