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Improving Cross-Border Interoperability: Partnerships in Action

DHS Network Summit

Wednesday, March 19th, 2008



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

"The single most important issue facing homeland security today is interoperability."

— Dr. David Boyd

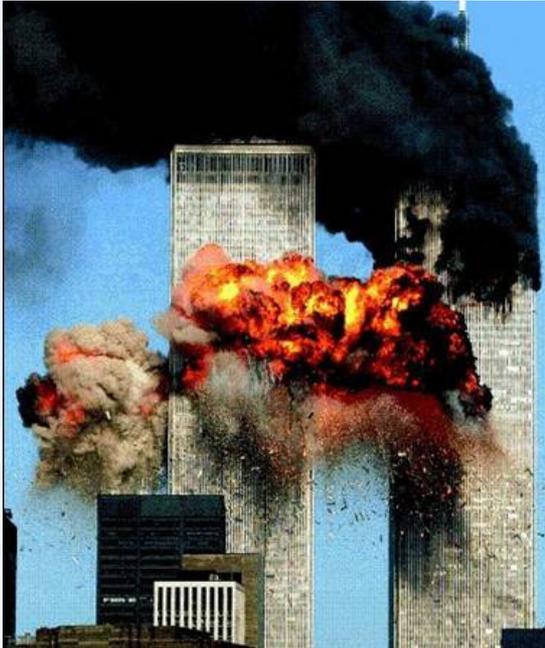
Speech to Ninth Annual Technologies for Critical Incident Preparedness Conference and Exposition, November 7, 2007

"Interoperability tops list of first responder issues"

— InterGovWorld.com

December 7, 2007 headline regarding the findings of a survey of over 140 Chiefs of Police, Fire and EMS released by the Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance (CATA) and commissioned by the Canadian Police Research Centre (CPRC).

Why Interoperability?



- During 9/11, 121 firefighters died inside the North Tower when it collapsed 21 minutes after the first warning of a potential collapse was issued over the police radio system
- Unfortunately, many firefighters didn't get the message because the two radio systems were not interoperable

Why Interoperability?

- Two hours after Katrina passed, the New Orleans communications system failed and first responders resorted to using very few mutual aid channels
- The overwhelmed radio channel system did not allow the first responders to effectively share information
- Katrina Exposed Failures



In Canada and Worldwide...

- The situation not much better — during emergencies, the agencies and jurisdictions that should be able to talk to each other often can't
- Most stakeholders (e.g., governments, public safety agencies, etc.) recognize the problem, but progress is slow and arduous

Why no Interoperability?

- Incompatible or aging communications equipment
- Limited or fragmented funding
- Jurisdictional or chain-of-command conflicts (more complex internationally)
- Availability of radio spectrum, etc.
- But the single biggest cause: **a lack of coordination and cooperation among public safety agencies**

Canada – US Commitment (Security and Prosperity Program)

Develop interoperable radio communication, improve and expand existing radio communications through the establishment and evaluation of pilot sites, such as the Windsor-Detroit area. Based on the evaluation of the radio interoperability pilots, explore long-term solutions for across the land border.

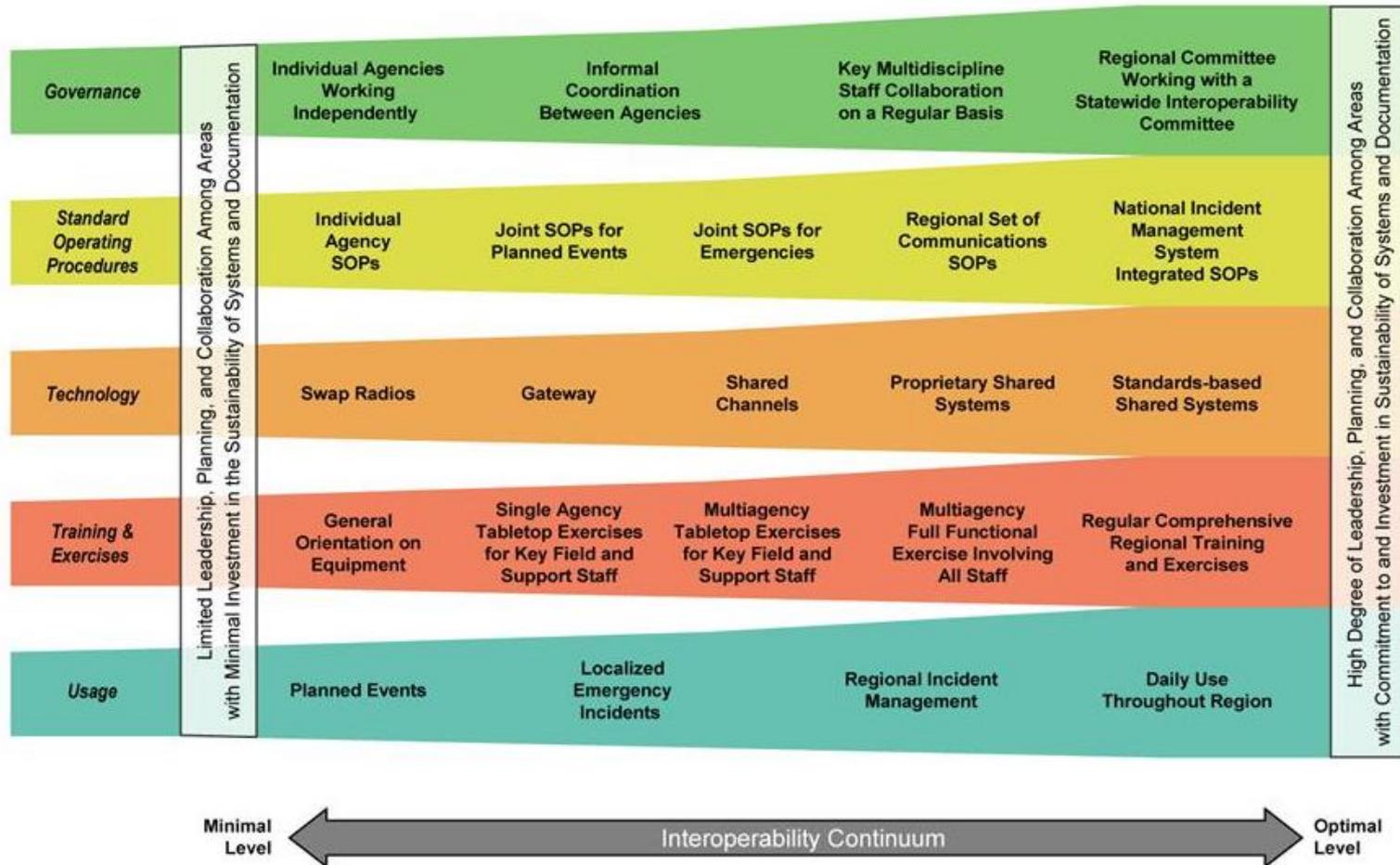
U.S./Canada border spans about 5,500 miles from east coast to west coast, from the Pacific to the Arctic Ocean.



Centre for Security Science

- **Defense Research and Development Canada and Public Safety Canada joined forces to develop Centre for Security Science (CSS) -**
www.css.drdc-rddc.gc.ca
- **Canadian Police Research Centre (CPRC) now part of CSS –**
www.cprc.org
- **Powerful new opportunities to join forces and leverage each others strengths**

DHS SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum



Call to Action!

- **Several successful meetings held (Toronto, St. John's, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver – May 15th in Saskatoon)**
- **Support and recognition in the U.S. (LEIM presentations, NPSTC, DHS, NIJ, etc.)**
- **Canadian Voice Interoperability Workshop, March 26th to 28th, Ottawa with over 120 experts from across Canada, the USA and International**

The Canadian Voice
Interoperability Workshop:

A CITIG National Forum

***“Making Public Safety Provider
Interoperability a Priority”***

March 26th to 28th, 2008

Chateau Laurier Hotel

Ottawa, ON

www.cacp.ca

Canada – US Partnerships

- Since October 2006 have been working closely with DHS-OIC
- Attending Emergency Response Council (ERC) and other related meetings
- Participating in various teleconferences moving DHS issues forward
- Participation by US Federal, State and Local officials in CITIG Regional Forums

CITIG Research Proposals

- Call for proposals ran through September to October 31
- 21 proposals received
- The total value of projects \$2,682,473 with total value of funds requested \$1,634,583
- Range of value requested: \$10,000 to \$500,000
- In total, \$325,000 in funding provided for interoperability projects
- All projects at 95% or more complete!

Each Project...

- Responds to a clear need for research and development in the proposed area
- Deemed to potentially have a significant impact on the state of interoperability
- Delivers outcomes related to the five elements of the interoperability continuum
- Was decided upon by evaluators from CPRC, CACP, CAFS and EMSCC

“The World is Flat”

(Thomas Friedman)

- **Standards (P25, TETRA, TETRA-POL, MESA)**
- **Convergence**
- **VoIP / RoIP**
- **Software Defined Radio (SDR)**
- **Cognitive Radio (CR)**
- **You tell us – take us to the next level!**

The Next Round of Proposals

- Working to improve the process (the feedback received was very helpful)
- Will be an open call and competitive process – priorities identified by broad base of Emergency Response Providers
- One key goal is to identify areas of research with Canada/US cross-border opportunities
- Targeting start of fiscal Q2

Next Steps

- **Continue working together on real life, practicable, applied research**
- **Identify possible “low hanging fruit” and jointly fund these “pilot” projects**
- **Increase awareness and participation in interoperability related issues both sides of the border**
- **Enhance communications between various partners**

Discussion

Questions?

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