**IHS Information Systems Advisory Committee Web Conference**

**Chief Information Officer Updates**

**December 8, 2017**

# Participants

## ISAC Members Present

Mark Rives, IHS Chief Information Officer (CIO) Representative

Bryce Redgrave, National Council of Executive Officers

*Donnie Parish, Tribal Term Appointee/Tribal Co-Chair*

Jesse Anderson (Desiree Traylor Alternate), Tribal Term Appointee

Keith Longie, IHS Term Appointee

Nicolas Barton, Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee Representative

## ISAC Members Not Present

*Amy Rubin (Lindsay King Alternate), IHS Term Appointee/IHS Co-Chair*

Stacy Bohlen, National Indian Health Board Representative

Brian Kaplan, Office of Environmental Health and Engineering/IHS Representative

Stewart Ferguson, Tribal Self Governance Advisory Committee Representative

Charles Merrill, IHS Information Systems Coordinator Committee Representative

Michelle Miller, IHS Term Appointee

Ty Reidhead, National Council of Clinical Consultants Representative

Michael Toedt, National Council of Chief Medical Officers Representative

Ashley Tuomi, National Council of Urban Indian Health Representative

## Other Participants

Jon Brandt, Office of Direct Service and Contracting Tribes, IHS

Tamara Clay, Office of Tribal Self Governance, IHS

Ben Smith, Office of Tribal Self Governance, IHS

Steve Carnes, Office of Information Technology, IHS

Mike Davis, Office of Information Technology, IHS

Susy Postal, Office of Information Technology, IHS

Andrea Scott. Office of Information Technology, IHS

Christy Tayrien, Office of Information Technology, IHS

Phil Wise, Office of Information Technology, IHS

# Welcome and Opening Remarks

CAPT Mark Rives, Chief Information Officer, Indian Health Service (IHS), welcomed participants to the Information Systems Advisory Committee (ISAC) conference call. He noted that Amy Rubin is currently serving as the Acting IHS Co-Chair while Lindsay King is on leave. RADM Michael Toedt, IHS Chief Medical Officer (CMO), will not be able to join today’s call due to a request by the Acting IHS Director for the CMO attend a meeting in downtown D.C.

# Current Status of IHS HITSS Modernization Efforts

The purpose of today’s call is to brief the members on the status of the IHS Health Information Technology Systems and Support (HITSS) modernization efforts. We all left the ISAC bi-annual meeting in September with a good handle on what the ISAC and IHS is charged with accomplishing. CAPT Rives and staff have been presenting updates on current Office of Information Technology (OIT) initiatives at various meetings including TribalNet, Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee (DSTAC), Tribal Self Governance Advisory Committee (TSGAC), “All Tribal and Urban Indian Organization Leaders” conference calls, and on multiple Area budget formulation calls. CAPT Rives has not really had an opportunity to circle back with the ISAC to share information on what the OIT has been working on; that is the intent of today’s call.

The IHS is taking steps to complete and issue the HITSS Request for Information (RFI). It has not gone out sooner due to several reasons, including the following:

* The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC-HIT) has reviewed the IHS’s RFI. The ONC-HIT have staff on board that assisted the Department of Defense (DoD) with their commercial buy and have been able to contribute to our RFI from that experience.
* The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Chief Technology Office’s (OCTO) staff member, Ms. Maia Lang, who attended the September 2017 ISAC meeting, was able to take the RFI back to the OCTO and they have added to it.
* We have had delays due to our conversations with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
* The IHS needed to make the HHS Secretary aware of our efforts. As a result, our work has been elevated to reporting to HHS and we have support from the Administration.
* The RFI has gone out to the chairs of various IHS combined councils, IHS Office directors, and other IHS stakeholders. Revisions are due today.
* The latest input has been very helpful. Refinements include approaching situations where a Tribe may exercise their rights.
* After engaging with commercial vendors, the IHS has been able to craft our RFI. The IHS CIO traveled to the NextGen conference, and had intended to attend the Cerner conference but was unable to make it due to family illness. We will circle back and talk to them and others.
* Our intent is to publish our RFI for HIT modernization as early as next week; this will give vendors a month to comment. After the deadline for submitting information closes, we will convene a group to review the comments received.
* Some of the comments we have received include why we aren’t moving faster. Our projected timeline follows:
* The IHS is using Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 as a year to explore options. He sees this as preparation for what will be required in coming years.
* FY 2019 is seen as a year to refine our acquisition plans.
* By FY 2020, we may be ready to make an acquisition and whatever changes that might result.
* If you are comparing our work with what others are doing, we are working with military operations to hear what they are doing, and identifying how we can collaborate with them. They have testified to Congress that they have an aggressive timeline.
* We continue to watch the VA so we can see what they are doing on long-term availability. We are watching some of the things they are consulting with Dell on.
* We have received recommendations from some organizations to standardize on a single platform. Things we need to consider include:
* Data flow and patient flow for referrals are reasons for IHS to consider multiple systems.
* Rapid City Hospital has offered to extend their EHR platform to us.
* California Area has Tribes that are strong NextGen advocates.
* Strong indication in CIO’s opinion that we may want to use multiple systems.
* We can still participate on the VA’s contract, but it may not be as straightforward since their acquisitions documents were not initially written to include multiple platforms.
* Other questions are on whether this issue been raised to the appropriate level. Yes, the IHS CIO reports every week to IHS Director, who in turn reports to HHS.

## Discussion

**Donnie Parish:** This is a great synopsis, and it is good to hear work is moving forward. He looks forward to continued communication. A Tribal Leader Letter would be great. You are already reaching out to a lot of groups, continue forward.

**Mark Rives:** Thanked Donnie Parish for his support.

**Bryce Redgrave:** Thanked CAPT Rives for having CDR Andrea Scott, Deputy CIO, participate in the Billings Area budget formulation meetings. One request the Billings Area has received from Tribes is since Billings Area does not have an ISAC Tribal representative, that one be added. He thinks the All Tribes Conference Call is important. He has informed the Tribes in his Area that the IHS CIO is reporting on this call. If he gets anything, he will share it. You can’t under-communicate on this.

**Donnie Parish:** Back in 2012, trade magazines were posting that the DoD was reviewing alternative HITSS. Why isn’t information on the IHS effort more publicly available?

**Mark Rives:** These are great questions. He doesn’t know for sure why trade magazines are not all over this. We haven’t gotten together with Public Affairs yet.

On Bryce Redgrave’s Tribal member question, as you recall back in September, we were working on charter revisions. The new charter is about ready to go through the IHS approval/publishing process. The revisions include one Tribal member per Area.

**Bryce Redgrave:** Assumes a person will get Tribal support then the Area Director will make the nomination.

**Donnie Parish:** The Tribal chair position has changed to the DTSAC representative in the charter revision. He does not think ISAC voted on that issue.

**Mark Rives:** We are trying to move forward with the charter, we are getting comments about comments. At some point we will just need to go forward and get it out.

**Nick Barton:** He has run into the same issue with the DSTAC. They have their Billings Area position currently vacant. He understands the frustration and has sent information back through Rosalyn Tso to the Area. He needs this support as well. He thanked Mark for the update and asked how DSTAC can support him. They are taking the CIO’s lead and sharing information that he is willing to share.

**Mark Rives:** Asked if there were any more comments. Hearing none, he thanked everyone for the comments received today. The CIO will be providing another update on the December 18th All Tribes Call.

Follow up actions from today’s call will include issuing a Tribal Leader Letter on the HITSS initiative/progress to date, and meeting with the IHS Public Affairs staff to see what can be issued publicly so trade magazines to help us carry our message.

# Next ISAC Meeting

The IHS has issued a “Save the Date” on the ISAC calendar for the next ISAC bi-annual meeting on March 14-15, 2018, to be held at the Phoenix Area IHS Office. He asked the ISAC to make sure and find their hotel rooms early. Due to other events in Phoenix that month hotels are going quickly.

# Meeting Adjourned.