2012 Annual Report

Founding - June 2012

The National Information Sharing Consortium (NISC) was formed in June 2012 via a Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) signed by partners from the state of Oregon, Commonwealth of Virginia, City of Charlottesville, Virginia, City of Charlotte, North Carolina, and the State of California.

At its heart, the MOU was simply a voluntary, reciprocal agreement to share items of value like governance documents, information sharing plans, SOPs, and, ultimately software code and documentation. The sharing of any item was, and remains, completely voluntary.

From the outset, the NISC has received great support from the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate’s First Responders Group.

Goals and Membership

The initial set of goals established for the NISC were as follows:

- Enhance situational awareness
- Save time and money
- Utilize data already paid for
- Influence national public safety & emergency management policy
- Standardize information sharing efforts
- Improve community resilience

These goals highlight the primary purpose of the Consortium which is to share tools and best practices designed to improve information sharing, situational awareness and interoperability across the nation’s homeland security, emergency management and public safety communities.

From its founding in 2012, the NISC has sought to bring together a broad group of members - focused on achieving diversity from a variety of perspectives - geographic, professional, jurisdictional and economic sector, etc. Eligible members included:

- First responders
- State/local government emergency management information & communications officers
- GIS practitioners
- Federal agencies
- Mission critical NGOs
- Private Industry Partners & Civic leaders
From June - December 2012, the Consortium membership grew from **five (5) founding members** to **seventeen (17) members** representing more than 50+ State and Local government, Civilian and Military, Non-Governmental, and Private Industry Partner organizations.

**NISC Collaboration and Partnerships**

- National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) Geospatial Preparedness Committee
- National Alliance for Public Safety GIS (NAPSG) Foundation
- National Guard’s GeoGuard Initiative
- DHS and other Federal Government partners, and
- Other stakeholders across the country.

**NISC Activities and Resources**

![Diagram showing NISC BOARD & ADMIN, Resource Exchange, Education & Training, Collaboration Space, Member Portal in Development, Monthly Special Topic Discussions, Virtual USA® Transition Working Group, and NSDI Leadership Forum.](image-url)
From its founding in June 2012, the NISC Board and members began to accelerate the sharing of a series of member/practitioner developed resources with one another, like:

- Methods to access the DHS Geospatial Information Infrastructure’s HSIP Gold and American Red Cross REST Services
- Sample MOAs, Intergovernmental Agreements, and Contract terms and conditions
- Technology assessments, case studies, and presentations
- Software code and documentation and lessons learned for a variety of widgets/micro-programs connected to our respective situational awareness viewers

The NISC held “Show and Tell” webinars on a monthly basis:

- September 20, 2012 - NISC Virtual Roll-out & Membership Drive
- October 25, 2012 - “Situational Awareness for Special Events: Lessons Learned from the DNC and the 2012 U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials”: Jeff Dulin, Sean McSpaden, Ken Kato
- November 29, 2012 - “GeoGuard and Shared Situational Awareness (SSA) Initiatives”: Chris Diller, Lt. Mike Domingue
- December 19, 2012 - “National Capital Region (NCR) – Geospatial Data Exchange (GDX) Initiative: Robert Horne

The Consortium also launched a series of initiative focused working groups starting with a Virtual USA Transition Working group, a vUSA ArcGIS Online Pilot Working Group, and agreed to participate in an NSDI Leadership Forum that was ultimately held on March 7, 2013.
In addition, DHS S&T FRG began to formally transition the responsibility for governance and direction of the Virtual USA program to the Consortium. This was the primary focus of the NISC Virtual USA Transition Working Group.

Member to Member Sharing - Software Code/Documentation/Lessons Learned

One of the true value propositions of the Consortium, comes through the development and deployment of specialized tools by one jurisdiction and the sharing of those tools with other jurisdictions across the nation at all levels of government.

On the Top row - from left to right - this graphic depicts the Geoportal Find Data widget (from the Esri Resource Center), the MyOregon Widget and Area of Concern tool (developed through Oregon’s RAPTOR project), and the Key Performance Indicator/Planning & Markup tool (developed as part of a joint project between the City of Charlottesville and the Commonwealth of Virginia).

On the bottom row from left to right the graphic depicts the Virtual USA My Library Widget (developed and enhanced as part of the Virtual USA pilot projects), the Special Events Console (Developed as part of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina’s COBRA project) and the RAPTOR Configurations Tool (in development as part of Oregon’s RAPTOR project).

All of these tools were shared at no cost across consortium member organizations upon request.

NISC Annual Report (2012)
This graphic depicts several specialized tools that were deployed within the City of Charlotte, North Carolina COBRA viewer. From Left to right:

- The Special Events Console – used to Search a Master Schedule of Events list (likely from the Democratic National Convention held in Charlotte in September 2012) by drawing a buffer around a specific point on the map
- The Response Times Report Widget – that identifies and allows a user to visualize heat-maps and clusters of events and actual event locations on the map and enables an export of that information in Chart and Table reports.

The bottom left of the graphic depicts the Critical Facility Search Tool – that allows a user to identify and visualize the point locations and threats associated with critical infrastructure located through the City of Charlotte.

And finally at the bottom right, the graphic shows an incident and automated vehicle tracking and visualization tool that displays the location of fire trucks and EMS vehicles and information about medical and non-medical incidents that are occurring or have occurred throughout the Charlotte Fire District.
This screenshot depicts a powerful tool developed as part of the CAVS project called the *Virginia Interoperability & Information Sharing Environment – VIISE*.

The VIISE allows an authorized user to dynamically access and create “Awareness Packages” comprised of data and data services from multiple sources. These “Awareness Packages” can be saved and accessed within CAVS and shared at any time with external partners.
Finally, Kentucky Emergency Management deployed an automation of mutual aid and EMAC via the Kentucky Awareness Analytical Tracking System (KAATS).

The Mutual Aid Support System (MASS) is a software code that focuses on Mission Ready Packages. MASS enables an organization to create and share information about Mission Ready Packages that ultimately can be identified and visualized on a situational awareness viewer like KAATS.

MASS was further enhanced and utilized by the Central US Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC) states during the CAPSTONE 2014 exercise.