



Inspector John Schouten, VPD, (retired) reaches out to other ham operators.

Amateur (ham) radio operators across North America competed in the annual Field Day contest June 28th and 29th in Queen Elizabeth Park, and the City of Vancouver Amateur Radio group VECTOR (based at E-Comm), took first place in Canada.

In the annual contest, participants must set up and operate field radio stations and contact as many other ham radio operators in Canada and the US as they can during the 24-hour contest period. Contact can be made using voice and packet radio, Morse Code, satellites, amateur television and other digital technologies. Points are given for each contact and for using alternate power sources such as solar, wind and methane.

The event is designed to test communications skills used in emergency situations. In a real disaster, members of VECTOR would work out of the E-Comm building and would provide back-up communications for emergency responders. They are also a vital link for Vancouver's Emergency Social

Services (ESS) organization.

In a disaster, ESS would activate emergency reception centres in each of Vancouver's 24 community centres. Ham radio operators would provide communication between the centres, and also would be



an important link to the Red Cross for reuniting families.

In honour of the event Mayor Larry Campbell declared June 22-29, 2003 Amateur Radio Week.

Congratulations to the 30 VECTOR members who participated in the Field Day contest.

## It's Easy Being Green

Although *e-communique* is produced on recycled paper and uses non-toxic and environmentally friendly inks, there are other ways to read *e-communique* if you do not wish to receive a paper copy. If you would prefer to read it electronically, please visit [www.ecomm.bc.ca](http://www.ecomm.bc.ca) and click on "Corporate" and check out the publications section. Here you will find a full PDF version of *e-communique*. If you wish to be removed from our mailing list, please e-mail [clare.marwick@ecomm.bc.ca](mailto:clare.marwick@ecomm.bc.ca)

E-Comm is committed to the use of environmentally responsible papers. By choosing 100% post-consumer recycled fiber instead of virgin paper for this printed material the following savings to our natural resources were realized:

Trees Saved	Wood Reduced (Lbs)	Landfill Reduced (Lbs)	Energy Reduced (btu)	Water Reduced (Gallons)	Net Greenhouse Emissions (Lbs)
.5	292.93	45.7	710.06	430.72	88.62



## Have You Visited Our Website Recently?

If you have, you'll notice something new and different about our site. If you haven't, you're in for a pleasant surprise. [ecomm.bc.ca](http://ecomm.bc.ca) has been redesigned with a clean, fresh look that makes navigating the site easier and provides quick access to key pages.

E-Comm has had over 150,000 hits on its Website this year, with the majority of visitors reading the corporate and media information.

But E-Comm's Website is full of other practical and interesting information. Check out the section on E-Comm's *Facility*, and learn about its post disaster capabilities. Or read past editions of *e-communique*. Or if you'd prefer a visual overview of E-Comm and its staff, check out the *Photo Gallery*.

If you have ideas or suggestions for E-Comm's Website, please e-mail the Webmaster – [webmaster@ecomm.bc.ca](mailto:webmaster@ecomm.bc.ca)

We welcome your feedback.

## Recent E-Comm Statistics

Some interesting statistics from E-Comm's Wireless Department who recorded, just in the month of October, that the total air time of all calls on the radio system equaled more than 312 days.

The radio system also experienced more than seven million push-to-talks during that same time period. Over the last six months the system has used a total of 1,700 days of air-time and experienced more than 40 million push-to-talks.

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

\*since Autumn issue of e-communique

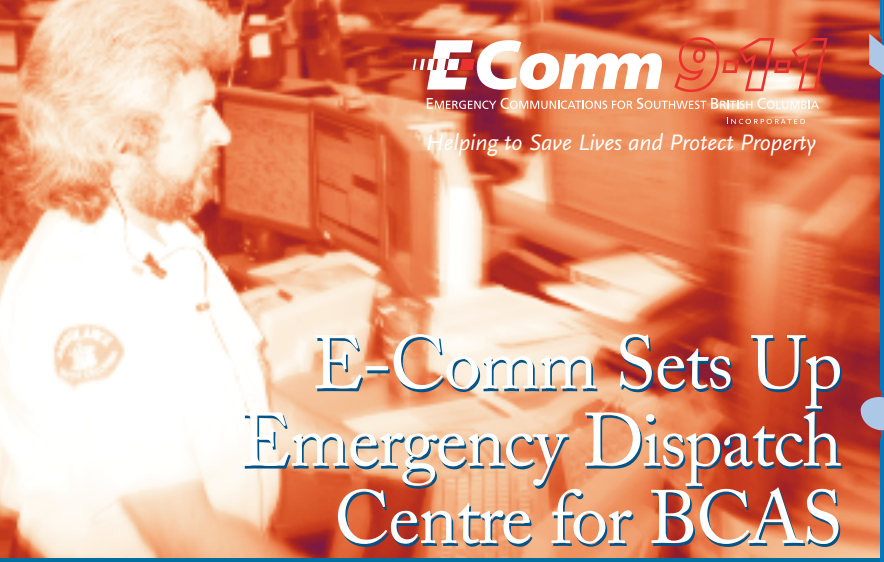
September . . . . . 106,813

October . . . . . 109,203

November . . . . . 100,293

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BCAS Dispatcher Jim Ferguson

## E-Comm Sets Up Emergency Dispatch Centre for BCAS

On Wednesday, October 22nd, a construction crew working in the vicinity of Main & 10th Avenue accidentally severed a TELUS cable, knocking out service to not only thousands of customers, but also to the Vancouver Police Department. This caused some problems with the records management system but did not impact 9-1-1 service. TELUS began working on a temporary fix, but on Friday evening, October 24th, it became apparent that in order to repair the damaged cables, a service disruption would likely escalate to BC Ambulance

Service, whose offices are located on West Broadway.

E-Comm's Information Technology, Wireless, and Operations departments, and BCAS and TELUS, immediately began developing a contingency plan.

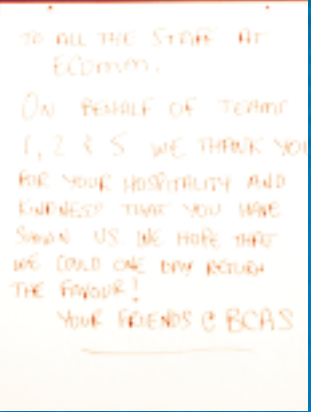
By Friday evening a contingency plan had been established that would see BCAS call-takers and radio dispatchers relocated to E-Comm ensuring that all 9-1-1 calls were safely down-streamed to BCAS, and dispatch capability would continue. This was accomplished by reconfiguring four consoles on the E-Comm dispatch floor for BCAS and providing a fifth console to guarantee the ability to pro-

vide "breakout" capability if required by VPD.

At this time, calls normally handled by 9-1-1 centres in Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Squamish would also be re-routed to our 9-1-1 call takers who would then transfer to BCAS, ensuring ANI/ALI (automatic number identification/automatic location identification) was maintained and coverage to areas not normally handled by E-Comm remained accessible.

By late Saturday afternoon, a decision was made to implement that contingency plan, and move BCAS into the E-Comm building. BCAS remained at E-Comm until Monday evening.

The weekend saw very long hours for many IT, Wireless, Operations and BCAS staff as they virtually built an entire ambulance dispatch centre overnight. Dan Cunningham, E-Comm Board Director comments that the teamwork and cooperation experienced was incredible. "Staff from both organizations worked tirelessly to ensure service levels were maintained, and once again demonstrated that BCAS and E-Comm employees are true professionals, extremely dedicated to public safety," says Cunningham. Congratulations to everyone involved!



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MESSAGE FROM  
**DAVID KORBIN**

BOARD CHAIR

with the support and assistance of our employees, shareholders and customers I am confident we will continue to make a positive contribution to emergency communications.

E-Comm's Board of Directors has consistently provided valued insight into the organizations and municipalities they represent, which has greatly aided in the development of the Corporation. The high quality of our Board members is a reflection of the support we have from our shareholders and I am certain this Board will carry on the work of its predecessors.

On that note, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and best wishes to outgoing Board members, **John Lynn**, **Ross Montgomery**, and North Vancouver City Mayor **Barbara Sharp**. Their dedication and service has been commendable. Special mention must be given to **Don Evans**, whose term as Chair came to an end at the October Annual General Meeting. Don has been involved with the Board for five years, having served as both an independent director and chair. I am delighted that Don will remain on as an independent director to help with the transition of the Chair's responsibility. There is no doubt his commitment, contribution and drive have been instrumental in successes to date.

To all of our employees, customers, and shareholders, I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season. I look forward to working with you over the next year.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new and returning Board members:

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Mayor Don Bell<br><i>(Mayor of North Vancouver District)</i><br><i>West Vancouver, North Vancouver City/District</i> | Rick Dumala<br><i>Fire Commissioner, Provincial Government</i>                                     | Mayor Lois Jackson<br><i>Delta</i>   |
| Gary Briggs<br><i>RCMP</i>   | Don Evans<br><i>Independent</i>  | Mayor Jon Kingsbury<br><i>(Mayor of City of Coquitlam)</i><br><i>Coquitlam, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, New Westminster and Belcarra</i> |
| Dan Cunningham<br><i>Emergency Health Services BC Ambulance Service</i>  | Len Garis<br><i>Fire Chief, Surrey</i>   | Councillor Kiichi Kumagai<br><i>Richmond</i>   |
| Murray Day<br><i>Vancouver Police Board</i>  | Councillor Jon Harris<br><i>Maple Ridge &amp; Pitt Meadows</i>                                     | Patti Marfleet<br><i>City of Vancouver</i>   |
|  | Tony Heemsker<br><i>Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General</i> |  |

# Streamlined E-Comm Dispatch Centre



E-Comm's ergonomically correct sit/stand workstations.

After a year of intense planning and designing, E-Comm's 9-1-1/Dispatch Operations Centre was reconfigured to streamline and enhance public safety dispatch operations.

55 ergonomically correct workstations and consoles were manufactured and installed to withstand 24/7 operations and to maintain the inherent flexibility to reconfigure from one function to another to suit shifting needs.

Each workstation is designed to meet the Canadian Standards Association Office Ergonomics specifications, accommodating up to five 18" flat screen monitors, 2 keyboards, a telephone and a writing area. Each of these components is designated a "zone" and dividing the work area into a primary zone for equipment that is used the most often or for the longest amount of time; a secondary zone for equipment accessed less frequently and a tertiary zone for equipment that is accessed occasionally.

Each workstation is also equipped with an enclosure for storing CPU's, power supplies, cabling connections and other necessary equipment.

The most progressive feature of the workstations is the ability to raise and lower the entire component allowing the user to work sitting down or standing up.

But the most challenging aspect of this installation was maintaining service levels, ensuring the 9-1-1/Dispatch Operators were able to provide uninterrupted emergency service to the residents of southwest BC. Michael Millward, Building Services Manager at E-Comm explains, "This wasn't just a construction, cabling, hardware and software relocation project; we had a live dispatch floor we had to work around. But the cooperation, teamwork and professionalism of everyone involved made a tough job manageable."

## Recent Visitors Have Included...

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • <b>Chair, Dick Ebersol, NBC Sports and Olympics</b>                | • <b>Burnaby Fire Department</b>  |
| • <b>TELUS International Seoul, Korea</b>                            | • <b>Great Britain Emergency Services</b>   |
| • <b>Belgian Police</b>  | • <b>Government of Mainland China, State Information Centre</b>                   |
| • <b>Versadex User Conference delegates</b>                          | • <b>Chinese Community Policing Centre</b>  |
| • <b>BlockWatch Captains from Hastings Community Policing Centre</b> | • <b>UBC, Centre of Excellence – Vancouver Hospital and Health Science Centre</b> |
| • <b>Richmond Crime Watch volunteers</b>                             | • <b>North Vancouver Rotary Club</b>  |



## Another Successful Exercise for the EOC

On Thursday, October 23rd, 2003, the Vancouver Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) held a mock exercise involving a gas-line tanker truck followed by an interface fire. The purpose of mock exercises is to ensure the EOC remains in a ready state of response, that all systems in the EOC are functioning properly, and to test response measures of a number of agencies. These exercises occur approximately four times a year.

### Correction: Director of Operations, Deborah Cherry

The Autumn edition of E-Communique incorrectly reported Deborah's length of service with the BCAS. Deborah was frontline dispatch for 19 years (seven of those as a Charge Dispatcher) and five years as the Dispatch Superintendent, for a total of 24 years service.