



Public Safety WINS, Version 2
Policy Solutions—Coordination and Partnerships

FINAL

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Policy Solutions Introduction

The recent acts of domestic terrorism have elevated and highlighted the importance of public safety wireless interoperability. As such, seamless interoperable communications between public safety related agencies, across all levels of government, has become a top priority. Seamless interoperability can be achieved only when stakeholders work together to address the key policy issue areas identified by the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) Program. The PSWN Program has worked to understand the importance of each policy issue and has identified actions and approaches to meet current and future interoperability challenges. Our solutions offer insight, guidance, and resources for stakeholders in their efforts to improve interoperability. This section also provides a detailed review of the impact of each issue on interoperability and what constitutes success in addressing the issue.

Coordination and Partnerships—Relevance to Interoperability

Coordinated approaches and partnerships among public safety officials and government leaders are an essential part of improving wireless communications interoperability, and ultimately a critical aspect of the ability of these officials to save lives. As such, shared systems planning and coordination and partnership activities should be integrated into any public safety communications systems upgrade or development effort. These activities also help make public safety communications systems compatible so that law enforcement personnel, firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, and other public safety officials can talk with each other more efficiently and effectively coordinate efforts to save lives and protect property.

Properly coordinated interoperability planning can help ensure the continuity of public safety operations. Interoperable communications are improving; however, much remains to be done. Interagency communications during emergencies or disasters are still not possible in many areas because of a lack of coordinated interoperability planning. First responders to these types of incidents may have interoperable communications. However, secondary responders often have limited coordinated communications capabilities. This inability of agencies to communicate with one another during joint operations places the lives and property of citizens and public safety personnel at risk.

The coordination of system planning efforts can also help reduce pressure on scarce public safety resources and may decrease system development risks. Inconsistent and incompatible system plans can interrupt the financial support from public officials and slow the progress of needed system developments.

Success in the area of coordination and partnerships will manifest as an advancement to a higher level of interoperable public safety communications systems. The following matrix illustrates the common stages that public safety agencies may exhibit as they progress—

New	Developing	Established	Mature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the lack of information exchange • Addressing the lack of interoperability guidelines • Beginning to identify potential partners at various levels of government • Addressing the lack of public safety multi-agency procurement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an interoperability working group • Developing a strategic plan for interoperability • Identifying partners and obtaining the necessary approvals to formalize the relationships • Initiating memoranda of understanding (MOU) • Developing common procurement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participating in an interoperability working group • Supplying interoperability guidelines • Formalizing sharing arrangements with partners • Planning and executing operational exercises • Operating shared systems and executing interoperability strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a formal working group actively supported by senior executives and the public • Ensuring consistent guidelines are widely shared and used • Sharing an interoperable system across all levels of government • Identifying additional partners • Continuing to examine ways to improve the system • Unifying the public safety community as a market force

Target Audiences Introduction

The PSWN Program understands that it cannot resolve the five policy challenges alone and that many people must assume the responsibility to achieve success in each policy area. These five challenges must be addressed by local, state, federal, and tribal public safety entities and the broader set of public safety communications stakeholders, including the U.S. Congress, regulatory agencies, civic leadership forums, and equipment manufacturers. These key public safety entities and stakeholders are jointly responsible for the resolution of interoperability issues. This section is designed to allow members of each group to identify specific actions they can take related to each issue area that can ultimately lead to the successful development of an interoperability solution.

Relevance to State Decision Makers

State decision makers must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. State officials are judged by their ability to protect life, property, and critical public infrastructures. A lack of coordinated planning jeopardizes public safety personnel and the citizens they serve to protect during interagency operations (e.g., emergencies and natural disasters). States are also responsible for ensuring public safety agencies have the ability to work across jurisdictional boundaries. To this end, interagency communications brought about through effective coordination and partnerships are vital to fast and efficient responses to emergencies.

Additional development of shared infrastructures and common procurement strategies can encourage system development efficiencies and cost savings. Coordinated planning of shared systems can also help allocate spectrum resources more efficiently. Statewide and federal-to-state partnership development can increase market pressure on vendors that may result in price reductions and more robust service offerings.

Actions/Solution Steps for State Decision Makers

State decision makers can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. They can support statewide interoperability by providing guidance and leadership in developing partnerships with federal and local entities, encouraging policy changes and financial support to advance interoperability, advocating the development of statewide systems as the linchpin for achieving public safety interoperability, and participating in executive-level public safety interoperability forums (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program symposiums and one-day events).

Statewide public safety forums or task forces can also be initiated to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed. These public safety forums and/or task forces could be directed to analyze and provide solutions for statewide, and ultimately state to federal, operational, technology, spectrum, policy, and regulatory issues. These entities could also increase awareness of the need for statewide interoperability by developing a comprehensive statewide interoperability plan, leveraging the knowledge base of jurisdictions that have already developed shared systems, and keeping abreast of national issues regarding shared systems development and successful partnerships.

State decision makers can also support the development of cost-effective systems that meet public safety requirements by encouraging coalitions of the public safety community to make more forceful demands on the traditional vendors and to consider commercial options as alternatives.

The following resources will prove useful to state decision makers in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications system interoperability requirements—

- *The Role of the States in Public Safety Wireless Interoperability*
- *Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide*
- *Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety*
- *Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide*
- *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships*

Relevance to Regional Decision Makers

Regional decision makers must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communication systems. Regional officials are judged by their ability to protect life, property, and critical public infrastructures. A lack of coordinated planning jeopardizes public safety personnel and the citizens they serve to protect during interagency operations (e.g., emergencies and natural disasters). Regions, in addition to states, are responsible for ensuring public safety agencies have the ability to work across jurisdictional boundaries. To this end, interagency communications brought about through effective coordination and partnerships are vital to fast and efficient responses to emergencies.

The development of shared infrastructure and common procurement strategies can encourage system development efficiencies and cost savings. Coordinated planning of shared systems can also help agencies allocate spectrum resources more efficiently. Participation in regional, statewide, and ultimately federal partnerships can increase market pressure on vendors that may result in price reduction and more robust service offerings.

Actions/Solution Steps for Regional Decision Makers

Regional decision makers can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. They can support regional interoperability by providing guidance and leadership in developing partnerships with local, state, and federal entities, encouraging policy changes and financial support to advance interoperability, advocating linkages with statewide systems as the linchpin for achieving effective public safety interoperability, and participating in executive-level public safety interoperability forums (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program regional symposiums and one-day events).

Regional public safety forums or task forces can also be initiated to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed. These public safety forums and/or task forces could be directed to analyze and provide solutions for regional operational, technology, spectrum, policy, and regulatory issues. These entities could also increase regional awareness of the need for interoperability by developing a comprehensive regional interoperability plan consistent with state efforts and federal, leveraging the knowledge base of jurisdictions that have already developed shared systems, and keeping abreast of national issues regarding shared systems development.

Regional decision makers can also support the development of cost-effective systems that meet public safety requirements by encouraging coalitions of the public safety community to make more forceful demands on the traditional vendors and to consider commercial options as alternatives.

The following resources will prove useful to regional decision makers in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications systems interoperability requirements—

- *Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide*
- *Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety*
- *Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide*
- *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships*

Relevance to Public Safety Community

The public safety community must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Because public safety personnel are responsible for protecting life, property, and critical public infrastructures, a lack of coordinated planning may place public safety personnel at risk during interagency operations (e.g., emergencies and natural disasters). However, coordinated wireless communications will facilitate successful co-jurisdictional incident response for both common day-to-day and emergency operations. Public safety agencies that already have established relationships upon which to build partnerships should move forward in addressing coordination of interagency communications systems. Public safety agencies that have yet to establish relationships should take the necessary steps toward building partnerships to address the incompatibility of existing communications systems.

The public safety community is also responsible for ensuring public safety agencies have the ability to work across all boundaries. Additionally, by coordinating with adjacent jurisdictions and ultimately public safety personnel across all levels of government, public safety agencies can save money and keep pace with near-term communications needs. Because operating and maintaining outdated and duplicative publicly funded infrastructures is expensive, the development of shared infrastructures and common procurement strategies can encourage system development efficiencies and cost savings. Coordinated planning of shared systems can also help agencies allocate spectrum resources more efficiently. Coordinated participation in statewide and eventually federal partnerships can increase market pressure on vendors, resulting in price reduction and more robust service offerings.

Actions/Solution Steps for the Public Safety Community

The public safety community can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. Working with neighboring jurisdictions will allow the public safety community to leverage the knowledge base of jurisdictions that have already developed shared systems. This coordination also ensures that interoperability with neighboring jurisdictions is a key requirement for new systems development and gives the public safety community an opportunity to be involved in the development or upgrade of a comprehensive statewide interoperability plan. This coordination will also help to lay the foundation for the necessary coordination and partnerships that will inevitably take place between state and federal public safety entities.

The public safety community should compel state and regional decision makers to make interoperability a high public safety priority by encouraging policy changes and financial support to advance interoperability, and by advocating linkages with statewide systems as the linchpin for achieving effective public safety interoperability.

The public safety community can also remind equipment manufacturers and software developers of the market size and competition for public safety systems. Learning about the wireless communications industry will also provide a better understanding of the products and services available to meet wireless communications requirements.

Attending and participating in public safety interoperability forums (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program symposiums and one-day events) will encourage state and regional officials to address and support solutions to public safety interoperability.

The following resources will prove useful to the public safety community in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications systems interoperability requirements—

- *Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide*
- *Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety*
- *Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide*
- *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships*

Relevance to Civic Leadership Forums

Civic leadership forums must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on the safety of citizens. Effective, coordinated communications ensures an efficient response to public safety incidents and will prevent the unnecessary loss of life or destruction of property. In times when the domestic security of the Nation is threatened, coordination is critical.

Overall, civic leadership forums provide a venue for dialog that enhances active and informed citizenship. Through these forums, citizens gain knowledge about the effect coordination, or lack thereof, has on public safety. Additionally, civic leadership forums can serve as an effective organizational tool to motivate government decision makers to support coordinated public safety communications systems. Also, civic leadership forums contribute significantly to public problem solving. They play a key role in elevating issues of public concern. Advocacy and other awareness efforts led by civic leadership forums can heavily influence key decision makers to recognize the importance of coordinated public safety communications efforts and to actively promote measures that address these concerns.

Actions/Solution Steps for Civic Leadership Forums

Civic leadership forums can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. They can actively support interoperability by encouraging policy changes and financial support to advance interoperability, and advocating linkages with statewide systems as the linchpin for achieving effective public safety interoperability.

Civic leadership forums can also sponsor media events to raise awareness and highlight the importance of public safety interoperability. Leveraging existing public safety forums and information sources, and participating in public safety interoperability forums (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program symposiums and one-day events) will further promote nationwide interoperability efforts.

The following resources will prove useful to civic leadership forums in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications systems interoperability requirements—

- *Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide*
- *Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety*
- *Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide*
- *Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships*

Relevance to the U.S. Congress

The U.S. Congress must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Congressional leaders are judged by their ability to advocate and establish effective laws on behalf of U.S. citizens. A lack of coordinated planning jeopardizes public safety personnel and the citizens they serve to protect during interagency operations (e.g., emergencies and natural disasters). Coordinated communications ensure an efficient response to public safety incidents and will prevent the unnecessary loss of life or destruction of property. To this end, coordinated public safety communications systems are vital and should be adequately addressed.

Members of Congress supervise the activities and efficiency of all levels of government. The use of shared resources among local, state, and federal public safety agencies will improve the efficiency of operations at all levels of government. The consolidation, partnership, and resource sharing among agencies will limit damage to property and decrease the loss of life associated with prolonged response time due to aged or faulty communication systems.

Actions/Solution Steps for the U.S. Congress

The U.S. Congress can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. Holding congressional hearings highlighting the difficulties of public safety interoperability can make interoperability a high public policy priority. The U.S. Congress can also draft and/or sponsor bills to provide funding for shared systems development that maximizes the use of partnerships and realizes resource efficiencies. These actions will encourage policy changes and financial support to advance interoperability, and support efforts of key Federal Government programs (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program, Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group [FLEWUG], National Institute of Justice [NIJ]) to foster public safety interoperability and shared systems development nationwide. The U.S. Congress can also encourage equipment manufacturers and software developers to produce compatible public safety equipment at an affordable cost to ensure that development needs are addressed in a cost-effective manner.

Annual briefings or progress reports on the state of interoperability presented by the PSWN Program, the FLEWUG, and any future executive-level committees to the U.S. Congress may encourage decision makers and the public safety community to actively pursue improvements in interagency communications systems. Additionally, these briefings or reports also provide an effective tool to measure and monitor the progress of interoperability efforts nationwide.

The following resources will prove useful to the U.S. Congress in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications systems interoperability requirements—

- *[The Role of the Federal Government in Public Safety Wireless Interoperability](#)*
- *[Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide](#)*
- *[Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety](#)*
- *[Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide](#)*
- *[Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships](#)*

Relevance to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

The FCC must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Coordinated wireless communications facilitate successful co-jurisdictional and ultimately national incident response for both day-to-day and major emergency operations. The FCC makes rules and policies regarding the use of spectrum. Unfortunately, the amount of spectrum currently available is insufficient for public safety agencies to effectively carry out their critical missions. However, the FCC can develop rules and approaches that encourage partnerships and shared systems development. Implementation of shared local, state, and federal communications systems will resolve many interoperability problems and will maximize the use of available funds and spectrum.

Actions/Solution Steps for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

The FCC can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. For existing spectrum and funding resources to be used effectively, extensive coordination needs to occur between the FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). This coordination is necessary to ensure that spectrum management rules allow for the establishment of shared systems across levels of government and for creating an efficient environment for systems developers to obtain and maintain interoperability frequencies.

Reaching out to the public safety community will ensure that the FCC realizes the full extent of public safety spectrum importance and needs. The Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) Program has a wide knowledge base to provide the FCC with information on public safety spectrum needs. Attending and participating in public safety interoperability forums (e.g., PSWN Program symposiums) serves as an additional method for the FCC to gauge the needs and address the concerns of the public safety community.

The FCC should continue to encourage coordination among public safety agencies through Regional Planning Committees (RPC), which manage the National Public Safety Planning Advisory Committee (NPSPAC) spectrum in the 800 megahertz (MHz) band, and the National Coordination Committee (NCC), which develops rules and regulations for interoperability spectrum within the 700 MHz band.

The following resource will prove useful to the FCC in encouraging coordination among public safety agencies—

- *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Safety Wireless Interoperability*

Relevance to Equipment Manufacturers

Equipment manufacturers must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Public safety agencies require coordination and partnerships to effectively perform their jobs. This necessity will increasingly affect equipment manufacturers because the public safety community is under pressure to demonstrate system development efficiencies and support homeland security initiatives by developing shared infrastructures and common procurement strategies. Operating and maintaining multiple outdated and duplicative publicly funded infrastructures is expensive and uses spectrum inefficiently.

The public safety community can no longer afford to continue operating stand alone communications systems. This reality affects the market for equipment manufacturers. For instance, the consolidation of Federal Government wireless systems may result in larger system procurements. This consolidation may also result in group procurement requirements from a collection of public safety agencies. These consolidations may increase market pressure on equipment manufacturers to develop and produce public safety equipment that will facilitate shared system development plans and requirements.

Actions/Solution Steps for Equipment Manufacturers

Equipment manufacturers can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. Continued dialog with government officials and the public safety community can ensure that public safety equipment development adequately addresses interoperability requirements. This dialog guarantees the equipment manufacturer is developing products that are ultimately affordable and useful to the public safety community. An additional outcome of these discussions, may be the development of alternative business models for provisioning communications services or equipment.

Additionally, feedback gained from interoperability forums (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program symposiums and one-day events) and meetings with local, state, and federal governments and the public safety community provide an opportunity to share and address concerns up front, during the development phase of any new equipment.

Relevance to the Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group (FLEWUG)

The FLEWUG must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Members of the FLEWUG are responsible for ensuring that public safety agencies work across jurisdictional boundaries and are judged by their agency's ability to protect life, property, and critical infrastructure. Coordinated wireless communications among public safety agencies will facilitate successful co-jurisdictional and ultimately national incident response for both day-to-day and emergency operations. Neighboring public safety agencies that already have established relationships upon which to build partnerships should move forward in addressing coordination of interagency communications systems. Public safety agencies that have yet to establish relationships should take the necessary steps toward building partnerships to address the incompatibility of interagency communications systems.

In addition to meeting the narrowband mandate, there is also a general trend towards system consolidation of Federal Government wireless systems. This consolidation provides equipment vendors with significant market opportunities as they make and sell narrowband equipment to the Federal Government. If agency officials are to support these nationwide consolidation efforts, increasing market pressure must be placed on vendors to reduce prices and encourage more robust service offerings for the public safety community.

Actions/Solution Steps for the Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group (FLEWUG)

The FLEWUG can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. First, the FLEWUG can ensure that interoperability remains a high-priority public safety communications issue by encouraging ongoing progress on coordination through interoperability assistance efforts. These efforts should include sponsoring and supporting several partnership-building and outreach forums and mechanisms (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program/FLEWUG meetings, PSWN Program symposiums, and PSWN Program Web site) to capture and exchange best practices. The FLEWUG can also work with local, state, and federal entities to develop interoperability plans and shared system partnerships, as well as encourage interoperability across all levels of government as a key requirement for new federal systems developments.

The FLEWUG can also remind equipment manufacturers and software developers of the market size and competition for public safety systems by inviting them to forums and participating in healthy exchanges of information.

Establishing and sponsoring forums (e.g., PSWN Program Executive Committee and Communications Advisory Committee) will provide much needed senior-level exchanges. Developing senior-executive-level action plans and agendas, as well as providing support to senior executives, will also help advance the cause of public safety interoperability.

The FLEWUG can demonstrate the benefits of common regional systems and the flexibility to meet unique needs with a common architecture through collaborative pilot systems. These demonstrations can also lead to the development of decision processes to take greater advantage of the full offerings of the marketplace. The processes may include piloting and testing of new products from new market entrants, investigating commercial services and commercial equipment options and architecture, and developing methods for offloading certain requirements

to commercial services. All of these actions will undoubtedly promote interoperability as a high public safety priority.

The following resources will prove useful to the FLEWUG in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications systems interoperability requirements—

- *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Safety Wireless Interoperability*
- *Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide*
- *Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety*
- *Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide*
- *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships*

Relevance to Federal Decision Makers

Federal decision makers must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Federal decision makers are judged by their ability to protect the lives and property of U.S. citizens. A lack of coordinated planning jeopardizes public safety personnel and the citizens they serve to protect during interagency operations (e.g., emergencies and natural disasters). Federal decision makers are also responsible for coordinating multiple public safety entities among the numerous components of the Federal Government, and eventually partnering with state public safety entities. To this end, interagency coordination is vital to fast and efficient responses to emergencies.

The development of shared infrastructures and common procurement strategies can encourage system development efficiencies and cost savings. The coordinated planning efforts for shared systems can also help agencies allocate spectrum resources more efficiently. Federal decision makers should support the continued consolidation, partnership, and resource sharing among federal departments (e.g., Department of Justice and the Department of the Treasury) while considering the consolidation of system efforts and partnerships between state and federal entities (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program South Florida pilot project).

Actions/Solution Steps for Federal Decision Makers

Federal decision makers can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. They can support nationwide interoperability by encouraging policy changes and financial support to advance interoperability, advocating linkages with statewide systems as the linchpin for achieving effective nationwide public safety interoperability, as well as establishing and continuing shared systems developments within federal departments or agencies.

Federal decision makers can also conduct media events that will raise awareness and highlight the importance of public safety interoperability. Productive media relations can assist federal decision makers with bridge-building efforts among all levels of government. Leveraging existing public safety forums and information sources will further promote nationwide interoperability efforts and will provide guidance and leadership in developing partnerships with state and local entities, in addition to other federal departments or agencies.

Federal decision makers can support the development of cost-effective systems that meet public safety requirements by encouraging coalitions of the public safety community to make more forceful demands on the traditional vendors. They can also consider commercial options as alternatives to increase market pressure on equipment vendors.

Attending and participating in executive-level public safety interoperability forums (e.g., Public Safety Wireless Network [PSWN] Program symposiums and one-day events) will encourage decision makers to address and support state and regional solutions to public safety interoperability.

The following resources will prove useful to federal decision makers in addressing coordination to meet public safety communications systems interoperability requirements—

- *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Safety Wireless Interoperability*
- *Coordination and Partnerships Awareness Guide*
- *Public Safety Communications—A Priority Investment for America’s Future Safety*
- *Public Safety and Wireless Communications Interoperability Guide*
- *Sample Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Case Based Tutorial on Shared System Development—Coordination and Partnerships*

Relevance to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

The NTIA must understand the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Coordinated wireless communications encourage co-jurisdictional incident response for both day-to-day and emergency operations. To respond to public safety needs, the NTIA, in conjunction with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), has tried to encourage this coordination among public safety agencies. Coordination and partnerships is an important component of interoperability and should continue to be addressed.

Overall, the NTIA makes rules and policies regarding the Federal Government's use of spectrum. Unfortunately, the amount of spectrum currently available is insufficient for public safety agencies to effectively carry out their critical missions. However, the NTIA can develop rules and approaches that encourage partnerships and shared systems development across all levels of government. Implementation of shared local, state, and federal communications systems will resolve many interoperability problems and will maximize the use of available funds and spectrum.

Actions/Solution Steps for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

The NTIA can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. For existing spectrum and funding resources to be used effectively, extensive coordination needs to occur between the NTIA and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This coordination is necessary to ensure that spectrum management rules allow for establishing shared systems and for creating an efficient environment for system developers to obtain and maintain interoperability frequencies. This can only happen if the NTIA actively engages both the FCC and the federal public safety community.

The Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) Program has a wealth of information that can aid the NTIA in learning about public safety interoperability issues and concerns. Public safety interoperability forums (e.g., PSWN Program symposiums and one-day events) also offer an opportunity for the NTIA to dialog with the federal public safety community and key decision makers.

The following resource will prove useful to the NTIA in ensuring that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements—

- *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Safety Wireless Interoperability*

Relevance to the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) Program

The PSWN Program must understand and address the importance of coordination and its effect on public safety wireless communications systems. Coordination and partnerships of public safety wireless communications is a key issue for the PSWN Program.

The program has identified, promoted, and is now working toward developing solutions to several key coordination-related issues. These solutions include—

- Promoting coordinated system planning between and among public safety agencies across all levels of government
- Compelling consistency in public safety communications recommendations and guidelines
- Establishing forums for senior-level exchanges
- Understanding and promoting the benefits of common statewide, regional, and federal systems
- Developing decision processes for taking greater advantage of the full offerings of the marketplace.

The program is also involved in several discrete activities to help resolve public safety coordination issues. These activities include developing system planning “how-to” guides, developing a nationwide integrator of best practices: Public Safety WINS: Wireless Interoperability National Strategy, piloting and testing new products from new market entrants, and investigating commercial services and commercial equipment options and architectures.

Actions/Solution Steps for the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) Program

The PSWN Program can take numerous steps to ensure that coordination is adequately addressed to meet interoperability requirements. The PSWN Program can ensure that interoperability remains a high-priority public safety communications issue by encouraging ongoing progress on coordination through interoperability assistance efforts. The program can also continue to sponsor and support partnership-building and outreach forums and mechanisms (e.g., PSWN Program/ Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group [FLEWUG] meetings, PSWN Program symposiums, one-day events, National Interoperability Forum [NIF], and PSWN Program Web site) to capture and exchange best practices. Developing senior-level action plans and agendas, as well as providing support to senior executives, will also help advance the cause of public safety interoperability.

Public Safety WINS: Wireless Interoperability National Strategy serves as a roadmap for improving interoperability. As a strategy to compel consistency in public safety communications, it provides recommendations and guidelines to improve and implement interoperable wireless communications systems across all levels of government.

The PSWN Program can demonstrate the benefits of common statewide, regional, and federal systems and the flexibility to meet unique needs with a common architecture through collaborative pilot systems. These demonstrations can also lead to the development of decision processes to take greater advantage of the full offerings of the marketplace. These decision processes may include piloting and testing new products from new market entrants, investigating commercial services and commercial equipment options and architecture, and developing methods for offloading certain requirements to commercial services. All of these actions will undoubtedly promote interoperability as a high public safety priority.