



E-Comm 9-1-1
Mid-Year Transformation Progress Update
September 2024

INTRODUCTION

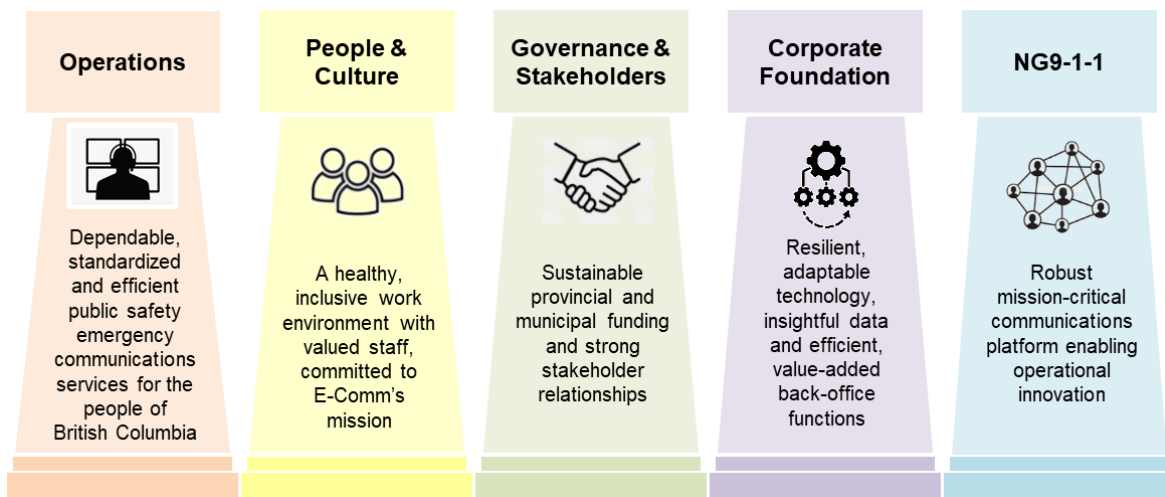
In 2022, E-Comm launched a comprehensive transformation plan, to modernize our operations and technology, strengthen our governance and people supports, and ensure our services are sustainable for the future. The following mid-year update is intended to provide a report on our progress to date from January to end of June 2024, and the improvements we are making for the benefit of our people, our agency partners, and the public we serve.

While we continue to make progress on our transformation goals, we recognize there is still significant work to be done, including building a more technologically resilient organization, modernizing our governance structure and establishing financial sustainability into the future.

This year, we received the results of the comprehensive independent [governance review](#) conducted by Deloitte. Our business has changed considerably in 25 years, and it's important our governance and financial models evolve to keep pace. We are consulting with our shareholders and partners on these future changes, which are aimed at improving Board oversight, efficiency, and representation for our many partners. A new financial model for our services is also in development, to ensure greater transparency and fairness of E-Comm's costs for services.

At this pivotal point in our organization's history, we have also marked two considerable milestones in 2024: the 5th anniversary of our Vancouver Island Emergency Communications Centre, and the 25th anniversary of E-Comm on June 8th, which we celebrated with a formal employee awards and service recognition event. Thank you to our hard-working and dedicated staff who keep the public and first responders safe. They are a key focus of our ongoing transformation efforts outlined in this update.

Transformation Plan objectives



SUSTAINED STRENGTH IN SERVICE LEVELS

Service levels have remained strong in the first six months of 2024, following last year’s best results on record since 2016. We are continuing to develop more training and recruiting options for our operations team, while bolstering police non-emergency call-taking through streamlined procedures, increased staff, and new technology.

- 9-1-1 service levels remain above target** – E-Comm’s 9-1-1 call-taking service levels held at 98% for the year to June 30, exceeding our target of 95% of calls answered within five seconds. With close to a million 9-1-1 calls (992,480), call volumes are the second highest on record for this period over the past five years, with the exception of a large spike of accidental calls in 2023 due to an Android operating system upgrade.
- Police and Fire emergency call-taking service levels exceed targets** – Our service levels for emergency call-taking for both police and fire surpassed set targets throughout the first half of the year. From January to June, 92% of police emergency calls in the Lower Mainland were answered within ten seconds, and 90% on Vancouver Island. For fire emergency calls, 94% were answered within 15 seconds. Stabilizing emergency call-taking and dispatch services has been a key focus in the initial stages of our transformation plan, and has included new hires, revamped training, additional peer coaching and mental health supports.
- Police non-emergency service levels strong** – Our non-emergency service levels for police call-taking in the Lower Mainland remained above target at 81% from January to June. Since it launched in May, our new contact centre technology platform, Genesys, has offered Lower Mainland callers to non-emergency lines greater options, including call-back requests and wait-time estimates. We have also seen a notable decrease from 2023 in the rate of abandoned calls over the service target window of three minutes, to just 6% in the Lower Mainland and 5% on Vancouver Island.

Lower Mainland Service Results, Year to June 30

	Target	2021	2022	2023	2024
9-1-1	95%/5s	99%	97%	99%	98%
Police Emergency	88%/10s	89%	83%	89%	92%
Police Non-Emergency	80%/180s	66%	44%	66%	81%
Fire Emergency	90%/15s	93%	90%	94%	94%

Vancouver Island Service Results, Year to June 30

	Target	2021	2022	2023	2024
9-1-1	95%/5s	99%	97%	98%	98%
Police Emergency	88%/10s	92%	90%	88%	90%
Police Non-Emergency	80%/180s	88%	84%	79%	79%

ENHANCED POLICE NON-EMERGENCY CALL-TAKING

We have taken several key steps towards our transformation goals of reducing non-emergency wait times and improving service, including streamlining procedures and introducing new technology to enhance user experience.

- Successful launch of new contact centre technology platform Genesys:** Following months of planning, the first call came through the new Genesys call centre platform on May 8 as part of a smooth and successful implementation. Genesys provides more options for callers to our Lower Mainland police agencies, including wait time estimates, SMS text capabilities and call-back features. Early results indicate callers are making use of the call-back function, and that abandoned calls continue to decrease with these new features.
- Increased data intelligence, service improvements:** With the support of our Data and Analytics team, we are also gaining new insights into the nature of non-emergency calls and how Genesys is performing, which is part of our strategy to improve public experience. From the May launch date through to the end of June, around 75% of police non-emergency calls were handled through the new system. Approximately 85% of call backs implemented as a result of Genesys were successful in connecting with callers and having their issue addressed. Genesys also provides us insight into what other services the public are calling the non-emergency lines for, whether it be referrals for civil or landlord/tenant issue, or information on police record checks.
- Extended hours for dedicated non-emergency (NER) coverage:** The dedicated NER team established in 2023 is now providing service seven days a week with extended hours from 5:30 am to 11 pm to address peak call volume times.



First call taken through Genesys May 8

NEW TRAINING AND RECRUITING INITIATIVES

- ***Police call takers benefit from new e-learning training program:*** In February, we launched interactive e-learning modules for new police call takers, with a goal of creating a more modern educational experience which applies research-based methodology and adult-learning best practices. The launch has generated positive feedback from both staff and trainers.
- ***Peer support positions for dispatch:*** E-Comm created a new peer coach position to provide support on the job for new dispatchers. These peer coaches offer mentorship and are specially trained to guide new dispatchers as they learn and develop their skills. The dispatch work group remains under significant staffing pressures due to the high demand for dispatchers, unique skillset required, making positions hard to fill and causes too much reliance on staff working overtime. We continue to look for solutions to expand recruitment, increase retention of our experienced dispatchers, attract new dispatchers to our workforce, and make the dispatch model more efficient.
- ***Partnership with ACCESS Futures:*** E-Comm is partnering with community-led Indigenous organization ACCESS Futures to develop a targeted and intentional recruitment effort within Vancouver Indigenous communities. Working alongside ACCESS Futures, E-Comm developed a training curriculum aimed at the 9-1-1 call taker role and supported the implementation of a 12-week skills training program, which welcomed its first cohort of students.

PRIORITIZING OUR PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- **High participation in employee engagement survey:** Our annual employee engagement survey conducted in March received an 82% response rate, well above industry standards and an increase from 77% in 2023. The survey is just one of the ways our organization collects input in order to look for ways to continually improve our staff experience at E-Comm.
- **Streamlining our internal processes:** Our internal “corporate optimization of processes and systems” (COPS) project launched in March, with the goal of enhancing the efficiencies of current processes for our People & Culture and Finance teams. The project is aimed at identifying internal procedures which could be consolidated, leading to greater efficiency and an improved workload for our staff.
- **Ongoing roll-out of Resilient Minds training:** All of our staff members will benefit from attending a peer-led Resilient Minds session in 2024, in support of employee mental health and wellness. This customized training for emergency communications staff is intended to help people manage occupational stress and was developed through a collaboration between E-Comm, the Canadian Mental Health Association, and retired fire captain Steve Fraser, who co-authored the Resilient Minds program.
- **Significantly decreased attrition rates in key workgroups:** One encouraging measure of the positive impact of our People and Culture improvements is a decreased level of attrition within our emergency call-taking and dispatch work groups. For the period of January 1 to June 30, 2024, compared to the same time in 2023, attrition for police emergency call takers dropped from 18% to just 4%, and within our much smaller dispatch workgroup fell to just 0.7% from 2.5% in 2023.



TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

- **Enhancing our cyber safeguards:** Like many government and public safety organizations, E-Comm is a potentially high-value target for cyber attacks. Our Security team has implemented a number of measures to help protect critical assets and sensitive data from the evolving threat of malicious cyberattacks, which have recently made headlines internationally for high-profile impacts on organizations. Our safeguards include a “vulnerability management” program to proactively scan our network for security issues, external testing to identify weaknesses from an outside viewpoint and effectively address gaps in our defence, and targeted access reviews and continuous updates pertaining to account permissions and confidential information. Internal phishing exercises have also been conducted to build employee awareness and a culture of heightened vigilance amongst our staff.
- **Cyber security training for employees:** As part of our ongoing work to protect against cyber threats and data breaches, we are empowering our employees through a new security awareness training course launched in June. This mandatory annual course provides staff with the tools and knowledge to better protect themselves and ensure a secure work environment which safeguards sensitive information and company assets.
- **Strengthening Data Resiliency:** We have advanced our data centre resiliency, including the creation of a robust back-up system to ensure our core services continue to function following an adverse event or disruption. A key priority for the remainder of 2024 and into 2025 will be continuing to build resiliency for our critical infrastructure as well as the call-taking and dispatch services our partners rely on to keep themselves and the public safe.



NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1)

E-Comm continues to make positive progress in the implementation of new federally-mandated “Next Generation” or NG9-1-1 technology improvements to modernize 9-1-1 networks across Canada, including enabling in future sharing of information with 9-1-1 via text and video.

In 2023, the Province provided \$90 million to E-Comm to complete these improvements on behalf of our local government and agency partners. E-Comm has met its key project deadlines and deliverables to date, including its core infrastructure build, and implementation-planning to begin transition of partner sites to the new network.

Before implementation can proceed, an important requirement beyond E-Comm’s control is the completion of agreements between Regional Districts and TELUS. To date, only 14 of the 25 Regional Districts involved in the project have signed agreements. In June, E-Comm announced a revised project schedule, to provide Regional Districts more time to complete this requirement, with transition to the new network now scheduled to begin next spring, and completion and go-live anticipated by November 2025.

E-Comm is continuing to work with the Province and Regional Districts to facilitate this process. In the interim, we are utilizing the extra time and the fact that all five of the NG9-1-1 system environments have been stood up to further multiple testing programs to validate all system aspects: functions, integrations to other systems, call flow configurations, fail over mechanisms, and connectivity to the NG9-1-1 Network.

IMPROVING GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT AND SERVICE

As noted, E-Comm has now completed a comprehensive, independent governance review of our organization, led by Deloitte, and is now actively consulting with its shareholders to provide information and receive feedback about proposed changes. The results of the review were shared with our shareholders and agency partners in June and include ten key recommendations to improve our corporate shareholder and board structure, as well as our financial governance and oversight.

As part of this process, E-Comm is working to develop an improved financial model based on recommendations from the review, as the current system has not kept pace with the growth of our organization and evolving technological needs. A new pricing structure is in development, with the goal of creating a more equitable and transparent pricing and cost-allocation model for our partners.

Read more details and find the full report on our [website](#).

LOOKING FORWARD

For the remainder of 2024 and beyond, we will focus on initiatives to support our operations staff, fortify our cyber security and data resiliency, and streamline our corporate and financial governance to offer more effective and efficient oversight of our organization.

As part of our commitment to improving transparency and predictability around costs, we are engaging with our partners regarding a long-term forecast for pricing and investments needed to ensure stability of our operations, while recognizing the financial pressures facing our local agency and government partners.

We also continue to work collaboratively with the Province and local government partners toward a new provincial mandate for 9-1-1 services in B.C., which would include consistent service standards, and sustainable funding through a levy on monthly cell phone bills in line with most other provinces.

While there are still many challenges ahead, we believe our transformation plan is creating a modern, reliable framework for strong, stable operations which will provide British Columbians with exceptional emergency communications services now and into the future.