

Pat Quinn, Governor
State of Illinois



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ITTF POLICY STATEMENT 2010 (7)

TO: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Preparedness Fund Sub-recipients

FROM: Mike Chamness, Chair
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DATE: September 22, 2010

SUBJECT: Illinois Terrorism Task Force Policy Statement Regarding Emergency Communications Plans for Schools

INTRODUCTION

Governor's Executive Order 2003 (17) created the statewide homeland security advisory committee, the Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF). The ITTF is responsible for developing and helping to implement the state's homeland security strategy as an advisory body to the Governor and overseeing the management and administration of federal preparedness grants. The task force continues to build upon a strong foundation of established working partnerships among its over 60 members, which represent all public safety agencies and associations and every community in Illinois.

BACKGROUND

The ITTF, through its member committees, seeks standardization and consistency in the possession and use of homeland security emergency response equipment in support of statewide and/or regional plans and protocols. The task force's goals also include coordination of response efforts and interoperability of communications for emergencies at all levels, from local to statewide. To support these goals, the ITTF has encouraged and assisted state and local jurisdictions throughout Illinois in creating tactical interoperable communications plans (TICPs) that integrate communications procedures for critical organizations within each jurisdiction. The task force recognizes that local school districts, community colleges, and institutions of higher education are jurisdictions that have a critical role in protecting the health and safety of our children. As such, each school's ability to communicate with emergency response agencies in its community is of paramount importance.

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GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

The ITTF recommends that each public and private elementary and secondary school in Illinois, as well as all community colleges and institutions of higher education in the state, includes an emergency communications annex in each school district's and each facility's emergency response plan. The emergency communications annex should, at a minimum, describe:

- (1) internal procedures for the activation of the emergency communications plan;
- (2) identification of voice and data communications equipment that will be used by school personnel to communicate with their community's first responders (i.e. police, fire, EMS); and
- (3) protocol for communicating the emergency situation with the community's first responders, including clear identification of the location(s) of the emergency.

The ITTF recommends that schools create their plans in cooperation with local emergency planning commissions or committees that include first responders to ensure coordinated procedures and equipment interoperability.

The ITTF further recommends that school administrators and security officials work with their local first responders to ensure the educational institution is an integral part of their county's TICP, which includes regularly training and exercising of the emergency communications plan in conjunction with local emergency response personnel.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF POLICY

This policy is effective as of September 22, 2010.