

IMPLEMENTATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS, DISASTER AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVISION

Acting as the State Administrative Agency

AND

THE SOUTH CENTRAL MONTANA INTEROPERABILITY CONSORTIUM

Consisting of Gallatin, Madison Meagher, Park and Sweet Grass Counties

Background.

The Disaster and Emergency Services Division (DES), within the Montana Department of Military Affairs (DMA), has the responsibility for coordination of the Montana Homeland Security Taskforce, a task force appointed by the Governor. Montana's homeland security objective is to protect citizens against the threat of terrorism by detecting, preparing for, preventing, responding to and recovering from terrorist threats or attacks. The mission of the Homeland Security Task Force is to serve the interests of the citizens of Montana by facilitating clear lines of communication and coordinating a comprehensive statewide plan in preparation for the specific occurrences of terrorism threat or attack. The Governor has appointed DES to serve as State Administration Agency (SAA) for the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP).

On August, 2004 Park, Gallatin, Madison, Meagher, Park and Sweet Grass counties acting as the South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium (SCMIC) signed a memorandum of understanding with the SAA to carry out the Assessment and Planning Phase to address the problems which must be overcome in developing "...an interoperable multimode radio communications system based on federal and state communication standards in which federal, state and local public safety and emergency management representatives can operate autonomously and transition seamlessly to communicate effectively in emergency mission roles". Completion of this phase occurred at the end of September 2005 with receipt of the Interoperable Communications Plan and Specifications developed under contract by CTA Communications, Inc. In October the five counties signed a Memorandum of Agreement (attached) to continue and expand the joint effort of the consortium into the Implementation Phase. The expressed aim of that effort is to coordinate the implementation of the plans developed during Phase I (Assessment and Planning) both as a consortium and individually by the counties involved.

Purpose.

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into between the South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium and the Montana Department of Military Affairs (referred to as the State Administrative Agency, or SAA) to facilitate implementation of improvements to the public safety communications capability of the individual counties involved, the region encompassed by the Consortium and neighboring jurisdictions in consonance with the statewide interoperability initiatives undertaken under the aegis of the State Interoperability Executive Council, the Project Directors Board and such other administrative coordination bodies as may be established pursuant to order of the Governor of Montana. The intent is to define the relationship of the parties to the agreement in continuation of the effort undertaken during Phase I (Assessment and Planning) into implementation of the plans developed therein; in order to reap the synergistic benefits of cooperation, coordination and sharing of resources as the SCMIC members and the state strive to achieve true interoperability of public safety communications. While the primary focus of this effort will be response to terrorism or the threat of terrorism, an all-hazard perspective will be maintained throughout.

Objective.

Pursuit of the objectives of this Memorandum of Understanding will meet the intent of the Montana Homeland Security Strategic Plan and of the applicable county plans of the members of the Consortium, as well as the parameters set forth by the Statewide Interoperability Executive Council.

The ultimate objective of the consortium is to develop an interoperable multimode radio communications system based on federal and state communication standards in which federal, state and local public safety and emergency management representatives can operate autonomously and transition seamlessly to communicate effectively in emergency mission roles. Such a system will provide advanced digital, secure voice and data communications for public safety and improve homeland security through provision of the means by which military and civil authorities may communicate. It will also provide for backwards compatibility during its implementation.

The objective of this agreement will be to define the relationship of the signatories as they carry out the second of two phases of the overall consortium objective outline in the previous paragraph. Phase I, the Assessment and Planning Phase, was accomplished under contract by CTA Communications, Inc. With full participation by the responders and managers of the SCMIC member counties, the contractor assessed the radio communications needs, capabilities and vulnerabilities of the members, both collectively and individually. They then developed a comprehensive communications plan and set of supporting specifications aimed at migration toward achievement of a reliable, effective and fully interoperable communications system within the counties themselves and also between all local, state and federal entities that might be involved in emergency management and response. This plan emphasizes flexibility and includes consideration of organizational relationships as well as detailed and prioritized schedules of equipment procurement, along with administrative, training and procedural recommendations considered necessary to fully achieve the overall objective. The Specifications also provide a basis for group and individual procurement during Phase II in order to maximizing effectiveness while minimizing the costs thereof. This document is an integral part Phase II and is intended to be a part of the implementation of the plans developed during Phase I. Members of the consortium will be required to support the activities undertaken during Phase II (Implementation Phase) with technical assistance, full disclosure, and cooperative utilization of resources under the guidance of the Governing Board as set forth in the Memorandum of Agreement which defines SCMIC.

Source of Funding.

Funding necessary for full project implementation by SCMIC has yet to be fully identified. It is anticipated that the sources will be many and varied: a combination of federal, state, local and perhaps even private funding. One source of funding is expected to be a combination of State and Local Funds withheld at the request of these local jurisdictions from Office of Domestic Preparedness Grant Programs. The Montana Department of Military Affairs, Disaster and Emergency Services Division, acting as the State Administrative Agency, will hold these funds under the provision of this Memorandum of Understanding.

Administration.

This Agreement shall be effective from the date of execution and remain in effect until mutually terminated as set forth herein. The Agreement may be modified through mutual consent of all the participating agencies. Any modification made to this agreement shall be confirmed in writing prior to performance of the change. No participating agency is obligated to fund any changes or incur any obligations not properly approved in advance.

The SAA will be administrator for all Homeland Security funds initially allocated to the state and sub-allocated to SCMIC. Sheri Lanz, DMA/DES Homeland Security Coordinator, will serve as SAA point of contact in that role. The Consortium Governing Board will oversee the performance of this Agreement and will provide accounting and bookkeeping services as outlined under Accounting and Financial procedures.

