



NEXT GENERATION 911

Will you continue to have 9-1-1 coverage in your jurisdiction?

By Eldon Amoroso, ICT Committee member, in collaboration with the ICT Committee and the NG9-1-1 Working Group

NG9-1-1 is a CRITICAL SUBJECT for POLICE EXECUTIVES because if all the first responder answering points and dispatch centers in your community are not NG9-1-1 compliant when the changeover happens, your community will cease to have 9-1-1 services. The old 9-1-1 system will cease to work.

We are concerned that many agencies may not be suitably prepared for a couple of reasons. First, in March of this year we ran a short survey for CACP members entitled, "Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Readiness Survey of Canadian Police Services." It was a very quick survey with 7 questions. There were only 28 respondents to the survey. This seems very low for an issue that has significant budget impacts, requires a multi-year allocation of significant resources, and the success of which determines whether or not your community will continue to have 9-1-1 services.

Secondly, of those who did respond, there are a few areas that cause concern. While we understand the responses would not be statistically reliable for the entire CACP membership, the responses do tell us something, and we sincerely thank those who responded. Listed below are the results from the survey.

Question 1 - Is someone of rank in your organization specifically assigned to be responsible for all aspects of a successful conversion to NG9-1-1?

More than 28% said No or Don't Know.



Question 2 - Are you aware of the total NG9-1-1 costs, for both capital and ongoing operational expenditures (ex. hardware, software, workstations, computer-aided dispatch upgrades, voice and data recording, security costs, etc.)?

More than half (57%) of those who completed the questionnaire said no.



Question 3 - Have those costs been approved and been included in your budget at this time?

Exactly 50% said No or Don't know. Significant costs will be incurred in both capital and operating budgets. Many jurisdictions may need to take a multi-year funding approach and 2022 budget preparations will be upon us before we know it. Ensuring your funding body knows about these costs as soon as possible may help with funding outcomes.



Question 4 - What is the status of your Request for Information (RFI) or Request for Proposal (RFP) process to secure equipment and services to convert to the new NG9-1-1 system?

26% of respondents said the documents are currently being drafted, while an additional 26% said the process is not yet started. Police services are finding that this process may take up to a year and a half to complete.

Question 5 - What is the status of your collaboration with local fire and paramedic/ambulance services to ensure your collective readiness for the NG9-1-1 transition, thereby ensuring Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) will be able to receive and transfer calls?

Almost 43% said discussions have taken place but that there are no conclusions yet, while 25% said discussions have not yet taken place. Please remember that all first responder call taker and dispatch operations must be able to receive NG9-1-1 calls, even by transfer, or you will not have 9-1-1 services in your community. This major transition requires interagency cooperation.

Question 6 - Has your organization committed to an on-site or hosted NG9-1-1 solution?

Half (50%) of those who completed the questionnaire indicated that they will be proceeding with an on-site solution. Almost a third (32%) said that they are unsure about what to select at this time, with another 7% responding that they have opted to proceed with a different option.

Question 7 - If you answered 'We are unsure about what to select at this time' for question 6, do you need more information to support your decision making process?

30% said yes.

An additional danger of a later start on the NG9-1-1 upgrade, is that even if your jurisdiction allocates the money and resources to make this happen, you may be in the situation of having the money, but no vendor having the resources to help you complete your project before the March 30, 2024 deadline. While the CRTC is currently reviewing the dates, the change in the end date is likely to change by months, not years, so the 3-year window to complete this transition has already started.

The first step toward keeping 9-1-1 services in your community is to assign a person with the necessary rank to get the NG9-1-1 transition done by this deadline. 9-1-1 services in your community are at risk. If you need more information on this subject please contact the ICT Committee by emailing to eldon.amoroso@gmail.com.

