



911 Emergency Communications for British Columbia Incorporated Agreement

RECOMMENDATION

That the 9-1-1 Call Answer Centre Service agreement between Emergency Communications for British Columbia Incorporated and the Central Island 911 Partnership for January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, be approved.

BACKGROUND

In British Columbia, the delivery of 911 services is optional and is a local government responsibility to establish as a service if desired. The Regional District of Nanaimo has established two areas for 911 Dispatch Services: Central Island 911 (Electoral Areas A, B, C and the District of Lantzville) and North Island 911 (Electoral Areas E, F, G, H, City of Parksville and the Town of Qualicum Beach (Attachment 1: 911 Dispatch Service Areas).

Central Island 911 Services

For Electoral Areas A, B, C and the District of Lantzville, the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) established 911 services which are provided through two separate service agreements: Primary Safety Answering Point (PSAP) and for Secondary Safety Answering Point (SSAP).

The RDN established a PSAP service through Bylaw 887, to provide a 911 emergency communications service to Electoral Areas A, B, C and the District of Lantzville. This PSAP service was previously provided by the Nanaimo RCMP Operations Communications Centre until 2015, at which time the RDN entered into a partnership with the City of Nanaimo (City) and Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) called the 'Central Island 911 Partnership', (CI911). At that time, the CI911 Partnership transitioned PSAP services to Emergency Communications for British Columbia Incorporated (E-COMM) under a 911 call answer centre service agreement. The CI911 Partnership share and support the 911 PSAP services under a Partnership Agreement, with the most recent one-year agreement having expired on December 31, 2024.

E-COMM is BC's largest 911 call centre providing 911 call answer services in 25 regional districts with a responsibility for 99 percent of the PSAP call volume in British Columbia. There remain a few exceptions such as the City of Prince Rupert who operates a combined 911 Fire Dispatch and Communications Centre or the North Coast Regional District, who does not provide any 911 services. E-COMM operates in a post-disaster facility in the lower mainland with a fully redundant back up site at the South Island E-COMM post-disaster Centre in Saanich.

The cost of the E-COMM agreement has to date been partially offset by a shared call answer levy between the RDN, CVRD and the City. The three CI911 partners have acknowledged that they wish to enter into a new agreement with E-COMM, who is proposing an agreement for the term January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025, with the potential to extend through an amendment or to enter into a new agreement. The proposed one (1) year

agreement period is proposed by ECOMM and is meant to allow for a review due to the transition to NG911 and the potential need for agreement changes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The fee for the E-COMM PSAP service for the one-year agreement term is \$522,510. Previously, the service has been offset by the \$0.47 Call Answer Levy (CAL) however, given the increases to the cost of the service, there may be a need for a review of the CAL in the future. As well, the CAL is collected based on landlines and does not currently include a levy for mobile devices.

When the CAL was first introduced in 1999 it was essential that the City and RDN approve a CAL at the same time because they shared an Emergency Service Zone (ESZ) and it is difficult and costly to separate lines within an Emergency Service Zone (ESZ). Rather than trying to separate the ESZ to change the cost share formula of the Central Island 911 Service Partnership Agreement to call volumes, the parties have agreed to retain the Cost Share Formula as is, based on the population. Using census figures, the share of costs by jurisdiction have been updated to the City at 48%, CVRD at 43% and the RDN at 9%.

REVIEWED BY:

- L. Grant, A/Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT

1. 2025 ECOMM 9-1-1 Call Answer Agreement - Central Island 911 Partnership.pdf