

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2715

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 16, 2006

Title: An act relating to the state interoperability executive committee.

Brief Description: Regarding the state interoperability executive committee.

Sponsors: House Committee on Technology, Energy & Communications (originally sponsored by Representatives Ericks, Anderson, Morris, Haler, Crouse, Hankins, Nixon, Sump, P. Sullivan, Hudgins, Kilmer, Takko, Green, Sells, Clibborn, Simpson, Springer, Roberts, Ormsby, Morrell and McIntire).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/16/06 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kastama, Chair; Berkey, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Fairley, Haugen, Kline, McCaslin and Pridemore.

Staff: Cindy Fazio (786-7405)

Background: In 2003, the Washington State Information Services Board established the State Interoperability Executive Committee (Committee) to take inventory of and evaluate all state and local government-owned public safety communications systems, and to prepare a statewide public safety communications plan. The plan was to include specific goals for improving interoperability of public safety communications systems and identifiable benchmarks for achieving those goals.

In December of 2004, the Committee submitted its final report to the Legislature. In November of 2005, the Committee completed their Technical Implementation Plan (TIP). A key component of the TIP is moving towards a statewide, Project 25 (P-25) technology. The P-25 is a communications interoperability standard supported and used by the federal government, numerous state governments, and by the communications industry. After adopting the TIP, the Committee adopted a requirement that when state agencies purchase new communications equipment, it must be P-25 compatible.

Summary of Bill: The Committee is charged with coordinating the purchasing of all state wireless radio communications system equipment to ensure that, at a minimum: (a) any new trunked standard, after the transition from a radio over internet protocol network, is P-25; (b) any new system that requires advanced digital features is P-25; and c) any new system or equipment purchases can be upgraded to P-25 standards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: I had a career in law enforcement and dealing with communication problems on the ground during an emergency is very real and very serious. The affect of this legislation will be to eventually provide the physical capability to cross all jurisdictional boundaries with all agencies and industries mobilized during an emergency. The federal agencies are switching to the P-25 as well. Even event planners, say someone planning an Olympic event for example, will be using this technology to ensure open communication capability. The legislation applies to the Washington State Patrol. They are on the committee that adopted this language. There will be significant costs to be faced in the future, but this bill provides local jurisdictions with an assurance that they can proceed to upgrade their equipment to this standard and the state will be following suit.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Representative Mark Ericks, Sponsor; James McMahan, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.