

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



Emergency Communication Networks

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TO: Emergency Communications Board (ECB) / Emergency Services Board (ESB)
Chairs and Regional Stakeholders

FROM: Director Dana Wahlberg

DATE: April 20, 2020

SUBJECT: ECN Support of PSAP Continuity of Operations Efforts

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, there is a significant potential to impact staffing levels in our Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). The need for coordinated planning and preparedness related to continuity of operations has taken on a new sense of urgency.

PSAPs are vulnerable to a variety of hazards related to natural disasters, technological failures, and/or deliberate criminal/terrorist acts. PSAPs maintain Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) to ensure core emergency communication capabilities are not compromised in these situations. These capabilities include:

- 9-1-1 call handling: The current 9-1-1 call handling network infrastructure in Minnesota provides the capability for PSAPs to route 9-1-1 calls to one another with relative ease.
- Land Mobile Radio (LMR) communications: Through the Allied Radio Matrix for Emergency Response (ARMER) statewide LMR system, PSAPs also have the ability to communicate with emergency responders across the state with relative ease.
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD): While PSAPs have established capabilities for 9-1-1 call sharing and interoperable LMR communications, the same cannot be said for the ability to transition 9-1-1 caller location, incident mapping, and CAD event information to another PSAP during a COOP activation.

With the COVID-19 threat evolving on a daily basis, there is an emergent need to act now to address this capability gap. During a COOP activation, it is imperative that 9-1-1 calls continue to be answered, the location of the emergency quickly identified, and law enforcement, fire, and EMS resources dispatched to the incident without delay. The Emergency Communication Networks (ECN) recently entered into an agreement with RapidDeploy, a well-respected cloud-based CAD vendor, under State of Minnesota's emergency procurement rules in place during this peacetime emergency. For a six-month period, RapidDeploy is under contract to supply a state-funded CAD platform to provide PSAPs with 9-1-1 caller location information, incident mapping, and event tracking capabilities during a COOP activation. The Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB) is pursuing a separate, but closely aligned, six-month contract with RapidDeploy to provide the same CAD functionality to the PSAPs within its region.

Leslie Sticht, ECN 9-1-1 Technical Engineer, is the lead on this project for the six greater Minnesota regions. She will be supported by Dan Craigie, 9-1-1 Program Manager, as well as ECN's two Regional Interoperability Coordinators (RICs), Marcus Bruning and Steve Tait.

I want to be clear ECN is not 'driving' the implementation of a Statewide CAD system with this initiative. Conversely, this tool is intended to supplement your existing CAD systems by providing regions with a viable, timely, and state-funded solution in support of PSAP continuity of operations activities. Our goal is to ensure PSAPs are equipped with the tools and resources needed to seamlessly and successfully transition essential emergency communication functions to another PSAP without comprising the level and quality of service.

We will schedule a series of informational webinars/demonstrations in the next several weeks for you to learn more about the project and get your questions answered. Due to the time sensitive nature of this project, there are a number of action items or next steps we're asking for each region to consider and respond by Friday, May 15.

- Provide ECN with a commitment to participate in the implementation of the RapidDeploy solution as part of its continuity of operations planning and preparedness efforts.
- Identify two PSAPs (primary and secondary) to serve as 'regional hubs' to host the RapidDeploy solution. These 'regional hubs' will be available to provide 9-1-1 call handling, dispatch, and basic CAD services for the impacted PSAPs within the region during a COOP activation.
- Designate a representative who will serve on a temporary ECN-led workgroup tasked with addressing governance, standard operating procedures (SOPs), technology, training, and usage issues related to the implementation of the RapidDeploy solution.

Please contact Leslie Sticht via e-mail at leslie.sticht@state.mn.us at your earliest opportunity to discuss the action items noted above. We want to hear from each region no later than Friday, May 15. Please don't hesitate to contact myself or Leslie should you have any questions or concerns regarding this initiative.

Thanks to all of you for your anticipated support, collaboration, and engagement in this critically important initiative for public safety communications in Minnesota.