



**E-Comm 9-1-1**  
Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property

# (a)SPIRE 2025

**Strategic Plan**

**Service  
People  
Innovation  
Relationships  
Expansion**



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# ► Our Strategic Planning Process

**Strategic planning, done well, involves the wisdom of many. That's why talking to our stakeholders and looking to jurisdictions around the world for leading practices was a priority for E-Comm as we developed our new strategic roadmap.**

Early in our planning process, our Board of Directors was clear in its direction: Our strategy must be evidence-based; be visionary, but realistic; and have clear, measurable objectives for which regular progress updates will be required. Examining key dependencies, risks and funding were also important elements.

To meet this goal, the Board established a task force to work closely with executive leadership to delve into current and anticipated service needs and challenges. These were identified through consultation with many, including police, fire and ambulance leadership, senior provincial and local government officials, technology vendors, and our staff. For the first time, E-Comm's strategic planning process was also linked to that of our public safety partner, PRIMECorp, the organization responsible for the information management system

used by police personnel, including E-Comm's call takers and dispatchers, throughout British Columbia. This was particularly advantageous given our many shared strategic objectives.

The result is a roadmap that is centred on five key commitments. Each commitment has supporting strategies and key initiatives that the organization will focus on over the next five to seven years.

Although our strategic plan will guide the organization's direction to 2025, it is adaptable to shifting public safety priorities and the emerging needs of the communities we serve.



Step 01	Step 02	Step 03	Step 04	Step 05
<b>DIAGNOSIS</b>	<b>DIRECTION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>VALIDATION</b>	<b>APPROVAL + IMPLEMENTATION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Research</li> <li>&gt; Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Vision</li> <li>&gt; Commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Strategies</li> <li>&gt; Initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Stakeholders</li> <li>&gt; Adjustments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Ownership</li> <li>&gt; Monitoring + Control</li> </ul>
<b>UNDERSTAND</b>	<b>DECIDE</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>FEEDBACK</b>	<b>MOBILIZE</b>
Build a common understanding	Build a consensus on future state	Provide the means to deliver concrete results	Create awareness and foster support	Monitor action and adjust plan
<b>BOARD TASK FORCE (INCLUDED EXECUTIVE)</b>				
<b>STAFF</b>				
<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>				



# ▶ Where We Have Come From

**The origin of E-Comm is connected to one of Canada's favourite pastimes—hockey.**

While the concept of consolidating emergency communications emerged in the early 1990s after a series of international disasters, including a devastating earthquake in San Francisco, it was the 1994 Stanley Cup riot in Vancouver that brought Metro Vancouver municipalities and the Provincial Government together to create shared services and technology to better meet the safety needs of citizens and first responders.

A lot has happened since E-Comm took its first 9-1-1 call in 1999. Our 9-1-1 service has expanded beyond Metro Vancouver, making us the first point of contact for 9-1-1 callers stretching from Vancouver Island to the Alberta border, and from the US border to north of Prince George.

We have grown from supporting one police department's call-taking and dispatch function to supporting dozens of police and fire agencies across the province. We have also evolved from one agency on the E-Comm radio

system in Metro Vancouver in 1999, to more than 30 today. This trajectory of growth and change has evolved over many years and will continue to evolve into the future.

Building on the organization's previous strategic plans, we considered both the external and internal environments in which E-Comm operates in the formulation of (a)SPIRE 2025. The external perspective considered a very competitive labour market, changing demographics, serious and complex social and mental-health challenges, rapidly changing technology and evolving first-responder needs.

From an internal perspective, we took into account recruitment and retention, strengthening existing lines of business before further expansion, an increased focus on resiliency, the introduction of Next Generation 9-1-1 technologies, and evolving our governance structure.

# ▶ Into the Future

**With the pace of change accelerating to what can feel like the speed of light some days, developing a strategic roadmap that is both visionary and practical is essential. With that in mind, we believe that E-Comm's strategic plan—rooted in consultation and informed by research—is both.**

We hope that as you read our plan, you will have a good sense of our view of the future and our key priorities. More important, we hope we will be successful in showing you how we plan to bring our strategic plan to life to deliver on our commitments.

As an organization built literally from the ground up, E-Comm has achieved many milestones in the course of our 20 years of service. We have shown we can save lives and protect property through helping 9-1-1 callers and supporting our first responder partners. We have become leaders in emergency communications through our new digital radio system and other technical innovations. This leadership is grounded in our smart, capable people and their ongoing collaboration with our many partners, whom we respect and value. The dedication of those who work in emergency services cannot be overstated.

There are many challenges in front of us, no doubt. But with (a)SPIRE 2025 as our guide, we will meet them as we continue to evolve from a regional service to one with a broader provincial focus. Whether it be adapting to technology change, managing increasing emergency and non-emergency call volumes, competing for talent or ensuring the public and first responders benefit from strong and resilient systems and services, we're focused on tackling these challenges head on, in new and innovative ways.

We believe (a)SPIRE2025 puts us on the path to what matters most—safer communities in British Columbia.

We welcome your comments at [talktoecomm@ecomm911.ca](mailto:talktoecomm@ecomm911.ca)



**Doug Campbell**, Board Chair

**Oliver Grüter-Andrew**, President & CEO

## Vision

**Safer communities in British Columbia through excellence in public safety communications.**

## Mission

Deliver exceptional emergency communications to the public and first responders that help save lives and protect property.

## Values

Our values guide how we carry out our work. Developed and defined by our staff, we are proud of our values: Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, Accountability and Service.

# Where We Are **Going**

Our commitments will guide and inspire our actions. Ultimately, the services we provide to our partners and the public are our highest priority. Services will be enabled by our people, innovation, and partnerships.

Over the next five to seven years, E-Comm will be focused on five key commitments:

## **01 / Service**

E-Comm delivers reliable, continuous, high-quality services that meet the needs of first responders and public safety.

## **02 / People**

E-Comm provides a meaningful, professional work experience and a workplace that values and supports its people.

## **03 / Innovation**

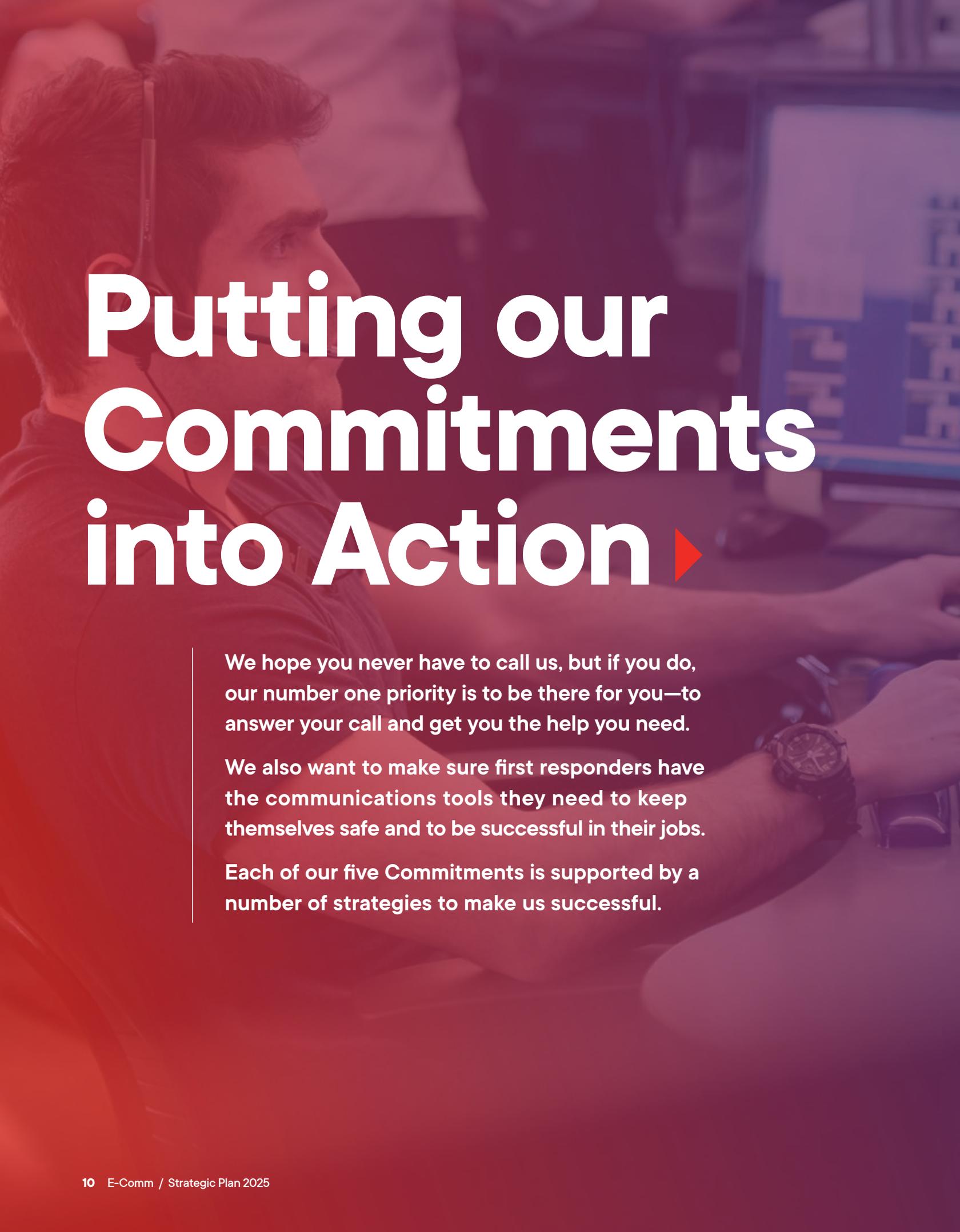
E-Comm provides leadership in emergency communications innovation.

## **04 / Relationships**

E-Comm fosters strong stakeholder relationships and builds partnerships that advance emergency communications and public safety.

## **05 / Expansion**

E-Comm continually strengthens its services and provides them to communities across British Columbia.

A call center agent wearing a headset is shown in profile, looking towards a computer monitor. The background is a blurred office environment. The entire image has a red-to-purple gradient overlay.

# Putting our Commitments into Action ▶

We hope you never have to call us, but if you do, our number one priority is to be there for you—to answer your call and get you the help you need.

We also want to make sure first responders have the communications tools they need to keep themselves safe and to be successful in their jobs.

Each of our five Commitments is supported by a number of strategies to make us successful.



**Our first commitment is all about service and the highest levels of effectiveness every day or during a disaster.**

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**COMMITMENT 01**

## **Service**

**E-Comm delivers reliable, continuous, high-quality services that meet the needs of first responders and public safety.**

**Strategies:**

1. Expand operating facilities so that a single site disruption does not interrupt services
2. Increase technology redundancy and continually evolve security to ensure continued service
3. Enhance and automate business processes and operating procedures to increase service efficiencies and effectiveness
4. Advance emergency and business continuity plans to ensure continued operations and that we meet partners' expectations
5. Ensure hiring and training supports organizational needs



## COMMITMENT 02

### People

**E-Comm provides a meaningful, professional work experience and a workplace that values and supports its people.**

Our people are the heart and soul of our organization so we have developed a commitment that focuses on them. We want our employees to feel proud of what they contribute to communities across our province and to feel great about doing it through E-Comm.

#### Strategies:

1. Ensure a respectful and flexible work environment that supports a positive culture and a healthy life balance
2. Create a work environment focused on wellness in which all employees feel supported physically and mentally
3. Locate future operating facilities in areas that consider operational needs, including accessibility to staff
4. Review and refresh employee value proposition to ensure it remains competitive

## COMMITMENT 03

### Innovation

**E-Comm provides leadership in emergency communications innovation.**

Technology is changing quickly and now more than ever, our organization must be flexible, responsive and open to change. Our third commitment is focused on innovation because we believe it directly links to taking a leadership role in working with our partners on solutions and approaches that make a real difference to public safety.

#### Strategies:

1. Provide the means by which E-Comm and its partners collaboratively research and implement new emergency communication solutions
2. Facilitate dialogue among first-responder agencies to evolve operational processes and prepare for the implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 technologies
3. Connect with organizations globally to identify and assess new approaches in emergency communications
4. Continue to lead the expansion of information exchange and interoperability between emergency service agencies across British Columbia



## COMMITMENT 04

### Relationships

**E-Comm fosters strong stakeholder relationships and builds partnerships that advance emergency communications and public safety.**

“...No strategy impacts your business more than how relationships are managed, inside and outside the organization.”<sup>1</sup>

As a service-based organization, we believe that too. Continued strong relationships with employees, partners and external stakeholders like our members and community groups are at the heart of our future success.

#### Strategies:

1. Build on our current partnerships to maintain and advance collaborative relationships
2. Ensure our corporate structure provides effective oversight, and meets the evolving needs of our stakeholders
3. Maintain close dialogue with E-Comm’s communities of interest and collaborate on issues and challenges that impact emergency communications and public safety
4. Maintain regular contact with a wide range of organizations at the federal, provincial and municipal levels to leverage opportunities and manage risks

<sup>1</sup> Harvard Business Review, August 2016

## COMMITMENT 05

### Expansion

**E-Comm continually strengthens its services and provides them to communities across British Columbia.**

From Abbotsford to Zeballos, we are here to help make your community safer.

#### Strategies:

1. Develop and implement the Next Generation 9-1-1 platform provincewide
2. Offer call-taking and dispatch services on Vancouver Island
3. Continue the sustainable integration of call-taking and dispatch services in the Lower Mainland
4. Offer our new and existing technology services across the province in a sustainable fashion



# Key Initiatives ▶

Certain commitments and strategies will be completed before others due to interdependencies, resource requirements and funding availability. However, the chronological order of completion does not indicate that any one specific commitment, strategy or initiative is more important than the others.

**Ten key initiatives have been established in support of our Commitments. Initiative teams, each with an executive sponsor, will work over the next five to seven years on their implementation. Initiatives are summarized below:**

**1 Service Resilience and Optimization**

Ensure staffing across all portfolios supports our partners' evolving needs, safeguards quality, and supports employees in their work experience. Enhance business/operational processes, including automation and business continuity, to maximize effectiveness and meet project timelines.

**2 Strong Workforce**

Improve the end-to-end process of recruiting, training, career development and employee retention. Strengthen the culture, wellness and mental health of our workforce.

**3 Additional Operating Centres**

Open and develop the Vancouver Island Operating Centre. Establish a second operating centre in the Lower Mainland to enhance overall operational resilience, including during a disaster.

**4 Strong Relationships**

Continue collaboration with current partners to develop and enhance the quality of our services. Cultivate new relationships and partnerships to expand the reach, scope and evolution of our services, and to ensure strong and trusting connections within the communities we serve.

**5 Innovation Centre**

Establish a function and team dedicated to the identification, evaluation and potential adoption of innovative ideas in emergency response communications and information management.

**6 Next Generation 9-1-1 Implementation**

Deploy the technology upgrades associated with Next Generation 9-1-1. Review call-taking and dispatch practices at E-Comm. Provide provincewide thought leadership and change management to ensure a smooth transition to Next Generation 9-1-1.

**7 Computer-Aided Dispatch/Records Management System Evolution**

Work in partnership with PRIMECorp and police and fire agencies to define, evaluate, and implement the next generation of computer-aided dispatch and records management system solutions.

**8 Service Expansion**

Expand the reach of current E-Comm services across Vancouver Island and Mainland British Columbia. Build on existing service offerings by introducing new and in-demand services that E-Comm is best positioned to deliver.

**9 Sustainable Funding Assurance**

Ensure adequate funding to deliver long-term sustainable services. Work with stakeholders to refine the use of current funding sources and develop new ones.

**10 Corporate Structure Evolution**

Examine the current structure of the E-Comm legal entities in light of changes to the scope, scale and geographic reach of the corporations' respective mandates. Align governance models to support evolving corporate structures.

# ► Making it Count

**Visionary and realistic—two words we have focused on during the development of this plan.**

**There is no doubt that to reach our objectives, funding considerations must be examined. This is why we have included sustainable funding as one of our key initiatives.**

Present and future initiatives will need to be examined in the context of long-term budget considerations. In this context, E-Comm will prioritize keeping stakeholders informed of budget requirements, including extensive notice and detailed rationale behind any proposed funding changes.

E-Comm leadership acknowledges that there are a number of challenges in front of us as we work to achieve what is laid out in this plan. Notably, we know that continued planning for a catastrophic or major emergency event must be a high priority for the future. We are addressing this risk by investigating the option for an additional emergency communications centre in the Lower Mainland to address redundancy needs while improving current services.

We will also need to ensure that our team has the capacity and capability to execute across our portfolio of new initiatives. In the context of change, communication with our stakeholders will be required. We are committed to maintaining the momentum and strong relationships we have built during the development of our future direction.

The Board of Directors will take a lead role in providing oversight of this strategic plan and our progress against it. Regular reporting will be undertaken in order to keep our shareholders, partners, staff and other key stakeholders informed.

# Acknowledgements

In 2018, E-Comm was the beneficiary of tremendous insight and guidance as we undertook extensive stakeholder consultation in support of the development of our next strategic plan.

Our sincere thanks to our many partners and stakeholders who have helped us develop this plan. Your open and candid feedback was instrumental to the shaping of our plan and enabled the Board to confidently chart a path forward that was informed and grounded by your insight.

## Thank you...

**E-Comm Board of Directors and members of the task force:**

- Doug Campbell
- Anne Kinvig
- Bill McNulty
- Paul Mochrie
- Warren Lemcke
- Mark Sieben
- Terry Waterhouse

**E-Comm User Committee**

**E-Comm staff and managers**

**Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General**

**Ministry of Health and Addictions**

**British Columbia Police Leadership (Municipal and RCMP)**

**British Columbia Fire Chiefs**

**BC Emergency Health Services**

**Emergency Management BC**

**Healthlink BC**

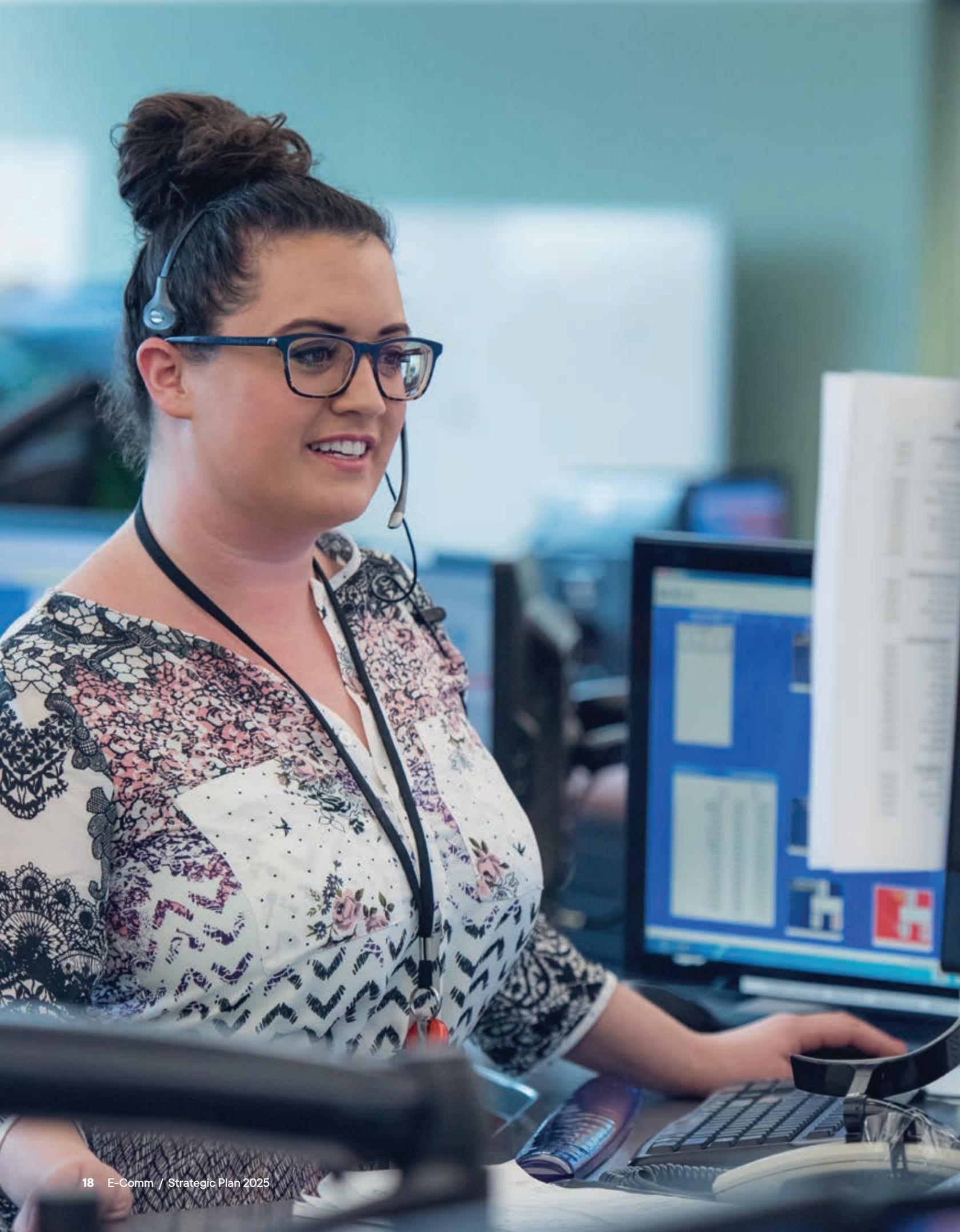
**KPMG**

**Pacific Autism Network**

**PRIMECorp Board of Directors**

**Provincial Health Services Authority**

**Our valued technology suppliers**





- ▶ **E-Comm handles approximately 1.6 million 9-1-1 calls each year from across British Columbia and is the dispatch partner of more than 70 police and fire agencies.**
- ▶ **E-Comm owns and operates the largest multi-jurisdictional radio network of its kind in British Columbia, allowing first responders to communicate their essential messages effectively and securely.**
- ▶ **E-Comm provides a variety of secure, mission-critical technology services that support its own operations and those of its public safety partners.**

