

Surrey & White Rock Join Emergency Communications Elite

The cities of Surrey and White Rock have linked their Fire Department emergency communications services to the E-Comm radio system, creating the largest shared emergency communications coverage area in British Columbia.

The communications circle was completed with the March 16, 2004 transition of the Surrey and White Rock Fire Departments to the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio System, already in use by the Surrey and White Rock RCMP and the BC Ambulance Service.

Now, all three major emergency service agencies in Surrey & White Rock (police, fire, ambulance) will be able to communicate directly with one another and with their emergency service counterparts in surrounding jurisdictions. The only other municipalities with this communications capability are Delta, Richmond, Port Moody and Vancouver.

In addition to the ability to directly communicate with other emergency responders

both in and outside of Surrey and White Rock, the E-Comm radio system offers enhanced personnel safety capabilities (emergency buttons), increased reliability and clarity, and higher peak traffic capacity.

Surrey Fire Chief Len Garis says, "on a day-to-day basis, the opportunities for

the previous system. The impact on public safety and response personnel safety is going to be very significant."

More than 5,400 wide-area radios are now active in southwest British Columbia. Currently, the network processes approximately 7.8 million radio transmissions each month.

The uniqueness of the Surrey coverage area made for a technically complex transition, and so the expertise found in the Surrey and White Rock Fire departments greatly assisted

interoperability of this system, combined with better in-building coverage, are two important features that will help keep firefighters safer, which makes for increased public safety."

White Rock Fire Chief Brian McMurdo adds, "White Rock is pleased with the coverage footprint of the radio system, which provides a dramatic improvement over

E-Comm in the interfacing of our two systems.

With the addition of the Delta (December 2003), Surrey and White Rock Fire departments, there are now six fire departments on the E-Comm radio system including Vancouver Fire & Rescue, Port Moody Fire Department and Richmond Fire-Rescue.

Thanks to:

Surrey

Fire Chief Len Garis
Deputy Chief Bud Livesey
Firefighter Larry Thomas

White Rock

Fire Chief Brian McMurdo
Deputy Chief Phil Lemire

Delta

Fire Chief Gord Freeborn
Deputy Chief Rick Lehbauer
Firefighter Shawn Smith

E-Comm

The Wireless and IT depts

E-Comm is pleased to announce the following appointments to its 2004-2005 Board of Directors

Mr. David Korbin, Independent Director, has been named Chair for a second term

New Appointments:

Cliff Annable

Councillor, White Rock (representing Township of Langley and the City of White Rock)

Kevin Begg

Assistant Deputy Minister, Policing and Community Safety Branch, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (representing Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General)

Returning Board Members:

Don Bell

Mayor of North Vancouver District (representing District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver)

Gary Briggs

Inspector, RCMP, ret (representing RCMP)

Murray Day

Inspector, VPD, ret (representing Vancouver Police Board)

Len Garis

Fire Chief, Surrey (representing Surrey)

Jon Harris

Councillor, (representing Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows)

David Hodgins

Fire Commissioner (representing Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services)

Daphne Corbett

Former Senior Vice-President, HSBC Bank (Independent Director)

David Morhart

CEO, BC Ambulance Service (representing BCAS)

David Sutcliffe

President & CEO, Sierra Wireless (Independent Director)

Lois Jackson

Mayor of Delta (representing Delta)

Jon Kingsbury

Mayor of Coquitlam, (representing Coquitlam, Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, New Westminster, Belcarra)

Kiichi Kumagai

Councillor, City of Richmond (representing Richmond)

Patti Marfleet

(representing City of Vancouver)

Joe Trasolini

Mayor of Port Moody (representing Independent Police Boards in Port Moody, District of West Vancouver, New Westminster)

Number of 9-1-1 calls placed to E-Comm

January	98,056
February	93,966
March	101,575
April	101,708
May	104,444

E-Comm is committed to the use of environmentally responsible papers. By choosing 100% post-consumer recycled fiber instead of virgin paper for this printed material the following savings to our natural resources were realized:

Trees Saved	Wood Reduced (Lbs)	Landfill Reduced (Lbs)	Energy Reduced (btu)	Water Reduced (Gallons)	Net Greenhouse Emissions (Lbs)
.5	292.93	45.7	710.06	430.72	88.62

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Delta and Richmond Fire Dispatch Moves to E-Comm

Al Tellier (E-Comm), Deputy Chief Rick Lehbauer (Delta) and Fire Dispatcher Marc McAdam (E-Comm).

The Richmond and Delta fire departments have transferred dispatch responsibilities to E-Comm bringing the total number of fire departments dispatched by the regional communications centre to ten.

Richmond's GO LIVE occurred May 5th and has been described as very successful—an obvious credit to the exceptional cooperation and dedication of both RF-RS and E-Comm operational and technical staff.

The first 9-1-1 call was fielded by E-Comm at 1056hrs—just seconds after the official cutover. It was a call for a person who had fallen.

Richmond Fire Chief Jim Hancock says he is "confident dispatching will be carried out efficiently and effectively by E-Comm."

The Delta fire dispatch transition on June 2 has also been described as "letter perfect," a testament to the caliber of talent found at both Delta

Fire and E-Comm. The first 9-1-1 call came in at 1111hrs and was a combined event (medical aid), which was extremely satisfying for all involved. Because Delta is now being dispatched by E-Comm, Delta Fire has access to Combined Events technology through Altaris CAD. Fire dispatchers and ambulance paramedics can see each other's calls simultaneously—simplifying the process for joint response.

The first 9-1-1 call for Delta Fire was a combined event.

"The transition team that moved us into E-Comm over the last few months was fantastic—very professional and responsive to our needs," says Delta Fire Chief Gord Freeborn.

When a dispatch service 'shifts' from one organization to another, it is more than just a relocation and implementation of technology. The entire process takes months of planning and training—as there is a significant knowledge transfer required including policies and procedures regarding individual agencies' response methods. Dave Mitchell, project manager for E-Comm adds, "the work that has been completed has enhanced the template for current and future transitions and this will only strengthen the relationship between fire services and E-Comm."

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MESSAGE FROM
DAVID KORBIN
CHAIR



On June 8, E-Comm celebrated its fifth anniversary—and I am pleased to report that there have been many accomplishments since our 1999 GO LIVE.

We have completed the first phase of the Wide Area Radio Network, our region's interoperable radio system. The BC Ambulance Service is using the radio system throughout the GVRD, as are most police forces. We now have six fire departments on board, which has resulted in six municipalities in the GVRD having all three emergency services—police, fire, and ambulance—on the E-Comm radio system. It is exciting to note that for the first time, emergency responders can now communicate directly with each other whether in their home communities or in a neighbouring jurisdiction. This cross-communication ability is proving invaluable on a day-to-day basis and will, of course, play a major role in the event of a disaster.

We have also increased our dispatch customer base since our 1999 GO Live. We now dispatch for the Vancouver Police and RCMP detachments in Richmond, Ridge Meadows, Whistler, Bowen Island, Freeway, UBC and the Sunshine Coast. We have also assumed responsibility for 10 fire departments—Vancouver, Port Moody, Richmond, Delta, the Sunshine Coast (Gibsons, Roberts Creek, Sechelt, Halfmoon Bay, Pender Harbour and Whistler/Garibaldi. Calls to 9-1-1 have increased over the past five years as well and in

2003, more than 1.25 million calls were placed to 9-1-1. In May 2004 alone there were 104,444 calls placed.

On a corporate level, the Board has been instrumental in helping to strengthen our long-term financial performance, customer satisfaction, technology implementation, and business development. E-Comm's Board has always reflected the communities we serve and the expertise and knowledge we have had access to over the years, is one of the reasons we have managed to build such a critical system from the ground up, in a very short timeframe.

On that note, I would like to welcome and thank our Board members, past and present, for contributing their business expertise and extensive knowledge of the regions and organizations they represent. We look forward to another exciting year. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Don Evans, Dan Cunningham, Tony Heemskerk and Penny Kirkpatrick who all departed the Board this year. Your service and dedication to public safety is tremendously appreciated.

It is hard to believe that 10 years have passed since the infamous Stanley Cup riot in Vancouver—the launching point for consolidated emergency communications in southwest BC. No one said consolidating emergency communications would be easy and I continue to be inspired by the dedication of the E-Comm Board and of course, the staff who give tirelessly to achieving that goal. It is true that they are "Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property" and I am proud to be associated with everyone who has played a part in such an important purpose.

>>> Continued from front cover.

Our Thanks To:

Delta

Chief Gord Freeborn
Rick Lehbauer, Deputy Chief
Robin Cullen, Deputy Chief
Gordon Williams, Training Officer

Shawn Smith, Firefighter
Brandy Dutka-Menges, Delta IT
Mike Theal, Training Officer
Colin Redwood, Delta IT

Richmond

Chief Jim Hancock
Geoff Lake, Deputy Chief
Ron Beaman, Deputy Chief
Dave Scorgie, Deputy Chief [retired]

Dave Anderson, Chief Training Officer
Mike Dewing, Business Systems Analyst
Daryle Warkentin, Firefighter
Tim Wilkinson (Richmond Firefighters' Union)

And the Hard-Working E-Comm Teams:

Transitions, Operations, Training, Public Safety Systems Group, IT, Telephony, Wireless.

From the "Awesome Performance" Department

Congratulations to E-Comm dispatcher Darcy Hambleton, who received a Deputy Chief Constable's Commendation from the Vancouver Police for her outstanding effort in the performance of her duties as the Chief Dispatcher on the night of the "Loft Six" shooting incident (multiple shooting in Gastown in August 2003).

And thanks to E-Comm dispatcher Karen Parnell (and her many colleagues) who takes "going the extra mile" to a whole new level.

During a night shift at the beginning of April, 2004, Karen Parnell was asked by VPD to assist a member by accompanying him to the apartment of a hearing impaired BNE victim and taking his statement. Karen's sign language abilities greatly aided VPD, and also allowed her to advise the building manager that the victim wanted his locks changed. But her kindness did not stop there!

"I was proud to have served both our VPD member and the victim," explained Karen. "But when I was in the victim's suite I realized the only thing stolen was his 13" colour TV with closed captioning. That broke my heart."

Two and a half weeks went by, and Karen could not stop thinking about the victim sitting alone in his apartment after losing the only form of entertainment available to him. She mentioned it to a few of her E-Comm colleagues, who made a group decision to ask staff to donate some money towards purchasing a new television for the victim.

"In less than 24 hours we had raised enough money, allowing me to purchase and deliver the TV the next day," continued Karen. "Words cannot express the look and expression I got from the victim. It took all of my composure to keep it together until I got back to my car. I am very proud to be a part of this great group of employees."

Deborah Cherry, E-Comm Director of Operations, adds:

"Our staff are truly incredible people. Karen's thoughtfulness in organizing the collection of donations from staff to purchase a replacement television for the victim went beyond the call of duty. The sensitivity and generosity displayed by staff in this singular incident would warm the hearts of many."



Karen Parnell

e-communique

AMBER Alert Launched in BC

The AMBER Alert was launched on May 25, 2004 by Premier Gordon Campbell. AMBER Alert (America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response) is a partnership between law enforcement, the media, and the public to combat abduction by sending out immediate, up-to-date information that aids in the child's safe recovery. When an AMBER Alert is activated, a message is broadcast on local radio/TV and cable stations. Police services immediately gain the assistance of thousands of people who are urged to call 9-1-1 with tips/sighting information.

The introduction of the AMBER Alert is a major undertaking, and will impact E-Comm with regard to an increase in calls to 9-1-1 if the Alert is activated (there are strict criteria on when it can be alerted). E-Comm has established special protocols to handle this increased call volume should an AMBER Alert be issued. Thanks to the entire steering



Front Row, left to right-Andre Thompson (SMS Active Technologies), Det-Cst Greg Neufeld (Vancouver Police), Cst Holly Marks (RCMP), Dawna Marshall-Cope (E-Comm), Cst Brian Soles (Port Moody Police), Insp. Donna Kaluza (RCMP), Carole Dueck (Citizenship and Immigration), Cst Tim Dean (West Vancouver), Heather Dumoulin (VPD), Cst Sharlene Brooks (Delta Police)

committee of AMBER Alert for their hard work and dedication in getting this important program launched (thank you Dawna Marshall-Cope and Raymond Lai of E-Comm for representing us so well). Here's hoping we never have to use it!

Combined Events Technology

The implementation of "combined events" technology on Altaris CAD became a reality on April 14th. "Combined Events" means that when a BCAS Call Taker creates a call that warrants a first response, the information will be sent to a Fire Dispatcher automatically and instantly. This technology is presently available to those fire departments that are using the Altaris CAD system, which includes Vancouver, Port Moody, Whistler, Richmond, Delta, and five fire departments on the Sunshine Coast (Gibsons, Sechelt, Roberts

Creek, Pender Harbour and Halfmoon Bay).

With Combined Events technology, individual fire departments determine the kinds of calls they want to attend. The protocols that the CAD system has been set up to follow were established by a working group of Fire and Ambulance personnel several years ago. For non-Altaris Fire Departments, BCAS will continue to use the current system of phoning fire departments for first response. Thanks to everyone who made this venture a success.

VP & Chief Financial Officer Appointed

Congratulations to Bea Henning, CGA, who was recently appointed Vice-President & Chief Financial Officer of E-Comm. This appointment reflects the enormous contribution Bea has made to E-Comm's long and short-term financial strategies, and her work with regard to administrative effectiveness and corporate strategy. Bea, who has held the position of Director of Finance & Administration since September 2002, will lead a number of initiatives with regard to organizational effectiveness in the future. She has done an outstanding job and will continue to play a valuable role in the future of E-Comm.

