Interoperability Montana and “Statewide Interoperability”
Interoperability Montana: Who We Are

501c4 Non-profit Association

“Statewide Interoperability” provider

Created in 2005

Created by counties & sovereign Indian nations working in regional “consortia”
Interoperability Montana: Who We Are

Executive Director: Kevin Bruski

Board of “Project Directors”
9 consortia leaders (local government)
3 state departments
   (Justice, Transportation, DNRC)

No supervising state agency
Interoperability Montana: Who We Are

WE WORK CLOSELY WITH:

Governor’s Office

Statewide Interoperability Exec. Council

Public Safety Services Bureau
(Dept. of Administration)
Funding Interoperability

- Other Federal Grants
- State Agencies
- State Legislature
- MT National Guard
- U.S. Air Force
- Counties
- Tribes
- Other
Interoperability Montana: “SIEC” / “SCIP” / “SWIC”

SIEC:
Statewide Interoperability Executive Council

SCIP:
Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan

SWIC:
Statewide Interoperability Coord.
**in-ter-op-er-a-bi-li-ty n:**

“The ability of public safety emergency responders to work seamlessly with other systems or products without any special effort.”

“To share information via voice and data signals on demand, in real time, and when needed.”

-Montana Statewide Interoperability Executive Council
“No person shall lose his or her life because public safety officials cannot communicate.”

-MT Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan
Interoperability serves:

- Law enforcement
- Fire services
- Emergency medical
- Disaster services
Interoperability serves:

- Law enforcement
- Fire services
- Emergency medical
- Disaster services
- Public works
- Hospital & ambulance
- School bus providers
- Private utilities
- Industry / business
“Mutual Aid”

- Useful for local incidents
- Frequencies assigned by discipline

- True Interoperability = one channel for everyone to receive information
Interoperability & Geography

- Local Interoperability within a city, county or reservation
- Statewide Interoperability all 56 counties & 7 reservations
A National & State Priority

- More federal resources after 9-11
- Endorsed by National Governors Association
- Included in Montana Homeland Security Strategic Plan
The Montana Approach

- Counties & Tribes select representatives.
- Representatives participate in regional “Consortium.”
- Locals pool DHS grant money.
- Consortium elects “Project Director” to serve on statewide governing board of IM.
“SCIP”
(Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan--2007)

KEY ELEMENTS:

- Technical Strategies (including radios)
- Implementation Strategies

- No identification of Funding Sources
- No identification of Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (Single Point of Contact)

- 2008: Kevin Bruski becomes SWIC
2009: Elements in Place

- A Statewide Plan (SCIP)
- An Organization (IM)
- A Point Person (Kevin Bruski)
Lewis and Clark County:
400 users to 2,000 users in four years

- City police
- County sheriff
- Rural fire districts
- Public works
- State agencies
- Federal agencies
- Hospital & ambulance
The Northern Tier Project (inc. Lewis & Clark County system)
Construction: 2009-2010

- MT 200 corridor: Great Falls, Lewistown
- I-15 corridor: Butte, Dillon
- I-90 corridor: Bozeman, Billings
- I-94 corridor: complete “backbone loop”
- “Master controllers” in Helena, Glendive
IM and the Legislature

2008 Audit Division Report

- Does the proposed governance system for IM provide accountability over its management?

✔ YES.

The IMPD will retain supervision over budgets and other key areas.
IM and the Legislature

2008 Audit Division Report

- Has IM addressed operational issues?
- Has IM adopted a long-term approach likely to result in the successful operation and continuing financial sustainability of the project?

✓ A new detailed business plan.
✓ A clearly identified service menu.
✓ Better accounting and staff planning.
IM and the Legislature

2008 Audit Division Report

- Has IM addressed operational issues?
- Has IM adopted a long-term approach likely to result in the successful operation and continuing financial sustainability of the project?

- Seeking consensus on local fees.
- Must meet state/federal standards.
- IMPD to decide on a plan August 10.
IM and the Legislature

2008 Audit Division Report

- Neither the IM project nor “Statewide Interoperability” are in state statute.

- IM has been a “ground-up” effort with local entities playing the leading role.

- Executive participation through agencies and SIEC.
2008 Audit Division Report

- No requirement for state agencies to “migrate” their communications onto the IM system.

- Still to come: a state “migration plan.”
- Some agencies ready for IM now.
- No mandate from executive or legislature.
Looking Forward

Building Out From “The Backbone”:

- **Southeast:** I-90 & U.S. 212
  (inc. Crow and N. Cheyenne)

- **West:** U.S. 93 & I-90
  (Ravalli / Missoula / Lake / Mineral)
Looking Forward

Paying for An Expanded System

- Federal money (DHS) slowing
- More state contributions?
- Maintenance costs
Statewide Interoperability: Long-term Needs

- Site Maintenance (tower, shelter, access)
- Power (electricity, propane)
- Equipment Maintenance (microwave, trunking)
- Equipment Replacement
IM Planning Efforts (2009-10)

- 44 Outreach Meetings
- Strategic Planning
- Business Plan

The message from local entities:
- Assessments must be fair
- Local control is important
How the Legislature Can Help:

- Money for operations & maintenance 2011-13 Appropriation?
  - Broad-based revenue source?
  - Include non-resident visitors?
How the Legislature Can Help:

- Interim Study of Interoperability
  *Energy & Telecommunications?*
- Proposals for 2013 Legislature
  *Re: stable, ongoing funding for long-term buildout & operations*
Now It’s Your Turn