

# Project 25 Compliance Assessment Program (P25 CAP)

## Project Description

### SNAPSHOT

After years of effort, industry is incorporating standards into the radio and communications equipment used by public safety, but until now there was no independent method that purchasers can verify that the equipment is compliant with the standards. In fact, past research indicates that some radios currently sold under the Project 25 (P25) label do not in fact meet all of the standards' requirements. To address this issue, OIC built a coalition of public safety users and communications equipment manufacturers to create an independent compliance assessment program that tests the equipment for standards compliance.

*"Today there are more digital radios in the P25 marketplace than ever before, and competitive pressures are reducing prices. Meanwhile, more agencies are acquiring two-way radio equipment that complies with the P25 standard. There are more sellers and buyers."*

*-Urgent Communications*

### BACKGROUND

For several decades, public safety agencies have been purchasing and using equipment developed by disparate manufacturers and operating on disparate spectrum. As a result, this equipment often cannot interoperate, preventing many public safety agencies from communicating when responding to critical incidents that threaten lives and property. Public safety and industry have partnered through P25 on developing standards that allow radios and other components to interoperate regardless of manufacturer – enabling emergency responders to exchange critical communications. The goal of P25 is to specify formal standards for interfaces between the various components of a land mobile radio (LMR) system – commonly used by emergency responders. Until now, there was no compliance process in place where a laboratory could confirm that equipment, advertised by manufacturers as P25-compliant, adhere to critical components of the P25 suite of standards.

### AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

The P25 Compliance Assessment Program:

- Is a cost-effective solution. OIC is working to recognize existing independent laboratories to conduct the testing rather than building a large centralized facility.
- Is a voluntary program that allows P25 equipment suppliers to formally demonstrate their products' compliance with a select group of requirements.
- Is a partnership of OIC, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, industry, and the public safety community.
- Is an example of government undertaking a minimal investment that catalyzes industry and the community it serves to develop a solution that will affect billions of dollars in purchases.

### VALUE TO PUBLIC SAFETY

The P25 CAP will provide the more than 60,000 emergency response agencies nationwide with a consistent and traceable method to gather P25 compliance information on the products they buy. This program, through grant guidance, also provides a means of verifying that Federal grant dollars are being invested in standardized solutions and equipment that promote interoperability for the public safety community. The P25 CAP also generates manufacturer competition, resulting in more affordable technologies.

### RESULTS

This P25 Compliance Assessment Program:

- Impacts billions of dollars in purchases of public safety equipment to ensure that it improves interoperability.
- Supports the migration from proprietary and stove-piped communications systems to open, standards-based infrastructure.
- Ensures that emergency response technologies effectively meet the needs of practitioners in the field.