



## Radio Programming Issues

At the Arkansas Interoperable Communications Conference in October 2012, several attendees described problems with radio programming for their agencies. These problems centered around two key issues, including the time between purchasing radios and being able to put radios into service and radios that were programmed incorrectly.

The Arkansas Interoperable Communications Committee (AICC) Executive Committee asks that users contact AWIN Operations to open a trouble ticket for any radio programming issues. This will allow the operations team to work with radio shops and users to resolve any problems. AWIN Operations can be reached at 501.683.1798 or [awin.operations@arkansas.gov](mailto:awin.operations@arkansas.gov).

## 700 Mhz Narrowbanding Waiver Request Filed

In an effort to minimize the impact of 700 Mhz narrowbanding requirements on AWIN users, the AICC Executive Committee worked with the governor's office to file a waiver request with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Governor Mike Beebe sent the request to the FCC on behalf of the state in September 2012.

In the waiver request the state asks that the FCC grant Arkansas a waiver to allow the state to operate in the 700 MHz channel efficiency until December 31, 2024. The request is based on:

- A significant portion of AWIN's infrastructure and 90% of the existing subscriber units do not support the 6.25 kHz channel efficiency.
- The December 31, 2016 deadline prematurely shortens the life-cycle of the statewide system.
- The cost to upgrade the equipment is prohibitive for the state and the local jurisdictions that depend on AWIN for public safety communications.

The FCC reviewed the state's request and posted the request for comment. The state and AWIN are waiting to hear a decision from the FCC.

## Public Safety Broadband Working Group Established

The state of Arkansas recently established the Public Safety Working Group. The group is comprised of public safety representatives from multi-jurisdictions and multi-disciplines, as well as information technology experts to include cyber-security and state network representatives that are participating in the working group. Approximately 21 individuals are participating in the working group.



The working group is drafting a preliminary plan for public safety broadband for the state, which is expected to be complete by the end of January 2013. This is a preliminary plan which will assist with completing the state's application for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) grant. The working group will continue to add needed details to the plan as required.

## AWIN Notification Tool Changed

With some AWIN users experiencing issues receiving AWIN alerts and notifications from the messaging tool that the AWIN team previously used to disseminate messages, AWIN Operations recently researched some options for sending notifications to users. A solution is now in place to deliver notifications to users that should not be captured by spam email filters.

The alerts and notifications that AWIN users receive will come from a PHPList and will have a new look. All users that were loaded in the previous distribution list have been imported into the new tool. If you would like to join the alert and notification list for important AWIN information, you may go to the AWIN website at [www.awin.arkansas.gov](http://www.awin.arkansas.gov) or <https://listmgr.state.ar.us/lists/>.

You may also follow AWIN Operations @awinalerts on twitter for up-to-date and important information. If you need any assistance or would like more information regarding AWIN alerts and notifications, please contact Brenda Roberts at [Brenda.roberts@arkansas.gov](mailto:Brenda.roberts@arkansas.gov).



## New User Process Summary Available Online

The AWIN program includes many agencies that join during the course of the year that may not be familiar with the process for new users. There are certain steps that need to be followed to smoothly migrate new users to the system. The AWIN team has compiled a document to assist new users with this process, which is available for review on the AWIN

website at <http://www.awin.arkansas.gov/applications/Pages/default.aspx>. The document is an abbreviated version of the process and does not necessarily include all steps and requirements involved but can be used as an informational document.

New users should be sure to obtain approval prior to the purchase of equipment to be placed on the AWIN system. For further information regarding the new user process, please review

the document available on the AWIN website. If you have any questions regarding this information or to speak to someone on the AWIN team, please contact AWIN Operations at 501.683.1798.

## **2012 Arkansas Interoperability Conference Wrap**

### **Dates Set for 2013 Conference**

The 2012 Arkansas Interoperability Conference was held on October 10-12 at the Crowne Plaza at 201 South Shackleford in Little Rock. Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola kicked off the conference after a preconference training session was conducted. The keynote speaker for the

conference was the Department of Homeland Security Director of Office of Emergency Communications Chris Essid. Ken Born, DHS Regional Coordinator for Region 6, also spoke regarding nationwide hot topics. The AICC Executive Committee conducted a “talk time” to give attendees a chance to ask questions of the committee, and Arkansas Attorney general Dustin McDaniel closed the conference.



The 2012 conference was attended by more than 202 representatives from the public safety sector, including:

- State – 57 attendees
- County – 43 attendees
- Fire – 11 attendees
- Law Enforcement – 21 attendees
- City – 13 attendees
- Ambulance - 9 attendees
- Federal – 9 attendees
- Vendor – 31 attendees
- Amateur Radio – 3 attendees
- Hospital – 3 attendees
- Other – 1 attendee

The 2013 Conference will be October 9-11, 2013 and will be held at the Crowne Plaza again. If you did not have the opportunity to participate in the 2012 conference, we hope that you will try to attend this year!



## **Welcome to the AWIN Team**

AWIN Operations would like to welcome Alex Ballard to the team! Ballard began working in network support for the AWIN program in December 2012. He is from Grant County and was born and raised in Poyen, Arkansas. After graduating from Poyen High School, Ballard attended Henderson State University for a year before enlisting in the U.S. Army in late 2001. In the U.S. Army he served in the 204<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion as a Signals Intelligence Analyst (98C). In addition to his duties as an analyst, he was the

Headquarters & Services Company Training Non-Commissioned Officer and the Lead Sergeant-in-Charge for the Battalion Operations Center for deployments.

After leaving the Army in 2005, Ballard moved back to Arkansas where he worked in car sales and then as the Assistant General Manager of Books-a-Million in Hot Springs. Eventually, Ballard became the IT Manager for the Little Rock Job Corps Center in 2009. He worked with the Job Corps Center until December 2012 when he transitioned to his current position with the AWIN team.

Happy New Year from the AWIN team! Follow AWIN Operations @awinalerts on twitter for important information and alerts in 2013!