

RF Workforce Crisis, T-Band Discussed at GWTCA Annual Meeting

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All directors and officers were re-elected for another annual term at the first annual member meeting of the Government Wireless Technology and Communications Association (GWTCA) March 31.

Board members Andy Maxymillian, Blue Wing Services, and Mike Newburn, Fairfax County, Virginia, conducted a spirited discussion about the emerging wireless workforce crisis. Agencies can't find qualified RF personnel, because many employees are going into IT. "This dearth of talent has reached a critical stage," said Maxymillian.

The GWTCA board of directors, under the leadership of board member Vic Maconachy of Capitol Technology University, decided to explore education and certification programs for entry into the wireless workforce or advancing the careers of those already there.

Members also addressed the loss of RF expertise and new skills required with the introduction of internet of things (IoT). "The shortage of qualified and experienced RF personnel may require a revision of compensation packages to attract talent to this field," said GWTCA member Rodney Grim from Icom America.

The industry may need to address salary disparity between RF technical/engineering and IT/Long Term Evolution (LTE) positions.

Advocacy is the primary GWTCA mission. Members were asked to prioritize GWTCA advocacy issues for 2017. See the watch list [here](#).

"Over the past year, we've weighed in on multiple FCC proceedings," said GWTCA Counsel Alan Tilles.

GWTCA Member Chuck Powers from Motorola Solutions requested to add the UHF T-band spectrum take-back included in the 2012 Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act to the list. He said 40 percent of T-band incumbents are in the business and industrial land transportation (B/ILT) pool, industry segments GWTCA is supporting. B/ILT licensees are not noted in the legislation, and the FCC has not addressed this issue.

"GWTCA could approach the FCC to discuss possible plans for enforcing the act and minimizing the impact on B/ILT users remaining in T-band," Powers said.

“Following about a year of work, we've grown the trade association to include departments of transportation, public-safety users, major radio manufacturers, and have a board that represents a broad, diverse group of interests,” said Chris Lougee, president. “We decided to open our first annual meeting to non-members and were very pleased with the turnout.

“Our team of founding leaders is enthused about continuing to grow our trade association. We would like to fill remaining open board positions with agency end users.”

Information about board participation is [here](#).