

Shared radio system highlighted

E-Comm celebrated its third anniversary (June 8th) by announcing the successful completion of Phase One of the region's shared emergency radio system. The Wide-Area Radio System links emergency service providers such as the police, fire and ambulance.

Today, emergency response agencies throughout the GVRD are using the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio System, which allows for cross-communication between agencies (police, fire, ambulance) within the communities they jointly serve and with agencies in neighbouring jurisdictions. There are more than 3,800 radios in use right now, resulting in more than 5-million police/fire/ambulance transmissions per month. A special demonstration of the mutual-aid capabilities of the radio system (for the first time responders from different agencies in different municipalities can communicate directly with one another via radio) was held for senior representatives of emergency services and the media on June 4th.

Benefits of the new system include: Wider radio coverage area; Better in-building coverage; Multi-agency communication; Cross-jurisdictional communication; Greater clarity; Improved reliability; Enhanced security; Earthquake proof infrastructure.



VF&RS Chief Ray Holdgate with VPD Inspector Bob Rich.



Tina Meadows dispatched for mutual-aid demonstration.

E-Comm's Wide-Area Radio System



Amateur radio enthusiasts make big hits!



On this year's Field Day, an international competition in which teams of amateur radio enthusiasts try to make as many radio contacts as they can during a continuous 24-hour period, members of VECTOR (Vancouver Emergency Community Telecommunications Organization) managed to make 738 Morse code contacts and 691 amateur radio contacts, all under simulated emergency conditions. VECTOR members contacted radio operators in ten provinces, in all 50 states, Japan and the South Pacific.

Vector is a non-profit, volunteer based society committed to providing Amateur Radio services in the event of an emergency or disaster. VECTOR will provide a communications link from the Vancouver Emergency Operations Centre to the various emergency shelters and neighbourhoods in Vancouver and provide general back-up communications to the Emergency Operations Centre.

By Paulette Schouten



Emergency Dispatcher Brooke Thompson captured this shot on one of BC's great summer days.

Number of 9-1-1 calls to E-Comm*

*since Spring issue of e-communiqué

April 2002	98,595
May 2002	92,980
June 2002	103,850
July 2002	108,932
August 2002	110,965

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Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property



New Dispatch Duties for E-Comm

Fire dispatcher Trish McMurray with Vancouver firefighter Stan Stovdat on "go live" day.

E-Comm has transitioned two more agencies into its facility: the first to arrive since E-Comm's June 1999 "go-live."

On July 2 at 11:22:49hrs, E-Comm began call-taking and dispatching duties for fire-rescue services in Vancouver, Port Moody, the Sunshine Coast Regional District and Whistler/Pemberton. Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services, which has been dispatching for all of these agencies for some time, is the third agency to transition its communication centre to E-Comm, and is E-Comm's first fire agency. Training continues.

E-Comm dispatcher Cindy McDougall handled the first call... "smell of propane or gas from outside." The call was for Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services.

On July 15th at 11:14:12hrs, Ridge-Meadows RCMP dispatchers fielded their first 9-1-1 call from their new dispatch location at E-Comm ("assistance for an elderly gentleman locked in a yard"). By 1130hrs E-Comm concluded the complete cutover and assumed full call-taking and dispatching duties. Ridge-Meadows is the second RCMP contingent to move to E-Comm (the first was '43', which dispatches for Gibsons, Sechelt,

Whistler, UBC, the Freeway Patrols and Bowen Island detachments) since in October of 1999.

E-Comm is now working with the City of Richmond to transition both the RCMP and Richmond Fire-Rescue Services into E-Comm in 2003.

E-Comm's model of regional multi-service consolidated dispatch operations is the model that major urban centres in North America are moving towards. Consolidated dispatch significantly enhances public safety operations during a major disaster such as an earthquake or large-scale public incident.

"I believe the transition of Vancouver Fire to E-Comm is the first step toward all Fire Departments improving their ability to deal with any major disaster in a more effective way. E-Comm will be able to provide all Fire Departments in the region with a cost effective state-of-the-art service."

Vancouver Fire Chief Ray Holdgate

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e-communiqué

MESSAGE FROM
DON EVANS
CHAIR

world leadership in emergency services communications, the kind that I am certain will become the world standard for the future. We should all be proud that we are leading the way right here in southwest British Columbia.

The job ahead becomes more straightforward now—to put these new systems to work throughout all parts of the region so that the benefits may be fully attained. An upgrade to our emergency communications system is not an inexpensive proposition—but it is much more cost effective when we are all partners in this common system than when we choose to go it alone. The added benefit, that is the most important benefit, is the increased public safety that results when we can communicate and dispatch where the emergency demands it, often crossing traditional boundaries. We must get on with the job of completing transitions to the new systems as our first priority for 2003. The citizens of our region can expect nothing less of us than completing this important task.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors for their hard work and guidance throughout the past year, and would like especially to acknowledge those who are leaving the board at this time: Vern Campbell from the Vancouver Police Board, Scott Young, Mayor of Port Coquitlam, and Lori Wanamaker of the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal Affairs and Women. I would also like to welcome our new board members, Councillor Kiichi Kumagai of the City of Richmond, John Lynn, representing the Vancouver Police Board and New Westminster Mayor Helen Sparkes, representing independent police boards.

I look forward to working with our incoming board, our new president, Ken Shymanski, and of course E-Comm staff, in seeing E-Comm's vision become a reality.

I'd like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who had a part in making 2002 a year of progress for E-Comm. At the Annual General Meeting one year ago, I mentioned in my remarks that concluding a labour agreement, setting a new direction in corporate culture, and putting our core technology systems to work were key priorities. We have made major headway in these areas and I would like to thank management and staff, our partner agencies and shareholders for their hard work in helping to move us forward.

The recent transitions of fire dispatch operations and the Ridge-Meadows RCMP represents a significant milestone for E-Comm and has set the stage for ongoing expansion. I would like to thank the staff of E-Comm and the transitioning agencies for ensuring a seamless cutover.

The events of September 11, 2001 have had a profound impact on how we look at public safety and one message we have heard clearly is the importance of integrated emergency communications systems. With E-Comm's radio system, Computer-Aided Dispatch system and records management systems in place, we are now in a position of



Fire dispatcher Cindy McDougall took the first fire call. (Firefighter Doug Wagner in background)

- | | |
|---|---|
| Naomi Arita
<i>Voice Systems Manager</i> | Peter Gauthier
<i>Radio Operations Manager</i> |
| Bryan Canuel
<i>Network Administrator</i> | Erin Fritsch
<i>GVRD</i> |
| Kirsten Conboy
<i>HR Advisor</i> | Karen Hay
<i>Comm III Trainer</i> |
| Kim Engelsjord
<i>Team Manager, Operations</i> | Susan Irons
<i>Team Manager, Operations</i> |
| Lana Franks
<i>Team Manager, Operations</i> | Arti Jinhabi
<i>Payroll</i> |

Thank you E-Comm staff!

- | | |
|--|--|
| Lois Kellar
<i>Payroll</i> | Natasha Pekic
<i>Radio Systems Engineer</i> |
| Tim Kelly
<i>Network Technician</i> | Louise Ryan
<i>Training Manager</i> |
| Blair Kent
<i>Radio Technician</i> | Chris Shultz-Lorentzen
<i>Call-taker/Dispatcher and member of CUPE 873-02 executive</i> |
| Mike Millward
<i>Building Services Manager</i> | Melanie Smith
<i>CAD Administrator</i> |
| Tina Meadows
<i>Call-taker/Dispatcher and member of CUPE 873-02 executive</i> | Rocky Tees
<i>Comm III Trainer</i> |
| Elton Pao
<i>Network Technician</i> | Jana Tulloch
<i>Transitions Manager</i> |
| Margaret Pardy-Magro
<i>Administrative Assistant</i> | Bernie Sparrow
<i>Informations Systems Manager</i> |
| Mark Pare
<i>Radio Technician</i> | Alex Wai
<i>Radio Technician</i> |

Port Moody Police first to use new CAD

On August 6, 2002 E-Comm successfully transitioned the Port Moody Police onto the new Altaris® Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, the first police agency in B.C. to be on the new system (the first CAD event for Port Moody was created at 0942hrs and was a complaint of vehicles racing). On August 19, E-Comm also installed a new release of the CAD system, paving the way for the Vancouver Police and the BC Ambulance Service to meet their planned "Go Live" dates in December 2002 (VPD) and August 2003 (BCAS). The CAD, which is configured to allow dispatchers from different agencies to share call data, is designed to support emergency dispatchers by providing swift and easy access to a wide range of information critical to emergency response including detailed street maps, a hazardous goods database and images of floor plans. The CAD also displays all emergency events underway so dispatchers know what is happening throughout the region. The CAD allows for information to be transmitted directly to emergency responders on the road through vehicle laptops.



RCMP dispatcher Paulette Camozzi handled Ridge-Meadows' first call.



Fire dispatchers Cindy McDougall and Penny Rattenbury during fire training exercise.

Thanks Also To:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Ridge-Meadows RCMP
Inspector W.A. (Bill) Dingwall
<i>Officer in Charge</i>
S/Sgt Lance Harris
Corporal Alf Seager
Natalie Kroeker
<i>Ridge-Meadows OCC (now E-Comm staff)</i>
Constable Darlene Kent
Bob McDonald
<i>RCMP CIIDS Coordinator</i>
Maureen Jones
<i>Municipal Manager, Police Services</i>
Paul Gill
<i>General Manager, District of Maple Ridge Corporate and Financial Services</i> | Vancouver Fire-Rescue Services
Ray Holdgate
<i>Fire Chief</i>
Doug McRae
<i>Deputy Chief</i>
Firefighters Pat Hayes (retired), Robert Bazaluk, John Wilson
Al Tellier
Richmond Fire-Rescue Services
Firefighter Melanie Simmons
Port Moody Fire-Rescue Services
Andy Sharpe
<i>Fire Chief</i>
Pat Downey
<i>Deputy Chief</i>
Al Johnston
<i>Fire Prevention Officer</i> | Sunshine Coast
Bob Stevens
<i>Fire Chief Gibsons & District</i>
Bruce Searle
<i>Fire Chief, Roberts Creek</i>
Bill Higgs
<i>Fire Chief, Sechelt</i>
Greg Phelps
<i>Fire Chief, Halfmoon Bay</i>
Don Murray
<i>Fire Chief, Pender Harbour</i> | Paul Fenwick
<i>Manager of Community Services, SCRD</i>
Brian Hardcastle
<i>Sechelt Fire Department</i>
Dale Boghean
<i>Fire Prevention Officer, SCRD</i>
Whistler
Bruce Hall
<i>Fire Chief</i> |
|--|---|---|--|



Sechelt firefighters