



BOBBY JINDAL  
GOVERNOR

**State of Louisiana**  
Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee  
<http://gohsep.la.gov/interop.aspx>

CHRIS GUILBEAUX  
CHAIRMAN  
SONYA WILEY-GREMILION  
VICE CHAIRMAN

**MINUTES**  
July 24, 2013

The Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) met on Wednesday, July 24, 2013 at The Louisiana State Police Headquarters, Conference Room B, 7919 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806.

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Chris Guilbeaux called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

The SIEC roll call was called by Travis Johnson, and a quorum was established.

The following SIEC members were present or absent as noted:

| <b>Committee Members Present</b>            | <b>Representing Agency</b>   |
|---|--|
| Chris Guilbeaux                             | Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP)     |
| Neal Underwood                              | Division of Administration   |
| Randall Dunaway, proxy for Chief Mike Knaps | Louisiana Association of Chiefs of Police                                      |
| Chief Ronald Bourque                        | Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association  |
| Dick Gremillion                             | Regional Parish Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness Directors Committee |
| Jeya Selvaratnam                            | Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections, Public Safety Services (DPS)             |
| Woody Glover, proxy for Bill Vincent        | Association of Public Safety Communications Officials                          |
| John Taylor                                 | Louisiana Rural Ambulance Alliance   |
| Aaron Miller                                | Region 1   |
| Billie Giroir                               | Region 2   |
| Eric Deroche                                | Region 3   |
| Lee Hebert                                  | Region 4   |
| Lloyd Miller                                | Region 5   |
| Artice Dowdy                                | Region 8   |
| Chief Merrick Tassin                        | Region 9   |
| <b>Committee Members Absent</b>             | <b>Representing Agency</b>   |
| Vacant                                      | Governor's Office of Indian Affairs  |

|                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Captain Alan Dunn      | Louisiana National Guard       |
| Ricky Edwards          | Louisiana Sheriffs Association |
| Sonya Wiley-Gremillion | Region 6                       |
| William Edge           | Region 7                       |

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Chief Merrick Tassin made a motion to approve the January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 meeting minutes. Dick Gremillion seconded. The SIEC voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2013 meeting.

**IV. Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Guilbeaux began the meeting by introducing himself as the newly appointed Deputy Director of Emergency Management at GOHSEP, taking over for Pat Santos. He informed the committee that he has been with GOHSEP for 5 years as Pat’s Operations Chief and Assistant Deputy Director. Chairman Guilbeaux thanked former chairman Santos for all of his work not only for the SIEC, but with GOHSEP, as Pat moves on to Stevenson Disaster Management Institute at Louisiana State University.

The Chairman then welcomed Neal Underwood from the Division of Administration as a new member, taking over for Mike Guskey who recently retired.

SIEC Secretary Travis Johnson also reminded the committee that although he was introduced last meeting, this is the first meeting for Aaron Miller who replaced Ken Hughes as the Region 1 representative on the SIEC after Ken’s retirement.

Chairman Guilbeaux then briefed the SIEC on some of the Louisiana Wireless Information Network (LWIN) interoperability activities since the last meeting. Interoperability talkgroups were used for multiple events since the last meeting, including the Bayou Country Superfest, an Active Shooter Exercise, the Huey P. Long Bridge Rededication Race and Ceremony, and a hazmat incident worked by Troop B.

Chairman Guilbeaux next provided the SIEC with an update on several ongoing projects the Technical Subcommittee has been working on to improve coverage.

The new site in the city of Franklin in St. Mary parish called the “Baldwin Site” is on the air and operational. Randall Dunaway, on behalf of the Chiefs of Police, relayed that Chief McGuire would like to express her appreciation for the work the state as well as the SIEC did to get the new tower in place. It has made a huge difference for that agency. Dick Gremillion also noted that this issue has

been on the drawing board for several years and a lot of people have come together to make this happen, and he applauds everyone who got the work done. Compared to seven years ago we are getting down to addressing very small gaps in coverage. Chairman Guilbeaux relayed that more issues have come up in the past eight days, and expressed his hope that we can keep up that operational tempo to get these issues resolved.

The Jennings Tower is now on line and final checks are in progress. It will be called "East Jennings"

Chairman Guilbeaux then advised the committee that he had a conversation with newly appointed Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) Director Kenneth Moore from Vernon Parish. Director Moore said his sheriff's office and rural fire departments would like to participate in the LWIN system, but there are coverage concerns on the west side of the parish along the Toledo Bend Reservoir. Chairman Guilbeaux referred the issue to the Technical Subcommittee to research the situation and report back to the full SIEC.

The next agenda item is the LWIN coordination through the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Jackson, Mississippi. We have put LWIN radios in the three NWS offices in Louisiana: Slidell, Lake Charles, and Shreveport. Each of those weather stations constantly monitors the LWIN talkgroup for the OEP region they are in. As this has been successful in the other areas of the state, the parishes in north eastern Louisiana served by NWS Jackson would like the same LWIN communications ability with NWS Jackson that the other parishes have. Since NWS Jackson is outside the LWIN coverage area a patch between the Mississippi Wireless Information System (MSWIN) and LWIN is required. The TSC was asked to come up with a technical solution to this issue.

Chairman Guilbeaux introduced Greg Boren with FEMA Region VI and the Office of Emergency Communications Region VI coordinator Ken Born, who delivered a presentation on their respective roles in emergency communications. A copy of the presentation can be found on the SIEC website.

## **V. Statewide System Maintenance**

Terry Waggenpack with DPS Radio Maintenance provided an LWIN System Maintenance Report. A copy can be found on the LWIN website.

## **VI. Subcommittee Reports**

### **A. Technical Subcommittee (TSC)**

Subcommittee Chairman Eric Deroche advised the committee that the TSC will take up the issues assigned to them in the meeting. Since the last

meeting DPS and Motorola have gone up to Bossier parish to discuss their coverage issues. Dick Gremillion noted that we have looked at this issue in the past and inquired as to the nature of the problem. Eric Deroche responded that it was an “in-building” coverage issue, and the last time tests were done Travis Johnson was part of the team and they found no coverage issues outside of a heavy construction jail building. Travis confirmed that they were unable to replicate the issues the local LWIN users were experiencing, which made it difficult to diagnose the problem.

#### B. Policy and Planning Subcommittee (PPSC)

Travis Johnson reported that the PPSC had not met since the last meeting. Christina Dayries asked when the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) would be updated as there was a contractor engaged to accomplish this. Travis Johnson responded that the contractor was asked to stop working on the SCIP update in order to complete the SLIGP. Jeya Selvaratnam advised that he has not revisited the SCIP issue, but he will look into it.

#### C. Budget and Finance Subcommittee (BFSC)

Christina Dayries advised the committee on behalf of Subcommittee Chairman Ricky Edwards that there is no change in the budget that was appropriated at \$7,970,116, all in reimbursements to DPS for maintenance on the system.

Jeya Selvaratnam asked that the agencies the get reimbursement from DPS or from GOHSEP please if there's non-critical emergencies such as generator expenses make a phone call before you spend the money. There are certain rules the state has to follow. If it's not a life threatening situation call before you spend the money so we don't get surprised.

Chairman Guilbeaux added that with hurricane season here now is the time to get everything checked.

#### D. Broadband Subcommittee (BSC)

Subcommittee Chairman Jeya Selvaratnam advised the committee that he has attended a couple of meetings with FirstNet personnel. The outcome of those meetings is that they are reluctant for the states to build their own system. They indicated that they do not want 50 different systems connected together; they want to have one nationwide system. FirstNet wants to build a true nationwide system, working with state and local representatives on coverage and capacity requirements. Users will be charges a fee for using the system. During the initial build out phase they will not have nationwide coverage, they will partner with

local carriers such as AT&T, Verizon, etc. to provide the coverage. The financial model has not been finalized. During the last meeting the FirstNet board requested thirty-five million dollars to hire staff and make plans.

Mississippi is in the process of building out a system but does not have a license to operate it at this time. This is a single license that the FCC has issued to FirstNet for all 700MHz broadband spectrum. Without the license, even if you go and build a system you can't turn it on. Mississippi has applied for an exemption, and we will too because it may be many years by the time they get around to Louisiana. We have a core already installed, if we can fund the sites it will make sense for us to start using the broadband capabilities. We will still have to get the license from FirstNet.

FirstNet also indicated that they are going to provide the devices to all the agencies nationwide. When Jeya asked what the reasoning for that was they replied that they will be able to negotiate better prices. So although they have not finalized any plans they are working on all these models, even applications. There will be two kinds of applications. One is your private applications but they also intend to provide nationwide public safety applications. There are a lot of financial questions at this time. We are going to continue working with them. Jeya noted that it will be, in his opinion, several years before Louisiana sees a system if we wait for FirstNet to build a system. In the meantime with our core if we go and add sites and they provide license exemption, then we will be able to stand up a system until it comes to Louisiana.

Chief Ronald Bourque noted that they were given seven billion dollars for the project. Jeya confirmed that they have initial funding of seven billion dollars and that in his opinion California and the state of New York were the places he heard them talk about. It will not be an overnight build out. Despite having all the tower sites around the country listed, they will still need to do inspections before they will know if they can even be used. There is a lot of detail work behind this project. Chief Ronald Bourque advised the committee that security was a topic of concern for a lot of people at the meetings. He also stated that they promised 24/7 support and he believes that will be difficult to accomplish on a nationwide network.

Dick Gremillion inquired as to what the expected subscriber cost might be. Jeya responded that they do not know, and he does not believe the subscriber units have even been built yet. He went on to say this is not a criticism of FirstNet, this is a huge effort and they are just starting out. Once there is a market the prices should come down but right now there is no market. Plus, public safety devices will have to be built to a different standard, adding cost.

Christina Dayries updated the committee on the State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP) status. We have applied for the grant, but have yet to

receive it. Christina has received several emails setting this up in the state treasury's finance system, so it's coming.

## **VII. Old Business**

None

## **VIII. New Business**

None

## **IX. Public Comments**

Jeya Selvaratnam asked to add that the Bayou tower site in Houma has been built with local funds, and they are paying all associated connectivity costs. Six repeaters have been installed and are waiting to be turned on. Jeya met with the local officials and they agreed to turn the site on for local users only with the exception of interoperability talkgroups. This site is to address Houma downtown in-building coverage issues. The site will be coming on-line soon.

## **X. Adjournment**

Chairman Guilbeaux suggested and it was agreed that the next meeting date would be Wednesday October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013.

Chief Ronald Bourque made a motion to adjourn. Randall Dunaway seconded the motion. The SIEC voted unanimously to adjourn.