



**SAFECOM Recommended  
Guidelines for Statewide Public  
Safety Communications Governance  
Structure**

# SAFECOM Recommended Guidelines for Statewide Public Safety Communications Governance Structure

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# SAFECOM Recommended Guidelines for Statewide Public Safety Communications Governance Structure

## Purpose

To encourage uniformity in approach to the governance of statewide public safety communications, including systems and networks, to promote their operability, interoperability, efficiency and effectiveness across and among states. The SAFECOM [2015 Emergency Communications Governance Guide for State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Officials](#) presents the myriad ways that public safety communications are governed at local and higher levels, providing suggestions and guidance for such organizations. This *SAFECOM Recommended Guidelines for Statewide Public Safety Communications Governance Structure* document makes specific recommendations for those structures to improve representation in policy-making while reducing duplication of efforts among those involved.

## Methods

These recommended guidelines should be reflected in all manner of authoritative guidance and requirements that agencies at the federal and state levels can employ to leverage public safety communications governance practices. For instance, *SAFECOM Grant Guidance* should reference these recommended guidelines, and state statutes should enable them.

## Scope

These recommended guidelines are intended to encompass governance for public safety information communications of all varieties including land mobile radio (LMR), broadband, current and Next Generation 9-1-1, and the Integrated Public Alert Warning System (IPAWS)/Emergency Alert System (EAS). They apply to all systems and networks for public and machine access and communication to communication centers and public safety agencies, communication center/public safety agency communications, and public safety to public safety communications. For this purpose, “public safety” includes all entities that may be involved in support of emergency response and other public safety agency responses.

## Recommended Guidelines for Statewide Governance Structure

### *Statewide Interoperability Coordination*

SAFECOM recommends statewide governance structures have a single executive branch position reporting *pathway* (i.e., through one cabinet department reporting structure) to the governor for all public safety communications purposes. This coordination point may be the public safety communications Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), and the pathway, regardless of other departments through which services are coordinated or delivered, is a single executive branch cabinet department. While one designated person responsible for SWIC duties is preferred, given the current SWIC landscape where the duties of the SWIC are generally that of a collateral duty versus a full-time job, state governance models may consider establishing a SWIC Office with several people to perform the traditional duties of the SWIC in order to accomplish the job.

SAFECOM recognizes that all governance decisions should rest with the states and local jurisdictions, however, when coordination does not exist at the local / state level, state government should ensure it exists.

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### Statewide Interoperability Governance Body

The SWIC should maintain a representative advisory body to assist the cabinet department in setting policy for the development and operations of statewide information communications systems and networks. This body, the Statewide Interoperability Governing Body (SIGB) or Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC), should include all representatives listed in *Figure 1* and organized with technical and policy subcommittees as described in the 2015 Governance Guide (pp. 24-25). As appropriate to the state, the following organizations should be considered:

FIGURE 1: KEY STATE AND PUBLIC SAFETY STAKEHOLDERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

State Communications Leaders	State Associations or State Chapters of National Associations
<input type="checkbox"/> Broadband Committee Members <input type="checkbox"/> FirstNet Single Point of Contact (SPOC) <input type="checkbox"/> Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) <input type="checkbox"/> 9-1-1 Board Members	<input type="checkbox"/> American Red Cross <input type="checkbox"/> Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Management Associations <input type="checkbox"/> EMS/Ambulance Association <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Chiefs' Association <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital and Public Health Associations <input type="checkbox"/> International Association of Chiefs of Police <input type="checkbox"/> National and State Sheriff's Association <input type="checkbox"/> National Emergency Number Association <input type="checkbox"/> National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators <input type="checkbox"/> National Association of CIOs <input type="checkbox"/> National Association of Counties <input type="checkbox"/> National EMS Associations <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works Associations <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Frequency Planning Committee <input type="checkbox"/> State Fire Fighters' Associations <input type="checkbox"/> State-level Amateur Radio Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Auxiliary Communication Organizations
State Government Leadership/Designee	Other Entities
<input type="checkbox"/> Chairperson from each Regional Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Communications Office <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Support Function (ESF)-2 Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> Executive and Legislative Leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Governor's Office <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utility Commission <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Academy/Dispatch Training Authority Directors <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Communications Network Operators <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Exercise Officer <input type="checkbox"/> State Administrative Agency/Grants Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> State Chief Financial Officer <input type="checkbox"/> State Chief Information Officer <input type="checkbox"/> State Chief IT Security Officer <input type="checkbox"/> State Chief Technology Officer <input type="checkbox"/> State Departments of Education, Emergency Management, Forestry, Transportation, and Health <input type="checkbox"/> State Director of Homeland Security <input type="checkbox"/> State 9-1-1 Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> State Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> State Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Office, Fire, Law Enforcement, Corrections, Public Works, Public Health, Homeland Security/Emergency Management <input type="checkbox"/> State Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Licensing Authority <input type="checkbox"/> State Training Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Utility Regulation Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Work Group (RECCWG) <input type="checkbox"/> NCSWIC Regional Interoperability Council <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Nation Representation
	Federal Government Representation
	<input type="checkbox"/> Department of Homeland Security, Office of Emergency Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Communications Commission <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> National Guard and Border Patrol

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### *Effective Characteristics of a SIGB/SIEC*

- **Documented Authority:** Establish formally with either an Executive Order or Legislation
- **Balanced Representation:** Align needs and priorities across various stakeholders
- **Properly-sized Membership:** Determine membership size that maintains inclusiveness while permitting a quorum to be met regularly
- **Accountability:** Determine whether stated roles, responsibilities, and membership requirements are being met routinely
- **Active Membership:** Provide multiple means to participate in meetings while advancing information sharing and transparency
- **Meeting Frequency:** Consistent meeting cadence
- **Scalable and Agile:** Able to respond to changes in the emergency communications landscape
- **Rules of Engagement:** Manage internal and jurisdictional differences
- **Transparent and Responsive:** Maintain an open and transparent forum
- **Funding and Sustainment:** Identify sustainable funding for existing and future priorities
- **Oversight of Strategic Plan(s):** Oversee and align activities to communications interoperability strategic plans

### *Required Reportable Statewide System Characteristics*

The SWIC should maintain the following information and be able to share it for the purpose of regional/multi-state and national communications planning and operations (e.g. maintained as an annual system status report):

- **Governance** – Identify the SWIC and SIGB and describe how they coordinate public safety communications systems and networks in the state. If broadband, 9-1-1, or any other system or network (or the SPOC, 9-1-1 manager, or any other key public safety communications position) is outside the purview of the SWIC, describe where in state government it resides, its funding and organizational status, and how it is governed and coordinates with the SWIC.
- **Statewide IPAWS/EAS** – Ensure a coordinated plan across the state.
- **Statewide LMR** – Describe the public safety land mobile radio systems(s) and network(s) in the state.
- **Statewide 9-1-1** – Describe the status of 9-1-1, E-9-1-1, and NG-9-1-1 in the state.
- **Statewide FirstNet and Other Broadband** – Describe the status of statewide broadband network development for public safety.
- **Status of SCIP Development and Use** – Describe statewide communications interoperability plan status and related activity including:
  - **Planning**
  - **Training on public safety incident communications**
  - **Technical Assistance received from USDHS/OEC, FirstNet, Other Sources**
  - **Operations**
- **Priority Telecommunications Services Utilized** – Describe numbers of subscribers to:
  - **GETS**
  - **WPS**
  - **TSP**
- **Status of Communications Unit Leader and Technician Training and Use**

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### Examples of Effective Statewide Public Safety Communications Governance Structures

Appendices A and B outline examples of effective statewide public safety communications governance structures from both Ohio and Delaware. The appendices describe each state's statewide interoperability governing body, as well as how 9-1-1 operations are managed within the state. These sections detail the membership comprising these statewide bodies, as well as their roles, responsibilities, and authorities.

These appendices are meant to serve as examples of effective statewide public safety communications governance structures and SAFECOM recognizes that all governance decisions should rest with the states and local jurisdictions.

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### Appendix A: Ohio 9-1-1 Program Office/Ohio Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee

The Ohio 9-1-1 Program Office coordinates and facilitates communication concerning 9-1-1 issues among state, federal, regional, and local 9-1-1 and public safety communications officials. Specifically, the Office coordinates all Emergency Service Internet Protocol Network (ESINet) Steering Committee activities to facilitate Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) state-level efforts within the scope of wireless 9-1-1. The Ohio ESINet Steering Committee has been tasked with the following, as stated on the [www.911.ohio.gov/ESInet](http://www.911.ohio.gov/ESInet) website:

- Address the development of a statewide ESINet, including a review of the current funding model for this state's 9-1-1 systems;
- Examine the readiness of the state's current technology infrastructure to support NG 9-1-1;
- Research legislative authority with regard to governance and funding;
- Make recommendations for consolidation of public safety answering point (PSAP) operations in this state, to accommodate NG 9-1-1 technology and to facilitate a more efficient and effective emergency services system;
- Recommend policies, procedures, and statutory or regulatory authority to effectively govern a statewide emergency services internet protocol network;
- Coordinate with statewide initiatives and associations.

In 2014-2015, Ohio created the position of and hired a State 9-1-1 Coordinator, who reports directly to the State Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Assistant Director of the Department of Administrative Services, Office of Information Technology.

The Ohio ESINet Steering Committee consists of representatives from the following areas:

- (1 Rep.) Department of Administrative Services; State CIO – serves as Chair, typically represented by the State 9-1-1 Coordinator
- (1 Rep.) Ohio Municipal League
- (2 Reps.) County Commissioners Association of Ohio
- (1 Rep.) Ohio Township Association
- (2 Reps.) Ohio Senate
- (2 Reps.) Ohio Representatives

Two Sub-Committees were created under the Steering Committee, the PSAP Operations Sub-Committee and the Technical Standards Sub-Committee, which are charged with assisting the Steering Committee members with completing the assigned tasks mentioned above.

The Technical Standards Sub-Committee consists of members from the following:

- Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARNet)
- Multi-Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS) Steering Committee
- Ohio Geographically Reference Information Program (OGRIP)
- Ohio Telephone Association (OH-Telco)
- Ohio Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (OHAPCO)
- Ohio Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (OH NENA)
- Wireline or wireless service provider that participates in the State's 9-1-1 system

The PSAP Ops Sub-Committee consists of members from the following:

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- Ohio Dept. of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management (ODPS-EMA)
- Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP)
- County Commissioners' Association of Ohio (CCAO) who are managers of PSAPs
- Ohio Municipal League (OML) who are managers of PSAPs
- Buckeye State Sheriff's Association (BSSA)
- Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP)
- Ohio Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC)
- Ohio Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (OH-APCO)
- Ohio Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (OH-NENA)

Per the Governor's Executive Order 2012-07K, the Directors of the Ohio Department of Public Safety and the Department of Administrative Services shall establish a Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) to advise the Directors on matters of interoperable communications, including funding efforts (<http://siec.ohio.gov/AboutUs.aspx>).

The Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) acts as the administrator of the SIEC and is responsible for the day to day operations and administrative functions of the SIEC. Ohio's SWIC also serves as the Ohio Single Point of Contact (SPOC) and the MARCS Program Director, and reports directly to the State CIO/Asst. Director of the Department of Administrative Services, Office of Information Technology.

The SIEC shall regularly report to the Directors and is authorized to:

- Develop policy recommendations related to comprehensive public safety communications systems, processes, and operations throughout the state.
- Create and implement comprehensive strategies to develop, sustain and improve public safety communications technologies at the local, regional, and statewide levels.
- Coordinate the implementation of such comprehensive state strategies with state, regional, local government partners, first responders, non-government organizations, the private sector, and experts within academia and research communities.
- Be responsible for the coordination and implementation of national communications plans and policies at the state level, including, but not limited to, the National Emergency Communications Plan and the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.
- By way of the SWIC, be the single point of contact with federal communications entities for the State of Ohio.
- Evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing and funding specific priorities of state, regional, and local communications efforts in coordination with national communications priorities and funding initiatives.
- Review and evaluate existing and emerging issues that relate to statewide, regional, and local public safety communications matters.

The SIEC is comprised of members of the following organizations:

- The Ohio Department of Public Safety
- Buckeye State Sheriff's Association
- Ohio Office of Information Technology
- Ohio Emergency Management Agency
- Ohio Emergency Medical Services Board
- Ohio Office of Homeland Security

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- Ohio State Highway Patrol
- Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
- Ohio State Fire Marshal
- Ohio Association of Fire Chiefs
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
- Ohio Department of Health
- Ohio County Commissioners Association
- Ohio Township Trustees Association
- Emergency Management Association of Ohio
- Ohio National Guard
- Ohio Chapter of APCO
- Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation
- Chairman of the FCC Region 33 Planning Committee
- Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services
- Ohio Department of Youth Services
- Ohio Board of Regents
- Ohio Hospitals Association
- Representative from Ohio's Electrical Service Providers
- Ohio Municipal League
- Representative from each Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) area (Franklin County/Columbus, Wood County/Toledo, Cuyahoga County/Cleveland, Hamilton County/Cincinnati, Southeast Indiana, Northern Kentucky)
- Representative from a mid-size City radio system
- Representative from a mid-size County radio system
- Representatives from each of the eight Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Committees

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### **Appendix B: Delaware 9-1-1 Executive Board/Delaware Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee**

The Delaware 9-1-1 Executive Board coordinates and facilitates communication concerning 9-1-1 issues among state, federal, regional, and local 9-1-1 and public safety communications officials. Specifically, the Board coordinates Emergency Service Internet Protocol Network (ESINet) vendor (West) activities to facilitate Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) state level efforts within the scope of 9-1-1. The Delaware E911 model is a statewide model and all E9-1-1 operations are managed by the E9-1-1 Administrator.

The Delaware E911 Executive Board has been tasked with the following:

- Review the current funding model for the state’s 9-1-1 systems;
- Examine the readiness of the state’s current technology infrastructure to support NG9-1-1;
- Research legislative authority with regard to governance and funding;
- Make recommendations for consolidation of public-safety-answering-point (PSAP) operations in the state, to accommodate NG9-1-1 technology and to facilitate a more efficient and effective emergency services system;
- Recommend policies, procedures, and statutory or regulatory authority to effectively govern a statewide emergency services internet protocol network;
- Coordinate with statewide initiatives and associations.

In 2002, Delaware created the position of and hired a State E 9-1-1 Administrator, who reports directly to the Enhanced 911 Emergency Reporting System Service Board (E911 Executive Board). The E911 Executive Board consists of 7 representatives with the advice and consent of the Senate from the following areas:

- (1 Rep.) Secretary Department of Homeland Security – serves as Chair
- (3 Rep.) Members shall have technical or financial expertise on telecommunications issues
- (1 Reps.) Member shall be a representative from the Delaware Association of County Governments
- (2 Rep.) Members from the Public

Sub-Committees were created under the E911 Executive Board, the PSAP Manager’s Operations Sub-Committee which are charged with assisting the E911 Administrator with completing the assigned tasks for NG 911.

The Technical Sub-Committee consists of:

- (3) Versalign Tech (State CAD IT Contractor)
- State of Delaware Department of Information and Technology (DTI)

The PSAP Operations Sub-Committee consists of members of emergency call center staff who are managers of PSAPs for Police, Fire and EMS.

Delaware has now implemented Governor’s Executive Order No. 39, to reestablish the Delaware Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) to promote and enhance statewide interoperability of public safety communications systems within the State of Delaware.

The safety of all Delawareans is of paramount importance; and effective public safety communications are critical to protecting the lives and property of the citizens of Delaware; and to communicate effectively with the public about safety issues, all levels of government must cooperate and share a wide

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variety of data, including voice, electronic, and video information. State, federal, local, and private entities with similar communications requirements must work cooperatively to promote and enhance statewide interoperability of public safety communications systems, the attainment of interoperable public safety communications requires statewide coordination and leadership.

The SIEC is authorized to:

- Develop policy recommendations related to comprehensive public safety communications systems, processes, and operations throughout the state.
- Create and implement comprehensive strategies to develop, sustain and improve public safety communications technologies at the local, regional, and statewide levels.
- Coordinate the implementation of such comprehensive state strategies with state, regional, local government partners, first responders, non-government organizations, the private sector, and experts within academia and research communities.
- Be responsible for the coordination and implementation of national communications plans and policies at the state level, including, but not limited to, the National Emergency Communications Plan and the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network.
- By way of the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), be the single point of contact with federal communications entities for the State of Delaware.
- Evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing and funding specific priorities of state, regional, and local communications efforts in coordination with national communications priorities and funding initiatives.
- Review and evaluate existing and emerging issues that relate to statewide, regional, and local public safety communications matters.

The SIEC shall consist of the following members or their designee:

- Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security,
- Department of Transportation,
- Chief Information Officer of the State of Delaware,
- Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services,
- Commissioner of the Department of Corrections,
- Adjutant General of the Delaware National Guard
- A representative of New Castle County Government,
- A representative of Kent County Government,
- A representative of Sussex County Government,
- A representative of the City of Wilmington,
- A representative of the Delaware League of Local Governments,
- A representative of the Delaware Volunteer Firefighters Association,
- A representative of the Delaware Police Chiefs' Council,
- A representative of the Delaware Public Service Commission,
- A representative of the Office of the Governor, and
- Other members as recommended by the SIEC, as approved and appointed by the Governor.