



Interagency Interoperability Oversight Group

Quarterly Meeting Summary Notes

September 29 & 30, 2009



Member/Alternate Attendance: Kim Thorsen (DOI LEI), Michael Williams (FS LEI), Vaughn Stokes (FS CIO), Shane Compton (NPS CIO), Tim Quinn (DOI CIO), Jim Douglas (BLM F&AM - Chair), Rick Prausa (FS F&AM), Tim Lynn (FS LEI), Kirk Rowdabaugh (DOI OWFC), Mike Field (FS CTO), Bernie Mazer (FWS CIO), Kolleen Shelley (FS - Program Manager), **Virtual:** Ellen Waterman (FWS CIO).

Guests/Presenters: Xavi Slocum (BLM Radio), Kathy Stewart (FS CIO), Brandon Diemer (BLM Radio), Simon Strickland (FS CIO-Radio), Bev Fronterhouse (AK AFS), **Virtual:** Russ Sveda (DOI Radio – IRA Chair), Jimmie Porter (FS-Radio & IRA), Matt Cnudde (FS F&AM - NWCG Liaison),

Meeting Frequency, Location and Dates

Agreement - there will be

- Four quarterly face-to-face meetings; 3 in the Washington, DC area and one in the field during the summer. These will be held the 3rd full week of the months of January, April and October. The summer meeting will be held the 2nd week of August.
- Monthly 2-hour calls as needed for on-going business. Phone meetings will be held the 3rd Tuesday of each month; usually from 1100-1300 Eastern time. Exceptions are highlighted in the table below.

The following dates have been identified covering the next year...

Month / Date	Type	Time
October 29, 2009 (Thur)	Phone	1300 mdt / 1500 edt
November 17, 2009	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
December 15, 2009	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
January 26-27, 2010	Washington, DC Area	8:30 am – 4:30 pm Eastern
February 16, 2010	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
March 16, 2010	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
April 20 & 21, 2010	Washington, DC Area	8:30 am – 4:30 pm Eastern
May 18, 2010	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
June 15, 2010	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
July 20, 2010	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern
August 9 – 13, 2010	Field Trip	Full week - TBD
September 21, 2010	Phone	1100-1300 Eastern

Review of Summer Field Trip / Meeting – From the meeting summary notes an action items tracking system was handed out. The tracks begin with the summer 2009 meeting and all meetings from this point forward so that things aren't lost and positive progress can be tracked.

Agreement – Action Items tracking system to be used from this point forward.

Next Steps – IIOG Program Manager will update/maintain the system and share with IIOG at meetings and as appropriate.

IIOG Workload – Work Plan and Future Funding Needs – The group discussed how many projects/tasks could be handled at one time and a chart was handed out with the current portfolio as an example of how the group might be able to visually plan for future resource needs including funding. The task list discussion plus discussions for the rest of the agenda should help chart the course.

Next Steps - The Work Plan will be adjusted accordingly for on-going use.

Interagency Radio Program Investment – Vaughn Stokes briefed the group on the surge of funding available over the next few years to improve the FS Radio infrastructure. FS leadership has confirmed an increase in funding = \$6 million for regular maintenance, and \$26 million in radio improvement. This is a 10-15 year improvement program. During the last three years the FS has pulled together a unified radio inventory. This inventory is by forest by tower, mountain, mobile, hand held and dispatch center. Looking at individual forests, we have a solid program of replacement ready to move forward. However, this opportunity is exclusionary to the Forest Service needs, not our overall Federal need. Now with the review of the Ochoco/Deschutes NFs and in Alaska, it is clear that working together, pooling our resources, it could be a much better deal for all partners. Vaughn is responsible for the FS, but if we could focus clearly on the USDA and the DOI and our primary state partners this could be a significant gain for us all. With the program of work in the FS alone, Simon is going to be very busy and we can't run faster than we have strength. If we look for a perfect solution, we may not get things done. Vaughn can't wait; he has clear direction from FS leadership to get these improvements completed. The sooner he has any lessons learned and information from the Oregon Pilot, the more possible these options become. The pilot effort must also ensure links with Regional leadership.

Agreement – The IIOG agreed that partnering is in the best interest.

Next Steps – Additional resources will be given to ensure Oregon Pilot Project completed and provides information necessary to apply the methodology in other parts of the country.

Interagency Radio Alliance (IRA) Briefing – (ppt in quickr teamroom) - Russ Sveda and Jimmie Porter led a discussion on the IRA activities and associated workload.

- They asked the IIOG for direction what and who the IRA might be in five years and were given the guidance that the IRA would morph into a dedicated group/organization providing Integrated Service Delivery support to the DOI Bureaus and USDA FS radio operations.
- Next they discussed the existing IIOG sponsored workload (charters and proposed charters) and how it is impacting their ability to support the daily operations of their existing jobs. They shared a trend of participation in conference calls meetings on projects since May 2009 showing a decline from 67% participation to 33% participation in late September 2009. Does this downward trend in participation indicate a wavering interest and support or tasking overload?
- In the current organization, the IRA is a team of individuals who serve two; one for a common good and second for their own agencies. They asked the IIOG to provide project prioritization and sequencing based on what is more important for the common good and in relation to the available resources to conduct the work.
- The discussion followed toward funding for the IRA efforts and how that might be provided, managed and tracked. (Incorporated from presentation slide into IIOG work plan).
- Shane Compton suggested that full-time dedicated PMO would be helpful to assist IRA in all that they are assigned. He offered up some funding to help cover that cost.
- John King's office in the FS CIO will assist on the IRSS effort in the user requirements gathering/analysis for the IRSS project.

Agreement - The IIOG responded to these questions stating that the direction is to create a radio program that is as integrated as possible; and in which we share everything that we can. However in order for this to be successful, both agencies have to give up control in some areas; and possibly put the control of this under a change management process. Still there is a lot of work ahead of us to gain departmental support. The Oregon Pilot Project is a very good first start. With this project, many questions will be answers, lessons learned documented, procedures established, policies refined to support integration.

Next Steps / Action - The IIOG agreed that they would write a memo to provide to customers throughout our agencies information about the Oregon project as it pertains to direction recently given from the Chief

of the Forest Service and the Secretary of Interior. It will be made clear in the memo that we intend to learn from this Pilot with the hope of using the information and methodologies gained as a template for use in other parts of the country where it makes sense. Kirk will provide the information for Kolleen to compose the first draft.

Analog to Digital Migration Discussion – IRA completed tasks 4a1, 4a2 and 4a3. However, the IIOG requested more information. Specifically a summary of unintended consequences “do no harm” and questions whether the infrastructure will be in place to support the mobile and handheld radios. Does it make sense to continue to purchase before the repeaters are in place. Rick is still concerned that the technology may not work as well as it should and maybe it does not make sense to move forward.

Action – IRA will refine the readiness dashboard / key indicators to include unintended consequences, and information regarding which agencies are already engaged with digital, percentages, etc., for all Federal partner agencies.

P25 Compliant Requirement for Aviation

Decision - The IIOG agreed with the recommendation given by the IRA and others that the requirement for P25 compatible radios in aviation resources by 2010 continue as was planned.

Action - The IIOG will create a briefing paper that reflects this position and forward to NFAEB. This should be shared widely.

Action - Kolleen will follow up with the individuals at the Redmond Air Center who first brought this issue to the attention of the IIOG.

Brandon Diemer gave a presentation on Analog to Digital Migration which focuses primarily around the BLM radio system. However, the information he presented certainly applies to all IIOG agencies. His presentation clearly outlined the pros and cons of Analog vs Digital, various constraints and included a suggested migration timeline shown below. It was agreed that using this timeline, it is possible to create the sequencing, include all IIOG agencies and resources necessary; and at a minimum, budget to engage in 2012 but hopefully sooner. It was recommended that the investment be placed here versus buying more hand held radios.

- NRCD to test analog vs. digital (2009)
- Develop state coverage maps (2010)
- Testing in current environment, not end to end (2010-2011)
- Build additional Radio Sites (2011-2014)
- Connectivity at sites (2011-2014)
 - All Site Findings Corrected – RI Cache (2014)
- Radio traffic on BLM network (2011-2014)
- Acquire new frequencies (2011-2014)
- Console connectivity (2011-2014)
- Testing Digital end to end (2014)
- Completed transition (Jan 1, 2015)

The IRA stated that with current resources it could begin to start analog to digital analysis in 2012. The IIOG wants this completed much sooner. There is a need for this by the close of 2010 and so asked what would it take to get this completed.

Agreement – IIOG agreed that an interagency analog to digital migration plan is needed by the close of 2010.

Next Steps / Action - Mike Field and Tim Quinn agreed to chart the way forward; identify the resources and steps necessary to figuring out a more rapid approach to migrate to digital.

Frequency Management – There is a need for sharing these frequencies as much as is practical. Digital migration is dependent upon frequency sharing, the use of RoIP and an analysis of backhaul capability. To date, there have been little, inconsistent, non-coordinated steps taken toward migration.

Agreement - Vaughn stated that the FS frequencies will be shared with our partners particularly in this effort to create integrated systems where it is possible/practical/feasible. The battle of yours vs mine is over.

Next Steps / Action – Mike Field will ensure that individuals in the FS CIO organization responsible for these frequencies are made aware of this direction from Vaughn.

IRA Resource Needs – In order for the IRA to focus on the integration, dedicated resources will need to be made available so that the day-to-day operations for each agency can continue. Without these dedicated resources the project will not move forward as quickly as is needed. This includes dedicated SME to various projects from Law Enforcement and Fire as well as technical expertise. The Law Enforcement participation has been somewhat sketchy to date.

Next Steps / Action - Russ will send Kolleen a list of participants from LEI from DOI and FS to date. Kolleen will forward to the Kim and Michael/Tim accordingly to ensure continued and consistent participation.

Central Oregon Pilot Project – Jimmie discussed the need for immediate fixes to the local system that were promised to leadership there; and how these must be completed by next season. Vaughn emphasized that the lessons learned and templates created through this project will be instrumental in the overall upgrades to the Interagency Radio Program Investment as discussed above. Therefore he would like to see this moving forward quickly. The IRA agreed in principal but clearly stated that there would need to be additional resources made available in order to support this effort and specifically recommended that a contract radio design engineer be involved in order to ensure that the outcome was not a stovepipe solution, remove any biases and eliminate slant to any agency preference.

Agreement - The IIOG agreed to make the funding available and the BLM indicated that they have a contractor on board that they can issue a task order for the work.

Action - Simon, Brandon, Russ, Jimmie will work to create a SOW for the contract engineering effort.

Action - The draft charter will be reworked to reflect this refined direction and include the two phases;

- Phase I - Immediate fixes to local system by 2010 field season which are complimentary to the Phase II.
- Phase II - The creation and implementation of a integrated interagency solution that incorporates design, towers, frequency management, governance, operations and maintenance, etc.

Facilities / Towers – The group discussed the tower mapping demonstration seen in Oregon and Brandon Diemer stated that he had received new software for tower inventory. Much of the specifics of what can be done in this arena are applicable to the Central Oregon Pilot project.

Agreement - The IIOG agreed that it was time to convey a message to all IIOG agencies with the expectation that tower replacement be analyzed for sharing possibilities. Before a tower is replaced on a one-to-one, ensure that there is no other tower in the vicinity that can be shared/used. This letter should come from the Secretary level.

Action - A draft memo will be created to convey this expectation and sent to the departments with recommendation for signature.

Portfolio Status Update

Handout included status of portfolio prior to meeting decisions. A copy is included in the QuickR Teamroom. Highlights not covered elsewhere in this summary of the meeting included:

Thin Client

Agreement - Cost/benefit analysis will be presented during October 29th phone meeting; the project closeout & lessons learned, etc., will be a separate call in mid-November with invitations sent to Stokes, Prausa, Rowdabaugh, Douglas and Field.

Action – Kolleen will schedule calls.

Interoperable Radio Systems Study (IRSS) – A business needs analysis is the key component to this project. However, IRA does not have the resources or expertise to conduct this. Brandon Diemer said that the BLM has some survey tools that they could use.

Agreement - John King of the FS staff is tasked with this for the CIO. Mike Field will check to see his availability to support this effort. Russ stated that he has a set of user requirements from the SW Border efforts that might be useful in this.

Action – Kolleen will ensure that John King and the IRA are connected to get this completed.

RoIP

Agreement – This is no longer a stand-alone project; will be combined into the Analog to Digital effort.

IIOG Website/Marketing – Kolleen is working on the website; <http://www.IIOG.gov>. This will be low cost (annual url registration and hosting fees at USDA NITC). All that is needed now is webmaster support to create the page; the IIOG Program Manager will update/maintain the site once it is created. Content will be briefing papers, charters, and other items appropriate for general consumption. At some point after the page is established we will explore the possibility of a password secured area for IIOG shared documents since the QuickR Teamroom still is challenging to use.

Agreement - Vaughn offered Bill Kraussman to provide the webmaster support.

Next Steps – Kolleen will continue and report progress during October / November calls.

Dispatch – The group discussed the next steps toward forwarding a recommendation on the dispatch effort, how that might look and who it might be addressed to, etc.

Next Steps - The smaller task group will take key points of this discussion and meet again on 10/13 at 1600 EDT.

Interior Telecommunications Coordinating Group Alaska (ITCG-A) – Bev Fronterhouse gave an in-depth presentation on the interagency integration of the telecommunications systems in Alaska. A copy of her presentation is on the QuickR Teamroom and packets were handed out to members who were present.

Next Steps - Kolleen will schedule a time for Bev to give her presentation to the IRA and to the Central Oregon project team. These sessions will be webinars, recorded for use and playback to those unable to attend and as part of the Central Oregon templates and path forward documents for use in other parts of the country. Much of what has been done in Alaska can be adapted for use in Central Oregon and beyond.

FTP Security Concerns – This issue was brought to the attention of the IIOG during the Summer field meeting in Oregon/Idaho. Although FTP as it is currently used is insecure and needs to be discontinued; the wildland fire community is in need of a suitable alternative before it is shut down. Shane Compton agreed to work with appropriate individuals to find a solution.

Agreement – Imperative that a workable alternative be available before this capability is discontinued.

Next Steps – Shane Compton agreed to lead the effort to find a workable alternative. Kolleen will provide list of SME who can describe the business requirement to Shane.

DHS Awareness – The IIOG is interested on DHS activities at a programmatic level affecting radio – broadband, state and local activity. After the presentation the IIOG will consider asking DHS to become an IIOG member. The goal is at the very least to create the opportunity for two-way dialog between the land

management agencies and the DHS regarding the radio infrastructure. Jimmie is particularly interested in their mistakes/lessons learned, etc.

Next Steps / Action - Tim Quinn agreed to invite a DHS person to an upcoming meeting to share information on what DHS is doing on a programmatic level regarding radio – broadband, state and local activity, etc.

Overarching Strategic Direction Document – Shane suggested and the group agreed that the IIOG will provide clear direction and statement of intent for sharing interagency wide. Basically the goal is a seamless access to information regardless of where it exists. Jim agreed to write the first draft of this document. This should include Networks, radios, dispatch, shared services, data management, wireless; a shared, integrated single service provider where ever it is possible.

Agreement – IIOG to provide clear direction and statement of intent re integration on interagency basis.

Next Steps – Jim will write first draft.

The IIOG Misc Tasks and Follow-up Tracking document is an attachment to this summary.