



A SCIP workshop for ISICS committee members will be held on February 8, 2024, from 1:00 PM—5:00 PM at the following location:

Dallas County Human Services Campus
25747 N. Ave.
Adel, IA 50003

*** lunch will be provided ***

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE is
January 15, 2024**

REGISTER [HERE](#)

“We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone.”

~ Ronald Reagan

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ⇒ **New Training Opportunity:**
ICS 300 Intermediate (Adel)
[MORE INFO](#)
- ⇒ **New Training Opportunity:**
ICS 300 Intermediate (Creston)
[MORE INFO](#)
- ⇒ **New Training Opportunity:**
ICS 400 Advanced (Harlan)
[MORE INFO](#)
- ⇒ **New FirstNet Opportunity:**
Click [HERE](#) to see a FirstNet Authority Emergency Management Cohort opportunity
- ⇒ The November 2023 FirstNet Newsletter is available [HERE](#)
- ⇒ The December 2023 FirstNet Newsletter is available [HERE](#)
- ⇒ Click [HERE](#) to see the November 2023 CISA Report
- ⇒ Click [HERE](#) to see the December 2023 CISA Report

New Approved ISICS Users

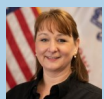
- ◆ Chariton Community School District—Level 2
- ◆ Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC)—Level 2
- ◆ Independence Mental Health Institute (update)—Level 2
- ◆ Linn County Sheriff’s Office (update)—Level 2
 - ◆ MercyOne—Clinton County—Level 2
- ◆ Muscatine County Joint Communications (update)—Level 4
- ◆ UnityPoint—Lifeguard Air Ambulance—Level 2

Note From the SWIC

Happy Holidays! It is a unique time of year in the realm of public safety, and I am always reminded of the law enforcement, fire, EMS, and dispatchers I worked as, and with, in the past who don’t always experience the season as most of those in the civilian world. Thank you for your dedication and sacrifice to public safety. As you will see in the ISICSB Committee reports that follow, this Board has successfully accomplished some monumental work in 2023. The Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) and the Iowa Field Operations Guide (IFOG) were both adopted, new policy and procedure and training material have been produced, a new Statewide Comms Interop Plan (SCIP) is being created and will be finalized early next year, and ISICS continues to see increased adoption with new users coming on every month. The extensive work by committee members is commendable, and I greatly appreciate the time that is devoted to these projects by a diligent team dedicated to ISICS. I am conveying all of that work in the annual report to the legislatures this month.

In 2023, ISICSB was also awarded the REMCDP grant of over \$1.8 million to expand and enhance rural emergency medical communications. Iowa is the 13th most rural state in the nation, and this grant’s initial scope will be ISICS Region 1 and include the hospitals and ambulance service providers in that region. My hope is that the success we exhibit through 2025 will lead to expansion into Iowa’s ISICS Regions 2-6. This is a great opportunity for Iowa, and I am proud to work on this project for ISICS and the state.

Have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and SAFE New Year.



Respectfully,
Haley Nichols, SWIC

To Join ISICS

For more info about joining ISICS click [HERE](#)

To start the process to JOIN ISICS click [HERE](#)

If you need assistance or have questions regarding the ISICS joining process, please contact SWIC Haley Nichols @ nichols@dps.state.ia.us

ISICSB Contacts

Michele Bischof
ISICSB Chair

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Patrick Updike
ISICSB Vice-Chair

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Haley Nichols

Statewide Interoperability Coordinator
(SWIC)

Iowa Department of Public Safety /
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ISICS NOC Contact Information

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	<h2>HAPPENINGS</h2> <p>View calendar HERE</p>	
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New Communications Unit Credentials

ISICSB would like to congratulate Shawn Page who recently completed all requirements to obtain his Communications Leader (COML), Communications Technician (COMT), and Incident Tactical Dispatcher (INTD) credentials.

Shawn is a Communications Center Specialist 2 with the Iowa Department of Public Safety. Congratulations to Shawn on this excellent achievement!

New FirstNet Sites

Two new 4G LTE cell site have launched; include Band 14 for first responders:

- One in **Waterloo, IA** near US 63 W Louise Street
- One in **Sterling, IL** along the Mississippi River near Ridge Road & Quinn Road

FirstNet Contacts

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ISICS System Administrator Report (October 2023)

Radios = 34,792 (up 626 from September 2023)
Talkgroups = 3,159 (up 7 from September 2023)
Push-to-Talks = 2,759,098 (down 88,746 from September 2023)

ISICS System Administrator Report (November 2023)

Radios = 35,555 (up 763 from October 2023)
Talkgroups = 3,214 (up 55 from October 2023)
Push-to-Talks = 2,708,831 (down 50,267 from October 2023)

Who's on FirstNet?

While not as fun as the iconic "Who's on First?" made famous by American comedy duo Abbott and Costello, the site [Who's on FirstNet \(whosonfirstnet.com\)](http://whosonfirstnet.com) is a great self-reporting resource for anyone wanting to know what their peers in Iowa and Nebraska are doing with their agencies using the FirstNet platform. The site shows a map and provides information about agencies using FirstNet and who to contact to get first hand information about others' successes and lessons learned.

If you are using FirstNet, please go to [Who's on FirstNet \(whosonfirstnet.com\)](http://whosonfirstnet.com) and report what you are doing and who one of your peers can talk to for advice. If you are thinking about using FirstNet or expanding your usage, please go to [Who's on FirstNet \(whosonfirstnet.com\)](http://whosonfirstnet.com) and see what your counterparts in other agencies are doing and find contact information to get firsthand experiences.

The Who's on FirstNet database is free of charge and maintained by members of the User Group Committee for the State of Iowa.

~ *Brian Blodgett, Region 1 Committee Chair | FirstNet Iowa Broadband Subcommittee Member*

FirstNet Authority Update

The FIRSTNET authority is wrapping up the FirstNet progress updates across the nation. Iowa remains in the queue to be finished early next year. The progress updates are a wealth of information to the states on the network's progress and where public safety expects the network to be in the years to come.

Significant progress has been made in Iowa regarding coverage and adoption of the network. Iowa continues to lead the nation with how it is structured to handle public safety needs when using the network. Governance is a crucial tool to ensure information is delivered to public safety in all Regions of the State; Iowa has that governance in place.

The authority continues to ensure the contract is followed and the network performs as intended. Next year, the authority will seek input on where to reinvest the dollars in the network. Education seminars and meetings with public safety will be coming in 2024 and will be hosted by the authority. The exact plan on how these meetings will be structured has yet to be finalized, but as your Senior Public Safety Advisor I will inform you on how that will work when ready. Iowa has the governance in place to make it a smooth process.

LTE and LMR integration technologies are advancing rapid-

ly. New technology and applications exist today to make this work. LTE is not intended to replace LMR but to enhance the interoperability between the two platforms. There are also cost savings, allowing more public safety agencies to communicate on LTE/LMR. More education is needed, which I expect to deliver to Iowa in 2024.

HPUE (high power user equipment) is a technology that is also rapidly becoming a solution for rural areas to solve the dead spots in counties. Ambulances, fire trucks, and law enforcement vehicles are using the devices with great success in obtaining signals where they did not have one before. Having a strong signal in an ambulance is critical when needing to stay in communication with the hospital during transports.

CJIS access on FIRSTNET: Details on how the FIRSTNET and CJIS are integrated will be a topic that will generate good discussions on the benefits for Law enforcement agencies on the FIRSTNET network.

I am looking forward to working closely with all of you next year.



~ *Tom Lampe, Senior Public Safety Advisor, FirstNet Authority*

ISICSB Year End Committee Updates

Finance Committee: During 2023, new ISICS Board Member Daniel Brown took on the role as the Finance Committee Chair. Throughout the year, there were no major expenses other than the average financial inflows and outflows historically recorded for the Board.

One recent expense of note...during the December 2023 ISICSB Meeting, the Board approved funding to provide lunch for the upcoming Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Workshop that will be held on February 8, 2024, in Adel.

Moving forward into 2024, as of now there are no significant changes anticipated to the Board finances.

~ *Daniel Brown, Finance Committee Chair*

FirstNet Broadband Committee: The FirstNet Broadband Committee has been regularly meeting this year with committee members, as well as Iowa AT&T and FirstNet Authority Representatives. FirstNet Committee member Brian Blodgett has been keeping the group up to date on the "Who's on FirstNet?" website. If you are a FirstNet user, this is a great site to go to and register not only for yourself, but as well as all users within your agency. Please see the short update on page 2 of this ISICSB Newsletter for more information regarding the Who's of FirstNet website.

Tom Lampe has recently come on board as the new FirstNet Authority Senior Public Safety Advisor for FEMA Region 7. Many of those who have been with ISICS for a while know of Tom with his work on ISICS as our previous ISICS Board Chair. We welcome him back in his new position. Tom has a wealth of knowledge and experience, and we look forward to working with him. Also, our AT&T Representative Tyler Richard has been keeping us updated on coverage and capacity expansion and buildouts as they continue across the state of Iowa with new site launches and micro sites to fill in coverage gaps where needed.

SWIC Nichols has also played a vital role in our committee as well, assisting our group in the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) workshop for the FirstNet Broadband Committee and keeping us up to date on important topics that relate directly to our committee.

This committee is comprised of individuals with exceptional broadband and technical knowledge, as well as a variety of backgrounds and experiences from across the State of Iowa. I truly appreciate everyone who takes the time to participate on the Committee, and I am excited to see what the next year brings for ISICS, the FirstNet Broadband Committee, and AT&T FirstNet expansion across the state.

~ *Mindy Benson, FirstNet Committee Chair*

Governance Committee: The Governance Committee, in its effort to develop and update policy and procedure statements for enhancement, deployment, and operation of ISICS, created a policy naming procedure and documented the process for creation, review, and revision of policies. The committee also developed a schedule to review all ISICS policies and standards to ensure they remain up to date.

~ *David Ness, Governance Committee Chair*

Operations Committee: The Operations Committee establishes operational policy for ISICS access and identifies, reviews, and updates existing communication plans. The Operations Committee has worked closely with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and Carroll County in the Operational Rapid Assistance Package (O-RAP) for rural emergency medical communications mission. The program assists rural communities by examining communications barriers and identifying solutions that enhance existing emergency communications infrastructure to improve the delivery of rural medical care. The program also assists in addressing National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) implementation gaps. The O-RAP project led ISICB to be the recipient of the Rural Emergency Medical Communications Demonstration Project (REMCDP) grant.

~ *Bridget Edson, Operations Committee Chair*

Training & Outreach Committee: This year, the Training and Outreach Committee has worked diligently in creating training videos for the use of the ISICS radio platform. The videos include a pursuit module and a statusboard usage module. SWIC Nichols has also completed the Radio 101 Training. All of these trainings, as well as other training resources, can be found on the ISICSB website at <https://dps.iowa.gov/divisions/commissioners-office/interoperability-communications/isics-board/education-and-training>.

We have had several Communication Specialists complete credentialing for Communications Unit Leader (COML), Communications Technician (COMT), and Incident Tactical Dispatcher (INTD). Six individuals received their COML credentials; five individuals received their COMT credentials; and five individuals received their INTD credentials.

We are working to schedule a COML class in Pottawattamie County next fall and a Communications Unit Exercise (COMMEX) in Story County next summer.

The Training Committee also dedicated time to discussing the ISICS Board policies and standards and how they may or may not align with our committee, as well as determining how often these need to be reviewed and or updated.

~ *Travis Solem, Training & Outreach Committee Chair*

ISICSB Mission Statement

In accordance with the code of Iowa and established rules, develop and provide standardized interoperable public safety communications through existing governance structures to enhance and achieve the highest level of interoperable emergency communications statewide.

FirstNet Resources

- ⇒ [FirstNet Apps](#)
- ⇒ [FirstNet New Sites](#)
- ⇒ [FirstNet FAQs](#)
- ⇒ [FirstNet Newsletters](#)
- ⇒ [FirstNet Forms](#)
- ⇒ [FirstNet Roadmap](#)

Technology Committee: As I reflect and review the year 2023, it is amazing how much time does fly. The ISICS Technology Committee started 2023 by tying up loose ends on a 700 MHz Low Power itinerant frequency structure licensed by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT).

A survey to stakeholders in Iowa was sent out to see how many were implementing the use of gateways within their local systems. The numbers were low, but it gives the committee an idea of how to possibly approach the topic in any future discussions.

The Committee also reviewed a proposed Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP)/Iowa Field Operations Guide (IAFOG) which included a Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP) Webinar. The results have been very positive and more work is expected to be done.

This year, the ISICS Board approved the licensing of the 700 MHz Air to Ground Channels. Working with SWIC Nichols and the people at Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), we completed that process and received a license call sign of WRYV868 in September.

The Technology Committee also took some time to review FCC Part 90 Rules as it relates to the various frequency bands that are being used in Iowa.

Additionally, stakeholders within the State expressed the need for discipline specific encryption for their agencies within the existing ISICS system. The Technology Committee first reviewed those conventional resources that are already in place. The first step was the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG) handbook. Within the handbook exists frequencies in the 700 MHz band set aside for conventional use with disciplines and encryption Storage Location Numbers (SLN's) already assigned. This is a good starting point for those agencies who need an encryption solution until more planning can be done at a State level.

The next step was to review existing conventional 700MHz frequencies listed on the ISICS ICS-217A currently known as ITALK channels. A plan was developed to rename those channels so they are more in line with ANSI standards. At the same time, review of available frequencies in that same band was made, and 6 available channels were identified. A policy draft for Discipline Specific Encryption was developed which listed 3 existing frequencies along with 6 additional frequencies. The Discipline Specific Encryption Policy along with licensing the additional 6 frequencies was then approved by the Board at the December meeting and work will continue into 2024 on this project.

Discipline Specific Encrypted Talk groups within the ISICS system is on the table but needs further discussions, planning, and standards/policy development before full implementation can be realized. The Technology Committee plans on continued work in this area.

Finally, the Technology Committee took part in a meeting with interested agencies in Minnesota about forming an interoperability cross walk between the two states. Currently the committee is looking at all aspects of the technical side which includes the use of existing NIFOG resources in a conventional mode as well as the use of soft patches within the system, gateways, and talk group sharing. This topic has recently evolved into discussions that involve all surrounding

states and how to better achieve interoperability between states when the need arises. This may eventually call for the mapping of all locations on both sides of the border to gain a better understanding of what both parties have in order to achieve the goal. There will be more discussions on this going forward into 2024.

Personally, I want to thank all of those who have been involved in addressing these issues in 2023. We have a really good crew of people within our committee(s), and I hope that 2024 will be even better.

~ *Patrick Updike, Technology Committee Chair*

User Group Committee: The User Group Committee (UGC) meets virtually on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM. Most of the 2023 business has been the review of ISICSB Agency Participation Plans and comparing those applications with the ISICSB standards. During the UGC meeting when an agency's application will be discussed, we encourage the users submitting applications to join our meeting in order to provide answers to questions and ensure that the UGC has a clear understanding of how they intend to use the system so a recommendation can be made to the Board. In 2023, we saw applications for new users related to the school safety initiatives, many current user agencies that have upgraded and increased their ability from ISICSB interoperability to daily operational use, and 28 new users.

The UGC also developed a new Applicant Participation Plan that was approved by the Board at the July 2023 ISICSB Meeting. ~ *Wendi Hess, UGC Chair*

*** If you would like to join one of the ISICSB Committees, please complete the Committee Membership Application located [HERE](#) ***

ISICS / ISICSB RESOURCES

Documents

- ◆ [Approved ISICS Standards](#)
- ◆ [ISICS Contact Information Form](#)
- ◆ [ISICS Standardized Interoperability Guide Card](#)

Forms

- ◆ [Become a Board Member](#)
- ◆ [Committee Membership Application](#)
- ◆ [Radio Programming Certification Form](#)

YouTube Vides

- ◆ [Iowa Total Interoperability](#)
- ◆ [ISICS System Live Demo](#)
- ◆ [ISICS Technology](#)

Training Videos

- ◆ [Console/Control Station Training](#)
- ◆ [ISICS Standard 1.3.0—Use of Plain Language](#)
- ◆ [ISICS Standard 1.5.0—Regional & Statewide Interoperability Talkgroups](#)
- ◆ [ISICS Standard 1.5.2—Air Ambulance Scene Flight Landing Zone Coordination](#)
- ◆ [StatusBoard End User Training](#)
- ◆ [Radio 101 Training](#)



ISICSB Website



Interop Website