

# VERMONT COMMUNICATIONS (VCOMM)

<http://www.dps.state.vt.us/need/>

EMS District #3  
February 8, 2006

# Vision

- To create a Public Safety communications network throughout the State of Vermont capable of meeting the two-way voice and data needs of all first responders.
- To leverage Homeland Security funds, Federal earmarks and other funding opportunities to reduce the construction financial burden on the first responder community within Vermont.

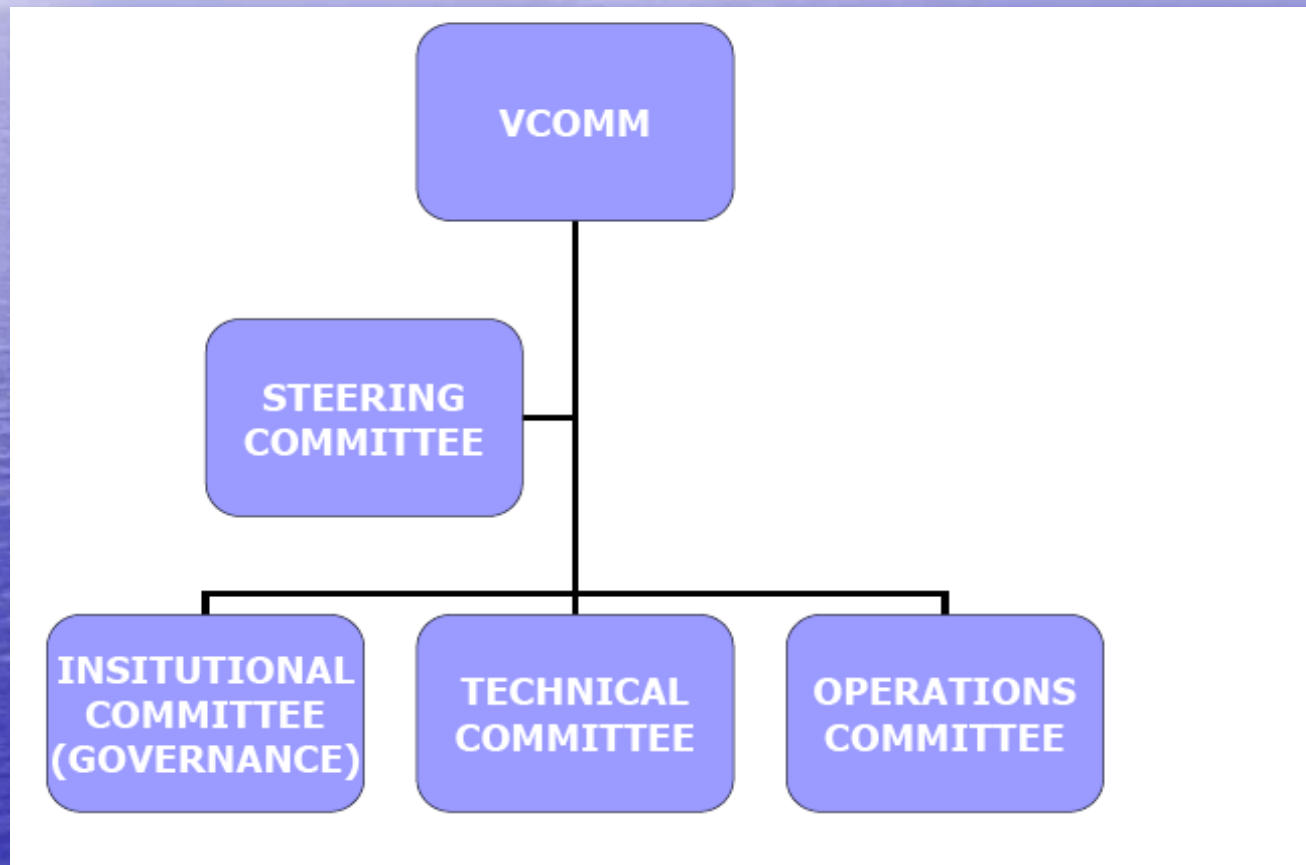
# Specific Project Objectives

- Interoperability (Local, Intrastate, Interstate and International)
- Enhance radio coverage
  - 95 percent mobile coverage
  - Enhanced portable outdoor
  - Enhanced voice pager coverage
  - Enhanced portable indoor
- Mobile Data
- Development of an intuitive user friendly system

## NOTE:

Interoperability has been identified by the National and State Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as a priority initiative. DHS has tasked all States to develop and test their interoperable communications systems to verify functionally and resolve any shortcomings in these networks.

# Project Administrative Structure



# Leadership Team

## VCOMM Steering Committee

- Chair Jim Colgan
- Vice Chair Neil Fulton
- Vice Chair Terry LaValley

## Sub Committee Chairs

- Roger Marcoux (Institutional /Governance)
- Paul Duquette (Operations)
- Al Barber (Technical)

# Key Agenda Items

- Identify funding sources
- Meet ODP mandate of interoperability plan and create an exercise to test plan
- Statewide partnership with all stakeholders
  - **Police** (State, Local, Sheriff's and Federal)
  - **Fire** (Career, Paid-on-Call and Volunteer)
  - **EMS** (Career, Paid-on-Call and Volunteer)
  - **DPS** (Hazardous Materials and Emergency Management)
  - Non Public Safety State and Local Agencies and Departments
  - **Dispatch** (All Agencies)
  - **Private Industry** (Utilities)

# Potential Obstacles

- Limited funding
- Competing projects for same funding sources
- Self sufficiency of some Public Safety first responders
- State of Vermont Act 250 requirements, regional planning and local zoning
- Vermont's terrain and the impact on system coverage requirements

# Potential Obstacles Continued

- Availability of usable frequencies
- Natural tendencies to develop low cost work around solutions instead of long term global resolutions
- Incompatible systems
- The challenge of seamlessly incorporating existing systems into statewide system
- Desire for local control of communications systems by first responders

# Project Requirements

- Minimal financial impact on participating agencies
- Seamless integration of existing systems that meet developed standards
- Function with existing dispatch systems
- Dispatch needs will be addressed in the future
- No impact on existing dispatch in core community (push to talk voice and data)
- Provide usable tools to the first responder community

# Project Status

- The RFBO (RFI) has been posted on our website and the vendor community has been notified.
  - Responses Due: 3:00 PM Friday February 10, 2006
- The request for a Radio Frequency Consultant has been drafted and is undergoing final review.
- Targeted improvements for 10 Fire Departments in the Northeast Kingdom has been initiated.
- Staff from the Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) is assisting the State in identifying and documenting the array of equipment currently in use in the NE Kingdom.
- Additional information on Dispatching capabilities and limitations will be needed to determine the most appropriate course of action.

# Committee Updates

- The Steering and Technical Committees will establish criteria for evaluating the responses.
- The Institutional Committee are continuing their efforts in establishing a formalized structure for the VCOMM group.
- The Operational Committee has began work identifying operational needs of Public Safety entities working in the Northeast quadrant of the State. VCOMM has identified this geographical area as test bed for deploying new technology and verifying operational recommendations function effectively in real world environment.

# Opportunities

The challenge of communications interoperability has plagued Public Safety agencies for decades. Great progress has been made, but there is much more work to be done. With the leadership of the VCOMM group and your continued support, *together* we can make a difference.

- Comments
- Concerns
- Suggestions
- EMS Representative  
Chair Jim Finger  
Vermont Ambulance  
Association 275 Stratton  
Road Rutland VT 05701-4647

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