



# Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan **EXERCISE**

**Omaha, NE, Urban Area  
College World Series**

**AAR/Improvement Plan**

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



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# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



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# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



### CONTENTS

**Administrative Handling Instructions .....iii**

**Executive Summary ..... 1**

    Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) Validation..... 1

    Exercise Overview ..... 1

    Next Steps..... 3

**Chapter 1: Exercise Overview..... 5**

    Exercise Details ..... 5

    Participating Organizations..... 5

    Exercise Planning Team Leadership ..... 6

    Exercise Design ..... 7

    Exercise Objectives..... 9

**Chapter 2: Exercise Events Synopsis ..... 11**

**Chapter 3: Analysis of Capability ..... 13**

    Element 1: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)..... 13

    Element 2: Usage ..... 15

    Element 3: Technology ..... 18

**Chapter 4: Conclusion ..... 19**

**Appendix A: Improvement Plan .....A-1**



**AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION**  
College World Series



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# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) Validation

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)-designated Urban Areas and other State-designated metropolitan areas to develop and test their Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans (TICPs) with full-scale exercises (FSEs). These exercises are designed to identify State and local needs that guide future investments.

TICPs must have been submitted to DHS by May 1, 2006. After submission, DHS reviewed and approved each plan. The deadline for validating the TICP through an FSE has been accelerated from that previously established in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Homeland Security Grant Program Guidance. FSEs must be conducted by September 30, 2006. This adjusted timeline for FSEs will ensure that sufficient time is allocated to complete the After-Action Report (AAR)/Improvement Plan process. The validation process, including the final AAR/Improvement Plan, must be completed by December 31, 2006. In total, 76 sites must meet this requirement.

If Urban Areas already have other FSEs or real-world events planned, they may use one of those exercises or events to meet the test requirement, as long as that exercise or event is consistent with the requirements of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). HSEEP requirements may be found at the DHS Web site: [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/exercises.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/exercises.htm).

### Exercise Overview

The College World Series TICP Validation Exercise was conducted on the morning of a game day. The exercise events took place at various locations: the stadium, participating counties' dispatch centers, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and a few other locations. Communication was coordinated, including setting up patches and testing technology that is not used daily. This exercise was designed to give the Omaha Urban Area an opportunity to exercise its tactical interoperable communications immediate response in any type of emergency or natural disaster. The Omaha Urban Area used this event to validate its TICP. It gave participants an opportunity to evaluate organizational performance of the TICP. The validation is co-sponsored by the Omaha Police Department and DHS.



This AAR is intended to assist the Omaha Urban Area in its efforts to improve current tactical interoperable communications capabilities by analyzing exercise results through:

- Identifying strengths to be maintained and built upon

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

### College World Series



- Identifying potential areas for further improvement
- Identifying issues to be resolved at a later date

Suggested actions in this report should be regarded as recommendations only. In some cases, agencies may identify alternative solutions that are more effective or efficient. Each agency should review the recommendations and complete actions in alignment with internal strategies, National Incident Management System (NIMS) requirements, national goals, and current program objectives.

### Major Strengths

Major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Dispatch was well-trained and responsive.
- Connections were made and communication was successful between the various counties and locations within them.
- Sarpy County was confident in its implementation and use of technology.
- Programming and reprogramming of radios was done efficiently, quickly, and to the standards of the county.
- Players and plans demonstrated significant overall improvement in terms of technology and training.
- Innovative and effective methods for radio inventory were used.
- Successful and perceptive ad hoc actions were taken by the Communications Leader (COML).
- The players had backup plans ready.
- There was great cooperation between players, which created a smooth exercise.

### Primary Areas for Improvement

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement in the jurisdiction's and/or organization's ability to respond to the incident were identified. The primary areas for improvement, including recommendations, are as follows:

- The Omaha Urban Area should bring other surrounding counties, as well as non-UASI counties, into future plans and exercises.
- The Omaha Urban Area should test their technology more often
- The TICP includes an outlined approach to cutting patches or connections; dispatch should follow this plan more closely.

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



- More detailed training at each level would be beneficial so replacements or assistance for programming radios, working in dispatch, etc. would be available.
- The Omaha Urban Area should revise its policies to enable improved adaptability to different types of emergencies.
- The statewide plan and the TICP should be updated with changes relating to these actions, including the COML's radio inventory and ad hoc system.

### Next Steps

This AAR/Improvement Plan will be finalized at the AAR/Improvement Plan Conference, which will be held at 13445 Cryer Ave., Omaha, NE, on August 1, 2006. After the report is finalized, the DHS Exercise Support Team will submit the AAR/Improvement Plan to the DHS Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) and SAFECOM. SAFECOM is working with existing Federal communications initiatives and key public safety stakeholders to address the need to develop better technologies and processes for cross-jurisdictional and cross-disciplinary coordination of existing systems and future networks.



These programs will use this AAR/Improvement Plan, in addition to the previously conducted plan review, as inputs into their TICP Validation Scorecard process. Based on these inputs, a scorecard will be issued for Omaha, NE, not later than December 31, 2006.



# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



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# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



## CHAPTER 1: EXERCISE OVERVIEW

### Exercise Details

#### Exercise Name

College World Series

#### Duration

3 hours

#### Exercise Date

June 20, 2006

#### Exercise Location

Johnny Rosenblatt Stadium, Omaha, NE

#### Type of Exercise

Full-scale exercise (FSE), attached to a real-world event

#### Sponsor

Omaha Police Department

#### Funding Source

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

#### Focus

Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP)

#### Classification

For Official Use Only (FOUO)

### Participating Organizations

#### Local Agencies

- 72nd Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Civil Support Team (CST)
- Bellevue Fire/Hazardous Materials (HazMat)
- Bellevue Police Department
- Cass County Sheriff's Department (non-UASI county)
- Dodge County Sheriff's Department
- Douglas County E-911



# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



- Douglas County Emergency Management
- Douglas County Sheriff's Department
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)
- La Vista Police Department
- Omaha Fire Department
- Omaha Police Department
- Region 5-6 Emergency Management
- Sarpy County 9-1-1
- Sarpy County Emergency Management/ Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Washington County E-911
- Washington County EOC
- Washington County Sheriff's Department

### Private Sector

- Johnny Rosenblatt Stadium, Omaha, NE

### Number of Participants

- |                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| • Players             | 12 |
| • Victim Role Players | 0  |
| • Observers           | 0  |
| • Controllers         | 2  |
| • Evaluators          | 6  |

## Exercise Planning Team Leadership

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# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



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### Exercise Design

The TICP Controller and Evaluator Group, in collaboration with the Omaha Urban Area, determined that the College World Series would be a beneficial opportunity to test Omaha's tactical interoperability in terms of communication. The College World Series TICP Validation Exercise was designed using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) methodology. Because of the specific nature of this exercise, however, several of the components and requirements of HSEEP had to be modified. Such modifications include a reduced planning timeline, an independent evaluation, and a specific focus on the TICP.

There were two primary efforts in the design of the exercise: exercise control and evaluation. To manage these distinct efforts, two DHS leads were assigned to support the Omaha Urban Area: a lead exercise controller from the DHS Exercise Division and a lead evaluator from ICTAP. These two individuals, along with their respective teams, worked closely with the primary authors and key players identified in Omaha's TICP to develop an integrated and comprehensive plan to execute the exercise.

The lead exercise controller focused on developing associated exercise products for an FSE to be consistent with HSEEP guidelines, with some slight TICP-specific modifications. The lead



# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



evaluator focused her team on developing a site-specific evaluation plan that would allow for comprehensive validation of the Omaha TICP. The ICTAP site lead was integrated into both the control and evaluation portions of the design phase because she possessed both a critical historical and good working knowledge of the TICP and local considerations unique to the Omaha Urban Area.

The evaluation methodology used in this TICP exercise was based on the structure established by SAFECOM for its interoperability baseline assessment, which sought to define how the level of interoperability in an agency or region could be assessed. SAFECOM developed a template for its national assessment that uses the five elements of interoperability introduced in the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum. These elements were then broken down into 13 measurable subelements, as illustrated in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum Elements**

Interoperability Continuum Element	Baseline Assessment Subelement
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Leadership</b></li> <li>• <b>Decisionmaking Groups</b></li> <li>• <b>Agreements</b></li> <li>• <b>Interoperability Funding</b></li> <li>• <b>Strategic Planning</b></li> </ul>
<b>Standard Operating Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy, Practices, and Procedures</b></li> <li>• <b>Command and Control</b></li> </ul>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaches</li> <li>• Implementation</li> <li>• Maintenance and Support</li> </ul>
Training and Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operator Training</li> <li>• Exercises</li> </ul>
<b>Usage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Frequency of Use and Familiarity</b></li> </ul>

The DHS will use this same format to provide the template for the TICP Validation Scorecards, which will be completed for each of the 76 TICP sites. The three elements the scorecard will focus on are Governance, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and Usage, as indicated in bold in Table 1.1. Because this TICP exercise AAR/Improvement Plan provides vital input into the scorecards, aligning the format of the AAR/Improvement Plan with that of the scorecard will allow easy integration of exercise data into the final validation. Therefore, this AAR/Improvement Plan is organized around SAFECOM’s interoperability continuum elements, with a section of the AAR/Improvement Plan devoted to each exercised element.

Because few Governance components can be observed in an exercise environment, this AAR focuses specifically on SOPs and Usage (with Governance validated primarily by the Plan Review). With regard to SOPs, evaluators focused on two subelements: (1) Policies, Practices, and Procedures, and (2) Command and Control. The Usage section focuses on one subelement:

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



Frequency of Use and Familiarity (i.e., using designated equipment and implementing SOPs). In addition, although the Technology element and the specific equipment used are not formally evaluated, it is documented to ensure that the equipment used in the exercise is included in the TICP. Any equipment used that is not included in the plan will be noted for potential inclusion in future versions.

In keeping with the no-fault nature of this exercise, the evaluation embodied in this AAR/Improvement Plan examines the plans, procedures, and systems used in this exercise. As an evaluation practice, individual and team player performances were observed and documented to make recommendations for future improvements. Observations focused on the primary functions of units and the interaction between response units, rather than on individual players.

Players were advised that the production of an AAR/Improvement Plan was one of the results of the exercise. This AAR/Improvement Plan is the key postexercise document developed in partnership with State sponsoring agencies and key participants. It is used as a reference for continued improvement of response plans and program attributes for coordinated response capabilities. The AAR/Improvement Plan itself is not used as a grading system or a report card. This document provides historical reference and recommendations for future response planning, training, and exercise development.

After the exercise, a Hot Wash was conducted; there also was a Controller and Evaluator Debriefing. These activities were used to discuss observations during the exercise and to clarify and/or confirm actions taken by Omaha Urban Area agencies and first responders. This information led to development of this AAR/Improvement Plan.

## Exercise Objectives

The Federal Government selected objectives that focus on evaluating the TICP, identifying areas for improvement, and achieving a collaborative attitude. The exercise focused on the following objectives:

1. Evaluate and assess receipt, notification, documentation, and implementation of primary dispatch center protocols to effectively establish and maintain a multi-disciplinary/multi-jurisdictional response to a large-scale incident.
2. Assess the ability to identify, establish, and manage necessary communications logistics for a large-scale incident.
3. Verify establishment of Incident Command and collaboration of necessary unified incident management components to effectively communicate with all responding agencies.
4. Evaluate the communications unit leader's ability to implement necessary components and actions in accordance with his/her TICP.
5. Verify inventory, functionality, maintenance, and technological support of communications equipment.

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



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# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



## CHAPTER 2: EXERCISE EVENTS SYNOPSIS

The following actions were key components in execution of this exercise:

- **Swap Radios/Radio Cache:** A radio cache should be requested and delivered to the requesting site. Once the radio cache has been delivered, the evaluator should randomly check one or more of the radios to verify that the required talk groups/channels have been programmed into them.
- **Shared Channels:** The site, Omaha Police Department Mobile Command Center (MCC), should be requested to show interoperability with other agencies in Douglas County and agencies in Sarpy and Washington counties.
- **Gateway:** The 72nd WMD CST will be on standby near the Omaha Police Department MCC. A patch using the ACU-1000 should be tested.
- **Raven Switch:** This switch is at the Douglas County Communications Center (DCCC). The DCCC Director will check with the Council Bluffs police and fire departments and the Pottawattamie County Sheriff to see if they were willing to receive a radio check.
- **National Public Safety Planning Advisory Committee (NPSPAC) Channels:** A simple test of NPSPAC channel should be conducted. This test would require the dispatch center to coordinate and turn on repeaters in the area.
- **EOC Communications:** Check communications between the Douglas County EOC and the Sarpy County and Washington County EOCs. Also check communications between the Sarpy County EOC and the Washington County EOC. This check will require patching through the DCCC.
- **Dispatch-to-Dispatch Communications:** Check radio communications between the DCCC and Washington County Dispatch. It is not necessary to check radio communications between the DCCC and Sarpy County Dispatch because Sarpy County Dispatch has only landline telephones at this time.



A detailed record of event observations is listed in Table 2.1.



# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



**Table 2.1 Event Timeline**

Time	Venue / Agency	Action
0800	DHS Exercise Support	Evaluator briefing
0900	Johnny Rosenblatt Stadium	Evaluation begins at Rosenblatt Stadium
0915	Omaha Police Department	Swap radio requested
0918	Omaha Police Department	Cache operator at EOC advises that cache radios are en route
0920	Omaha Police Department	Raven Switch is activated
0924	Omaha Police Department	Shared channels are requested and activated
0935	Omaha Police Department	Radio cache arrives
0945	Omaha Police Department	Gateway is patched
1001	Omaha Police Department	Dispatch-to-Dispatch communication reached
1026	Omaha Police Department	NPSPAC channels are tested
1400	Johnny Rosenblatt Stadium	First game of the day begins

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



## CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF CAPABILITY

This section of the report provides an analysis of how well the participating jurisdictions as a whole achieved the expected capability. In the TICP Exercise Series, evaluation is restricted to one portion of one capability—that capability is *interoperable communications*, and the specific portion of that capability is *tactical interoperable communications*. Therefore, the evaluation is organized around the SAFECOM interoperability continuum elements, as described in Chapter 1. These elements constitute the categories that will be assessed in the TICP Validation Scorecards. Results for the element analysis are summarized in this chapter. A detailed analysis of the key observations that contributed to results related to the element analysis also is included.

### Element 1: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

#### Overview of Element

#### Subelement 1.1: Policies, Practices, and Procedures

##### *Observation 1.1.1: Radio Programming and Reprogramming*

**Summary of Observation:** Technology and programming with respect to swap radios went smoothly except for a problem with noncoordinating systems; radios should be reprogrammed regularly.

**Related Task(s):** Task 2—Follow TICP policies and procedures for Swap Radios, including request, activation, deactivation, and problem resolution.

**Analysis:** Swap radios policies and procedures were followed correctly. However, programming on radios did not match cache radio fleet map. A radio cache technician immediately reprogrammed the cache that had been delivered.

**Recommendation 1:** All other radios in the cache that were not used for this event need to be reprogrammed.

##### *Observation 1.1.2: Raven Switch Policies and Procedures*

**Summary of Observation:** There was a lack of information regarding the Raven Switch and its policies and procedures. The Raven Switch is not sufficiently defined in the TICP or the statewide plan; this is further addressed in observation 3.1.1.

**Related Task(s):** Task 4—Follow TICP policies and procedures for Gateways, including request, activation, deactivation, and problem resolution.

**Analysis:** Policies and procedures for activation and deactivation of the Raven Switch and the CST Unified Command System (UCS) were not completely followed because notification

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

### College World Series



procedures were not followed. Furthermore, although the Raven Switch is mentioned in the TICP, there is not enough detailed information given; see observation 3.1.1.

**Recommendation 2:** Review policies and procedures for the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) regarding activation, use, and deactivation of gateways. Adjust the plan to reflect current procedures or train personnel in current TICP procedures, as needed.

**Recommendation 3:** Provide detailed information concerning the Raven Switch in section 3.3 and associated appendices of the TICP.

#### *Observation 1.1.3: Role of Communications Leader (COML)*

**Summary of Observation:** The COML was not universally known to the players throughout the participating jurisdictions.

**Related Task(s):** Task 6—The COML, or person assuming COML duties, was able to request necessary resources using documented procedures.

**Analysis:** Although a COML was designated for the exercise, the identity of that person was not universally known to all staff involved in the exercise. An argument also could be made for a better location of the COML to the scene, although the setup for this exercise appeared to work well.

**Recommendation 4:** Practice routinely identifying the Communications Leader (COML) to all event staff via radio and other means.

#### *Observation 1.1.4: Communications Backup Plan*

**Summary of Observation:** Dispatch was capable, well trained, and maintained a secondary setup in case of a problem with the primary station.

**Related Task(s):** Task 8—Provide communications backup during the incident if the conventional mode of communications fail or become overloaded.

**Analysis:** The secondary dispatch center in downtown Omaha appeared fully capable of taking over communications as needed.

### **Subelement 1.2: Command and Control**

#### *Observation 1.2.1: Updated TICP*

**Summary of Observation:** The TICP was followed and necessary updates were noted as the event took place.

**Related Task(s):** Task 4—Follow TICP policies and procedures for Gateways, including request, activation, deactivation, and problem resolution.

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

### College World Series



**Analysis:** The COML used a pre-created Incident Command System (ICS) 205 form to coordinate and keep track of all talk groups during the exercise.

#### *Observation 1.2.2: Commendable Communication between Locations*

**Summary of Observation:** Communication was efficient and effective between the various jurisdictions and counties.

**Related Task(s):** Task 5—Follow TICP policies and procedures for Shared Systems, including general procedures and problem resolution.

**Analysis:** Communication during this exercise was an impressive example of EOC-to-EOC and EOC-to-dispatch communication links, data links, and redundant systems. The Douglas County EOC is set up on the same network as the DCCC, allowing the two centers to share files, templates, and so forth and demonstrate exceptional data interoperability.

#### *Observation 1.2.3: Radio Inventory*

**Summary of Observation:** The COML came up with an innovative method for radio inventory.

**Related Task(s):** Task 7—Requests for interoperable communications assets follow protocols established by the regional authority, as documented in the TICP.

**Analysis:** The COML demonstrated a radio inventory Excel spreadsheet, which worked exceptionally well.

## Element 2: Usage

### Overview of Element

#### Subelement 2.1: Frequency of Use and Familiarity

##### *Observation 2.1.1: Effective Local Interoperable System*

**Summary of Observation:** Local first responders demonstrated a proficient system of tactical interoperable communications.

**Related Task(s):** Task 1—Provide tactical interoperable communications between local first responders.

**Analysis:** Local first responders fully provided effective tactical interoperable communications.

##### *Observation 2.1.2: Effective Regional Interoperable System*

**Summary of Observation:** Regional first responders demonstrated a proficient system of tactical interoperable communications.



## AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

### College World Series



**Related Task(s):** Task 2—Provide tactical interoperable communications for regional first responders

**Analysis:** Regional first responders showed effective line-level and command-level communications between agencies from several counties and across State boundaries.

#### *Observation 2.1.3: Plain English*

**Summary of Observation:** There was consistent use of NIMS-compliant terminology.

**Related Task(s):** Task 3—Use established common response communications language for all relevant communications, as outlined in the TICP.

**Analysis:** Throughout the exercise, players and participants were consistent in using NIMS-compliant phrases and using plain English instead of codes.

#### *Observation 2.1.4: Relevant Unit Identification Procedures*

**Summary of Observation:** Unit identification procedures were used in relevant communications.

**Related Task(s):** Task 4—Use unit identification procedures for all relevant communications, as outlined in TICP.

**Analysis:** Players used unit identification procedures for all relevant communications and did so in accordance with the TICP.

#### *Observation 2.1.5: Swap (Cache) Radio Communications*

**Summary of Observation:** There were some discrepancies in radio labeling and programming.

**Related Task(s):** Task 5—Users demonstrate familiarity with setup and effective use of Swap (Cache) Radios.

**Analysis:** Radio cache labeling did not match the programming according to the fleet map provided to evaluators; however, the cache operator was able to reprogram the cache radios immediately on-scene.

**Recommendation 5:** Radio labels should be checked and set with the correct, corresponding program.

#### *Observation 2.1.6: Shared Channel Communications*

**Summary of Observation:** There were some problems with radio proficiency, coverage/reception, and delivery of correct information.

**Related Task(s):** Task 6 – Users demonstrate familiarity with effective use of Shared Channels.

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

### College World Series



**Analysis:** Sarpy County did not have metro channels, and there was a lack of information pertaining to this issue in the TICP. In addition, Washington County personnel did not know all the channels they had on their radios. Bellevue radios did not work at first because of in-building coverage issues.

**Recommendation 6:** There needs to be more training on how to use radios and all their channels.

**Recommendation 7:** The Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) and statewide plans should be updated to reflect the current system, with all pertinent information for users.

**Recommendation 8:** Radios should be tested regularly in all situations and areas where they might be used to ensure that they will work in the case of an emergency.

#### *Observation 2.1.7: Gateway Communications*

**Summary of Observation:** There was insufficient training and policy for the gateways.

**Related Task(s):** Task 7—Users demonstrate familiarity with setup and effective use of Gateways.

**Analysis:** For the Raven Switch, the area would like to begin to use tactical frequencies in place of primary dispatch frequencies so that it would not have to interrupt other communications. Neither the dispatcher nor the supervisor was able to provide information on the policies of gateways, including the Raven Switch. The ACU-1000 Gateway was activated and deactivated successfully but not in full accordance with the TICP.

**Recommendation 9:** Better policies should be developed on the Raven Switch, in terms of what it is and proper activation, deactivation, and communication methods.

**Recommendation 10:** Training should be conducted on how the gateways and their policies should be used and understood.

#### *Observation 2.1.8: Shared Systems Communications through Dispatch*

**Summary of Observation:** Improper procedures were used at the dispatch center in terms of ending the connections.

**Related Task(s):** Users demonstrate familiarity with setup and effective use of shared systems.

**Analysis:** The dispatcher did not follow procedures by checking with surrounding agencies before activating the repeater to ensure that the channel was not in use, in accordance with the Omaha TICP. Similarly, the dispatcher did not follow deactivation procedures by announcing on the air that the patch would be deactivated before taking down the patch, in accordance with the Omaha TICP.

## AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

### College World Series



**Recommendation 11:** Dispatch should be trained on proper Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP)-mandated procedures, with particular attention to cutting the connections.

### Element 3: Technology

#### *Observation 3.1.1: Raven Switch*

**Summary of Observation:** There was a lack of information on the Raven Switch throughout the State and city’s literature.

**Analysis:** The Raven Switch is not listed in all locations throughout the TICP where it should be, and there is not enough information about it.

**Recommendation 12:** The Raven Switch should be listed under gateways in the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) under section 3.3. In addition, where it is mentioned in the appendix there should be more information, such as its definition, how it is used, when it is used, and other pertinent information in the case of immediate communications.

#### *Observation 3.1.2: Sarpy County*

**Summary of Observation:** The Sarpy County communication system is a dual mode digital analog system, and the life cycle of the system will expire within the next couple of years.

**Analysis:** Failure to upgrade this system may cause interruption in service to the Omaha Urban Area.

**Recommendation 13:** To ensure seamless communications between Douglas County, Washington County, and Sarpy County, Sarpy County should integrate its communications system into the current Omaha Metro 800Mhz Trunking System used by both Douglas County and Washington County; this upgrade will provide the entire Omaha Urban Area with a seamless and integrated communications system.

### Element 4: Training and Exercises

#### *Observation 4.1.1: Training and Exercises*

**Summary of Observation:** The UASI area and adjacent county agencies would benefit from the distribution of the TICP and training according to it.

**Analysis:** Communications would be improved by the introduction of this plan to the UASU area and adjacent county agencies if they were familiar with the plan and were provided training according to its procedures.

**Recommendation 14:** Distribute of the TICP and provide training according to the plan.

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



## CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

This TICP exercise provided evaluators with an opportunity to evaluate current immediate communications workings and plans for connecting multiple locations within different counties of northeast Nebraska and southwest Iowa. Exercise participants satisfied most of the exercise design objectives and identified the following areas for improvement:

- The Omaha Urban Area should bring other surrounding counties, as well as non-UASI areas, into future plans and exercises.
- The Omaha Urban Area should test its technology more often
- The TICP includes an outlined approach to cutting patches or connections; dispatch should follow this plan more closely.
- Additional concentrated effort needs to be made to use NIMS-compliant, plain English instead of code.
- More detailed training in each level would be a good idea so that there are replacements or help for programming radios, working in dispatch, and so forth.
- The Omaha Urban Area should revise its policies to enable improved adaptability to different types of emergencies.
- The statewide plan and the TICP should be updated with changes relating to these actions, including the COML's radio inventory and ad hoc system.
- Pelican cases should be considered as a good alternative to the current system of carrying radios. Batteries and chargers can already be packed with radios; the radios, with their accessories, can then be grabbed easily in case of an emergency.

The Omaha Tri-County region appears well established technologically to interoperate among local and regional first responders, including those from adjoining States. The system performed as if it were well planned and well implemented, with adequate redundancies. Regional planners should continue to progress toward training and using the system as incidents expand from day-to-day operations into large-scale critical incidents and disasters. Participants can use the recommendations made here to update their State plan—the TICP—and to better prepare their means of communication, especially within the immediate hour or hours following an incident.

Based on completion of this AAR, the Omaha Urban Area TICP will be validated.

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



## APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This Improvement Plan has been developed specifically for Omaha, NE, as a result of the College World Series TICP Validation Exercise conducted on June 20, 2006. This table includes only observations from Chapter 3: Analysis of Capability that include one or more recommendations.

Observation	Recommendations	Improvement Actions	Responsible Party/Agency	Completion Date
<b>1. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)</b>				
<b>1.1.1</b> <i>Radio Programming and Reprogramming</i>	<b>Recommendation 1:</b> All other radios in the cache that were not used for this event need to be reprogrammed.	<b>Action 1:</b> The county communications chiefs should verify that all radios are programmed according to plans.	Each individual county's communications chief: Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	November 30, 2006
<b>1.1.2</b> <i>Role of the Communications Leader (COML)</i>	<b>Recommendation 2:</b> Practice routinely identifying the Communications Leader (COML) to all event staff via radio and other means routinely.	<b>Action 1:</b> Write Policy and make revisions within the TICP  <b>Action 2:</b> Train the COMLs	1. Douglas County  2. Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	1. November 30, 2006 2. Ongoing



# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



Observation	Recommendations	Improvement Actions	Responsible Party/Agency	Completion Date
1.1.3 Raven Switch Policies and Procedures	<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Review policies and procedures for the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) regarding activation, use, and deactivation of gateways. Adjust the plan to reflect current procedures or train personnel in current TICP procedures, as needed.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> Provide detailed information concerning the Raven Switch in section 3.3 and associated appendices of the TICP.</p>	<p><b>Action 1:</b> Re-identify the Raven Switch in the TICP in Section 3 as “fixed gateways”</p> <p><b>Action 2:</b> Insert Raven Switch procedures in Section 4 (4-4-1)</p>	<p>1. Douglas County</p> <p>2. Douglas, Sarpy, Washington</p>	<p>November 30, 2006</p> <p>November 30, 2006</p>
<b>2. Usage</b>				
2.1.1 Swap (Cache) Radio Communications	<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> Radio labels should be checked and set with the correct, corresponding program.</p>	<p><b>Action 1:</b> This is in coordination with Observation 1.1.1. There needs to be an actions program; and verify a cache radio template.</p>	Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	November 30, 2006
2.1.2 Shared Channel Communications	<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> There needs to be more training done on how to use the radios and all their channels.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> The Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) should be updated to reflect the current system, with all pertinent information for users.</p>	<p><b>Action 1:</b> Continue developed, ongoing training, include some bordering counties</p> <p><b>Action 2:</b> Distribute the TICP to surrounding jurisdictions</p>	Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	Ongoing

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



Observation	Recommendations	Improvement Actions	Responsible Party/Agency	Completion Date
2.1.3 <i>Gateway Communications</i>	<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> Better policies should be developed on the Raven Switch, in terms of what it is and proper activation, deactivation, and communication methods.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> Training should be conducted on how the Gateways and their policies should be used and understood.</p>	<p><b>Action 1:</b> Develop policy and update the TICP</p> <p><b>Action 2:</b> Train according to the updated policy</p>	Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	Ongoing
2.1.4 <i>Shared Systems Communications through Dispatch</i>	<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> Dispatch should be trained on proper Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP)-mandated procedures, with particular attention to cutting the connections.</p>	<p><b>Action 1:</b> Look at activation procedure in Section 4 and take out extraneous questions: leave or add only what is done</p> <p><b>Action 2:</b> Train (refer to list of pertinent details in section 4), they need to be announced</p>	Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	Ongoing
<b>3. Technology</b>				
3.1.1 <i>Raven Switch</i>	<p><b>Recommendation 11:</b> The Raven Switch should be listed under gateways in the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) under section 3.3. In addition, where it is mentioned in the appendix there should be more information, such as its definition, how it is used, when it is used, and other pertinent information in the case of immediate communications.</p>	Refer to 1.1.3	Refer to 1.1.3	Refer to 1.1.3

# AFTER ACTION REPORT – TICP EVALUATION

## College World Series



Observation	Recommendations	Improvement Actions	Responsible Party/Agency	Completion Date
3.1.2 Sarpy County	<b>Recommendation 12:</b> To ensure seamless communications between Douglas County, Washington County, and Sarpy County, Sarpy County should integrate its communications system into the current Omaha Metro 800Mhz Trunking System used by both Douglas County and Washington County; this upgrade will provide the entire Omaha Urban Area a seamless and integrated communications system.	<b>Action 1:</b> Continued exploration of funding	Sarpy County	Ongoing
<b>4. Training and Exercises</b>				
4.1.1 Training and Exercises	<b>Recommendation 13:</b> Distribute of the TICP to those who use it or might need to reference it, as well as provide training according to the plan.	<b>Action 1:</b> Develop distribution list and training schedule, to also include adjacent non-UASI counties	Douglas, Sarpy, Washington	Ongoing