

APCO State of the Association Address
August 2010
Executive Director, George S. Rice, Jr.

Good afternoon! It is indeed my pleasure to address you today, and to inform you of the State of the Association. And it is clear from President Mirgon's remarks today and throughout the conference that the State of the Association is again quite strong, even in these turbulent economic times.

Each year, this organization works to improve the quality and state of public safety communications through its many programs and initiatives. The activities outlined in the association's 2010 annual report illustrate how APCO International continued in this fashion over the past year.

We maintained our program themes of *Learn, Act, Connect* - established in 2007 - as a means to position the primary components of the association's programs and services.

Our training and professional development offerings – *Learn* – continue to be at the forefront of the field; our leadership in advocacy – *Act* – has become even more influential in Washington, DC; and our conferences, symposiums, and events – *Connect* – are consistently at the top of the field in attendance and value added content.

APCO International members and staff have launched efforts to fully prepare public safety communications professionals for the future. Whether it's new course offerings or standards, APCO International is at the leading edge of progress in public safety, and it provides a valuable setting for development, discussion and debate in front of a nationwide and international audience. It is a vital and vibrant component of the public safety communications industry. By working with the Board of Directors and various committees, APCO International's members in 2010 took great strides toward realizing the association's mission.

APCO AFC offered much needed radio frequency related services for public safety communications organizations, while APCO's Government Affairs team helped to represent the public safety communications field in a year that included debates on many changes in policy that will affect public safety as a whole. And, in order to better understand the needs of its members, APCO International conducted a Member Indispensability Survey this year and will use the data to help implement new strategies in 2011.

AFC experienced an exceptional year in 2010 in terms of frequency coordination, and licensing and engineering services. AFC's core business function - frequency coordination - steadily increased in 2010 due to activity in narrowbanding, deployment of 700-MHz systems across the country, the

availability of additional 800-MHz channels, and the completion of rebanding in several regions across the country.

Since the introduction of its license management service, AFC has been able to assist many more licensees in monitoring and ensuring regulatory compliance. AFC has also fully developed its license management software and has expanded to provide licensed-based searches for clients in order to identify the number and scope of licenses under their control.

On the professional development front, every day, the APCO Institute helps members of the public safety community get better at their jobs. As the official educational arm of APCO International, the Institute is the only nonprofit educational entity that serves the unique needs of the public safety communications industry. In 2010, the APCO Institute conducted over 1,700 courses both online and in person, teaching over 15,000 public safety communications students from around the world.

This year, *Crisis Negotiations for Telecommunicators* was added to the APCO Institute's catalog of one-day courses. This course is built on the knowledge, skills and abilities inherent in basic telecommunicator training programs and is designed to educate the public safety communications professional on the most effective way to receive and process calls involving crisis situations and to ensure they fulfill their role as a vital component of the overall public safety response.

In addition to its many domestically oriented products and services, the APCO Institute has been quite active on the international front as well. After the conclusion of a successful six-month training program in Saudi Arabia at the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, the team continued to pursue additional international training opportunities.

The APCO Institute conducted a two-week training program in Amman, Jordan. This project was sponsored by the US Department of State, for the country's Public Security Directorate, the nation's law enforcement arm, and the Civil Defense Directorate, its fire and EMS division.

Another opportunity surfaced when Saudi ARAMCO - a government-owned national oil company - requested a three-day onsite training evaluation, to conclude with a presentation on how APCO Institute training prepares calltakers and dispatchers to deal with all aspects of public safety communications. Saudi ARAMCO operates its own EMS, security and fire departments, including thirty-eight communications centers throughout the Kingdom.

APCO International also offers publications that provide educational opportunities to all members and interested parties in the public safety field. *Public Safety Communications*, the monthly magazine published by APCO International,

offered up-to-date information and continuing education articles in 2010 to help readers stay current on the latest in public safety communications operating procedures and technology by offering real-world examples of communications work in action.

APCO International has increased the level of standards activities occurring concurrently. This year we began our first APCO American National Standards revisions process. The proposed second versions of the *Standard for Public Safety Telecommunicators when Responding to Calls of Missing, Abducted and Sexually Exploited Children*, which is a joint project with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and the *Service Capability Criteria Rating Scale*, a joint APCO/NENA project, both concluded the public review and comment periods in July.

The *APCO Project RETAINS Toolkit 2.0* launched at this conference, where the capabilities and functions of the updated toolkit were demonstrated. The features of the upgraded toolkit will help users estimate appropriate staffing needs, evaluate retention, administer an employee satisfaction survey and produce high quality reports of this information.

APCO International members also took action advocating for intelligent policy and crucial advancements in the equipment and technology used to ensure the safety of the public, and they don't do it alone. APCO International members amplify their voices through working with partners in public safety. Further, APCO International continues as a strong and leading partner in the APCO Global Alliance, working with APCO Canada, BAPCO, and APCO Australasia to share valuable insights on public safety communications issues around the globe.

As you've heard, in 2010 APCO International established the Public Safety Alliance (PSA), a partnership among the nation's leading public safety associations and supported by national and international organizations representing state and local government and other situational responders, and launched a national campaign to secure the spectrum necessary for the creation of a nationwide interoperable public safety broadband network. Specifically, this campaign calls on Congress to allocate spectrum directly to public safety. At the close of FY 2010, the PSA was successful in securing the introduction of H.R. 5081, the Broadband for First Responders Act of 2010, and S. 3625, the First Responders Protection Act of 2010, both of which would allocate spectrum directly to public safety, and the latter of which also provides initial funding.

In 2009, APCO International celebrated its bright future and past of distinguished service at its 75th Annual Conference and Exposition. Over 5,000 members of the public safety communications community met and talked with their colleagues from around the globe, learned from some of the industry's most knowledgeable speakers, and connected with over 350 industry organizations.

APCO also celebrated its 6th Annual Public Safety Communications Leadership in Policy Awards Dinner in May, attended by 270 friends and colleagues. Enthusiasm grows each year for this event, evidenced in part by record support this year from our corporate patrons. A portion of the net proceeds, plus cash contributions collected during the event, went to support the Public Safety Foundation of America.

These events and other APCO International activities offer opportunities for members to connect in person. Added to this, APCO International also offers a wide array of online tools for members who may not be able to attend events, including a member discussion forum, a presence on social networking platforms - including Facebook and Twitter - a National Public Safety Telecommunications Week blog, and an online member directory, job board and buyer's guide.

In 2010, APCO International launched PSConnect, the first and only professional networking platform dedicated specifically to public safety communications professionals and their needs. PSConnect serves as the central hub for APCO International's overall social and professional networking initiatives and is intended to enhance engagement among members. Through PSConnect, APCO International can listen to its members to better understand industry trends and develop new products and services to meet their needs and wants. In a more traditional communication sense, PSConnect assists APCO International in providing industry information to its members and is a virtual gathering place where APCO International can energize and organize its members around issues of concern to public safety communications professionals. PSConnect also serves as a forum for members to support each other through discussion, document sharing and more.

In response to the financial needs and technology desires of the industry, APCO International will be offering new ways for public safety communications professionals to become involved in the association. APCO International is planning to offer group memberships so entire public safety agencies can experience the benefits of APCO International membership. In addition, APCO International is considering options for online-only membership for interested professionals with limited resources.

APCO International will also expand on its reach into the Middle East next year, in conjunction with member organizations of the APCO Global Alliance. The APCO World Congress will be an international showcase of public safety communications offerings hosted by the APCO Global Alliance and will be held in Dubai in June of 2011. Exhibitors from around the globe will showcase groundbreaking technologies and trends to a rapidly expanding Gulf-region audience. Attendees will explore new resources and participate in dynamic educational sessions, hand-selected by a qualified team of top-ranking public safety professionals.

This year, the Public Safety Foundation of America established the Public Safety Fellows Program to recognize individuals for their leadership in research activities and service to local government, while acting as a resource to planners and managers on emerging technology issues. A PSFA Fellow is an individual who has advanced the use of technology for public safety and the public good. The Foundation's first fellowship was bestowed at the Policy Awards dinner in Washington in May.

As for your APCO Board and Executive Committee, they eagerly and steadfastly dedicate themselves to the mission of your organization. This year's successes are largely the result of their diligent leadership and insightful approaches to advancing the Association's mission. Coupled with expert organizational support and program management delivered by the APCO staff, the team is strong and complete.

My sincerest thanks to the APCO staff for their commitment to excellence and their skilled implementation of the many activities undertaken this year.

Thank you for your participation during 2010. I look forward to our continued partnership as we serve the nation and the international community. Working together, we can continue to make APCO International the best conduit for public safety communications professionals to learn, act and connect.

Good day.