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# Enhanced 911 Advisory Committee

Annual Legislative Update - 2017

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## COVER LETTER

December 22, 2017

TO: The Senate Energy, Environment & Telecommunications Committee

The House Public Safety Committee

Cc: Washington State Senators and Representatives

FROM: The Enhanced 911 Advisory Committee (AC)

Joann Boggs, AC Chair, Deputy Director, Pend Oreille County Emergency Management

Richard Kirton, AC vice Chair, Director, Kitsap 911

SUBJECT: 2017 REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE, E911 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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RCW 38.52.532 requires, “On an annual basis, the enhanced 911 advisory committee must provide an update on the status of enhanced 911 service in the state to the appropriate committees in the Legislature. The update must include progress by counties towards creating greater efficiencies in enhanced 911 operations including, but not limited to, regionalization of facilities, centralization of equipment, and statewide purchasing.” This is the annual E911 Advisory Committee Legislative Report to the House Public Safety and Senate Energy, Environment & Telecommunications Committees.

We are pleased to report that Washington State’s progress toward key emergency services goals is showing significant results. As outlined in this report, great progress has been made in the deployment of Next Generation 911 (NG911) services.

The 911 network and systems are in transformation across the nation and all states are addressing costs and consumer expectations. The goal is to build a secure system with leadership that is deeply focused on the safety of our state citizens while remaining fiscally responsible.

Thank you for your interest in this work.

Attachment

cc: The Honorable Governor Jay Inslee

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## INTRODUCTION

This 2017 summary report to the Legislature is submitted by the Enhanced E911 Advisory Committee pursuant to RCW 38.52.532. The Washington State E911 Advisory Committee was created to advise and assist the State Enhanced 911 Coordinator<sup>1</sup> in coordinating and facilitating the implementation and operation of Enhanced 9-1-1 throughout the state.

## STATUS OF ENHANCED 911 SERVICE

911 is a critical infrastructure through which people can access public safety resources during emergencies. The 911 public safety telecommunicators and dispatchers that answer and react to those calls are the first link in the chain of the public safety delivery. The United States Congress, the Washington State Legislature and federal agencies including the Federal Communications Commission recognize the importance of 911 systems. The transition to Internet Protocol (IP) based technology for delivery of 911 is imperative. Next Generation 911 will address network interoperability, system resilience, security and reliability, improve connections between 911 call centers, and support 911 voice and data. These capabilities enhance accessibility of emergency services to the public and provide Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) with information submitted by varied communications technologies which emergency responders can assess and use to respond to emergencies. The State E911 Coordination Office (SECO) with advice and assistance from the E911 Advisory Committee began the transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911) in 2009 to address the gap in services and technology that existed in the analog system.

NG911 systems require an Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network (ESInet) as the core infrastructure to assure appropriate routing of 911 calls within the state. The ESInet provides for 911 call routing, transport, interoperability, security, and related services. The SECO completed the transition to a statewide ESInet (effectively an IP-based selective router system) in 2012. The current ESInet requires extensive technology enhancements to allow for Next Generation 911 type data communications. On June 19, 2016, the SECO completed the procurement process and signed a contract for a new ESInet vendor and has begun to implement ESInet II which will bring NG911 connectivity to all county PSAPs. This implementation is well underway and is expected to be completed by late-2019.

The Military Department was on course to stay within appropriations levels in SFY 2017-19 biennial budget. Unanticipated technical and contractual objections by the incumbent provider have forced the delay of implementation. The delay has extended the need to operate the current ESInet through the remainder of the biennium which will add \$5.2M in costs for the 2017-2019 biennium. The SECO is addressing this unexpected cost through cost cutting measures and reductions within the existing E911 maintenance funding level for the FY2017-19 biennium but will need an additional \$4.2M supplemental appropriation to fully address the shortfall.

The delay added a year of dual provision costs. The anticipated total of monthly recurring payments for the current ESInet will continue to decrease into the first half of FY2020, as the transition from the old to the new

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<sup>1</sup> SECO is the state **911 Authority**: The Washington Military Department (WMD) is the governmental entity responsible for 911 service operations in Washington State for funding, planning, management, and/or operations of certain service components.

contractor continues. Once fully transitioned to the new ESInet the network costs will be commensurate with the current contract service levels and the SECO should be able to absorb these costs within the standard level of funding appropriation.

Under normal conditions the Enhanced 911 account is the only funding source necessary for state E911 expenses. Due to E911 fund appropriations by the Legislature to other than E911 purposes in the past totaling \$33.47M, combined with the projected revenue for the current biennium by the Department of Revenue, there is not a sufficient E911 fund balance for this additional appropriations request. Previous biennia appropriations to non-E911 purposes include:

- 2001-2003
  - \$6M to State General Fund
- 2003-2005, 2005-2007, 2007-2009 and 2009-2011
  - \$612k, \$573k, \$572k, and \$603k respectively, a total of \$2.36M, was appropriated from the State E911 Account to the Washington State Patrol for computer aided dispatch replacement.
- 2011-2013
  - \$2M was appropriated from the State E911 Account to the Department of Corrections for radio system upgrades. Resulted in a temporary suspension of 911 telephone systems purchases, delaying the implementation of NG911.
- 2013-2015
  - \$10.8M was appropriated from the State E911 Account to the Washington State Military Department to replace normal general fund source of funding.
  - \$3.87M was appropriated from the State E911 Account to the Washington State Patrol for Mobile Office Platform.
  - \$2M was appropriated from the State E911 Account to the Department of Corrections for radio system upgrades.
- 2015-2017
  - \$8.06M was appropriated from the State E911 Account to the Washington Military Department – later reduced to \$2.7M to replace normal general fund source of funding.
  - \$3.23M was appropriated from the State E911 Account to Washington State Patrol – later reduced to \$3.009M
  - \$633k was appropriated from the State E911 Account for state government policy compensation changes.
  - \$103k was appropriated from the State E911 Account to King County for a CPR cellular pilot project.

- 2017-2019
  - There were no appropriations from the State E911 Account designated for non-911 purposes.

The Legislature took special effort to ensure no appropriations for purposes other than 911 were included in this biennial budget. This effort was made because federal grants for NG911 will be available in this biennium. States with a recent history of “diverting” 911 funds are not eligible to apply for federal grants.

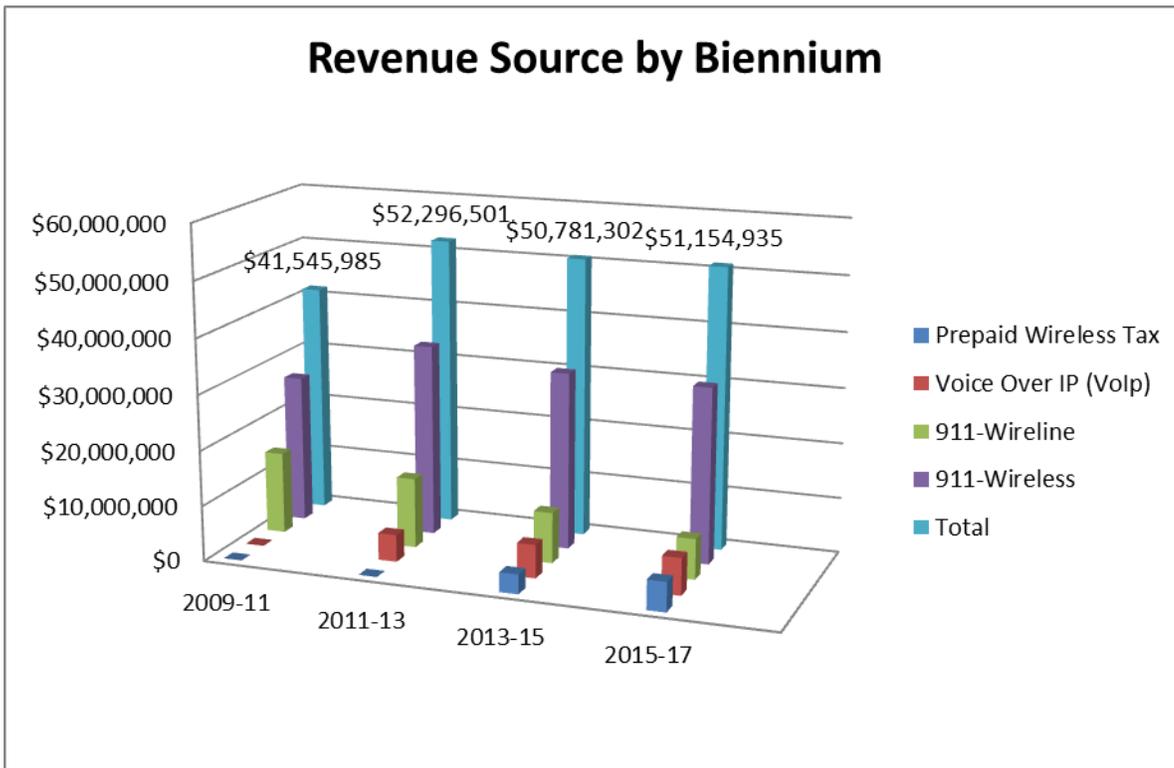
Implementation of the statewide Next Generation 911 system requires a funding model that assures 911 excise tax revenues collected from Washington state citizens be fully appropriated for this purpose and only for this purpose. The excise taxes are intended for system development, maintenance, current operating requirements, and to modernize the 911 network and PSAP customer premise equipment (CPE). These funds are allocated to ensure the state 911 emergency public safety communication system is capable of processing data and voice technology statewide. State statute RCW 38.52.540 was a mandate by the Legislature that assured all monies from 911 excise taxes be used only to support the 911 system.

### *Revenues & Expenditures*

#### History

State and county E911 excise tax revenues are remitted to the Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR), which distributes funds in accordance with RCW Chapter 82.14B. The E911 excise taxes are applied to each switched access line, wireless subscribers, and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) service line which were set at the maximum rates by the Legislature in 2011. On January 1, 2014, prepaid wireless retailers were also required to remit E911 excise taxes on each retail transaction at the point of sale. The SECO, under the Washington State Military Department, is the designated 911 network administrator.

## Revenue Source by Biennium



**State excise tax collections have been shifting from primarily landline remissions to primarily wireless over the past eight to 10 years. There were one-time revenue corrections in years 2013 and 2017 which account for a spike in revenue. Over the past six years, adjusting for the one-time events, the excise tax has remained around \$50M.**

### Current Status of the State E911 Fund

Biennium 2015-2017 ended with a balance of \$1.08M in the State E911 account. For biennium 2017-2019 the Department of Revenue is forecasting \$52.4M in state enhanced 911 telephone tax receipts, which results in a projected total of \$53.4M tax revenue into the account during the current biennium. For the current biennium, the Legislature appropriated \$50.2M to the State E911 Account. In addition, in the current appropriation a \$2M proviso was unexpectedly appropriated out of the fund for grants to small and medium-sized, rural counties for replacement of equipment, which further restricts available funds. If all projections come to pass, the projected balance in the account at the end of the current biennium will be approximately \$1.6M. The projected balance will not be enough to cover expenses; therefore, the SECO is submitting a supplemental budget request of \$4.2M.

### PROGRESS TOWARD GREATER EFFICIENCIES

#### *Regionalization of Facilities*

#### Benton & Franklin Counties

In SFY2015, Benton and Franklin counties completed a SECO funded regionalization study seeking greater efficiencies for both counties. Both counties are currently engaged in discussions regarding the possible regionalization of the two currently independent PSAPs. It is expected that in calendar year 2018, the Franklin

County PSAP will close and its operations will move to the Benton County PSAP, under the direction of the Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM), as a Regionalized PSAP.

#### Jefferson & Clallam Counties

In SFY2015, Clallam and Jefferson counties completed a SECO funded regionalization study seeking greater efficiencies for both counties. In January 2016, both counties entered into a regionalization agreement with the intent to continue efforts in combining the two currently independent PSAPs into a single regionalized PSAP. At the same time, both Counties appointed Karl Hatton, the Director of JEFFCOM911, to be the Director of both PENCOM (Clallam) and JEFFCOM 911, and to begin the process of combining operations.

#### Snohomish County -- SNOCOM & SNOPAC (Snohomish County 911)

There have been two PSAPs operating in Snohomish County for decades. After more than 18 months of thorough deliberation, the SNOCOM and SNOPAC Boards of Directors took action to consolidate the two organizations. The new organization will be known as Snohomish County 911. The timelines for this action are as follows:

- SNOAC & SNOCOM will become Snohomish County 911 effective January 1, 2018.
- Consolidation of personnel into the SNOPAC facility will occur no later than January 2019.

#### Pierce County -- SouthSound911

Consolidation and co-location efforts have been successful with the Pierce County PSAPs. Specifically, Puyallup Communications has co-located with South Sound 35<sup>th</sup> Street Branch, and Fire Comm has relocated to the Puyallup facility. The agency is still on track to fully integrate under one roof with the construction of a new facility due in 2019/20.

#### *Centralization of Equipment*

Efforts and pilot programs are underway across Washington State for the centralization of equipment in the following PSAPs:

- CRESA, TCOMM911, and Wahkiakum County 911
- Columbia County 911 and Walla Walla Emergency Services Communications

#### CRESA TCOMM911 Pilot Project:

Completed in 2015, Thurston and Clark counties initiated a geographically diverse, dual-hosted remote prototype pilot program. This program allows counties, which choose to be a “remote” PSAP, to reduce on-site equipment and overall costs, while increasing redundancy. Clark and Thurston counties have completed an interconnection between themselves and completed the first remote PSAP connection with Wahkiakum County. The initial progress report on the pilot project calculated the savings of the host/remote configuration at \$50k less than if Wahkiakum had installed a stand-alone telephone system.

#### Columbia County 911 and Walla Walla Emergency Services Communications:

Columbia and Walla Walla Counties completed the purchase and installation of a shared Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system with Walla Walla housing and maintaining the common “back end” of the system.

## STATUS OF NG911 SERVICE

- ESInet Vendor: On July 19, 2016, the Military Department awarded the contract for the statewide ESInet to Comtech Telecommunications Corporation (Comtech) for a period of 5 years following the transition of the last PSAP to the new system. The transition from the current vendor to Comtech has begun and is expected to be complete by December 2019.
- NG911 capable customer premise equipment (CPE) that are connected using a direct Session Initiated Protocol (SIP) connection are installed in: Benton, Chelan/Douglas, Clallam, Clark, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Pierce, San Juan, Snohomish, Spokane, Stevens, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, Whatcom, and Yakima counties, plus WSP-Tacoma and WSP-Wenatchee.
- NG911 capable CPE that are not yet using a direct Session Initiated Protocol (SIP) connection are installed in: Adams, Columbia, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Island, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Skagit, Skamania, and Whitman/Asotin counties, plus WSP-Bellevue and WSP-Marysville. These locations will become direct SIP connected, when they are “cut-over” to the new ESInet.
- There will be several secondary PSAPs using obsolete equipment. These PSAPs do not receive the original 911 calls but do perform as dispatch centers and/or back-up PSAPs.
- Interim Text to 9-1-1 progress includes final statewide policy recommendations development, security requirements, training curriculum development and public education program development. To date, there are 12 PSAPs in 11 Counties receiving Text to 9-1-1: Clallam, Clark, Grant, Jefferson, Kitsap, Pacific, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston and Wahkiakum counties.

### *Challenges*

Cybersecurity Protection: Because all networks are vulnerable to security attacks and compromises, conversion of the 911 systems to IP technologies increases not only our capabilities but also the vulnerabilities to the entire 911 system. Several counties are, or have begun, addressing 911 security at the PSAPs and the new ESInet includes an extensive set of security sub-systems and protocols. All these activities and systems will help mitigate – not eliminate – the threats posed by use of these new technologies.

### Funding:

2017-19 Biennium Decision Package – Legislature approval of the biennial budget supplemental request submitted by the SECO and Military Department is essential. If the supplemental request is not approved the SECO will have to reduce funding in areas other than NG911, such as funding to small and medium counties, to complete the NG911 project in compliance with contractual obligations. The E911 Advisory Committee to the SECO strongly recommends approval of the 2017-19 Decision Package as submitted by the Military Department on behalf of the State E911 Coordination Office.

## CONCLUSION

The Committee respectfully offers this report to the Legislature. The report addresses issues that relate to policies and funding common to state and local jurisdictions in the provision of 911 services. Ensuring accuracy of information submitted to the Legislature and to the Federal Communications Commission in compliance of reporting requirements are focus points of this report from the 911 Advisory Committee. Our common goal is to ensure a robust emergency communications system that continues to save the lives of citizens.