

Wisconsin Dept. of Military Affairs: Statewide interoperability programs move to DMA

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Contact: Jackie Guthrie, Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs

Office: [608-242-3050](tel:608-242-3050)

Wisconsin Department of military Affairs update: Statewide interoperability programs move to DMA

Wisconsin's state interoperability programs have been consolidated under one state agency — the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs (DMA). This change is directed in the 2017-19 state budget recently passed by the legislature and signed into law by Gov. Scott Walker.

Interoperability programs — Wisconsin Interoperable System for Communications or WISCOM, 911, Land Mobile Radios, and the Public Safety Broadband Network (or FirstNet) — are directed by the governor-appointed Wisconsin Interoperability Council. Going forward, the council will advise DMA on these programs, and the department will in turn, advise the governor and legislature on the interoperability programs.

The new law also establishes a new 19-member 911 Subcommittee, which will be appointed by the governor. This subcommittee will advise DMA on needed steps to transition from the current 911 system to a next generation system capable of communicating across multiple communications platforms including video and text. The department will lead the effort, based on subcommittee advice, to seek proposals to establish the new system.

“We look forward to working with the Interoperability Council and the soon-to-be formed 911 Subcommittee on multiple courses of action to improve the state's interoperability programs. We will work with all stakeholders, be transparent, and do our best to be a strong advocate for Wisconsin,” said Maj. Gen. Don Dunbar, Wisconsin's adjutant general and homeland security advisor.

“Our first course of action is to ‘re-snap’ the chalk line to ensure we have an accurate assessment of where Wisconsin is with the various components of interoperability,” Dunbar said.

DMA will establish a new directorate to be the department's primary point of contact in support of Wisconsin's interoperability.