

# (((SOUNDING BOARD)))

## ♦ Raves, Rants & Responses

### Change: Critical, Inevitable, So Embrace It

We have recently participated in an association-wide discussion about governance. Our Board of Officers appointed a group to review and make recommendations with respect to how to more effectively govern the association's business activities. While efforts to improve governance were in the works as early as 1994 and again in 2003, this effort gained sufficient momentum to place the proposal before the Executive Council (approved 42–8) and the Membership Quorum (with a 64% approval). Sadly, the vote in the quorum was not the required two-thirds majority necessary to go forward, missing by fewer than 10 votes. On a positive note, the quorum vote indicated that the majority of those in the room (which I believe were record numbers) are in favor of improving the means by which we govern APCO.

There have been several postmortems of what happened. Such words as “divisive, bitter and disconcerting” have entered the conversation. Although each member may have a differing opinion, I choose to believe that this process has made us all critically aware of how important and necessary a change in our governance really is.

The competitive forces of the association business are driving us to this conclusion. What are those competitive forces? They are associations who we compete with for members, organizations that provide competitive training to ours. The competition is tighter organizational budgets, high fuel costs, limited travel and commercial vendors focusing on the shows that give them greatest exposure. The competition is: The economics of doing business is rapidly changing the way business is done.

We want to have the largest voice in Washington D.C., the adaptability to move toward new opportunities as the industry changes. We must meet those changes with new programs, responses and efforts. That fact should be motivating us to review all the issues that place us

in the position of having to compete in this marketplace. That means a more informed leadership, tighter control, more adaptability and the willingness to be flexible as the forces of competition change the way we do business. Many of us work for governmental agencies, but APCO is a business. Its revenue depends on the services it creates and provides to that ever-changing marketplace. Our governance must adapt to those changes, sometimes in a moment's notice. That adaptability comes in a different form than what many of us are used to in a traditional governmental setting.

Our new board of Officers has committed themselves to move forward with this effort. I applaud that move. If asked to serve, I will gladly commit whatever time necessary to assist. Every member of this association should be asking themselves how we can make this a success. With that success we can meet the challenges—many unknown at this time—that this association faces in an ever-changing competitive world.

I leave you with this thought expressed by Tim Russert: “Be strong in adversity, and adapt ... to the inevitability of change.”

~STEVE PROCTOR, Member, Past President

~PS. Thank you to the 2007–08 SGI group:

Steve Souder, Michael Mangini, Woody Glover, Lynn Feller, Richard Granado & Peter Thomas.

### Patrol Alert

In his guest commentary, “Patrol Alert: The Urgent Need for a New Procedure” (May *PSC*), author W. Gordon Fink states the case for a formalized Patrol Alert. Any officer in the field who has responded to an incident in which a suspect has crossed jurisdictional lines or to one in which multiple agencies from multiple jurisdictions are all on scene together will agree with Fink's premise with a resounding “Yes!”

Fink says, “The communication means is not as important as the urgent need to communicate the critical information to other law enforcement jurisdictions.” Frankly, I think the means is just as important as the information. If there's not an easy way to communicate the mes-

sage, the message dies.

*A solution to consider:* A consortium of agencies in Colorado is using a message system called UNITY by VisionTEK to quickly deliver secure Amber Alert and National Weather Service subscription feeds, BOLOs and other public safety alerts to officers within the consortium—regardless of jurisdiction, CAD system or mobile data software. When a BOLO is issued, all consortium agencies are immediately notified, thus providing a Patrol Alert to the officers on the street. It also integrates with other messaging systems to allow instant messaging and alert forwarding to handheld devices. Alert authorization is not an issue because the system allows multi-level authorization for BOLO issuance.

UNITY is also being used by agencies in Ohio and Kentucky.

I invite readers to contact me directly for more information about the VisionTEK UNITY solution for your Patrol Alert system. I'll put you in contact with users so you can hear firsthand how agencies are addressing cross-jurisdictional communications.

~KEVIN BRYAN, VisionTEK

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**Editor Keri Losavio responds:** VisionTEK offers one solution for Patrol Alerts. As always, we encourage readers to explore their options and choose the one that best fits their needs.

### Correction

Due to an error introduced during editing, the Silent Key listing on p. 36 of the July issue indicated that the members listed had passed away this year. The listing actually spanned several years and omitted some members who had more recently passed away and have since been honored at the Silent Key ceremony at the 2008 Annual Conference. We regret the error.

[PSC]

### TELL US ABOUT IT



Contact the editor via e-mail at [PSCeditor@apcointl.org](mailto:PSCeditor@apcointl.org). Letters may be edited for length and clarity.