



**Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System (ISICS)
Standards, Protocols, Procedures**

ISICS Standard: Requesting Access and Participation	Standard #:	2.8.0
	Date Adopted:	01/10/2019
	Date Reviewed:	11/14/2024
	Version:	2.0

1. Purpose or Objective

The purpose of this standard is to establish the procedure for an eligible entity to apply for participation in the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System (ISICS) and for a participant to request amendments to their participation plan.

2. Technical Background

The following definitions apply to this standard:

- “Requesting entity” means an entity that wishes to gain access to the ISICS platform as a “USER” for voice communication purposes. Entities that are not eligible ISICS users may not apply for access. Each entity solely applies for itself unless accompanying authorization documentation from sub-applicants is submitted with the application. “USERS” are defined in sections 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 of the [ISICS Memorandum of Agreement](#).
- “Level 1 users” means interoperability use only.
- “Level 2 users” means local operational use with no enhancements.
- “Level 3 users” means local operational use with additional channel capacity or core-connected consoles.
- “Level 4 users” means local operational use with additional channel capacity and/or local coverage enhancements.

3. Operational Context

Since changes to ISICS may affect other participants, the addition of new participants must be reviewed for possible performance or cost impacts to some or all users of the system prior to taking on the new participant and ensures that new users will have sufficient

training and procedures in place to properly use the shared system and interoperate with other users.

Similarly, whenever existing users change the nature of their use of the system, those changes must be documented in a participation plan amendment and evaluated for system impacts prior to implementation.

Only those issues that affect the operation of ISICS are governed by this ISICS Standard. Changes that affect only local resources may be managed at the local or regional level.

The ISICS platform is designed with a certain amount of capacity in anticipation of the addition of future participants joining the system. However, if a participation plan requires the addition of new ISICS resources or triggers a major technical change, the technical change management procedures of ISICS Standard 2.15.0 - Change Management may also apply.

4. Recommended Protocol / Standard

All users accessing the ISICS platform must have a current, approved participation plan or be included in the approved participation plan of another entity.

5. Recommended Procedure

Plan Contents

When an entity elects to become a participant, it shall submit a Letter of Intent (LOI), Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), and Participation Plan to ISICSB.

Interoperability Participation

When an entity elects to become an Interoperability Participant, Participation Plans should contain the following information:

- The type and quantity of equipment
- Whether the agency has Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) equipment capable of accessing ISICS
- A narrative description of the entity's intended use
- A list of public safety agencies that the entity would anticipate communicating with over ISICS

The requesting entity may be granted access to these talkgroups:

- Statewide interoperability talkgroups
- Regional interoperability talkgroups
- Statewide system patches to Legacy communication systems
- Other talkgroups whose owners have granted permission to the requesting entity

Plan Review

The User Group Committee (UGC) may determine whether the requesting entity's plan is consistent with regional and statewide plans. The UGC may resolve inconsistencies by seeking adjustments to the requesting entity's participation plan. The UGC may not recommend the approval of plans where there is an inconsistency between regional and statewide plans and the requesting entity's plan. Once the requesting entity's plan is found

to be consistent with regional and statewide plans, the UGC may recommend approval and submit it for approval to ISICSB.

ISICSB will review the requesting entity's plan to ensure these requirements are met:

- The plan accurately reflects any impacts on ISICS that would result from its implementation.
- The plan is consistent with the capacity and operational constraints of the ISICS platform.
- The plan is consistent with the currently adopted plan and standards of the ISICSB.
 - If ISICSB determines that the requirements are met, they may approve the applicant for access to ISICS.
 - If ISICSB determines that the requesting entity's plan does not meet these requirements, they shall communicate their objection of the plan to the requesting entity. The requesting entity may then revise and resubmit their plan to the UGC. The UGC shall review the plan and load assessment and make a recommendation to the ISICSB, who shall have final authority over acceptance of the plan. Appeals of UGC decisions may be brought to ISICSB.
 - The requesting entity gains access to the system when their request for participation is approved and the entity has received a welcome letter from the ISICSB.

6. Participation Plan Amendments

All participation updates shall be initiated by the user agency submitting an updated Applicant Participation Plan (APP). The updated APP shall be submitted electronically through the ISICSB website where it will be directed to the System Administrator, User Group Committee (UGC) Chair, and Statewide Interoperability Coordinator. Amendments to a participation plan are required for a variety of circumstances, some potential instances and their processes are listed below.

- Changes to user-levels shall go through the application process.

Level 4 users are responsible for ensuring system capacity for the number of subscriber units and/or talkgroups added and can bypass the application process by working directly with ISICS System Administrators and the SWIC.

- Requesting the addition of more than twenty-five (25) subscriber units to the current plan shall go through the application process.

Requesting up to twenty-five (25) subscriber units shall be reviewed by the UGC Chair and the System Administrator. Final approval may be granted by the ISICSB Chair and/or Vice Chair. This modification is capped to two (2) updates before the UGC application process is required to add more subscriber units.

- Requesting the addition of more than two (2) talkgroups to the current plan shall go through the application process.

Requesting up to two (2) talkgroups shall be reviewed by the UGC Chair and System Administrator. Final approval may be granted by the ISICSB Chair and/or Vice Chair. This modification is capped to two (2) updates before the UGC application process is required to add more talkgroups.

7. Other Participation Plan Amendments

- Eligible public safety users who have joined ISICS may work directly with entities who may not normally be eligible and authorized for the public safety communications network in emergency situations involving imminent safety to life or property, or under contractual agreements with limited scope. Eligible public safety users who have joined ISICS may have the ability to communicate with those entities they contract with or work with during these emergency events. Non-public safety/non-public service organizations not addressed specifically in other ISICS Standards may be eligible to use the ISICS system during the following situations:
 - Emergency coordination with other authorized users during an emergency event which is under incident command of a public safety entity.
 - Coordination among other authorized users in the performance of official governmental activities of the eligible ISICS user agency.**Prohibited use includes internal day-to-day, administrative, and non-emergency communications, except where otherwise approved by the ISICSB.**

Nothing in this Standard shall be construed so as to prohibit a user from temporarily issuing radios to non-public safety/non-public service entities, or to eligible non-users of ISICS as necessary in an emergency to protect life and property. Any such use shall be approved by an incident commander, Communications Unit Leader (COML), or a Communications Unit Leader in Training (COML-(T)) and be included in an Incident Communications Plan (ICP). Such use exceeding 72 hours shall be reported to the Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC).

All amendments made under this section must be accompanied by a Letter of Support from the eligible ISICS user agency.

All amendments made under this section shall require review by the UGC application process.

Any requests for new groups or individuals as defined in this section may also be reviewed by other ISICSB Committees as deemed appropriate before submission for approval by the ISICSB. The UGC reserves the right to review any application and make recommendations for approval or denial to ISICSB.

Radio IDs, talkgroups, or other resources provided on the System will be available to the non-public safety/non-public service user only for the length of service provided by the eligible user of ISICS and not to exceed a 12-month period.

All agreements made under this Standard will expire and IDs will be terminated on ISICS at the end of the agreement date by the ISICS System Administrators.

Any amendments to the criteria listed above will be submitted in writing and reviewed by the User Group Committee or, in emergency situations, the SWIC and ISICS System Administrators.

Required information in the Letter of Support from the ISICS approved user to accompany the amended application includes the following criteria about the non-eligible user:

Criteria 1 – Background Information

- 1a. Eligible ISICS User amending their plan must complete the Letter of Support
- 1b. Organization(s) the eligible ISICS user is requesting to share ISICS access with
- 1c. Reason for plan amendment request (proposed uses)
- 1d. Deployment time requirements
- 1e. Training plan for non-eligible entity
- 1f. Fleetmap

Criteria 2 – Value of Participant Being on ISICS

- 2a. Need and justification for immediate interoperability with public safety responders
- 2b. Basis and justification for the quantity of resources requested
- 2c. Area of impact (critically: e.g., emergency search and rescue, food, shelter, mental health services, clean-up, utility service storage)
- 2d. Is the support duplicative of that provided by another entity (e.g. is there overlap with others already on the system; if so: the identity, location, and service area for the incumbent entity)
- 2e. Level of coordination needed with other entities
- 2f. Risk or impact of not providing resources for this service
- 2g. Risk or impact of providing fewer resources than requested.
- 2h. Monitoring and enforcement plan of those resources for appropriate usage

Criteria 3 – Technical Consideration

- 3a. Resources required (e.g., quantity of Radio user or Talkgroup IDs, existing talkgroups required, etc.)
- 3b. Anticipated traffic load, if applicable
- 3c. Capacity for additional users in the area, if applicable

8. Management

The User Group Committee Chair in coordination with the System Administrator will be responsible for ensuring compliance and use of these resources.

All ISICS Users shall maintain use of the system based on the ISICS Memorandum of Agreement, Agency Participation Plan, ISICS Standards and Policy, and defined best practice as determined by the Governance structure of the ISICSB.

The UGC reserves the right to review any application and make recommendations for revocation of access to ISICSB.