

THE THIRD ARM

Washington, D.C. 2006

This week I took the NIUSR message straight to the Information Technology wireless industry. We met the phantom of "Interoperability" head-on. I am spending this week-end putting my words on paper as you all know I never speak from notes but from the heart. It will be up on the VIACK file cabinet on Monday at "NIUSR New Cabinet".

What I told them was that what the front line civilian Public Safety and other "First Responders" needed was a Dick Tracy wireless voice-activated wristwatch that could **transmit the questions from the people who needed the answers to the people who had that information, immediately and receive back the answers, immediately.** The Front Line wants only two things--

Communications that make their hazardous tasks safer and/or easier and let's them do a better job while remaining alive.

.And I said, that the so called emergency "interoperability networks" as configured today provide only reports up the line of projected dollars needed, infrastructure damaged and the degree to which it may have been damaged, and how long will it be before you think you have the operation under control? All this is numbers and dollars. Not lifesaving information, but sound bites for the media so the folks a thousand miles from the action can look as though they know what is happening in the mud and the blood. Oh, yeah. It is RECOVERY information. Not RESPONSE.

I said, if they couldn't give me that two-way wrist watch. then I needed a third arm delivered with each radio sold, to be attached to the first responder to hold and operate any new communications device while he was holding on to the victim with one arm and something solid with the other. During emergency response you cannot be digging a communications device out of a belt or pouch, or pocket; pushing buttons or typing addresses. And where is your third hand for your tactical radio, let alone for one with "interoperability"? Today's phantom "interoperability" permits you to talk to someone or some place that only wants dollar figures to be expended and infrastructure information that is useless to you as you dangle by a thread. They are compiling statistics –NOT providing information DOWN the chain to save lives or private property. And remember that 85% of U.S. industry is private property.

Also let's face it, your First Responder tactical radio is probably with the rest of your gear somewhere above you? But it cannot reach anyone with the answers you need because it is capable of reaching only other tactical radios on your same frequency who are trying to find out the same information that you need. Get it? .

I had taken a risk with that speech. Only one person came up to me and said they liked the passion and congratulated me on the talk. When Larry (the moderator) said I had scared them I went home feeling pretty down. Next day nobody spoke to me in the morning about the message I had tried to get across so I was pretty discouraged.

But never give up. That afternoon one of the audience said that they weren't scared. but that I had made them feel guilty. Well, it's never too late for them to remedy an honest oversight. And by that afternoon, they were over guilt and into doing something about the shortfall for first responders.

That afternoon I had five people come up to me and say that they had prototypes of pieces of what I had asked for, or research in the answers to my need. By today, it turns out that we have turned a corner. We will have two separate radios in prototype in time for the August 26th Demonstration here in San Diego. How about that!!!

After the audience came out of shock here is what my panel moderator, a law enforcement guy and former Marine, now working for ATF had to say. I guess I carried your flag with more success than I at first realized!

Below is this morning's message from him.

----- Original Message -----

From: [William Bell](#)

To: [lois mccoy](#)

Cc: [Buckner Mark](#) ; David.Linn@montgomerycountymd.gov

Sent: Friday, March 03, 2006 5:22 AM

Subject: Re: Wireless/RFID Conference Logistics

Lois, the message you delivered was the correct message. Everyone needs to understand we need to do far more than we are doing. The first responders need tools and they need in many cases special tools, so stick to your message. Taking the lead on something like this is never easy, but you are passionate and clear

and get your message across. You need to keep doing that. I spoke to a couple of folks in the audience that I knew and, believe me, you got your points across. I think the technology is there and it is evolving to the support of first responders. Lois, you did extremely well. Thank you.//Larry

And here is another one from your Executive Board:

.
Lois, Great report!

Your honesty and direct "tell it as it is" approach is an attribute that is an inspiration to all of us at NIUSR.

The "guts" your Dad had is in the genes //Ron P....