



# Michigan's Public Safety Communications Interoperability Board

9/10/25 Meeting Minutes

MSP HQ – 1917 Room

1. Vice-Chair Brad Stoddard called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm. Roll call was taken and is noted below.

Board Member	Present, Absent or Virtual
Ms. Brianna Briggs	Virtual
Mr. Gary Hagler	Present
Fire Marshal Thomas Hughes	Virtual
Mr. Thomas LaFave	Virtual
Mr. Sean McCarthy	Present
Chief Edwin Miller	Absent
Mr. Matthw Sahr	Virtual
Colonel Raymond Stemitz/ Mr. Tyler Cady	Present
Mr. Brad Stoddard	Present
Captain Kevin Sweeney	Present
Mr. Art Thompson	Virtual
Mr. Bryce Tracy	Present
Chief Jon Unruh	Present
Chief Edward Viverette	Present

## Also in Attendance:

In Person Attendees	In Person Attendees	Virtual Attendees	Virtual Attendees
Tim Lee	Kathryn Hall	Tara McLeod	Nick Carpenter
Kate Jannereth		Derek Flory	Kevin Collins
Anastasia Ferguson Nelligan		Ted Roney	Steven Rand
Randy Williams		Karl Arriola	
Chris Kuhl		Rob Dale	
Chris Russo		Dennis Fitzpatrick	
Chief Greg Janik			

**2. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes from Meeting on March 12, 2025**

**A motion was made by Mr. Gary Hagler, seconded by Chief Jon Unruh and carried to approve the March 12, 2025 meeting minutes as presented.**

**3. Additions and Approval of Meeting Agenda**

**A. Bryce Tracy had two items to add to the agenda.**

1. Under New Business Item C - December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss a change in time of the meeting and a joint meeting with the SNC.
2. Under New Business Item D - 2026 Meeting Dates.

**A motion was made by Chief Edward Viverette, seconded by Captain Kevin Sweeney and carried to approve the September 10, 2025 meeting agenda with two additional items from Bryce Tracy.**

**4. Communications and Correspondence: None**

**5. 1<sup>st</sup> Public Comment: None**

**6. Old Business:**

- a. Updates - New Standard for Hospital talk-group naming on the MPSCS

Chris Kuhl said the working group wrapped up meetings in May-June. We have had email and virtual meetings for standardized convention for hospital talkgroups for going forward and existing talkgroups. Socialized in circles and most seem in agreement. They have not started the actual process of changes because of the number of projects upcoming that have tied up most of the time for RPU. By December Board Meeting they hope metrics back on changes and what we start on. Slow moving and lengthy progress to do everything correctly. Sean McCarthy added, in case of a community that has two hospitals, they have a metric to determine naming. Bryce asked if this a multi-year process. Chris said yes, once we get to the Metro area for example, it will be more of a crawl because there are so many hospitals there. Bryce said a regulatory thing is that MDHHS will include that standardization in their future netcomm plans. Chris said yes, the chair of the EMSCC has been involved. He will help make a sheet for responders to use to show the what was and what is now. Mr. Forebush has been an asset in this process.

**7. New Business**

- a. Discussion - 2025 ICE STORM After Action Briefings Bryce asked for this because a lot of people who experienced ice storm around the state are talking about it now. He has been asked to do presentations in his county and others. He asked if the MPSCS has done an after-action report. Brad Stoddard replied they provided a presentation, and it has the costs to remediate sites. But they haven't completed a comprehensive after action across all of the MPSCS as they want to close out what the actual expenditures of the damage numbers. Bryce said they had no catastrophic failures or problems in their area and that is a credit to MPSCS and its resiliency.

People were looking for any downtimes? Why did the MPSCS stay more resilient than cellular networks? It's not to make others look bad. But we want to know why it did work. He asks because it is a wide scope event that hadn't been seen before. It's interesting to know the good things too.

Brad added that a lot of credit goes to Gary Hagler who sat right behind us in SEOC, for clearing the roads conversations. They already knew number tower sites were on generators and it was pretty much all of northern Michigan. They had ice damage on the towers which impacted backhaul. They worked closely with Gary, and he understood the impact if there was no communication. A lot of credit to Captain Sweeney in the SEOC. Activity was done in conversations across the table in the SEOC. That is sometimes not recognized in the response efforts. There was good engagement with National Guard and MDOT about propane and road clearing. He wants to acknowledge those two of our board members that were heavily involved in the recovery efforts. One of our legislators was in MPSCS office soon after and was talking about the impact of our system and keeping people connected when some areas lost all other forms of communication. There were cell and broadcast towers that folded. He would propose at the December Board Meeting they could provide a presentation about the ice storm. Bryce said that it would be great for a high-level report to talk about successes and any weakness or gaps. It wasn't just the system, but it was maintaining interoperability. Brad added there was the behind-the-scenes people and includes Gary Hagler and Captain Sweeney in that. For example, Kate Jannereth led efforts every day staying late in evening and early morning. Randy Williams also was in the SEOC. In Vanderbilt there is a prime site up a hill. It took them two days to cut trees to get to tower. There were elderly people living there and we gave them gas because their generator was running out. Those are the small things we should know about. Gary Hagler said the engineering of the towers were good, the quality of the maintenance over time to make sure they worked. Some private cell towers didn't survive.

**b. MPSCS 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on September 24 at 1:00pm**

Brad said all board should have received the invite. We have a number of people who worked on the system through the years. Brad's predecessor, Jeff Steffel, will be speaking among others. Covering the history of the system and modern information. If you are able to attend that would be great. Capt. Sweeny asked if there was an agenda for that and Brad replied yes they are working on that now.

**c. December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss a change in time of mtg and joint mtg**

Bryce said we want to ask the board to change the meeting time to 1:30pm on December 10 and to hold a joint meeting with the State 911 Committee (SNC). The SNC Board approved the joint session. Because there was an ask from ATT/First Net to do a session that morning which involved attendees from both MPSCIB and SNC. Brad added that John Hunt had reached out to schedule a coverage workshop. They are doing it across the country. They want to learn from Public Safety where there is a need for coverage across the state. We didn't have a lot of time available earlier this year so that day was agreed to. Some states have had success with this. Think of this as a requirement for reinvestment by AT&T so they can prioritize the highest needs

in the country are. Brad asked if you have a location of needs, start documenting those now. They are looking at population density and for coverage shortfalls. Brad will let the Board know how to send that information in. Bryce said he thought it would be like the scoping meetings that were in the past. One of his first things to talk about is coverage. Brad added that if there is anyone you know that should really be there, we will invite them.

**A motion was made by Captain Kevin Sweeney, seconded by Sean McCarthy and carried to change the December Board Meeting time to start at 1:30pm and to have the SNC joint meeting.**

Bryce will work with Chairman Troyer and Stacey Hansel from SNC and will develop a joint agenda. Matthew Sahr asked if we are having a joint meeting, will there be a special meeting agenda. Bryce said yes.

#### **d. 2026 Meeting Dates**

Bryce said usually we discuss next year's meeting dates at the December meeting but since this room has less availability now, we want to discuss 2026 dates at this meeting. The last few years the SNC Meeting are in the morning and ours are in the afternoon. The proposed 2026 Meeting dates are **March 11, June 10, September 9, and December 9.**

1. Matthew Sahr, said he supports the dates but asked if there is a discussion about moving the meeting around the State. Bryce said we haven't yet but what are your ideas? Matthew suggested Operations Centers around the state. Would be good for all of us to see those centers. Bryce asked if there is any discussion. Captain Sweeney said posting the meeting schedule at each site is required but otherwise there are no objections. Matthew said he would help organize the other location based on its availability.
  
2. Hagler asked if this will this cause conflict with the SNC Meeting being on the same day? Bryce said there is a gap between each meeting for travel time depending on the agenda so we can work it out. Brad said in the event that it may not work, maybe have a special meeting to have it at the other location. It would be nice to see different facilities in other parts of the state.

**Captain Kevin Sweeny made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gary Hagler and carried to approve March 11, June 10, September 9, and December 9 for the 2026 MPSCIB Board Meetings with the possibility of changing the location of the meeting to a different city.**

### **8. Federal Updates**

- a. CISA Emergency Communications Division -There was no one attending from CISA.
- b. FEMA Region 5 RECCWG -Karl Arriola

Karl Arriola said he returned from various emergency communications appointments, and he's happy to say FEMA changes going on only in moderation. He is working to make sure he has better attendance.

September is National Awareness here at Region 5. He volunteered to be initiating a regional recruitment campaign for all areas in the 6 states. Will hold call this week and webinar for participating counties who are interested to understand software capabilities and pricing and research perspective.

Next meeting will be on September 23rd will have a guest speaker. Will have an AUXCOMM coordinator within the subcommittee. Dan Lenz will be the coordinator to facilitate and expand federal capabilities. It's a unique first-time endeavor. Ohio Governor contacted Caster and Green at the SEOC in Ohio. Ohio wants to do an interoperable national radio system and weekly checks with outside regions with Pennsylvania, Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio. Because the Ohio winter caused comms outage. The Governor decided to do these interoperability hf capability checks, it will be first of its kind. Also, they will do inter-region tests between SEOCs. Thanks to Max Schnieder and Brad Stoddard for their contributions and their tabletop exercise and functional exercise. It was so successful that hospital admins realized that there were gaps in their interoperable communications. Other hospital admins in southern states have heard about what we did in Region 5 thanks to contributions from Bryce, Brad and Max. They want to read the after-action report and know what was tested and to purchase equipment for hospitals. All activity will be documented and published in 2025 RECCWG congressional report.

## **9. Statewide Updates**

### **a. Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) – Brad Stoddard**

Brad gave update on SWIC activity since beginning of the year. He said almost all of our CISA resources that support Michigan on interop and cyber side, all those people are gone. One of the existing emergency communications coordinators, Travis Johnson, out of Louisiana offered to help Michigan if needed. We are working through CISA emergency communications division to see what work can get done with limited staff. Last year they had created a google WG amongst the SWICs where they share info and collaborate. It's been really successful. There is an acting Director of CISA in place, he has very limited background in emergency communication. The incoming CISA director has a little more background in cyber. SWIC Coordinators have quarterly meetings with leadership of CISA and we've brought info from across the nation to that group and hope once the new director is in place we will have our next meeting. There was a plan for the markers, a self-evaluation of how each state was doing in all areas of emergency communication. Last year they had conversations to do something this year in the last quarter but he has no confirmation. But he has help from other WG members to help fill those out and submit them to Emergency Communications Division. He would include that in the December meeting packet.

### **b. MPSCS System/Budget/Staffing**

For FY 2025 we are almost fully staffed with a few open positions in recruitment. Within the next few weeks, we hope to be at full staff of 137. There are a few temp employees now and would like to make them full-time employees at Install location as there is an influx of new

equipment across the board. In FY25 we have had a structural deficit in our budget and have reported to DTMB since 2021/2022. We were able to get a number of initiatives to move forward. You may recall that during COVID time we were in a hiring and spending freeze. So, some of those projects we had were paused through Covid. We are now catching up on that. For FY26, we are looking at all 3 proposals out there (Senate, House, Exec) two are the same and one is not. The House version is considerably different. There is a reduction in staffing in the House plan for MPSCS and the budget is also reduced. We are hopeful that the House plan is not the final plan for FY26. The structural deficit would continue into 2026. Still working on FY27 yet but did request funds to shore up that deficit. FY27 is still in internal discussions with DTMB. Our concern is we won't have resources and staff to support local counties.

MPSCS Deputy Director, Anastasia Ferguson-Nelligan, said one of the biggest concerns is the House plan is that full-time staff is set at 122 and we are currently at 134. We are hoping that will not be the final version. Bryce asked if she had a rough estimate of budget cut? She said that is about \$500,000. Brad added that that is the cut but we still have structural deficit funds needed beyond that. So it's a bigger number. Bryce added that is why he brought up the Ice Storm because it is positive and put in discussion with House Representatives, many of whom represented those areas affected. Not the speaker but many others. It justifies the need for budget in 2026. Brad said that an easy example is Chris Kuhl has shared the CJIS requirements for encryption of radios. We have new requirements but not enough radio techs to keep up. He had told a County it would be 4 months to bring radios online, but that is the challenge. Trying to look at prioritization of those. Gary Hagler suggests for ice storm and impacts maybe MPSCS look at what did not occur. Like there were not numerous deaths and interoperability stayed working. Calls for service would be significantly different if the system went down. Brad added we heard repeatedly that it didn't matter if it was a hospital or sheriff department, the MPSCS were their only source of communication. Many of the legislators in the affected areas have no idea that we exist. It was a fluke that a Senator in the area was already scheduled to come tour MPSCS, so he was aware. If the board has the opportunity to share info about the success of the system with lawmakers, that can be helpful. Tyler Cady talked about the National Guard perspective during the Ice Storm. They had about 1,300 soldiers on the ground, at the height of it the MPSCS was the only communication option, whether due to fiber optics cuts or power outages, the only communications in some locations were the MPSCS.

**c. Agency/County/Member Additions to MPSCS**

Brad reviewed the current metrics with the board. Related to the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Governor's Proclamation came through and recognizes that September is Public Safety Communications Month and in recognition of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MPSCS.

Randy added we have gone through biennial system upgrade and stable release of Astro 2024.1. We continue to roll out the cyber platform, the Managed Detection and Response. Dispatch center upgrades will go through to March to finalize upgrade as it's such a big system. There was a lot of extra effort by the team.

d. **Current MPSCS Snapshot Data**

- i. *Agencies = 2,629*
- ii. *Radios = 155,471*
- iii. *Dispatch Centers = 134*
- iv. *Dispatch Consoles = 774*
- v. *Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) consoles = 64*
- vi. *Fire Pagers = 17,969*

**10. 911 in Michigan**

Amy Magirl reviewed her report as submitted ahead of time to the Board.

**11. Workgroup Reports**

- a. ***Communications Unit Workgroup*** - Co-chairs Ray Hasil and Nick Carpenter. Nick Carpenter reviewed his report as submitted to the board ahead of time.
- b. ***AUXCOMM Workgroup*** - Co-chairs Max Schneider and Jaclyn Barcroft. Max Schneider reviewed his report as submitted to the board ahead of time. He added 4 AUXC trainees participating in Labor Day exercise for Bridge Walk. Happy to say that all 4 completed their task books.
- c. ***Public Alerting Workgroup*** - Co-chairs Jaclyn Barcroft and Rob Dale. Rob Dale reviewed their report as submitted ahead of time to the board. He added he did the MSU regular test and it took four minutes to go out and FEMA didn't know why it took that long but they are doing follow up tests.
- d. ***Building RF & Fire Paging Workgroup*** - Co-chairs: Greg Farrer, Al Mellon & Greg Janik – Greg Janik reviewed the report as submitted to the board ahead of time. He added that the international fire code building code has been updated. Most have gone to the 2024 codes. There is some significant changes to that that we are happy with. Clear testing requirements are in that. System design standards must now be protected against fire. There is an emphasis on exemptions, if you have acceptable levels you don't have to put a system in. That is still a stigma, but they know because they tested it. Al Mellon said Calhoun County is working through some issues. They found they were putting out less power on base station radios that was allowed so Calhoun County will have more power. Bryce asked Al if there had been any system loading issues with all additional paging and traffic? Al said there is a lot of information from adjacent dispatch centers. So that is programming changes they will make in the pagers to seal them from those. Standardized paging formats we may have to consider.

- e. **Encryption Workgroup** - Co-chairs: Tim Jones & Chris Kuhl –Chris Kuhl reviewed the report submitted to the board ahead of time. He added that the mandate does not need to be done by 2026 for all users, just those sending protected data. L Event was used in summer but L94 that was used was shut down in August.
- f. **Security Workgroup** - Co-chairs: Capt. Kevin Sweeney & Brad Stoddard – Captain Sweeney reviewed the report as presented to the board ahead of time. He added FY 23 grant award will be going out by the end of week to local entities. Three things were denied by President for Ice Storm assistance, one was individual assistance for citizens, utility companies, and hazard mitigation was not allowed. Governor has appealed the decision with the President and waiting for a response. Transition from MI-Train to Cornerstone, a new learning management system. It's working well but now working on getting payments in Cornerstone. Expect to go live on October 1. All will transfer to new system in January. Training video being created for Cornerstone. We will see it at the Interop Conference.
- g. **UASI Workgroup** - Co-chairs: Craig Swenson & Sean McCarthy. – Sean McCarthy said there was nothing to report.

**12. 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Comment:** None

**13. Good of the Order:** Captain Sweeney announced that Inspector Michelle Sosinski will be retiring after 31 years of service with MSP. Her retirement celebration is October 29 at 1:00pm in the SEOC. Our Board Clerk will send that information out to the Board. Brad added the InterOp Conference is first quarter of next year. The first planning meeting was held, and he asked if the Board had any content or speaker they would like to see, please get that to us.

Bryce said that the next meeting will be on December 10 and start at 1:30pm.

**14. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:29pm