

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1496

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness

**Title:** An act relating to changing the membership of the state interoperability executive committee.

**Brief Description:** Changing the membership to the state interoperability executive committee.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Roberts, Hurst, O'Brien, Simpson, Hinkle, Van De Wege, Ericks and Sells.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness: 2/3/09, 2/11/09 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Clarifies and expands the membership of the State Interoperability Executive Committee.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hurst, Chair; O'Brien, Vice Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Klippert, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Goodman, Kirby and Ross.

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841)

**Background:**

The Department of Information Services (DIS) was formed through the consolidation of the state's independent data processing and communications systems in 1987. The DIS provides technology leadership and coordinated planning and management of state information services for state government organizations within Washington. Within the DIS there is a Washington State Information Services Board (Board) that is comprised of 15 members. The Board is generally charged with the following: (1) developing standards and procedures

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governing the acquisition and disposition of proprietary equipment and licensing of radio spectrums on behalf of state agencies; (2) developing statewide technical policies; (3) reviewing standards for new telecommunications networks; and (4) providing direction concerning strategic planning goals and objectives for the state.

In 2003 the Board established the State Interoperability Executive Committee (Committee) to coordinate the purchasing of all state wireless radio communications system equipment, 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 set forth recommendations for executive and legislative action to ensure that public safety communications systems can communicate with one another and conform to federal law and regulations governing emergency communication systems and spectrum allocation. The plan was to include specific goals for improving interoperability of public safety communications systems and identifiable benchmarks for achieving those goals.

The membership of the Committee, appointed by the Board, includes, but is not limited to, the following: the Military Department, the Washington State Patrol, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, the DIS, city and county governments, state and local fire chiefs, police chiefs and sheriffs, and state and local emergency management directors. Voting membership of the Committee is limited to 15 members.

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#### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The membership of the Committee is clarified and expanded. The number of voting members of the Committee is expanded to include a representative of the following entities:

- the local police;
- the State Emergency Managers Association;
- the State Emergency Management Division; and
- a tribal representative.

A representative of the following entities will be requested to participate as non-voting members of the Committee:

- a federal agency counterpart;
- the state's Urban Area Security Initiative region;
- the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials National Emergency Number Association Chapter; and
- four legislators, one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate, and one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives.

The chair of the Board must appoint the chair or co-chairs of the Committee.

#### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

Clarifications and technical changes are made to clarify the voting members from the non-voting members on the Committee.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Many of the new entities that are added to this bill were not in existence when the original legislation for the Committee was created. The state is dealing with a continual growth of technology and yet there is still a limited set of bands within the airwaves. Interoperability affects the day-to-day operations of emergency responders. Although we must always be ready to respond to major disasters, emergency responders cannot always communicate with one another in a time of crisis. Expanding the Committee strengthens the ability to be successful in responding to emergencies. This bill reflects new perspectives on emergencies and ensures that the right people and the right balance of people are at the table.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Roberts, prime sponsor; and Lowell Porter, Washington Traffic Safety Commission and State Interoperability Executive Committee.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.