

e-COMMUNIQUE

E-Comm Newsletter Summer 2013, No. 40

E-Comm 9-1-1
Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property

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NWPD Chief Dave Jones and E-Comm CEO David Guscott celebrate successful transition.

Value of integrated communications showcased after New Westminster Police transition

"Welcome to E-Comm, have a great shift and stay safe." And with those words, veteran New Westminster Police Department (NWPD) dispatcher Noella Hunter marked the first dispatch broadcast following the successful transition of NWPD to E-Comm at 0811 hrs, June 4.

Within hours of that first broadcast, the benefits of integrated dispatch were apparent when multiple simultaneous calls regarding two high-profile events (assault-in-progress and a hit-and-run involving a semi) were managed within a 15-minute timeframe. The new partnership meant that cross-trained E-Comm staff on duty were able to jump in and assist NWPD call-takers so the influx of calls were answered faster than would have been previously possible.

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E-Comm Application Specialist Colleen McKenna and NWPD Dispatcher Noella Hunter get ready for Go-Live on June 4.

“Our partnership with E-Comm will help realize many benefits, most important, enhanced public safety for the City of New Westminster.”

NWPD Chief Dave Jones

Immediately following the transition, Police Chief Dave Jones expressed his appreciation to all NWPD call-takers and dispatchers past and present, who continue to serve New Westminster, its citizens and the NWPD so well. “We have committed through our strategic plan to provide the best service delivery possible,” said Chief Jones. “Our partnership with E-Comm will help realize many benefits, most important, enhanced public safety for the City of New Westminster.”

Prior to the transition, NWPD’s 19 call-taking and dispatching staff visited E-Comm on several occasions to meet their new colleagues and to participate in a thorough training program.

Continuing to perform the same call-taking and dispatch duties they were previously responsible for at NWPD headquarters, the New Westminster staff were also trained on 9-1-1 public-safety answer point duties, E-Comm equipment, as well as E-Comm policies and procedures. As part of the training program, E-Comm staff were also trained in New Westminster procedures including familiarization with the community, its geography and NWPD operations.

“We are very proud to partner with New Westminster police and believe that integrating dispatch operations is a key element in helping create safer communities in B.C.,” said David Guscott, E-Comm president and CEO. “Our goal is to enhance and support our partners’ emergency response in order to meet the high standards expected from the critical role of emergency call-taking and dispatching.”

The New Westminster Police Department is E-Comm’s 13th police dispatch partner. E-Comm’s partnership began with New Westminster police in 2002 when they first joined the E-Comm radio network and with New Westminster Fire & Rescue Services, which also use the E-Comm radio network and for whom E-Comm has been dispatching since 2005.

Laser pointer attacks on aircrafts drop 69%



Richmond RCMP Sgt. Cam Kowalski and E-Comm Training Manager Corrie Okell honoured with public-safety award.

An innovative new policy developed in partnership between Richmond RCMP Sgt. Cam Kowalski and E-Comm Training Manager Corrie Okell has resulted in a dramatic drop in the number of laser incidents on aircrafts in British Columbia. Shining a laser into the cockpit of an aircraft in flight is a serious safety risk, incapacitating pilots and endangering the lives of passengers and surrounding communities. Following the launch of the new policy the number of laser attacks declined from 42 to 13 between 2011 and 2012.

Aware of the serious repercussions of laser attacks, Sgt. Kowalski and Okell worked together to create a Laser Attack Policy in conjunction with Navigation Canada (NAV CANADA) to help put a stop to these aircraft assaults. Their teamwork and dedication to public safety was

recognized May 7 at the Richmond Chamber of Commerce 9-1-1 Awards where they were honoured with a Community Safety Initiative award. Sgt. Kowalski and Okell received the award for their standard operating procedure developed for E-Comm call-takers and dispatchers.

"This policy gives first responders the opportunity to make significant breakthroughs in improving response times and helping to create safer communities," says Okell.

Under the previous policy, air traffic control would report a laser incident within NAV CANADA internal operations, resulting in a delayed response. With the new policy, E-Comm fields all reports of laser incidents in Metro Vancouver from the air traffic control or airport operations centre. Police are now notified with general location information and an officer is dispatched to apprehend the perpetrator.

This policy is the only program of its kind in Canada and has been cited by NAV CANADA as a "best practice." It is also being used as a basis for policies in airports across B.C. and is currently under consideration for national procedures.

Follow that cab!

Coordinated response ends crime spree



Flickr Creative Commons

A quick-thinking cabbie combined with coordinated communication between Richmond RCMP and Vancouver police allowed the two agencies to join forces to stop a string of multi-jurisdictional robberies.

On the evening of May 31, a call came into E-Comm for Richmond RCMP from a taxi driver who believed his passenger was shoplifting and using the taxi as a 'get-away' car. The male suspect began his alleged crime spree in Burnaby, moving onward to Lansdowne Mall in Richmond at which point the taxi driver became suspicious and called 9-1-1.

The call-taker advised the taxi driver to hide his cellphone once the suspect was near the vehicle to ensure he would not be aware police were responding. The cabbie and suspect then made additional stops between Richmond and Vancouver and each time the suspect left the car, the conversation between the cabbie and call-taker continued and additional information was collected. This was central to the successful apprehension of the suspect by police not long after.

E-Comm's consolidated dispatch model allowed accurate and continuous information to be passed between a police call-taker and RCMP and VPD dispatchers; effectively erasing jurisdictional boundaries and delivering an enhanced level of service. This kind of collaboration between agencies is a key component to ensuring the safety of first responders and the communities they serve.

Canadian 9-1-1 centres weigh in on Next Generation 9-1-1

The Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) recently invited emergency services across Canada, including E-Comm, to provide insight on the country's existing 9-1-1 system and the introduction of "Next Generation 9-1-1" (NG9-1-1); a North America-wide initiative to modernize current 9-1-1 systems by aligning with today's broadband Internet and wireless services.

In response to the CRTC's request, E-Comm submitted a consultation paper that outlined the many attributes of B.C.'s highly reliable, life-saving emergency service, and also its limitations. The submission focused on significant issues facing the 9-1-1 system including determining funding models that not only meet the demands presented by today's wireless and Internet-connected world, but also support the implementation of NG9-1-1. This includes the planning for, and implementation of, the required technical NG9-1-1 infrastructure, the significant operational change that will need to be undertaken within all 9-1-1 centres (e.g. training, policy change) and the necessary public outreach on capabilities and limitations of the "new 9-1-1."

"E-Comm is anxious to capitalize on opportunities for improving public-safety communications and we believe that NG9-1-1 technology is a key enabler," says Mike Webb, E-Comm's vice-president of Technology Services. "At the same time, it is imperative we not lose sight of the investments in operational processes, personnel training and infrastructure that comes with these technological advances."

E-Comm Recommendations:

- That discussion continue regarding avenues for enhanced provincial funding models to help adequately and equitably fund 9-1-1 services.
- That the CRTC regulate wireless carriers to improve the location technology on cellphones.
- That the CRTC call on cellphone manufacturers to design better safeguards to prevent accidental calls ("pocket dials") to 9-1-1.
- That an Automatic Number Indicator and Automatic Location Indicator (ANI/ALI) national database with redundancy and links to international databases be established.
- That the NG9-1-1 system have security features within its infrastructure to prevent abuse of the 9-1-1 system and police resources.
- That the NG9-1-1 system allow Public-Safety Answer Points (PSAPs) to transfer 9-1-1 calls between provinces.
- That a test environment be created for PSAPs to provide 9-1-1 test calls for businesses or residents (e.g. VoIP subscribers) to ensure their 9-1-1 calls will connect to the nearest PSAP and for the PSAP to test new technologies for other scenarios.
- That under the NG9-1-1 system, downloading of data (video, pictures) should be compatible with computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and records management systems (RMS) to allow for sharing and storing.
- That provinces implement their own Emergency Services IP Network (ESInet), as defined in the NENA NG-9-1-1 architecture, with a governing body to oversee the standards. Each province should be interconnected to facilitate information sharing, redundancy, and transfers of communication.

Mock disaster prepares emergency services for the worst



YVR's emergency response exercise involved 27 agencies and 600 people.

“Training exercises such as these are a great way to focus on inter-agency procedures and communications during an emergency scenario.”

***E-Comm Fire Dispatch Manager
Jennifer Gjaltema***

Vancouver Airport Authority's latest emergency response exercise provided a realistic disaster experience for emergency responders, who on April 17 found themselves faced with a simulated aircraft fire on land and aircraft ocean wreckage. The training exercise was the largest to date, with 27 agencies and 600 individuals taking part all with the goal of improving emergency response plans. Participants

included police, fire and ambulance personnel, Airport Authority staff, response volunteers such as social services and E-Comm.

“Training exercises such as these are a great way to focus on inter-agency procedures and communications during an emergency scenario,” said E-Comm Fire Dispatch Manager Jennifer Gjaltema. “Events like the recent plane crash in San Francisco are a stark reminder of the importance of consolidated emergency management, and having the opportunity to work through disaster response scenarios within the context of a training exercise allows agencies to test response protocols and procedures.”

Richmond RCMP, Richmond Fire-Rescue and E-Comm dispatch teams managed exercise-specific calls at the same time they were managing real 9-1-1 calls. Richmond agencies utilized combined radio channels including a patch to the YVR channel when inter-agency discussion was required, demonstrating the benefits of interoperable communication protocols in the event of a major incident.

E-Comm's 2013/14 Board of Directors

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Board Chair

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White Rock, Township of Langley, Surrey

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Bob Rolls, representing
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Sheldon Stoilen, Independent Director

Glenn Wong, Independent Director

E-Comm in the Community

West Vancouver Community Day

E-Comm hosted a booth at Community Day in West Vancouver on June 1. The fun-filled event began with a parade, followed by festivities and activities for the whole family. E-Comm ambassadors were on hand to help teach children about 9-1-1 and to answer questions from adults too.

Collingwood Days Festival



VPD ambassador Chip and E-Comm's 9-1-1 ambassador ALI catch up with Transit Police at the Collingwood Days Festival on May 25 for fantastic food, activities and 9-1-1 education.

Lower Mainland Local Government Association Conference

E-Comm hosted a booth at the LMLGA conference in Harrison Hot Springs from May 8 to May 10. The conference brought together local government leaders from across Metro Vancouver, Squamish and Whistler areas.

VPD Volunteer Recognition Open House

On April 28, E-Comm hosted a booth at the Vancouver Police Volunteer Recognition Open House, a celebratory event recognizing the dedication of VPD volunteers.

E-Comm service by the numbers

April – June 2013

9-1-1- service levels

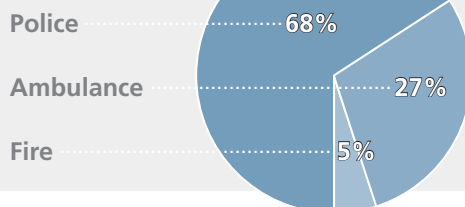
9-1-1 calls placed to E-Comm	Service level*
215,112	97%

* Service Level Target: 95% of all 9-1-1 calls answered in five seconds or less.

Number of 9-1-1 calls from landlines and cellphones

Landline	Cellular
75,106	140,006
35%	65%

9-1-1 calls directed to police, fire and ambulance



Technology

9-1-1 availability: 100%

System availability

System air time (seconds)	Transmissions (#)	System availability average
120,159,821	31,320,006	99.9927%

E-Comm mission

To deliver exceptional emergency communication services that help save lives and protect property, and to advance public-safety partnerships.

E-Comm vision

Safer communities in British Columbia through excellence in public-safety communication.

E-Comm values

Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, Collaboration

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Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property

This newsletter is produced by E-Comm Corporate Communications.
For more information on E-Comm or to comment on a story, contact:

corpcomm@ecomm911.ca

Ph 604-215-4877 Fax 604-215-4923



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