

## E-Comm 9-1-1

### 2010 Annual Report to the Community



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









## CORPORATE OVERVIEW

E-Comm is the emergency communications centre for southwest British Columbia. E-Comm develops and operates technology that supports public safety, including Metro Vancouver's Wide-Area Radio System. We also provide dispatch services for more than 30 police and fire departments and are the regional answer point for 9-1-1.

E-Comm is governed under the **Emergency Communications Corporations Act** (1997) and incorporated under the **BC Business Corporations Act**. Our annual operating budget is \$50 million.

Operating as a cost-recovery model, E-Comm is owned by its shareholders and is not structured to make a profit. An 18-member board of directors provides governance to E-Comm and is responsible for overseeing the Corporation's strategic direction, finances and operating results.

### OUR VISION

Safer communities through outstanding service – every call, every time.

### OUR MISSION

To provide emergency personnel and the public with exceptional communication services that help to save lives and protect property.

### OUR VALUES

Respect, accountability, integrity, service, collaboration



My association with E-Comm dates back to 2007 when I first joined the board of directors and I am delighted to say that my first year as chair has been particularly gratifying. The many achievements of our staff and partners in 2010 are a source of great pride and give me confidence there are definite possibilities for future collaborative efforts that support public safety.

Every year has its own high points and 2010 is indeed an unforgettable one, due in large part to the exceptional work undertaken for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The energy that went into preparing and carrying us through the busiest days in our region's policing history resulted in a winning performance by the entire E-Comm team. We witnessed firsthand the movement of call-taking and dispatch to a new level. The sheer volume of work our operational and technical staff managed with such calm and professionalism is a testament to their dedication.

Beyond the Games, there were other priorities we met head on in 2010, chief among them seeking operational efficiencies at every opportunity. Like most organizations, we continued to feel the impact of the worldwide economic recession. As a board, our goal was to find savings for our customers and shareholders without jeopardizing our high-quality service. A corporate restructuring and a change to our cost allocation model in late 2009 resulted in significant levy reductions for our dispatch customers in 2010. In addition, a new shift pattern model developed by our Operations team resulted in a zero per cent increase in dispatch levies for our customers in 2011 and stronger alignment between staffing and call volumes.

Having had the opportunity to watch the progress of this company for four years now, I have come to believe that consolidated public safety communications is the backbone of an effective emergency response system. The critical part E-Comm played in this area in 2010 is merely a launching point for an even broader role in the safety of southwest British Columbia. This will factor prominently into our future strategic planning.

As I prepare for my second term as chair, I want to acknowledge the entire board of directors for its leadership during this transformational time for E-Comm and to thank them for their vision and support. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the contribution of Ken Shymanski, who retired as our president & CEO in the fall of 2010.

On that note, it is my pleasure to introduce you to David Guscott who became our president & CEO in November. David's 30-year track record of leadership, innovation and building strategic partnerships is a perfect fit for the board's vision for E-Comm. Under his leadership, I am confident we'll continue to make a contribution to public safety and provide shareholder and customer value in ways that align with our region's collective public safety interests.

There is much to be proud of in 2010 and the board of directors and our dedicated staff intend to keep the momentum going as we focus on our vision of creating safer communities through outstanding service.





This is a particularly personal message for me to write as it is my first as E-Comm's new president & CEO.

Joining this dynamic young company was an easy decision for me because as a resident of southwest B.C., the concept of consolidated emergency communications is one I believe to be critical to ensuring a resilient region. There is no other organization that is currently taking such a significant and unique approach to building a strong emergency communications platform, and what is particularly exciting to consider are the many untapped possibilities for advancing the consolidated model even further.

Although solidifying our position as an international model of efficiency, innovation and leadership will form part of our future thinking, we will never lose sight of our primary purpose: to provide exceptional services that help save lives and protect property right here at home. Whether that's supporting public safety through radio interoperability, the development of innovative technology systems, or providing first-rate 9-1-1 and dispatch services, E-Comm remains committed to making a positive contribution to safer communities.

In the following pages you will read about many significant milestones in 2010 that stretch beyond our role in the safety and security of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. For example, we welcomed the Abbotsford Police Board as an E-Comm Class A shareholder, paving the way for its police department to transition to our radio network in 2011, the first outside of Metro Vancouver to do so. We also completed implementation of 9-1-1 location technology for cellular phones and we signed a five-year service agreement with our long-time and valued dispatch partner, the Ridge-Meadows RCMP. Our staff managed multiple high-level events for all of our dispatch customers, including shootings, home invasions, robberies and multi-structure fires. In all, our teams handled more than one million 9-1-1 calls, answering 96 per cent of those calls in five seconds or less. As a result, public confidence in 9-1-1 is at an all-time high of 89 per cent.

I am also very pleased to advise that, like previous years, most radio members received rebates of an average 2.2 per cent on their total radio and user equipment levies in 2010. Dispatch levies also decreased by an average nine per cent. We continued on this positive financial track as we prepared a 2011 budget with a zero per cent increase in dispatch levies and an average increase of just 1.6 per cent in radio levies, both of which are better than what was anticipated in the Strategic Financial Plan. E-Comm is well positioned to move forward financially and remains on track with its overall Strategic Financial Plan for ongoing deficit reduction.

E-Comm, like all successful organizations, will always be striving for ways to better itself. For me, that core value of continuous improvement will guide us as we work with our board, staff and key stakeholders to plan our future strategic direction.

E-Comm continued to focus on strategic measures to maximize efficiencies and minimize cost increases for our shareholders and customers.

Our back-up centre's operations, technology and procedures were regularly exercised and enhanced.

**E-Comm completed full implementation of 9-1-1 location technology for cell phones, well in advance of national deadline.**

9-1-1 public education materials and outreach received a 96 per cent approval rating from users.

Staff managed multiple high-level events including shootings, home invasions, robberies and multi-structure fires.

**A new pricing model has made dispatch service even more affordable; in fact, at less cost than many municipalities can do themselves.**

Radio network continued to provide seamless communications for police, fire and ambulance and exceeded all service targets in 2010.

**Public confidence in the 9-1-1 system hit an all-time high of 89 per cent.**



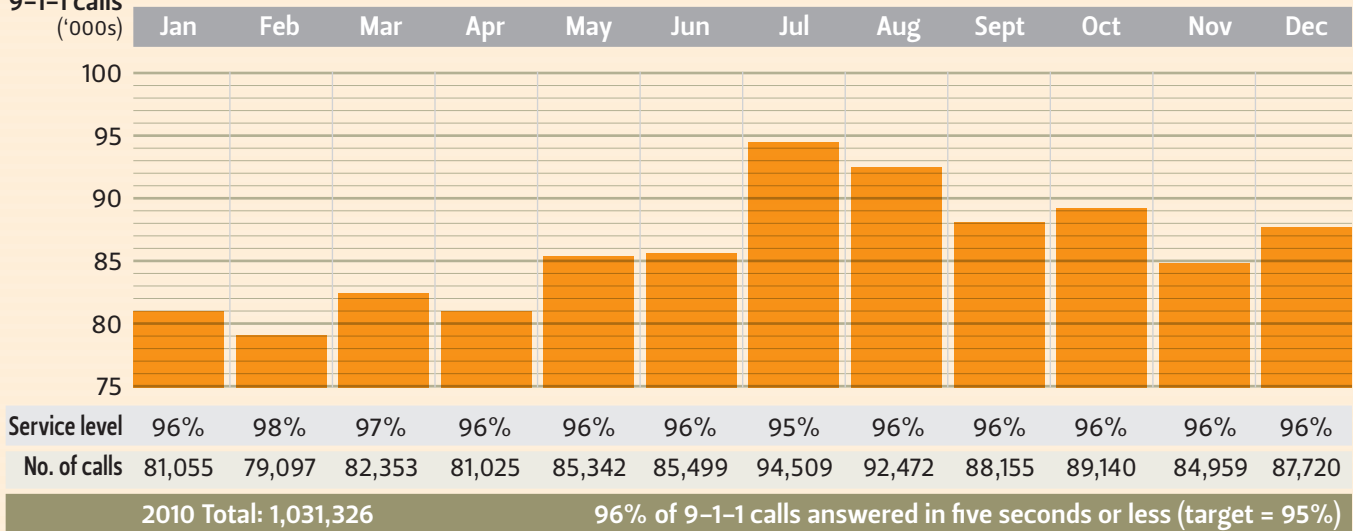
## 2010 PERFORMANCE RESULTS

### 9-1-1 SERVICES

In 2010, more than one million calls were placed to 9-1-1. Of those calls, 96 per cent were answered in five seconds or less.

The annual uptime for 9-1-1 technology was 99.995 per cent. A power outage to the telephone switch in December caused a brief disruption before back-up systems were activated, which affected our usual uptime of 100 per cent.

#### 9-1-1 calls (‘000s)



### WIDE-AREA RADIO NETWORK

- Network airtime (in seconds): 408,874,633
- Network transmissions\*: 107, 527, 437
- Total number of radios: 7,000
- Traffic grade of service\*\*: 0.01% (2010)
- Network availability: 99.9949%

The number of radios on the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio Network increased dramatically in 2010 in order to support the Integrated Security Unit for the 2010 Winter Games and the Vancouver, Richmond and West Vancouver police forces and Vancouver Fire-Rescue Services. The additional radios are considered an Olympic legacy as they were re-deployed after the Games to replace aging radios used throughout the Lower Mainland.

\* Number of times responders spoke on the radio

\*\* Grade of service represents the ability of the radio network to handle radio traffic volume. Industry Canada sets the standard for the public safety community, which is less than 3%. This means at the radio network's busiest hours, there cannot be more than 3% of all calls in those hours queued (waiting for available radio resources). The E-Comm radio network continues to operate within this standard.

### E-COMM WIDE-AREA RADIO SYSTEM NETWORK



Municipalities with all three emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) on the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio System Network.

• Abbotsford police to join in 2011.

# 2010 GAMES: Our busiest two weeks

By the time the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympics began, E-Comm was primed for a gold-medal performance. Our readiness was no accident though — it took years of planning to ensure our technology, our operational plans, and our staff were prepared for the busiest two weeks in our region's policing history.

Photo: Vancouver Sun



***“While the cameras focused on the crowds and uniforms in the street I was always keenly aware of the outstanding support we were receiving from the call takers, dispatchers, and radio technicians at E-Comm.”***

**Jim Chu, Vancouver Police Chief Constable**

***“The tremendous work E-Comm and the Integrated Security Unit did to define shared processes and communication paths during the Games paid off handsomely.”***

**Bud Mercer, RCMP Assistant Commissioner**

## **9-1-1 CALL VOLUME UP 11%**

As the 9-1-1 answer point for southwest B.C., ensuring that a rise in call volumes did not increase call-answer times was high on our priority list. Careful forecasting ensured the communication centre was adequately staffed to manage the more than 41,000 calls that were placed to 9-1-1 between February 12th and 28th. Indeed, service levels remained exceptionally strong throughout the Games, with 98 per cent of the month's total 9-1-1 call volume (79,000 calls) answered in five seconds or less.

## **EMERGENCY CALLS IN RICHMOND AND VANCOUVER UP SIGNIFICANTLY**

Emergency calls for the Vancouver Police Department increased by 42 per cent during Games time and Richmond, also part of the Games host region, experienced a 34 per cent increase for its RCMP detachment. Our police and fire call-takers managed more than 38,000 emergency, non-emergency and reports calls during the two-week Olympic period. With volume like that, it was no surprise that the E-Comm radio system was also tested, carrying the most traffic in its 11-year history. Like our staff, it performed tremendously under the pressure.





### DISPATCH TEAMS FEEL IMPACT OF INCREASED RADIO TRAFFIC

All shifts during the Games were extremely busy for our Operations area and presented many challenges. The demands on dispatch were apparent early on, especially during those first few days when rotating protests turned violent, testing our teams' mettle as they worked to support both officer and public safety.

With more than 2,000 additional radios on the ground to support police communications, radio transmissions were up significantly.

### RADIO SYSTEM GETS MAJOR WORKOUT DURING GAMES

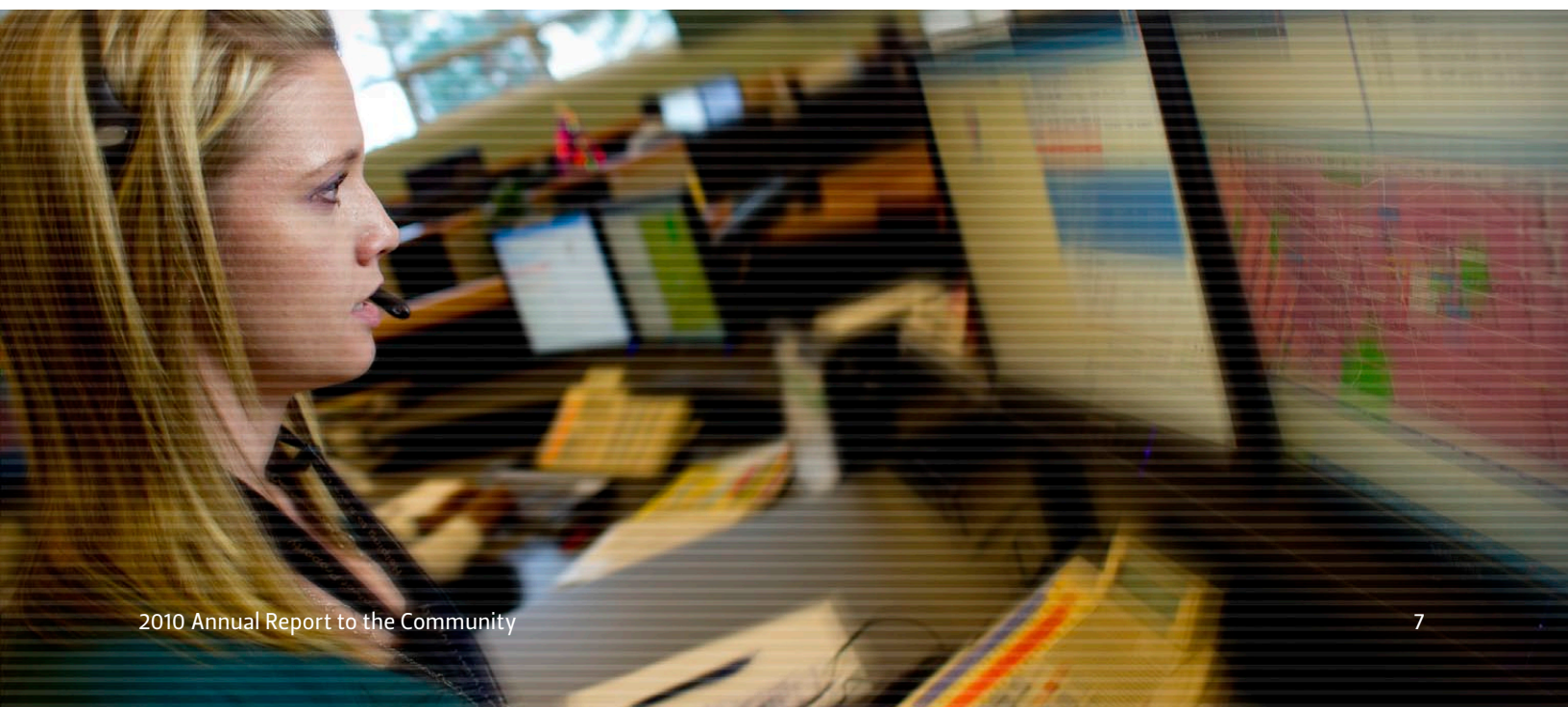
The E-Comm radio network performed extremely well under such intense pressure and a comparison of 2009 and 2010 data paints a clear picture of just how busy the radio network was. Transmissions (the number of times a responder spoke over the radio) on the opening day of the Games were 456,134 — up 40 per cent over the same day in 2009. That equals 1.7 million seconds in radio airtime, or 472 hours of talk in just one day!

Vancouver and Richmond both experienced tremendous increases in radio use among police, fire and ambulance personnel during the Olympics. Vancouver radio traffic was up 63 per cent and in Richmond, traffic rose by 61 per cent.

Despite heavy volume, the E-Comm radio system continued to outperform Industry Canada guidelines by keeping queuing (responders waiting to speak due to heavy traffic) to a minimum.

***“Our lowest number of radio transmissions during the 2010 Games was significantly higher than our highest number of transmissions in all of 2009. That shows you how hard everyone worked, even the technology.”***

**Peter Gauthier,  
Director of Wireless Services**





# BEYOND THE GAMES: Our year in review

Although the Olympic Games grabbed much of the spotlight in 2010, E-Comm also focused on implementing many other initiatives in support of our goals for technical, operational, financial and public safety leadership.

## TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP

- After becoming a Class A shareholder in 2010, the Abbotsford Police Department becomes the first force outside Metro Vancouver to join E-Comm's radio network when it transitions onto the system in the fall of 2011. In addition to better radio coverage, clarity and security, Abbotsford police will now have direct communication with other police agencies in the Lower Mainland.
- Public safety in southwest B.C. received an important boost in February with the completion of Wireless Phase II — general location information from cellular phones to 9-1-1. Call-takers now receive latitude and longitude coordinates that can be plotted on a computerized map for those callers who absolutely can't communicate their location. The new technology has the potential to shrink current search areas from 4,000 metres to 300 metres or less.
- E-Comm's innovative mapping system, E<sup>2</sup>MV, made another important contribution to public safety, this time assisting with local response in border communities. The RCMP Border Integrity Unit — responsible for securing Canada's border, excluding ports of entry — is now using E<sup>2</sup>MV to maintain a stronger situational awareness of events related to the Canada-US border. Use of the technology also assists the Border Integrity Operations Centre in initiating the appropriate responses.
- The ability of E-Comm's staff to deliver results has been recognized by Intergraph, the leading global provider of engineering and geospatial software. Their award of excellence — the *Icon Award* — was presented to E-Comm for providing Coquitlam Fire & Rescue and the Saanich Fire Department remote access to its computer-aided dispatch (CAD) technology.

***"We have some tricky geography out here that hampers communication. We're anticipating the E-Comm Radio System to help with that."***

**Abbotsford Mayor George Peary**

## OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- In the fall of 2010, we signed an agreement with the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD-South) to provide fire dispatch and 9-1-1 services in the spring of 2011. E-Comm already provides dispatch for fire departments in Squamish and Whistler, and for police in those communities as well as Pemberton. With the addition of SLRD-South to our fire dispatch roster, E-Comm will dispatch for more than 500 kilometres of response area in the Sea-to-Sky corridor — meaning responders in this vast area now have improved communication and information-sharing capabilities which will contribute to more efficient response.



- Swift and skillful actions of police in Surrey, Vancouver and Delta, combined with quick-thinking E-Comm call-takers and dispatchers, significantly minimized risk to the public during a police incident in June. Multiple 9-1-1 calls from residents reporting 'shots fired' in Cloverdale indicated a male suspect fleeing the scene; a cross-jurisdictional police pursuit was immediately launched. To support the police effort, E-Comm call-takers obtained Global Positioning Coordinates (GPS) from the suspect's cellphone provider as his vehicle sped through multiple municipalities. Our dispatchers coordinated radio communications through E-Comm's interoperable radio system.
- When two Gibsons landmarks went up in flames in June, E-Comm's fire dispatch team was there to support local responders and public safety. A massive response effort was required after a heritage building and marine diesel repair shop went up in flames, threatening the community's waterfront. Outstanding efforts by firefighters, police officers, call-takers and dispatchers helped contain the fire.

Throughout the year, we were called upon to support and assist our partners in situations that highlighted our dedication to quality service and responsiveness:

- When high winds wreaked havoc with Burnaby RCMP's emergency and non-emergency lines in July, quick response from E-Comm helped ensure continued service to that community. Our Operations teams quickly re-routed 9-1-1 calls to our call-takers, who managed more than 20 calls for the RCMP during the two-hour outage.
- Coquitlam Fire & Rescue found itself in need of temporary accommodation for its call-takers and dispatchers in early December and called E-Comm for assistance. Quick work by our operational and technical teams resulted in a temporary dispatch location being set up at the E-Comm building where their team worked for several days.
- E-Comm played an integral role in the launch of the Vancouver Police Department's project Sister Watch, taking on the responsibility of answering the 24/7 tip line. Part of the mission to combat violence against women in the Downtown Eastside, the tip line provides a non-intrusive way to collect valuable information from Downtown Eastside residents on a wide range of crimes against women.



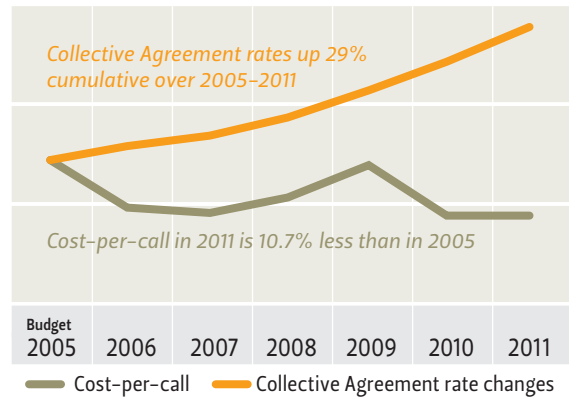
Photo: Alan Ferguson





## FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP

### EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS



- Cost-per-call is based on total police levies divided by total police call volumes (emergency, non-emergency and reports).
- Collective Agreement rate changes based on annual increases for 2005 to 2011, including the one-paygrade increase negotiated in 2009 for call-takers, which impacted the net increase in 2009 and 2010.

The chart above provides a comparative analysis of the cost-per-call for police dispatch and collective agreement increases between 2005–2011. The efficiency gains made by E-Comm over this seven-year period illustrate the benefits of consolidation as the cost-per-call has decreased by 10.7 per cent (\$2.36 per call) even though collective agreement increases on a cumulative basis are up 29 per cent. Efficiencies are part of the overall value E-Comm provides.

### PUBLIC SAFETY LEADERSHIP

- E-Comm's leading edge 9-1-1 public education program continued to attract interest from other jurisdictions. After requests from police departments in Ottawa, Calgary, Dallas and Kent, Washington to use our public education materials, E-Comm developed a program that allows our materials to be used in multiple jurisdictions. Ottawa was the first agency to use our newspaper campaign on accidental calls and caller location.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2010, E-Comm continued to focus on strategic measures to maximize efficiencies and minimize costs. This was reflected in E-Comm's financial results for the 2010 fiscal year, with net earnings of \$1.4M. This was due to a combination of favourable factors including the introduction of a new dispatch staffing model, which resulted in decreased staffing costs, the sale/rental of fully levied/depreciated radios, one-time ancillary revenues earned from the 2010 Olympics and a focus on reducing operating expenses.

E-Comm also addressed the ongoing timing differences in levy recovery versus accounting as it relates to amortization and interest by changing the accounting related to recognizing revenues from levies. These changes have been applied retroactively and are reflected in the 2010 audited financial statements, which result in statements that better reflect the provision of service to user agencies. This has resulted in a reduction of the cumulative year-end deficit to \$1.4M.

As in previous years, most radio members received rebates of an average 2.2 per cent on their total radio and user equipment levies in 2010. The 2011 budget had zero per cent increase in dispatch levies and an average 1.6 per cent increase in radio levies, both of which are better than what was anticipated in the Strategic Financial Plan. E-Comm is well positioned to move forward financially and remains on track with its overall Strategic Financial Plan for ongoing deficit reduction.

### STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND DEFICIT

	2010	2009 <i>restated*</i>
Revenues	45,038,062	46,077,747
Direct operating expenses	30,052,691	32,213,309
	14,985,371	13,864,438
Other expenses		
Accretion, amortization and other	9,011,923	8,919,068
Interest expense	4,538,744	4,762,019
	13,550,667	13,681,087
Excess of revenue over expenses	1,434,704	183,351
Deficit, beginning of year		-
As previously reported	(16,242,341)	(15,294,438)
Restatements*	13,405,875	12,274,621
As restated	(2,836,466)	(3,019,817)
Deficit, end of year	(1,401,762)	(2,836,466)

\* The corporation has restated its prior years' financial statements for a change in the application of certain accounting policies with respect to revenue recognition of capital assets and related billings, as well as treating user equipment as direct finance leases.

E-Comm's financial statements have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for not-for-profit entities. To obtain full copies of E-Comm's 2010 Audited Financial Results including the Auditor's Report to the Shareholders and Notes to the Financial Statements please visit [ecomm911.ca](http://ecomm911.ca).



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

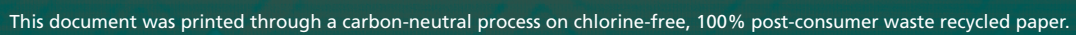
### REPRESENTING

<b>Jocelyn Kelley</b>	<i>Independent Director, Board Chair</i>
<b>Kevin Begg</b>	<i>Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General</i>
<b>Helen Blackburn</b>	<i>Independent Director, Audit Committee Chair</i>
<b>Mayor Ernie Daykin</b>	<i>District of Maple Ridge and City of Pitt Meadows</i>
<b>Rebecca (Becky) Denlinger</b>	<i>Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General</i>
<b>Daphne Corbett</b>	<i>Independent Director</i>
<b>Councillor Charlie Fox</b>	<i>Township of Langley, City of White Rock, City of Surrey</i>
<b>Len Garis</b>	<i>City of Surrey, City of White Rock, Township of Langley</i>
<b>Mayor Pamela Goldsmith-Jones</b>	<i>District of West Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, Governance Committee Chair</i>
<b>Cindy Grauer</b>	<i>City of Vancouver</i>
<b>Councillor Barrie Lynch</b>	<i>City of Coquitlam, City of Port Moody, City of Port Coquitlam, City of New Westminster, Village of Belcarra</i>
<b>Ernie Malone</b>	<i>Royal Canadian Mounted Police</i>
<b>Councillor Bill McNulty</b>	<i>City of Richmond</i>
<b>Karl Preuss</b>	<i>Corporation of Delta</i>
<b>Bob Rolls</b>	<i>Vancouver Police Board</i>
<b>Michael Sanderson</b>	<i>Emergency Health Services Commission</i>
<b>Sheldon Stoilen</b>	<i>Independent Director, Human Resources &amp; Compensation Committee Chair</i>
<b>Mayor Joe Trasolini</b>	<i>Independent Police Boards of Port Moody, West Vancouver, Abbotsford, New Westminster, South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority</i>

## E-COMM LEADERSHIP TEAM

<b>David Guscott</b>	<i>President &amp; CEO</i>
<b>Peter Gauthier</b>	<i>Director of Wireless Services</i>
<b>Glen Miller</b>	<i>Director of Information Technology</i>
<b>Beatrix Nicolato</b>	<i>Vice-President &amp; Chief Financial Officer</i>
<b>Erin Ramsay</b>	<i>Director of Human Resources</i>
<b>Jody Robertson</b>	<i>Director of Corporate Communications &amp; Corporate Secretary</i>
<b>Doug Watson</b>	<i>Vice-President of Operations</i>









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