



COMMITTEE REPORT

NO: *P011*

DATE: **September 14, 2015**

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **September 9, 2015**

FROM: **Officer in Charge, Surrey RCMP
General Manager, Human Resources**

FILE: **7400-01**

SUBJECT: **Emergency Communication Services – Police Communication Centre**

RECOMMENDATION

City staff recommends:

1. that this report be received as information;
2. that the Mayor be authorized to issue the proposed letter to Minister Anton stating the City of Surrey's position with respect to emergency communications service delivery in British Columbia; and
3. that staff be directed to send a copy of this report to E-COMM, White Rock, and the Ministry of Justice.

INTENT

It is the City's understanding that the provincial government is exploring a variety of options with respect to the future provision of emergency communications services. These options may impact the City's current service model. Staff is seeking to ensure that the best interests of the City, its RCMP members, and its residents are represented in any such decisions. With this report, staff will update Mayor and Council on this evolving issue and seek agreement to convey the City's position to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General on this matter.

BACKGROUND

The province's review and this report only apply to the call taking and dispatching services provided by City staff to its RCMP detachment. Fire Service dispatching is not included to the City's knowledge by the provincial government in its report. Also not directly included in the report is the PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point) call taking service provided through an agreement with Metro Vancouver municipalities as a levy to the City by E-COMM (PSAP is typically the first telephone contact a 911 caller has – the caller is asked to identify their location and if it is a fire, police or ambulance emergency, the call is then transferred to the municipal call centre).

City of Surrey Emergency Communications Service Delivery Model

The City currently provides call taking and dispatching services (police communication services) through its Operations Communication Centre (OCC) to the residents of Surrey and the RCMP

detachment. A Surrey resident calling 911 with a police emergency is telephonically redirected to City staff by E-COMM. City staff detail the police emergency and, under the direction of the RCMP, dispatch the appropriate RCMP resources.

Approximately 87 City staff (predominately CUPE), supported by RCMP members, work 24/7 to deliver this service. Annually, the City's OCC handles approximately 393,000 incoming calls and dispatches 155,000 files to RCMP members. Against reviewed comparators, the City achieves world class answer/response standards and is cost effective.

The City also provides contracted police call taking and dispatching services to White Rock and has submitted a proposal to Delta to provide similar services.

Province of British Columbia Proposal

In March 2015, the Ministry of Justice distributed a discussion paper (Appendix I) to interested parties seeking input from key stakeholders to inform the future of emergency communications across the province.

The discussion paper outlined the background, challenges and strategic vision for emergency communications service delivery involving 911 PSAP. The government identified its interest in a consolidation of the 911 PSAP (currently provided by E-Comm to the City of Surrey) and the police communications service delivery model (currently provided by City of Surrey staff to the Surrey RCMP).

The discussion paper read in part:

"911 PSAP is a local government responsibility in British Columbia and is optional. Local governments have worked to manage and improve service since the 911 system was implemented in the late 1980s, when technology was predominately wireline telephone services (landlines). Three decades later, the system faces new and distinct challenges related to:

- *Migration of households from wireline services to mobile wireless services;*
- *Implementation of Next Generation 911 (NG911) technologies;*
- *Gaps in the provision of 911 service;*
- *Ensuring resiliency of the 911 system amid major catastrophic events.*

Given these challenges, there is a need-indeed, an opportunity-to revisit and renew the overall approach to 911 service deliver in British Columbia. By modernizing the current approach to a more streamlined, equitable and resilient system, the emergency communication system will be better positioned to enhance service province-wide".

Specifically, the Province identified the potential to introduce a consolidated 911 PSAP (E-COMM) and police dispatch service model. There are 10 PSAPs under local government authority and 17 police communication centres across the province (including the OCC in Surrey). Key stakeholders were invited to participate in a consultation on this discussion paper on June 1, 2015. The City of Surrey attended. A report on that consultation is included in Appendix II.

With respect to the provincial government's ability to mandate local government actions in the area of PSAP and City police communication service, it has stated:

“The Ministry provides overall direction respecting police services in the province and ensures there are adequate and effective levels of policing. Although 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is a local government responsibility and not a policing function, dispatching of police related calls is and the two functions are inextricably linked. Local governments have worked to manage and improve service over the years, and the Ministry values the role of local government as a key stakeholder in the provision of 911 PSAP.”

While the provincial government’s next step with respect to its review of emergency communications service delivery in British Columbia is not known, there is some risk that a decision may be taken by the province that negatively impact the City of Surrey, its residents and its RCMP detachment.

E-COMM Proposal

In 2014, E-COMM approached City staff to explore alternate emergency communications service provisions models. Surrey initially indicated an interest in discussing the feasibility of it providing call taking and dispatching services in partnership with E-COMM to a broader number of municipalities in the lower mainland. Surrey believes that having a second provider in the lower mainland of police emergency communication services made good sense from both an emergency preparedness and economic perspective. In the most recent discussions, E-COMM has indicated it is only interested in incorporating Surrey as another client within its existing service model. This proposal is not acceptable to the City of Surrey.

DISCUSSION

The City of Surrey’s foundational objectives for the police communication services (call taking and dispatching) it provides to the RCMP Surrey Detachment and its partners, are ensuring optimal RCMP member and public (resident) safety. It also strives to ensure efficient utilization of its resources, cost effectiveness, and employee well-being.

The City’s current police communication services model is supported by the Surrey RCMP Detachment Commander. By having the OCC in the Surrey Detachment, senior RCMP members are able to direct field operations. This ensures member safety, enhanced resident safety and service, and optimizes the available RCMP resources. The speed and quality of emergency response is enhanced by having the OCC in Surrey.

City staff is concerned that if Surrey’s emergency communications services are consolidated into a single/larger provincial model outside the boundaries of the City of Surrey its current effectiveness and efficiency will be reduced.

Specifically, there are concerns with:

- The undefined costing model;
- Declining resident service;
- Resident safety;
- Member safety;
- The lack of a balanced governance model;
- The negative impact on City staff if jobs are lost or transferred to another employer;
- The impact on the economic wellbeing of the City;

- The loss of competition/financial balance in the provision of emergency communications services; and
- Emergency communication services system balance if a catastrophic event occurred.

The City understands the impact of looming technology changes (NG911), economics of scales, and operational and financial efficiencies on emergency communications service. We question some of the value of uniformed policies and procedures given the differences in policing requirements/models across the province.

The province appears to be advanced enough in its thinking on this issue that more serious focus needs to be paid to the unique policing needs of the City of Surrey. The purpose of issuing the attached letter (Appendix III) to Minister Anton is to gain a greater recognition by the province of the policing needs in the City of Surrey and to ensure no unilateral action is taken by the province without more extensive consultation and exploration of options. For example, Surrey sees value in its OCC becoming another regional provider for the province.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

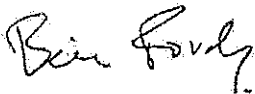
This initiative assists in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly the following action items:

- SC5: Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents;
- SC11: Public Safety and Security; and
- SC17: Crime Reduction Strategy

CONCLUSION

City staff recommends:

1. That this report be received as information;
2. that the Mayor be authorized to issue a letter to Minister Anton stating the City of Surrey's position with respect to emergency communications service delivery in British Columbia; and
3. that staff be directed to send a copy of this report to E-COMM, White Rock, and the Ministry of Justice.



Chief Superintendent Bill Fordy
Officer in Charge (OIC)
Surrey RCMP



Nicola Webb
General Manager, Human Resources

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- Appendix I Ministry of Justice Strategic Vision Discussion Paper on Emergency Communication Service Delivery in British Columbia March 2015
- Appendix II Ministry of Justice Report on Emergency Communications Service Delivery in British Columbia July 2015
- Appendix III Draft letter to Minister Anton

**EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
SERVICE DELIVERY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Police Communication Centres and 911 PSAP

**STRATEGIC VISION
DISCUSSION PAPER**

MARCH 2015



Ministry of
Justice

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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) is seeking input from key stakeholders in order to inform the future of emergency communications across the province. This Discussion Paper outlines the background, challenges, and strategic vision for emergency communications service delivery involving 911 PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point). Specifically, the vision includes a consolidated 911 PSAP and police communications service delivery model, with enhanced support from a provincial call answer levy on wireless devices.

911 PSAP is the initial service a caller, requiring immediate emergency services, reaches when dialling 911. The PSAP creates an immediate link between individuals in crisis and their local emergency response agencies (police, fire, ambulance). 911 operators function in a crisis environment where incoming calls must be handled promptly and information conveyed in an accurate and timely manner. In this context, 911 PSAP is an integral component of the overall emergency communications system, and plays a significant role in public safety.

911 PSAP is a local government responsibility in British Columbia and is optional. Local governments have worked to manage and improve service since the 911 system was implemented in the late 1980s, when the technology was predominantly wireline telephone services (landlines). Three decades later, the system faces new and distinct challenges related to:

- Migration of households from wireline services to mobile wireless service;
- Implementation of Next Generation 911 (NG911) technologies;
- Gaps in the provision of 911 service;
- Ensuring resiliency of the 911 system amid major catastrophic events.

Given these challenges, there is a need – indeed, an opportunity – to revisit and renew the overall approach to 911 service delivery in British Columbia. By modernizing the current approach to a more streamlined, equitable and resilient system, the emergency communications system will be better positioned to enhance service province-wide.

BACKGROUND

There are currently ten 911 PSAPs in British Columbia under local government authority, with a patchwork of different service providers. Local governments voluntarily contract with the RCMP Provincial Police Service, deliver the service through E-Comm (Emergency Communications for BC, Inc), or provide the 911 service themselves.

1. E-Comm
2. Nanaimo (RCMP)
3. West Shore (RCMP)
4. Chilliwack (RCMP)
5. Prince George (RCMP)
6. Victoria Police
7. Saanich Police
8. Nelson Police
9. Abbotsford Police
10. Prince Rupert Fire Rescue

E-Comm is governed by the *Emergency Communications Corporation Act*, and has integrated emergency communications in much of the Lower Mainland. E-Comm handles 80% of the 1.5 million 911 calls in the province each year.

Many PSAPs are co-located with police dispatch services. There are currently seventeen police communication centres across the province, and similar to 911 PSAPs, is a patchwork of RCMP, E-Comm and independent municipal police departments. Funding of the two functions (911 PSAP and police dispatch) is separate. There are two general funding sources available to local governments for 911 PSAP: a call answer levy (CAL) on wireline telephone services and a levy charged on residential property taxes.

In the past the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) endorsed a number of resolutions calling for the Province to introduce legislation that would allow the implementation of a province-wide 911 CAL on wireless devices. In July 2013, UBCM released a report on the issue and requested that local governments provide further input on the provincial call answer levy issue. In May 2014, UBCM advised there was not sufficient support for the CAL among local governments.

The Ministry would like to acknowledge the work of UBCM on this issue and the July 12, 2013 report by Dave Mitchell and Associates Ltd. "911 Services in British Columbia: Background Review in Relation to a Province-Wide Call Answer Levy". The report is an invaluable resource on issues related to 911 PSAPs and can be found at:

<http://www.ubcm.ca/assets/Resolutions~and~Policy/Policy/Community~Safety/911%20Services%20in%20BC.pdf>

CHALLENGES

When the 911 system was implemented several decades ago it reflected the organizational and technical realities of the day. For example, in the 1980s physical landlines served as the primary means of telephone communication, and mobile/cellular devices with embedded functionality (e.g., global positioning systems) were merely nascent technologies. Moreover, our awareness and readiness for natural and human-based threats to public safety – earthquakes, tsunamis, and terrorism, for example – was comparatively unrefined.

Now, some 30 years later, the pace of technological change has placed increasing and inevitable pressure on 911 PSAPs – not only in terms of how services are delivered, but also how the system and its constituent parts interact and function. In this context, several distinct challenges to the 911 PSAP status quo have emerged.

Changing landscape – wirelines to wireless

The number of wireline (landline) telephones is declining as more people migrate from wireline to wireless services. This declining number means reduced revenue collected by local governments to support PSAPs in British Columbia. It also means that more and more calls to 911 are generated from cell phones – in fact 67% of 911 calls are from cell phones.

The wave of Next Generation 911 (NG911) technology

“NG911” broadly refers to ongoing efforts to improve the capacity of PSAPs to leverage increasingly powerful internet protocol (IP) based systems, sensors and devices in a manner that enhances 911 services and emergency response. Examples of NG911 functionality include text messaging, integrated photo/video, and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) to assist in conveying critical situational details from the location of an emergency directly to a 911 PSAP and first responders.

Despite the potential they offer, harnessing NG911 capacities remains a challenge as it involves considerable investments to upgrade and/or replace legacy infrastructure and associated business processes (e.g., staffing, training). Nonetheless, citizens are increasingly information-oriented and dependent on personal mobile devices, and with that transformation come reasonable expectations that public safety mechanisms such as 911 will be appropriately aligned to emergent technologies. As such, there is value in emphasizing the imperative to embrace and enable NG911.

Gaps in the provision of 911 service

In some areas of the province there are gaps in 911 services. These gaps include areas where no landline or wireless connectivity is available, however the focus of this discussion is on areas where 911 services are not provided (regardless of whether connectivity exists). These areas include the Stikine Region, Central Coast Regional District, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, and the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District (outside the City of Prince Rupert).

Although much of the territory within these jurisdictions is vast, isolated and inaccessible, it nonetheless encompasses numerous, long-standing communities with typical emergency service needs. Moreover, their local economies are increasingly premised on burgeoning industries such as energy and tourism, which not only elevate demands on existing services but also create unique service pressures.

Ensuring resiliency of the 911 system amid major catastrophic events

The inherent critical nature of emergency situations necessitate that the supporting 911 system must be robust and resilient across the entire service continuum, fully capable of functioning amid wide-scale and severe emergency events. A system that falls short of these fundamental business continuity requirements threatens public safety, jeopardizes the lives and safety of citizens and emergency responders, and endangers private property and strategic assets.

Achieving the required measure of resiliency for 911 services, however, is an ongoing and costly pressure, and involves a number of aspects including human resources (e.g., appropriate staffing levels, training); information technology (e.g., capacity, redundancy, back-up systems); physical infrastructure (e.g., structural integrity of buildings, communications systems, powers connections); organizational preparedness (e.g., procedural, planning and response functions); and business continuity (e.g., work-flow maintenance).

STRATEGIC VISION

The following sections outline what is needed on a provincial level to address the challenges described above. The proposed approach is for discussion, and represents the strategic vision that the Ministry of Justice is currently considering. The Ministry welcomes comments and input on the discussion questions provided in the following sections.

Strategic Vision

- Patchwork of 10 911 PSAPs, 17 police dispatch
- Operational and financial efficiencies not fully realized

Consolidated
service delivery model
Economies of scale province-wide

- Policies, standards inconsistent
- Infrastructure, technology not coordinated

Approach to technology,
standards consistent
Resiliency and Interoperability improved

- Landline revenue declining
- Cellphone users not contributing

Modernized funding model
New revenue stream for NG911,
infrastructure, etc.

1. Consolidated 911 PSAP and police dispatch service delivery model

As described earlier, British Columbia has 10 PSAPs under local government authority, and 17 police communication centres across the province. From both a public interest and public safety perspective, the Ministry is interested in exploring options to develop a more streamlined service delivery model. Benefits of consolidation include economies of scale, and operational and financial efficiencies (for example, improved communication, reduced duplication, financial savings, volume purchasing, uniform policies and procedures, etc.).

There are a number of guiding principles to inform the vision:

- Enhanced public safety
- Improvements to resiliency, interoperability and capacity building
- Leverage existing efficiencies and economies of scale
- Equitable funding
- Cost-recovery for consolidation
- Consistency province-wide: approach to NG911, policies, standards etc.
- Accountability for performance

Discussion Questions:

Vision

- Is the current service delivery model as efficient as it could be?

Service Delivery

- What are the key factors to consider in consolidating 911 PSAP and police communications across the province?

Funding

- How does local government in your community currently fund 911 PSAP?
- Will local governments be able to fund these and enhanced services such as NG911 in the future?
- What funding model options exist and would be successful? Why or why not?
- With respect to existing funding for emergency communications, what works well, needs improvement, or could be done differently?

Next Generation 911

- What is the most appropriate response to infrastructure and technological pressures related to Next Generation 911?

Resiliency

- How can resiliency of emergency communications best be addressed (e.g., appropriate back-up, redundancies)?

Governance

- What is an appropriate method for emergency communications governance and regulation in British Columbia?
- Would standardization be of benefit to emergency communications? If so, in what areas (e.g., policies, procedures, standards, education, other)?

2. Modernized funding model

Local governments currently rely on a wireline call answer levy (CAL) and property taxes to fund 911 PSAP services. This varies by local government. With the proliferation of cell phones, and with 67% of 911 calls from cell phones, the Ministry is of the view that it would be reasonable for cell phone users to contribute to funding the emergency communications system. In fact, seven other provinces already have provincial CAL legislation in place.

As described earlier, UBCM had looked at a provincial CAL on all wireless devices that connect to 911 services, and the Ministry was part of a working group exploring the issue. Although UBCM withdrew the proposal, the Ministry considers there is still merit in considering a CAL on wireless devices.

Discussion Questions:

CAL Scope

- What scope of services would be appropriate to be funded by a provincial CAL? Emergency communications only or broader services? If broader services, what else should be included?

CAL Administration

- What would be the most effective process for administering the CAL?
- How should the revenue be managed?

CAL Amount

- What would be the most appropriate way to determine the amount of the CAL?

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of these important issues. Please provide written feedback via email to the following email address: SGPSPB@gov.bc.ca

All input is requested by May 15, 2015.

NEXT STEPS

In addition to seeking feedback on this paper, the Ministry of Justice is meeting with select key stakeholders such as UBCM, local governments and police agencies. A summary of information received will be provided to those who submit feedback. The Ministry will consider the results of this targeted stakeholder engagement as part of the analysis of the strategic vision. Thank you for your feedback.

**EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
SERVICE DELIVERY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**Police Communication Centres and 911 Public Safety Answering
Points**

**STRATEGIC VISION
SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION COMMENTS**

JULY 2015



Ministry of
Justice

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Highlights

- Since the 911 system was implemented in the late 1980s, local governments have continuously worked on improving service delivery. However, times and technology have changed and there is now an opportunity to revisit and renew the overall approach to 911 service delivery given the number of challenges related to:
 - Migration of households from landline to wireless telephone service;
 - Implementation of Next Generation 911 (NG911) technologies;
 - Gaps in the provision of 911 service;
 - Ensuring resilience of the 911 system amid major catastrophic events.
- The Ministry of Justice distributed a Discussion Paper in April 2015 and held an in-person consultation forum in Vancouver on June 1, 2015, seeking feedback from key stakeholders on the Ministry's strategic vision for emergency communications in British Columbia.
- The Ministry's strategic vision includes a consolidated 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) and police communications service delivery model, with enhanced support from new revenue raised through a provincial Call Answer Levy (CAL) on wireless devices. Feedback on the Discussion Paper was requested by May 15, 2015. In total 15 responses were received and 40 participants attended the one day consultation forum.
- The Ministry heard from Regional Districts and municipalities that operate their own 911 PSAPs, First Nations Emergency Services, RCMP, BC Association of Chiefs of Police, BC Association of Police Boards and the BC Police Association, E-COMM and CREST, TELUS and other wireless service providers, BC Emergency Health Services, Fire Chiefs Association of BC, Industry Canada, DND and others.
- Stakeholders were requested to comment on the 3 components to the strategic vision: service delivery, governance and the CAL on wireless devices.
- There was general support for service delivery consolidation and implementation of a provincial CAL.
- Key themes raised, and outlined in this summary report, include:
 - Approach consolidation in a thoughtful manner by considering the particular needs and attributes of individual jurisdictions, including variances between rural and urban areas;
 - Ensure costs for consolidation can be addressed through any future funding model;
 - Develop a set of minimum standards for all functions in the emergency communications system to reinforce consistency while being flexible enough to accommodate local nuances;
 - Ensure the new governance model represents a diverse group of stakeholders including, but not limited to: local authorities, provincial government, federal government, police and emergency services, regional district authorities, E-COMM, and telecommunication service providers;
 - Put a CAL on all devices capable of triggering a 911 response, this includes landlines, wireless devices and new and emerging technologies;
 - Establish greater clarity and understanding of the scope of components within the emergency communications system to be governed and funded by the new CAL;
 - Delegate responsibility to a central body/agency to collect, administer, and dispense CAL revenue and clarify the roles of the provincial government, local authorities and other key stakeholders in this process; and
 - Engage and communicate with the public as changes to the system are agreed to and implemented.

Part 1: Background to the Consultation Process

Background

The current 911 system was implemented in the late 1980s, when technology was predominantly landline telephone services (landlines). Today, more households are abandoning landline services in favor of wireless services, and Next Generation 911 (text and images) is expected to be complex and costly. In the recently released Earthquake Consultation Report, consultation chair Henry Renteria raised the need for the provincial government, local authorities and key partners to assess opportunities to enhance the resiliency and capacity of the 911 system. System resiliency, that is the ability to function effectively regardless of adverse circumstances, is critical to public safety.

Given these challenges, the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) reached out to key stakeholders for input to inform the future of emergency communications across the province involving 911 and police communication centres. By modernizing the current approach to a more streamlined, equitable and resilient emergency communications system, services and public safety will be enhanced province-wide.

The Ministry provides overall direction respecting police services in the province and ensures there are adequate and effective levels of policing. Although 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is a local government responsibility and not a policing function, dispatching of police related calls is and the two functions are inextricably linked. Local governments have worked to manage and improve service over the years, and the Ministry values the role of local government as a key stakeholder in the provision of 911 PSAP.

Consultation Process

On April 17 and 20, 2015, the Discussion Paper was distributed to key stakeholders and experts inviting them to provide feedback and input on the future state of emergency communications in British Columbia. At the same time, stakeholders were invited to attend a consultation forum. The morning of the session provided a number of subject matter expert presentations which focused on providing stakeholders with context and a common language to support the afternoon discussions. Input to the consultation process was therefore received by way of:

Written feedback – stakeholders were asked to provide a written response to a list of questions by May 15, 2015.

Verbal feedback – stakeholders participated in the one-day emergency communications stakeholder consultation forum on June 1, 2015 held in Vancouver.

Profile of Respondents

All feedback submitted, through written submissions and in person at the consultation forum, was documented for review and consideration by the Ministry*.

1. Written Submissions	
Local governments	7
Police agencies/PSAP	3
Telecommunications companies	2
Federal organizations	2
Universities	1
Total	15
2. Forum Participants	
Local governments	20
Police agencies	9
First Nations	2
BC Emergency Health Services	1
Fire Chiefs Association of BC	1
BC Search and Rescue Association	1
E-COMM	6
CREST	1
Independent (Consultants)	2
Federal government	1
Total	44

*Ministry staff also met with the UBCM Community Safety Committee on April 16, 2015 and the Association of 911 Service Providers of BC on May 13, 2015.

Part 2: What we Heard – Themed Responses and Comments

This section provides a high level overview of the themed responses from the perspectives of the stakeholders who responded in writing to the discussion paper or who attended the consultation forum.

Service Delivery

Current model

Some stakeholders believed that the current system is effective, ensures necessary redundancy and provides unique 911 PSAP and police dispatch services based on local needs. The current system allows for communities to set unique service levels and control the tone and culture of the callers' experience.

Consolidation

The majority of stakeholders believed that consolidation was the best option for the future of emergency communications services, resulting in increased efficiency and the ability to address challenges facing the system.

For example, consolidation of PSAPs could provide the economies of scale required to make Next Generation 911 more affordable. Stakeholders noted that rolling out any new 911 features would be more difficult when there are many different centres each requiring updated equipment, technology, testing, training, and funding.

Other challenges to be addressed through consolidation were noted as follows:

- Lack of redundancy and back up;
- Inconsistent standards across the province;
- Inability to access new and better technology; and
- Finding sustainable funding sources, which is especially difficult in rural and remote areas where there are small populations.

There was a sense that PSAPs serving larger geographical areas and populations were going to be more efficient than PSAPs serving smaller areas and populations. Geographic differences and local needs would need to be considered in a consolidated model. Others noted that consolidation does not necessarily mean that individualized and specialized service has to stop. The specific requirements of individual jurisdictions can be addressed with appropriate training of staff and the use of technology.

It was mentioned that the consolidated service delivery model will require a consistent set of minimum standards, and will have to be aligned with telecommunications service providers and system integration partners to ensure success. In emergency situations, designated back up PSAPs will be able to better support each other if they have similar standards, equipment, and training. The need for consistent procedures in responding to abandoned calls and “pocket dials” was also mentioned.

Some stakeholders also noted that cost effectiveness of moving to a consolidated model would need to be ensured.

Public expectations

Implementation of a consolidated service delivery model and new technologies needs to be aligned with the public needs and wants. It will be important to have an effective communications strategy to help the public better understand the limitations and benefits of consolidation to ensure their expectations are aligned with what is realistic.

Governance

Scope and structure

Stakeholders noted that the scope, structure, and roles and responsibilities of a governance body would

need to be clear to ensure a consistent understanding. The role of local government versus the provincial government should be clear.

An advisory committee structure was cited as an option. Stakeholders mentioned a number of considerations for successful governance implementation, as follows:

- The governance model should include representation from a diverse group of key stakeholders working within a collaborative decision-making environment;
- The implementation of the governance model needs to be incremental – if too much is undertaken at once, it will be difficult to implement;
- Best practice alternatives should be explored by investigating what is working well in other jurisdictions.

Standards

The majority of stakeholders noted that minimum standards should be established by the Provincial Government with local stakeholder input taken into consideration. Minimum standards will ensure consistency to meet public expectations and enhance public safety. Some stakeholders also suggested that a central regulating body could set standards and policies for PSAPs. One stakeholder suggested Emergency Management BC would be the ideal body for setting standards and policies.

It was noted that standards should include the equipment and infrastructure required for PSAPs to operate. Some stakeholders noted that despite established standards, there should be flexibility to address local needs and differences between urban and rural areas (i.e., minimum standards may not apply to remote areas of the province).

Funding model

Some stakeholders noted that the funding model in a consolidated system must be seen as equitable to avoid any perceptions of inequity, particularly between urban and rural jurisdictions. Local governments should have some degree of control in the funding model. Some stakeholders also mentioned their jurisdictions would like to have flexibility in selecting the services they will be paying for. Additionally, the administration of funding should be conducted by an existing group, and not through the creation of a new organization. An overall principle of the funding model was identified as transparency in how funds are collected and distributed.

E-COMM

A number of stakeholders noted that they were already in a contract, or moving towards a contract, with E-COMM (Emergency Communications for BC Inc). These stakeholders were comfortable with this arrangement and believed that it would retain the benefits of stand-alone communication centres.

Call Answer Levy (CAL) on Wireless Devices

CAL administration

The majority of stakeholders support a provincial CAL, particularly given the decline in landline use and revenue and the increase in 911 calls from cell phones. Stakeholders also noted that the most efficient and

effective process for administering the CAL would be through the provincial government, with revenue distributed equitably to local governments.

Devices to be covered by the CAL

A number of stakeholders felt the CAL should cover all devices capable of connecting to 911 - wireless, landlines, and future technologies. It was felt this would create more of a user-pay environment, which fairly allocates the cost across all users.

CAL model

Stakeholders noted that BC should model the new levy after CALs already in place in other provinces. Currently wireless service providers collect 911 fees province-wide from their subscribers on behalf of the provincial governments that have a CAL. It was noted that wireless service providers should be allowed to keep an administration fee, while others mentioned that the amount of the administration fee should be negotiated to a lower rate.

CAL scope

Stakeholders noted that the CAL should fund more services than just 911 PSAP. Some stakeholders mentioned only the operations of emergency communications centres, not first responder costs, should be funded using CAL. Others stated that the use of the CAL funds should be the decision of each PSAP.

Potential services identified which could be included within the funding allocation included radio networks, civic addresses, Secondary Safety Answering Point enhancements, or GIS mapping & technology. Some stakeholders noted human resources were one component which should not be funded through the CAL.

Stakeholders in northern regions of the province noted that CAL revenue would address the present, longstanding concern over the absence of any 911 service. First Nations stakeholders also noted the issue of lack of 911 service on some First Nations territories.

Other Comments

One written submission expressed concern with the process of the discussion paper and the deadline for submitting feedback, and requested clarification on whether the Province's proposal is to assume responsibility for 911 PSAP services. In response to these concerns, the Ministry clarified that the timelines were set to assist in preparations for the June 1, 2015, Emergency Communications Forum and that submissions were accepted after the deadline. It was also clarified that it is not the intention of the Ministry of Justice to assume the responsibility from local government for the provision of emergency communications services in British Columbia.

Thank you to all the stakeholders who participated in the consultation. The feedback is being considered as part of the analysis of the Emergency Communications Strategic Vision, and will help to inform next steps.

Draft Letter to Minister Anton

September X, 2015

The Honourable Suzanne Anton, Q.C.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of British Columbia
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 9044, Stn Prov. Govt.
Victoria, BC

Dear Minister Anton:

Re: Emergency Communications Service Delivery in British Columbia

The City of Surrey appreciates the opportunity it has had to provide feedback to the Province with respect to the opportunities for emergency communication service delivery in British Columbia. Based on its understanding of the status of this project with the provincial government, it is timely to ensure that the Minister fully understands the City of Surrey's position on the options being considered by the Province for emergency communication services.

The City of Surrey's foundational objectives for the emergency communication services (call taking and dispatching) it provides to the RCMP Surrey Detachment and its partners, are ensuring optimal RCMP member and public (resident) safety. It also strives to ensure efficient utilization of its resources, cost effectiveness, and employee well-being.

The City's current operational model for emergency communication service delivery best meets its foundational objectives and provides exceptional service to the RCMP and its residents. The City is committed to its current service model. The City believes that having a financially competitive model for the provision of this service in the province is enhanced by having alternatives to the E-COMM model. In addition, having the potential second site for emergency communications service delivery in Surrey would be a benefit for provincial emergency planning.

While the City has little interest in changing its emergency communication service delivery model, it understands that as discussions continue within the provincial government on service options, new solutions may evolve that benefit all parties. The City's openness to engaging in such discussions would be based on its desire to continue to operate its own OCC and its openness to be a regional emergency communication service provider. The City focus includes ensuring that:

- its foundational objectives would be met;
- an E-COMM governance model could be developed that properly recognizes the scope of Surrey's service delivery challenges;
- the workplace, jobs and communication work remain with the City of Surrey; and
- an appropriate financial structure could be developed to ensure an equitable distribution of emergency communication service costs over the long term.

While the City of Surrey is making no specific request of the Minister at this time, it is important that its position be understood and recognized. The City remains open to having constructive discussions with the Minister (or her designate) on this matter.

The City appreciates the Minister's consideration of this matter. Please contact the undersigned if additional information is required.

Yours truly,

Linda Hepner
Mayor
City of Surrey

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cc City Council
Vincent Lalonde, P.Eng., City Manager
Chief Superintendent, Bill Fordy, Officer in Charge (OIC), Surrey RCMP
Assistant Commissioner, Norm Lipinski, Criminal Operations Officer "E" Division