

**Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council
Western Massachusetts Regional Interoperability Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 16, 2025, 12:30pm**

Subcommittee members present: Jason Breault (Pittsfield PD), Aaron Budine (Bernardston FD), Thomas Grady (BCSO/BCECS), Steve Kozloski (Monson PD/ WMLEC), Dennis Nazzaro (Northampton FD/Pelham FD), Kurt Seaman (S. Deerfield FD), Lindsay Stromgren (Amherst FD), Robert VanZandt (Belchertown FD)

Non-members present: Raine Brown (FRCOG), Bob Flaherty (Hatfield Fire), John Hart (Hampden County Sheriffs Dept), Rachel Mason (FRCOG)

Subcommittee members absent: Matt Barstow (MSP), Nina Barszcz (Westfield Dispatch), Tyrone Denson (CMED/Springfield FD), Robert Garriepy (Huntington PD), Anthony Gentile (Wilbraham Dispatch), Alan Sirois (Agawam FD)

This meeting was conducted on Zoom. The meeting was recorded.

Tom Grady called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes

The committee reviewed the minutes from the March 18, 2025 meeting.

<p>Motion: Jason Breault moved to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2025 meeting as submitted. Aaron Budine seconded the motion. Lindsay Stromgren, Tom Grady, Dennis Nazzaro, Aaron Budine, Jason Breault, Robert VanZandt, and Alan Sirois voted in favor. Steve Kozloski and Kurt Seaman abstained. The motion was approved.</p>

Introductions followed.

Updates from the Chair – None.

SWIC/SIEC Update – Dennis Nazzaro reported that last month’s SIEC meeting was cancelled.

Project Updates

FC40 Comms Upgrade – Raine Brown reported that the project is complete. Aaron Budine reported that the new technology is running well.

WMLEC Equipment Replacement – Raine learned that this did not need to go to SIEC for approval, so the specs just need to be finalized and sent to MAPC.

BCSO Radio Repeater Site – Raine reported that this is waiting on SIEC review.

Berkshire Mobile Command Unit Mast Camera and Router Antenna – This was approved by the Council today. Raine sent the project justification to EOPSS and SIEC for review.

Hampshire County Fire Chiefs Roip Gateway – This was approved by the Council today. Raine sent the project justification to EOPSS and SIEC for review.

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Western Mass Interoperable Systems Update

Berkshire County – See “New Business,” below.

Franklin County – Kurt Seaman reported that things are status quo. They are starting to work with John Ruggerio on the CoMIRS project, which is moving along slowly.

Hampshire County – Dennis Nazzaro reported that there was a mutual aid call to Franklin County and they had no communication back to Northampton Control. However, he has Franklin County Roip on his phone, and it worked well.

WMLEC – Steve Kozloski reported that the system is up and all sites are functioning. He is anticipating retirement in the next few months and actively looking for replacements for his seat on WMRIC and the Council.

CMED – No one was present to give an update.

MSP – No one was present to give an update.

911/Dispatch – No one was present to give and update. Tom Grady noted that this is National Telecommunicators Week; thank your dispatch staff.

Air Methods – No one was present to give an update.

Other – John Hart reported that in Hampden County they have been having challenges communicating with deputies throughout the county. There was a change in leadership at WESTCOMM and they are hoping for updates on the status of installing repeaters to get better service. They are also looking at getting a NIBRS number, which is now mandated for reporting. They are in talks with Cliff Goodband in EOPSS about getting that squared away. Dennis asked if CoMIRS has Sheriffs Dept channels. Tom replied that they have statewide groups, but he is not sure about talk groups. Jason Breault clarified that there are transport talk groups for the DoC that the Sheriffs can use, but they don't have a dedicated 800 talk group yet. He suggested that John Hart should talk to John Ruggerio about getting a talk group for the Sheriff's Office in conjunction with WESTCOMM. Steve Kozloski reported that there is some in-kind money that the Sheriff's Department has been paying into WESTCOMM for a system upgrade. So unless WESTCOMM moves entirely to COMIRS, there should be some provisions for the network to be expanded. However, their vendor is not local, so everything moves at a snail's pace. Dennis added that the Hampden County Sheriffs Dept does a lot with the Dive Team, and they are all over Western Mass. Even if WESTCOMM was 100% functional, it might not cover everywhere that the HCSO needs to go. So it would be good to have a talk group as a backup plan for interoperability. Tom suggested that we keep this on the agenda moving forward.

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Budget Review

Raine Brown reported. The budgets in the meeting packet are not up to date with the Berkshire County Mobile Command project and Hampshire County project that were just approved today. The actual remaining in FFY24 is \$26,067, which runs through next July. Raine was in communication with CMED regarding a project they want to bring forward, possibly next month. Tom noted that the CMED rep has not been showing up to WMRIC meetings. We don't want people coming just to ask for money; we want them to be active participants. Raine explained that they have been communicating not with Ty Denson but rather with Sean Crimmins from Baystate Medical Center. Hugh O'Callaghan was also on the first call.

Requests

None.

Old Business

Interoperability using the State's P25 system talkgroups LPS9 and LPS10

Lindsay Stromgren pointed out that we've been kicking this down the road for a long time. What/who are we waiting on? Tom replied that Anthony was taking the lead on this, working with Rich Fiske. He suggested that we put on the agenda to get an update from Anthony. Dennis noted that 9 and 10 are active for Western Mass and do get used from time to time. Dennis scans them and heard some BOLOs recently. We had been talking about it because of duplication of efforts. Should they be patched together, or should it be used as a sole source instead of WMLEC? He is not sure if it's the SWIC that we're waiting on or just that we need to make a decision as WMRIC. Lindsay recalled that there was also a question about providing radios for dispatch centers to be on that channel. Jason recalled that Anthony made a request to see who has access to CoMIRS, but he is not sure the status of that list. We need to figure out who has it and who does not, and what we need.

WMLEC Command Pod

Dennis reported that the pod was relocated to Pelham. He spent two days updating it to make it fully operational again. He asked what will happen to the trailer after Chief Kozloski retires. Steve replied that it probably will go either to Chicopee or to the new WESTCOMM facility. Dennis noted that we got those two units from WMRIC but never got an operational plan in place. He has been talking with Rob VanZandt and others about this.

New Business

Berkshire update – Jason reported that regarding Berkshire system, he met with John Ruggerio at Savoy Mountain. They will be swapping antennas in June to make room for microwave dishes up there. So for a couple of weeks they are going to use the antenna for the VHF. Tom added that State 911 hired a Western Mass radio person, Jake Pyra, who will work under Don Tyron. Jake worked for Pittsfield Communications for some time. He is coming on board next week full time and will be assigned to Western Mass, supporting PSAP operations for State 911. Hopefully we will get him to these meetings moving forward.

Business Unforeseen by the Chair: None.

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Next Steps/Future Meetings

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 12:30 pm, as a virtual meeting.

Motion: Jason Breault moved to adjourn. Steve Kozloski seconded the motion. Lindsay Stromgren, Tom Grady, Dennis Nazzaro, Steve Kozloski, Alan Sirois, Kurt Seaman, Jason Beault, Rob VanZandt, and Aaron Budine voted in favor. The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:52 pm.

List of Documents Reviewed at the Meeting

- WMRIC Meeting Agenda for April 16, 2025
- WMRIC Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2025 (draft)
- WMRIC FFY23 Budget Report through 4/11/25
- WMRIC FFY24 Budget Report through 4/11/25

Respectfully submitted by:

Rachel Mason, WRHSAC Program Assistant
Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council
Franklin Regional Council of Governments