

State of Arkansas



*Arkansas Interoperable
Communications Committee
(AICC)
Rural Leadership Council (RLC)
Charter*

March 2014

Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC)

Rural Leadership Council Charter

Section 1: Introduction

The Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC) is committed to cooperatively addressing the challenge of communications interoperability. AICC members have the overall responsibility for supporting the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Executive Committee (AICEC) and carrying out the committee charges. The Rural Leadership Council is established by the AICEC, through the State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIGP), and is responsible for representing the needs of rural public safety personnel in the development of the Arkansas Public Safety Broadband Network (APSBN).

Arkansas is a very rural state, and by establishing the Rural Leadership Council, hereafter referred to as RLC, the AICC will be able to coordinate and implement strategies based upon input by and for rural areas of the state, as represented by RLC members. The RLC is composed of members from the five emergency management areas in the state. This document describes the purpose, membership, responsibilities, scope, operating principles, and management by which the RLC will achieve success.

Interoperability Vision

The State of Arkansas will lead the Nation in establishing the ability for public safety stakeholders, across disciplines and jurisdictions, to exchange information seamlessly, as authorized, on demand and in real-time in order to protect lives and property.

Interoperability Mission

The Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC) will work collaboratively with the emergency response community across disciplines, levels of government, jurisdictions (including bordering States) and organizations to achieve the Arkansas interoperability vision. To do this, the AICC will coordinate and provide resources to help the emergency response community pursue the goals, objectives and strategic initiatives in the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP).

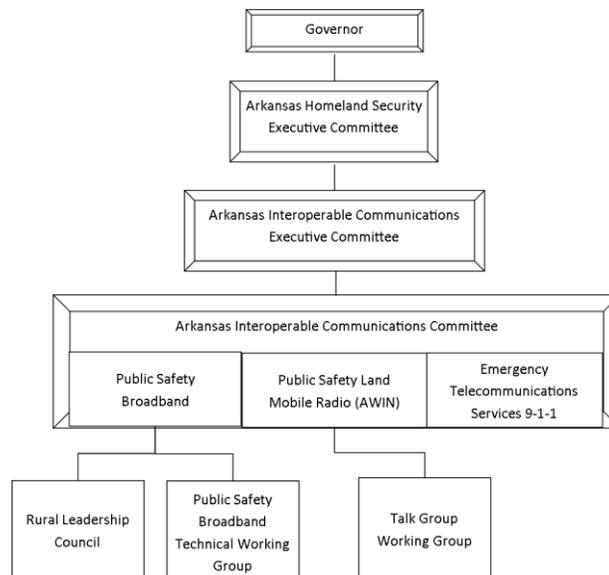
Section 2: Purpose

The RLC was formed to address the challenges facing rural public safety organizations in regards to access to and use of broadband technologies. The RLC's goals are to:

- Facilitate the flow of information from Arkansas counties and cities to State and Federal officials tasked with developing the plan.
- Ensure that a broad range of local-level public safety responders are represented.
- Assist with the development of coverage and capacity requirements for Arkansas's participation in the National Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN).
- Provide advice and guidance on policies and processes that are necessary for the successful implementation of the NPSBN in Arkansas.

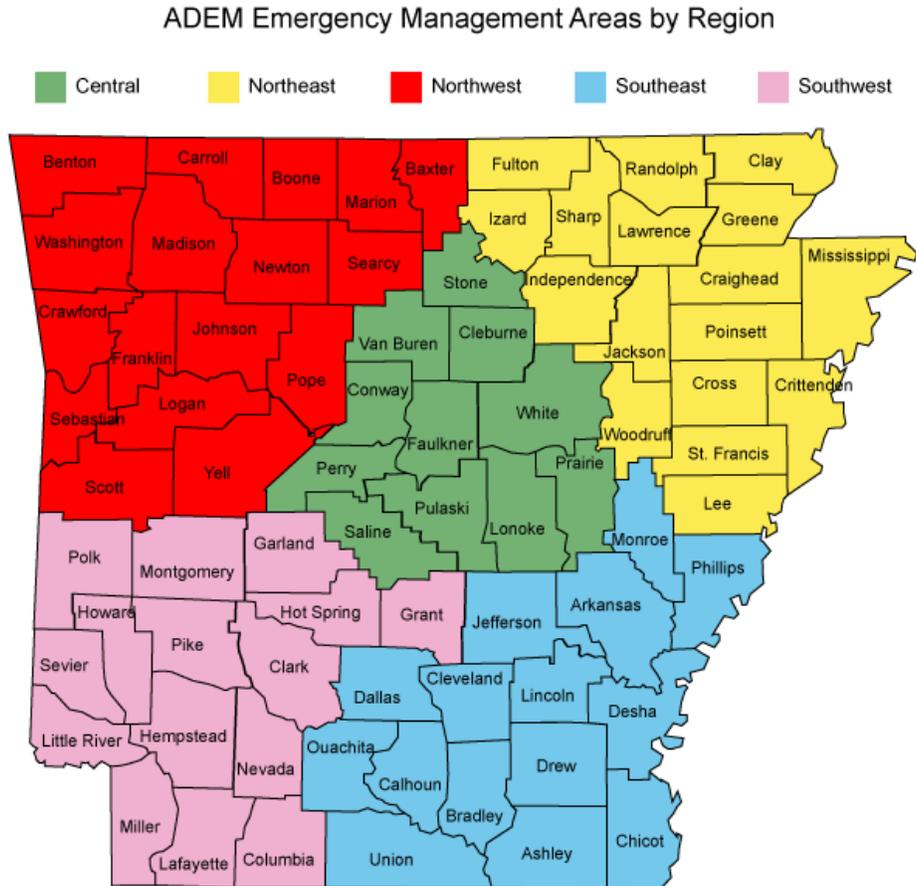
Section 3: Governance

The RLC is established as a working group of the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Executive Committee (AICEC), which governs the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC). The AICC addresses the challenges facing interdisciplinary communications across multiple jurisdictions and establishes a partnership among law enforcement, fire departments, state agencies, cities and counties in order to enhance communications interoperability capabilities. It also provides a forum to discuss related public safety communications initiatives. The AICC's goals are to: ensure the participation of relevant state executives and political leaders in the decision making process, build relationships at the local, regional, state, and federal levels, ensure that a broad range of local-level public safety responders are represented and assure participatory decision making.



Section 3: Membership

The RLC is established as a working group of the AICEC. Nominations were solicited from those counties designated as rural in the 2010 Census. Two representatives from each emergency management area (map below) were selected by the AICEC.



The AICEC designated two Ex-Officio members to serve as advisors to the RLC. The Chairman of the AICEC and the Director of the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) are the current Ex-Officio members.

The AICEC further designated that the Arkansas Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) will be responsible for facilitating the on-going work of the group.

Current RLC Council members, Ex-Officio members, and others working closely with the RLC are listed in **Appendix A**.

In the event that an RLC member cannot fulfill their responsibilities on the Council, the AICEC is responsible for selecting a replacement candidate.

Section 4: Responsibilities

Minimum expectations for all RLC members include:

- Serve as subject matter experts on emergency communications
- Commit to serve a two-year term
- Participate in three in-person committee meetings annually
- Participate in conference calls and town hall meetings as needed to further the work of the RLC and the AICC
- Support the Arkansas Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan mission, goals and objectives
- Participate as needed in FirstNet briefings and events.
- Assist with the activities leading to the development of a plan for Arkansas's participation in the NPSBN
- Support the majority decision; speak with one voice in regards to the workings of the Council

Section 5: Scope

The RLC is charged with ensuring the needs of rural public safety personnel are addressed in the development of the Arkansas Public Safety Broadband Plan. This includes addressing the following needs and concerns:

- Capacity and Coverage
- Applications
- Policies and Processes
- Legal and Legislative
- Border state
- Roaming

Section 6: Operating Principles

The RLC will use the following guidelines regarding how the membership will interact, and the ground rules for meetings and standards for member accountability. Premier to the RLC's Operating Principles is the definition of interoperable communications.

Interoperability is the ability to communicate, as needed, on demand, and as authorized at all levels of government and across all Public Safety disciplines.

Overarching Principles

Keep in mind the reason the National Public Safety Broadband Network deployment in Arkansas exists: to serve the first responders of the State of Arkansas in their mission to serve the citizens of Arkansas, and to serve first responders nationwide.

- Maintain the sense of urgency that 9/11 and more recent events such as Hurricane Sandy and the Boston Marathon bombings brought to the issue of communications interoperability.
- Ensure the issue of communications interoperability remains in front of elected officials as administrations change.
- Speak with one voice when reporting externally – present a unified front.
- Ensure that the State of Arkansas takes on a collaborative approach in dealing with issues regarding the operations, expansion, or management of the system.

Planning and Management Principles

Think not in terms of local, county, or even statewide interoperable communications. Think in terms of nationwide interoperable communications.

- Think interdisciplinary.
- Use a phased approach to strategic planning.
- Ensure that the state's requirements for Public Safety Broadband clearly reflect the desired future goals and strategies.
- Avoid overuse of acronyms and codes to eliminate confusion or misunderstanding.

Technology Principles

Recognize and respect that each discipline has unique needs and attempt to address them as part of the state's requirements for public safety broadband.

Consider security concerns during the planning of future communications solutions.

The initial scope of the National Public Safety Broadband Network deployment in Arkansas is data; mission-critical voice communications is a future goal.

Section 7: Decision Making

A. Voting

RLC members are responsible for representing their discipline, organization, area or agency. If a member is unable to attend a committee meeting, they may cast a vote by contacting the meeting facilitator, casting their vote via email, or by designating another RLC member as their proxy.

Ex Officio members are appointed by the AICEC and provide advice to the RLC membership. Ex Officio members will not participate in RLC votes.

The RLC may invite subject matter experts to participate in meetings as the need arises. These subject matter experts are not considered part of the RLC, and as such will not have voting privileges.

B. Committee Decision making process

The RLC will work towards consensus-based decision making. However, if a consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken and simple majority rules. All decisions and recommendations approved by a simple majority will be considered a decision or recommendation of the RLC when presented to the AICEC for consideration.

All RLC members will be held accountable by the discipline, organization, or agency that they represent. The AICEC final decision in all matters related to committee participation. The AICEC may make recommendations for the replacement of committee members who are not participating.

Decisions and recommendations will be reported to the AICEC through the SWIC.

Section 8: Logistics

The RLC will meet face-to-face three times per year (Approximately March, June, and October – dates TBD). Meeting locations will vary. Conference calls will be held on an as-needed basis to reduce travel time and facilitate the work of the group.

RLC meetings will be open to the public unless otherwise determined in advance.

The Department of Information Systems is responsible for providing administrative support for all meetings. In specific:

1. Maintenance of the RLC roster and contact information;
2. Identification of meeting locations and logistics
3. Development and distribution of meeting agendas;
4. Facilitation of meetings;
5. Recording and distribution of meeting minutes;
6. Assignment and tracking of action items.

APPENDIX A

Current RLC Members

Name	County	Discipline
Glen Crymes	Stone	Emergency Management
Doug Deckard	Cleburne	Fire Chief
Chris Evans	Calhoun	Emergency Management
Chris Gaines	Hot Spring	Emergency Management/Fire
Mary Howard	Logan	Emergency Medical
John Montgomery	Baxter	Sheriff
Mike Morgan	Chicot	Emergency Management
Dewayne Phelan	Clay	Mayor
Tim Stuckey	Grant	Fire Chief
Patrick Weatherford	Jackson	Law Enforcement

Current Ex-Officio Members

Judge Sonny Cox – Arkansas County & AICEC Chairman

David Maxwell – ADEM Director & State Point of Contact (SPOC)

Current Facilitator

Penny Rubow – Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC)