



ICN Insider

Iowa Communications Network
May/June 2016 Newsletter

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ICN's Vision:



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Summit Provided Strong FirstNet Discussions

Over 60 individuals representing Iowa's private industry telecommunications leaders gathered on March 3rd for the third Public Private Partnership summit to advance Iowa's discussions about the broadband network dedicated for first responders. FirstNet (First Responder Network Authority) is a federal initiative to create a nationwide public safety wireless communications network, and is the last remaining recommendation of the 9/11 Commission.

The summit opened by providing an overview about FirstNet, and panel members explained the federal teaming list and Iowa's use of a collaborative effort with an Invitation to Qualify (ITQ). 123 telecommunications providers were submitted to FirstNet to be included in the FirstNet Teaming List. In addition, panel representatives explained the objectives and key dates to the federal FirstNet RFP.

"From day one, Iowa's request for FirstNet has been Iowa needs ubiquitous coverage. Iowa has had tornados and incidents happen in every corner of the State. To risk having a major event where there isn't public safety broadband coverage in some area of the state isn't a good option for Iowa," said Ric Lumbard, ICN Executive Director.



Members of the public were able to ask the panel questions about various topics regarding the public safety network. Questions and discussions included: the anticipated State plan, coverage, financial responsibilities, opt-in and opt-out scenarios, Iowa's Regional Interoperability Committees (RICs), and the role Iowa officials will take when a national telecommunications provider is selected.

Iowa's private sector telecommunications providers feel that the communication momentum has accelerated. "In the beginning it seemed that [conversations] were all blue sky. There has been momentum with, "the communications, the RFP being released, help with the ITQ process by getting ICA (Iowa Communications Alliance) members involved, and recently having data requests from middle-mile providers," stated Ryan Boone, Premier Communications.

FirstNet's mission is to build, operate and maintain the first high-speed, nationwide wireless broadband network dedicated to public safety. FirstNet will provide a single interoperable platform for emergency and daily public safety communications.

Iowa's FirstNet Broadband Committee, the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System Board (ISICSB), and the ICN hosted the summit. The summit is posted on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2xQJQL5wcM>.

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Building a Strong Framework to be Cyber Aware

In the State of Iowa and around the world, the Cybersecurity landscape is rapidly changing shape. The role of the transport provider has had to change over the last year in providing customers options regarding cyber security and the ICN is staying in step in securing the State’s network cyber ecosystem.

With the increase in threats and cyber-attacks, the ICN, in collaboration with the State of Iowa’s Chief Information Officer (OCIO), is strengthening its ability to protect the State, its customers, and the agency itself. Each day, the Capitol Complex is a target to thousands of cyber threats.

An attack can target not just data systems, but industrial controlling equipment, and computers. In addition, through manipulation of images, text, and phrases, ones emotions and choices are also a target. The human factor continues to



be a significant vulnerability due to phishing emails, malware attacks, ransomware, key loggers, and remote access to cameras that capture keystrokes or video.

ICN has taken proactive measures by implementing a monitoring tool to improve malware detection within network traffic and related infrastructure. The tool provides ICN’s BRIC (Broadband Information Center) with an advanced warning that heightens the situational awareness for malicious activities. If a threat is recognized, steps can be taken with intent to mitigate the threat and take necessary precautions before damage is done.

ICN is assisting in drafting Cyber Security Strategies for the State of Iowa per the Governor’s Executive Order 87. It is imperative that the ICN, not only be prepared, but engage fully in the prevention and mitigation of cyber-attacks.

New Flexible Pricing for Video@LightSpeed

Beginning July 1, users will notice a price decrease for ICN’s IP video service Video@LightSpeed (V@LS 1.0). This E-rate eligible service includes unlimited video usage for \$155/month while maintaining the functionality users have become accustomed to with upgrades to IP technology. This price decrease was approved by the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission (ITTC) during the September 2015 meeting.

With ICN’s V@LS 1.0, users can experience high video quality within a flexible room layout with open microphones and high definition cameras. Video sessions can be unscheduled (ad hoc) or scheduled using ICN’s Video Operating Scheduling System (VOSS).

Users may also notice that ICN’s MPEG2 pricing increased by 25%. This rate increase is due to the earlier announcement that ICN’s MPEG2 video service will be phased out by June 2018. ICN users are encouraged to transition their video conferencing use to V@LS 1.0. After June 30, 2018, MPEG2 video conferencing will no longer be offered or supported by the ICN. Advancements in IP video conferencing services and applications allow for mobility, space flexibility, lower operational costs, and simpler and easy-to-use interfaces.

ICN’s Account Consultants can assist users in explaining transition options and work at planning changes as it relates to budgeting and operational issues. We will bring our extensive experience in video conferencing, broadband, and telecommunications to help users meet their communication needs now and into the future.

Find out more about ICN’s Video@LightSpeed service at www.icn.iowa.gov/services/video. For questions regarding the MPEG2 sunset date please contact your account consultant or Randy Goddard at Randy.Goddard2@iowa.gov.

In Case You Missed Our Webinar

The recording of ICN’s Billing 101 Webinar - Understanding Your Invoice has been added to ICN’s website. The webinar provides step-by-step information about customers’ invoices, an overview of the listing of the types of services received, and the differences between parent and child accounts.

Find a link to the webinar and other ICN videos at: <https://icn.iowa.gov/about-icn/videos-and-presentations>

Retiring the MOD 70 Means More Flexibility

What took the space of approximately 20 full-size refrigerators in ICN's equipment switch room was officially retired in February 2016. The MOD 70 (or also called the Model 70), a voice/telephone switch, began its operations in November 1990. Customers' services configured on the switch were voicemail, calling cards, IVRs, and other voice circuits. As ICN transitioned to provide CenturyLink's Managed Voice Service (MVS), the agency was also preparing to turn down the legacy voice platform.

Advantages for the ICN are found in the new capabilities of the newer MVS phone service. Customers did not have the option to receive caller ID on the MOD 70. Today with MVS, Call Detail Recording (CDR) shows current calling records allowing for a more efficient and easier voice platform to manage. Current services allow for Automatic Call Distribution (ACD), which gives real time stats and allows for each agency to monitor their own services. The ACD servers today stores historical reports for up to a year; the MOD 70 stored historical reports for 2 weeks.



The removal of the MOD 70 freed up one-fourth of the space within the equipment switch room. In addition, it reduced the DC power utilization in the switch room by approximately 30%. As with any technology and the advances made, the space required to operate the telephone equipment has reduced in size. Today what runs the telephone switch fits in half of a dorm-size refrigerator.

This space now opens up the ability for the ICN to create a carrier grade telecommunications lab. The lab will address any and all production related testing as it may pertain to new product introductions, protocol enhancements, services improvements/changes, and scalability in the network, voice, and video infrastructure. Incorporating the telecommunications lab will allow

the ICN to become faster, more efficient, and gives the ability to further enhance our flexibility to operate as a standards based agency. ICN manages broadband networks, and the lab will provide strong capabilities to test and authorize secure services for the State of Iowa's wide area network.

Establishing a Strong Leadership Foundation

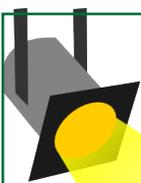
There have been leadership additions to the ICN organization in recent months. In January 2016, ICN named Phil Groner as its new Chief Operating Officer (COO). The COO has oversight for agency operational guidance, strategic business alignment, new business activities, and network long-range planning. The COO has responsibility for the Security and Engineering Bureaus.

As part of its mission to serve Public Safety in Iowa, the ICN has a dedicated Security Bureau serving both Public Safety and Cybersecurity initiatives. Ryan Mulhall joined the ICN on March 29 as the new Security Bureau Manager. Ryan serves in the Army Reserves and has led and managed enterprise communications both here at home and in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. Ryan comes to the ICN with a strong background in information security and network infrastructure.



To assist in creating a flexible and fast customer broadband service delivery experience, ICN named Randy Goddard as the new Business Services Bureau Manager on April 8. Randy previously worked for the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) in a leadership role as a Chief Communications Engineer. Prior to joining HSEMD, Randy worked for the ICN.





Employee Spotlight Shweta Agrahari

Shweta Agrahari has been working with the ICN for 4 ½ years. She started in the Finance Bureau, but recently transitioned to ICN’s Cyber Security Bureau. Her current duties include supporting the FirstNet initiatives in the State of Iowa. Those responsibilities encompass collecting and maintaining information for the Communications Assets and Survey Mapping (CASM) database, while also coordinating online CASM training for Public Safety personnel. Prior to joining ICN, Shweta received her Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in Finance. Shweta explains that the best part of her job is the people that she works with. “Everyone is always ready to help and encourages one another.” She also enjoys the ability to work independently, which has helped her become a more confident person.

Shweta lived in Nepal most of her life, and after landing in the United States she spent three months on the east coast travelling before moving to Iowa. When not working she spends time with her husband and 3-year-old son, Shreyan. Her hobbies include practicing Yoga, visiting new places, watching movies, relaxing, dancing and listening to music. She aspires to do her best, “I believe good things will follow me while maintaining a positive, humble attitude.”

A memorable life experience that Shweta explains is that she survived a plane crash/accident at Lukla Airport in Nepal, which is considered one of the most dangerous runways in the world. It is a popular place for visitors to the Himalayas near Mount Everest to arrive.

If there was one person in history Shweta would like to meet it would be the legendary India actor, Amitabh Bachchan, who is 73 years of old. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential actors in the history of Indian cinema.

Broadband News from Around the Web

[Iowa Invitation to Qualify Contributes to FirstNet Teaming List](#)

The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) pre-qualified 123 vendors under an invitation to qualify (ITQ) released Dec. 31 to indicate Iowa vendors’ interest in subcontracting and partnering with other vendors involved with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet). *Strong and fast broadband for first responders.*

[Telemedicine effective for parents of autistic children](#)

Researchers at the University of Iowa found video chats with doctors can help parents with autistic children in rural communities deal with sudden behavioral problems.

[Iowa Congressman Makes Correcting Broadband Access Gaps His Central Mission](#)

Rep. Dave Loebsack’s Small Business Broadband Deployment Act extends the FCC exemption from its enhanced transparency rules for small Internet service providers for five years to help extend rural broadband in the state. *Strong broadband matters to rural Iowa.*

[Replacement Social Security cards now available online](#)

You can now replace a lost or stolen Social Security card online, through a program being rolled out in Iowa and a half-dozen other states. *Flexible online services.*

[Jacobson: With ransomware, prepare for the worst](#)

There is a lot of news about a new type of malware called ransomware. This is a very nasty type of software that will encrypt all of the data on your hard drive and then demand payment in order to get your data back. Jacobson addresses a very simple method everyone should be using to protect themselves from threats against their data. *Data backups mean strong protection.*

[Iowa, agriculture on front line of cybersecurity threats](#)

But cybercrime isn’t limited to the big banks and major corporations, Assistant Attorney General John Carlin warned Iowa businesses and university personnel in presentations at Iowa State University and Drake University. *Strong broadband security for ag biotech.*

[Sign up to receive weekly broadband emails](#)

BROADBAND MATTERS

BROADBAND STRONG: Delivering **FLEXIBLE** broadband and **FAST** experiences to meet the growing broadband needs of education, government, public safety, and healthcare in Iowa.

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