



PLACEHOLDER_Vermont Community Listening Session-20241022_113107-Meeting Recording


October 22, 2024, 3:31PM


1h 32m 59s


● **Speaker 2** started transcription

 **Speaker 1** 0:08
It looks like the meeting recording has started.
Is that correct, Bonnie?


 **Speaker 2** 0:13
That is correct.

 **Speaker 1** 0:14
OK.
I think we will just get started then. Good morning everyone.

 **Speaker 3** 0:22
Good morning.

 **Speaker 1** 0:22
Thank you very.
Thank you very much for being here at this public safety communications task force community listening session.
It looks like maybe people are still popping in, so I just want to make an announcement as people are coming in and that is that we have two American Sign Language interpreters with us today.
You should see them on your screen, spotlighted with the words ASL interpreter. In their window, if you happen to be someone who needs that assistance, if you would like to, you can identify yourself in chat and the interpreters will then be ready to assist. If you would like to share something later in the meeting.
OK.
We're going to officially start now and I will introduce myself. I'm Barbara Neal. I'm executive director of the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board and Co chair of this task

force, along with Commissioner Jennifer Morrison from the Department of Public Safety. Also with us today from the task force is Paul White, who is the vice chair of this task force.

 **Speaker 4** 1:32
Great.

 **Speaker 1** 1:35

Also, the former chair of the Berry Town Select Board.

And the chair of a regional dispatch working group that tackled this very subject a couple years ago.

Thanks for being here, Paul.

And also from the task force is Michael Wright, who is the CEO of Calx Ambulance and is representing the EMS community on the task force.

We very much appreciate everyone taking the time to be here this morning.

We're looking forward to your views on emergency communications in Vermont today.

And how we can all work together to develop plans for the future.

So a quick agenda review, we are going to take care of a few housekeeping items and introductions in just a moment. I will give you a very brief overview of the task force work to date and what we have been tasked with.

Then we'll move into the important part of the meeting, which is the Community discussion and.

Will end things later on with a summary of of what's been discussed.

So you can go to the next slide, Bonnie.

Alright, housekeeping. This meeting is being recorded so that everyone is aware we are using live polling during this meeting and our facilitators from Mission Critical Partners will let you know how to participate in the live polling when we get to that point in the meeting, it is helpful.

When you're asking questions or commenting, if you could state your name for everyone.

And also in case you weren't with us at the very top of the meeting here, we do have two.

Asl American Sign Language interpreters with us and it is helpful for all if we all speak slowly, clearly and using plain language as we go about the meeting.

So there we go.

Good for housekeeping, Bonnie.

We can move on to the overview.

So the public safety communications task Force was created in 2023 by ACT 78 and was tasked with the planning and implementation of a reliable, secure and interoperable statewide public safety communication system.

So to that end, the task force has been meeting on a regular basis since June of 2023. We have hired our project management and system planning consultants who I'll introduce in a moment.

That was done earlier this year and with their help, the task force has established regular stakeholder updates.

We are in the thick of things with data collection and stakeholder engagement plans and as we get started, there's a couple things that I'd like to stress.

The task force appreciates and values.

All of your input and feedback. We look forward to hearing what is and perhaps what is not working for you now and what you think could be improved upon.

And also I want to stress that the task force has no preconceived notion of the future structure of a statewide communication system in Vermont.

So this community's input is essential to determining what that will look like and how it will be managed.

And governed. All right, moving on. I've introduced you to a few of the task force members already also on the task force, but not here in the meeting with us today is our public safety answering point.

And you will hear me refer to that as a peace app, public safety answering Point Representative is Jim Mack from the Shelburne Police Department.

The municipal representative appointed by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Like dungeons from the city of Rutland and the Vermont State Firefighters Representative is Ron Koumetz, the chief of the Allberg Fire Department.

And moving to our vendor project vendor introductions.

So Televate is represented today by Rick Burke and Dom R Curry.

They are the project management team for the task force and we also have with us several representatives from mission critical Partners, who is our system planning vendor. First up for mission critical is Jason Malloy, the project manager.

We also have Bonnie Mainie, the operation senior advisor, and she will also be the facilitator for most of this meeting.

I believe we have Scott Neal, the wireless senior advisor and GG Smith Operations subject matter expert.

Did I miss anyone, Bonnie from mission critical?

OK.

All right, good enough.

So thank you to everyone from Telivate and mission critical for being here.

We will hear more from them as we go through the meeting.

And we will start with just a quick overview, so that everybody's on the same page about the current.

Emergency communication systems in Vermont, so Vermont has a statewide a single statewide 911 system.

That routes 911 calls and text messages to one of six public safety answering points around the state.

All Vermont 911 call takers are fully trained and certified, including in emergency medical dispatch.

So the 911 call takers answer the 911 call, determine the location and nature of the event.

Connect the 911 caller to the appropriate dispatch center.

For the needed responders and provide any needed pre arrival instructions to the caller. While responders are in route.

And all aspects of that system. The 911 system are governed by the Enhanced 911 board.

Now in some cases.

The piece up that answers the 911 call also provides dispatch services for the needed responders and in other cases.

Those 911 calls need to be transferred to one of many dispatch centers providing service to Vermont response agencies.

So in addition to the six public safety answering points, there are 37 dispatch centers serving Vermont.

The emergency communications professionals at these centers focus on coordinating and supporting emergency responders during events and monitoring responder locations and activities.



Speaker 5 8:33

I love you.

 **Speaker 1** 8:44

And dispatch services at those 37 centers are governed at the local, regional or state level.

And if you move to the next slide, Bonnie, we will see a map of the locations of those six piece apps, the public safety answering points. Those are the icons with the little red.

Circle around the green dot and then we have multiple dispatch centres.

In Vermont and a few outside of Vermont, those are the green dots that provide dispatch services to Vermont responders.

So we thought this slide might be helpful and you get for you to get a picture of where all this activity in emergency communications is happening in Vermont and for Vermont.

So with that, Bonnie, I will hand it over to you to take us through the next part of the meeting.

 **Speaker 2** 9:46

Wonderful. Thank you very much, Barb.

Hello everybody.

 **Speaker 6** 9:49

Thank you.

 **Speaker 2** 9:50

So glad you here. The next portion of this really revolves around you and your feedback.

 **Speaker 7** 10:00

Yeah.

 **Speaker 2** 10:01

Really is the essence of why we are bringing you together today. As Barb said, to get that feedback.

So it's really all about community discussion.

We are in that remote environment and we know that at times it can be challenging

to be distracted.

We like to have the convenience of remote be able to make sure we have really inclusive participatory environment.

But you know, please try to be present.

We do want you as well, to be candid.

Yet respectful we the US as MCP, televate and of course the task force. We need to have honest feedback.

And we want to have a positive dialogue today.

Listen as as partners, yes.

 **Speaker 8** 10:46

Honey.

We have one individual reporting that the slides are not showing.

Can you UN share and reshare your screen please?

 **Speaker 2** 10:56

Certainly we can do that.

And then let me.

 **Speaker 4** 11:03

Is anybody else not seeing them?

 **Speaker 2** 11:05

Reach.

 **Speaker 9** 11:08

I'm getting on.

 **Speaker 4** 11:09


I'm getting them too.


 **Speaker 2** 11:10

OK.

Well, we'll just give it a little Rep push.

I'm not sure if maybe they have something covering their screen perhaps.

 **Speaker 9** 11:24
All set, they're all set.

 **Speaker 2** 11:24
OK.
Alright, so so listen.
Not just as partners, but listen as neighbors as community members.
Yeah, we do want again.
We want to, you know, make sure that we're candid, if you're, you know, in criticism is fine.
Let's make sure that we do that with ideas.
And let's think big picture when we say that, like I said, we not only are we thinking about you know how maybe your experience have been individually. But again thinking as a community as a region.
And then if there are some thoughts that kind of aren't on topic for what we're talking about, we do have something we call a parking lot. Jason is going to be monitoring the chat.
He's going to be monitoring the lobby and he's also going to be making sure that we jot down any notes and things that maybe have to be put aside for a later discussion.
So with that, as we mentioned, we are going to be doing some live polling.
So that again between the chat, being able to raise your hand and speak, we want to make sure again that we provide so many different ways and opportunities for you to share your input. So one of the ones we're going to do is with polling and you can. Put your response to this in the chat. You can raise your hand and let us know your response.
But one thing we want to know is what's one key take away?
You want us to gain from today's listening session and now how are you going to provide that information? And that is here if you have your your phone, you can take a picture of that QR code there in the upper right hand corner or you can use text. On your phone and you can text.
The BMANEY 1192. That message number there, 3760.
Seven. Once you access that, the chat will your text window will stay connected and you will just get the next poll and the next poll. It'll all always it'll automatically switch

so you don't need to, you know, text that each time.

So you can you can scan the QR code, you can join by text.

You can also join on your computer.

By entering that web address.

Pollev.com.

Forward Slash B Maney 119.

So that's pollev dot COM forward slash BMANEY 119 and once you get to there again the you should have the interactive window. So as you all get on there, if you you know if you.

Want to?

You can also again like I said, you can put it in chat or you can raise your hand.

We'll start seeing the results pop up here right on the screen and nobody has responded yet, but we'll we'll set it on here.

And Jason, do we have anybody in the chat or anybody raising their hand to share their thoughts of one key take away that they want us to gain from today's listening session.

 **Speaker 10** 14:39

I haven't.

I haven't looked at it in.

 **Speaker 8** 14:49

Bonnie, Jonathan Hines advice he needs to discuss some issues that he has had.

 **Speaker 10** 14:53

Yeah.

 **Speaker 2** 14:57

OK. And we're going to get to that of sharing of thoughts. Are you talking about?

Can you unmute, Jonathan?

No, you cannot. OK, let's see.

Can you put?

 **Speaker 8** 15:17

Type in chat. I can relay the message to Bonnie.



Speaker 2 15:24

There is having technical difficulties.

Is what I'm gathering.

Jason, will you monitor that with Jonathan?

We do have a couple of responses, so we need better systems set in place with police or the right departments to deal with safety problems and if there.

One, if there is a central source to read about emergency communications.

Great.

The one thing we want to focus on today and we appreciate that feedback.

See, I'm interested in alerting residents to various pending disasters, allowing individuals to save.

There is need for special help.

Specific I'd like to thank you for putting the region in here for Champlain Islands.

Not well served for person to person radio communications.

All right.

And then, of course, yes, AI technology and advantages and disadvantages.

Updating and upgrading the systems.

There's a great a lot of information, and as we did say, we are capturing all of this for later as well.

Micro Rural, Essex County.

Vermont very interesting when you say micro rural, we are seeing some of that.

Some of these areas are small region.

So thank you for providing that information.

What we do ask in this here today is we are focusing on the.

Receipt of calls that need to be, you know, for service.

And that initial dispatch, we do not want to focus today on the actual response of public safety field responders.

So not that it's not important, it is very, very important.

But today's conversation is about the communications piece.

Not about how quickly, perhaps.

Or how you were treated when the fire department arrived.

Or something like that.

So just to be clear with that and I am seeing this in, in, in the chat or in the in the responses, let me get this over here so I can do a little scrolling.

Micro Essex remote geography, lack of cell service.
We've heard that a lot about the lack of cell service.
Appreciate you sharing that trying to put together an ambulance crew.
Won't work if we can't hear each other, that is, that is very true.
A lot of times it, whether that be from radio communication, cell communications, or even sometimes if it's when you have to relay information by phone, all of that can definitely impact that.
And then about the special alerts as well. I understand you guys have had some terrible river flooding up there last year and this year.
So being able to have emergency alerts as well.
Well, all right, we're going to move forward.
On that. Thank you again, Jason, is there anything else in chat or anybody has their hands raised?
Have we solved Jonathan's problem?



Speaker 8 19:01

He's advising he would like someone to call him at a specific phone number.
Jonathan, we can.
We can provide that.
And arrange a phone call after the meeting.



Speaker 4 19:18

Should be able to call into this teams meeting.



Speaker 2 19:21

That is an option.
Great idea.




Speaker 4 19:26


He can't unmute his computer.





Speaker 2 19:26


So.


 **Speaker 4** 19:27
Maybe he can call in on the phone.


 **Speaker 2** 19:29
Right, Jonathan?

 **Speaker 9** 19:30
Now can we?

 **Speaker 8** 19:30
Correct. I'll provide that in the chat and while I'm doing that, Jane English has her hand raised.

 **Speaker 2** 19:34
Yeah. Thank you.
OK, Jane.
Go ahead.
Jane, are you there?
Yes.
I mean, you can go ahead and speak if you'd like.
You are unmuted.
Why can we not hear you?
Others have been able to unmute and we can hear them.
Jane, if you would like to put your comment in the chat.
Right. We'll wait for for Jane's response as well.
Let's let's move on here.
So you're going OK.

 **Speaker 8** 20:39
Ki have her response funny.

 **Speaker 2** 20:41
Go ahead.

 **Speaker 8** 20:44

Her response is we on the town's Emergency Management committee here in Calais, want to know how our internal emergency communications via gmrs and ham radio can interface with state systems.

She is a races member and has done emergency communications with the state in the past.

 **Speaker 2** 21:04

Alright, thank you very much Jane for for sharing that.

Definitely something that we we're glad that you want us to take away from from today and that information.

So we'll be able to, you know, note that down as well.

Alright, so this the conversation today is gonna be broken down into two types of segments.

1st is about the current stage.

 **Speaker 6** 21:29

Hello.

 **Speaker 2** 21:30

Yes.

 **Speaker 6** 21:32

Yes it is.


Hold on a second, please.


Hold a second.


 **Speaker 2** 21:46


OK.


I think Jane was taking a phone call, so it's gonna be broken down into two aspects. First couple of questions are going to be about the current system today, the current communication system and you heard Barb mention this, what is working well today and maybe what is not working so well today? We don't I don't know who on the call maybe has had.

 **Speaker 10** 21:57
Where I understand why.

 **Speaker 2** 22:11
A.
You know, a personal experience or need to call for emergency services.
We definitely want to.
You know you to have take that into consideration.
Yes, Jonathan, you have had that is OK.
Try Jonathan.
Try to use your telephone to call in on the number.
Is there somebody, perhaps on the task force, that can help Jonathan on the side?
I don't wanna. I I want to make sure he is addressed, but I also want to make sure
that we can keep this moving forward and perhaps it is having a separate
conversation with Jonathan as well to get his his perspective separately.

 **Speaker 4** 23:08
I can take care of that.

 **Speaker 1** 23:09
So thank you, Paul.

 **Speaker 2** 23:10
Thank you.
Appreciate that.
Again, so what's working well, what?
Maybe not working so well based on your personal experiences with the current
system. And then after these couple of questions were gonna actually talk about the
future state.
What do you think? Maybe could be improved upon?
All right, so let's go to the next slide.
There's another poll again you can answer.
In poll you can answer in chat you can raise your hand.
What is working well today?

With the current communication system, what do you like about how your your 911 and dispatch system is doing today?

Any thoughts there?

Fast responding and if you wouldn't mind with that too? What area are you?

Are you in when you say that?

I mean it is a pretty big state.

You know about 600,000 residents so fast responding is good to know.

Any other thoughts?

Do you like about the system today and how it works?

Lot of people in the chat and I remind you, we really want to hear from you, so please do not be shy. Please put things either in the chat.

Raise your hand or on the poll.

Or is it just the fact that there doesn't seem to be a lot that is working well today?

Some of the dispatchers really get drum beat of how calls unfold in Grand Isle County, OK.

Whoever that is, would you mind unmuting and sharing a little bit about what that means?

So we don't.

Yeah, we wanna make sure we have context there.

What do you mean by drum beat?

 **Speaker 11** 25:28

Hi. This. Hi.

This is Bob Melcher from South Hero Rescue. I used to work for a phone company in Lancaster, PA, and we ran the Lancaster County 911 system.

 **Speaker 2** 25:34


Hi, Bob.


 **Speaker 11** 25:41

But I was only involved in circuits.


But the Lancaster City Police Department always wanted their own dispatch because things would be happening in the city that somebody 30 miles away and it Manheim.


Wouldn't understand.


 **Speaker 2** 26:01
Hmm.


 **Speaker 11** 26:02
Our dispatch is Shelburne and when we get one of the regular dispatchers and there seems to be an unfortunate high level of turnover, but when we get one of the regular dispatchers, they understand where we are, what we're doing, what we're likely to need and it is really.
Really helpful 'cause. We're a bunch of volunteers and we get calls like.
17 month old not breathing.

 **Speaker 2** 26:29
Mm hmm mm hmm mm.

 **Speaker 11** 26:30
So.
That that the communication attacks attaches to humans at both end, to me is the focus.

 **Speaker 2** 26:41
All right.
OK.
So you're the the value of having that local dispatch center in their local knowledge.
If that's understanding what you're saying.

 **Speaker 11** 26:53
Yeah, just so long as I understand.
Just so long as they understand us and take a lot of calls from our town.

 **Speaker 2** 26:59
OK, got you.
Alright, thank you for that.
Any other responses?
Any other things in chat that you think is working well today?

Six county, very low population area, mostly volunteers again.
Sounds a little bit like Bob Meltzer as well.
Very fortunate to have a map of volunteer first responders to respond.
OK, with poor reception.
So the with that.
Whoever's there here from Essex County.
Is it a similar situation for you that you're that Bob was just relaying?
About local knowledge.
Is. What is it about the dispatch side?
Is it that they have more resources to be able to dispatch?
Because you have so many volunteers.
Is that person from Essex trying to speak?




Speaker 8 28:14


Bonnie Sharon Ellingwood in the chat says yes.
Colebrook Dispatch covers Canada, US main New Hampshire and Vermont over 100
and over 1400 square miles.





Speaker 2 28:30

OK.
Alright, thank you for that.
So let's let's let's see what we have here.
That's an enormous *** with low population defined responders. Yes, it is.
It very much is.
Let's switch gears to what is not working so well and I will throw this up there again
from another poll perspective. What is not working well today.
Your personal experience, aging Vermont systems and infrastructure statewide.
Again, I'll ask with that whoever posted that if you wouldn't mind coming off of mute
and and sharing a little bit more about your experience.
Specifically.
If there's a specific system that you're concerned about.
Or more than one system.
Ever posted that yes.


 **Speaker 9** 29:47
Matthew has his hand up.


 **Speaker 5** 29:48
Yeah, this is Nancy.
I did posted that I work within Vermont on 12 subcommittees.
So yes, every single one of them is aging and.
It's a.
It's a hindrance at this point.
It doesn't matter what you were in.

 **Speaker 2** 29:59
OK.

 **Speaker 5** 30:03
Yeah, but the answer to your question is Vermont's, you know, systems and infrastructure goals hand in hand.
And I'm not just in the medical I'm in education legislative. I can go on and on. I can tell you this.
It's, you know, it's one.
In hand, it's just, you know, the system of Vermont is just not up to date and it's being worse for others, you know, in harm's way.

 **Speaker 2** 30:23
OK.

 **Speaker 5** 30:28
It just needs to be updated and it thank you very much.

 **Speaker 2** 30:28
Gotcha.
Thank you, Matthew.
Nice to see you again.
OK.

 **Speaker 8** 30:36

Bonnie, along those same lines, Sharon Ellingwood also shared.

There's something called line A, which is a Canadian border interference with the border for communications and radio service.

She said.

That is a known issue.

 **Speaker 2** 30:54

OK, right.

Thank you for that, Sharon.

So we also have another response in the poll on the screen a few years ago, we had an emergency during which residents were told not to drink tap water.

Lots of people never heard about it, or if they did, it was a neighbor running around knocking on doors.

Not good.

So this sounds a little bit of a reference back to emergency.

Alerting systems which you know, understandably.

A lot of times, you know when we first have an emergency or a disaster of some sort, that information 911 is the first in your local, you know, law enforcement, fire and EMS.

They're the 1st to hear about it, so being able to coordinate that, whether that be locally or asking for outside resources.

We have just responded to responder radio as something that is not working well and then also for Addison County, several areas with poor or no cell service.

No possibility of contacting 911, especially when your when your mobile by the sounds of it.

OK. Anything else? Anybody else like to share what they think is not working well?

Alright.

Well, this is not a you know, the end of a conversation on on this part of it.

If you do think of something, please don't hesitate to put it in again into chat or something like that.

Raise your hand and at the very end of this presentation as well of this of this listening session, there is some contact information to be able to share your your ideas if something comes to mind later on.

Well, let's switch.

From current state.

To future state.

So.

You know, public safety communications or public safety is a very personal.

Part of our of our worlds and we always want to make sure that you we are feeling comfortable and confident that we can.

Access and receive emergency services if we ever need them.

And so this is where the a lot of this work for for televate and mission critical partners and working with the task force is to really now get a sense of what is your vision, what are your vision for the future of a statewide emergency communication system and.

We're going to have three. We're going to have to talk about three things in this part.

What expectations do you have for emergency communications in your community?

And so it's gonna kinda, you know, we're gonna bring it back.

We're gonna take it from state down to a community.

What is something you would not want to change if there are changes?

What is something that you were really thinking? We don't want this to change in our community. And then how do you think the emergency communication system could be improved now? The first two of those evolve again, a poll option. The third one though, hopefully you guys will be.

Really warmed up by then and we really wanna engage.

Coming off of mute, sharing in the chat and that that is going to be more of a a conversational question.

So first up. So you guys are again, you're warmed up now in in how this is working, but what expectations do you have for emergency communications in your community?

I know we heard from Bob.

You know, the fact that, you know, wherever the calls are being handled, that they.

Have they take enough calls that they know the community?

And you know.

What else is there for each of you?

That is very important to you.

What are your expectations when you need to call or contact emergency services?



Speaker 8 35:12

Funny in chat, Jane English would like to know what preparations.



Speaker 2 35:15

Yes.



Speaker 8 35:19

Vermont has made or looked at in regards to coronal mass ejections, the cm ES coming from the Sun that can take down all kinds of electronics.



Speaker 2 35:32

Somebody from the the state or Dom or Rick?

See if they can at least give Jane little bit of information on that.



Speaker 1 35:43

I'll. I'll try him in just to say it is not something I'm familiar with.

I'm wondering, Rick or Dom, do you have any information about this topic?



Speaker 12 35:58

So this is Rick Burke of Telivate and I'm going to put my camera on.

So the good news is that these events rarely happen.

And when they do happen, the the architecture of the of the radio networks of the communication networks.

Are secure enough and solid enough that we don't anticipate and we don't experience these types of of of issues during public safety communications the way the networks, the public safety networks are built, they're built to accommodate and and and to resist the these types of incursions, however.

You know, if they do happen, we have backup networks and we always can rely on a backup network in the event that we do have a disruption of of this magnitude.



Speaker 2 36:50

And hopefully that answers your question for right now.

If not, let us know. OK, thanks. You're welcome.

So one community expectation we have just posted on the screen that it's accessible

24/7 regardless of the access method that would require solid cell service.

All right.

And then in Grand Isle County, fast responding to calls is a high priority.

In Grand Isle, do you know what kind of the how long it takes right now?

Of an average response time trying to get kind of a definition around or an understanding and context. What? How do you define fast responding?

Right. So while somebody can respond to to that about whoops.

Comes back up.

So for Grand Isle, right?

If whoever posted that could let me know what what? How do you define fast responding?

Fact that my dispatch area has the radio and tower coverage to reach first responders out in the field, even in Essex, even in the remote areas of the utg and forests, especially on remote trails for snowmobile accidents, hunting, domestic situations, etcetera. All right, appreciate that.



Speaker 8 38:22

Bonnie Matt has his hand up.



Speaker 5 38:29

Yes, that was my question. And yes, it takes about, you know, a fast response should be immediate out here.

You don't get that every minute of the poll is different, you know, and we seen that across state.

You got volunteers that you know, like I said, can do the job.

It's just, you know, when you got literally limited like police service, you only got one out here and there's like I said and all our our mutual aid pretty much.

But to me it's like fact response should be.

Anywhere between.

As a call should be live.

Five actually should be anywhere between 10 to 15 minutes per that call out here we're seeing 30 at least between 15 to 30 minutes out here for the call because due to, you know, we're volunteer. Most of us are volunteers and and then just firefighters, miss, it's police.

Too as well. And per, you know, municipal district, you know, not every police like, you know, every town has like three or four police stations.

 **Speaker 2** 39:30

Right.

 **Speaker 5** 39:30

Out here we only have the one that represents. All of us is Grand Isle County Sheriff so.

It's that's a that that should be need to be addressed to as well. It's a call response time too as well. Thank you.

 **Speaker 2** 39:42

OK.

Yep. Now we do know.

I know one thing that the state has done is with what they call the emergency medical dispatch that does allow.

Call takers in the the peace apps and I will one centers to provide pre arrivals instructions.

For accidents, bleeding, trauma, things like that. When something is a medical in nature, which does help.

In between the time.

The call is received and actual medical professionals could get on scene, which is a really nice thing to have a lot of states don't have that statewide.

But at the same time, we understand as well that when calls are being transferred, that can also take.

Additional time to calls and trying to find those volunteer resources. So thank you for that, Matthew.

Any other?

Any other response is in here.

Comprehensive coverage.

IPhones can make satellite calls now, OK.

Let's see.

Resources for people trying to prevent or ease emergency situations is an expectation. Again, if you ever answer that, if we could add a little context behind

that. If you wouldn't mind coming off of mute, what do you mean for people trying to prevent?

Ease emergency situations.

Are you referring to what?

I just kind of mentioned the pre arrival or instructions over the phone.

So a little bit more context if somebody wants to come off of mute for that, I did it again.

Keep scrolling on my mouse instead of scrolling on the side, so I apologize for that.

Here we come. It's gonna refresh.

 **Speaker 8** 41:50

Bonnie, if we get an answer to that, then Barb also had her hand up for a moment.

 **Speaker 2** 41:54

OK, bar, go, go right ahead.

 **Speaker 1** 41:57

I just wanted to add a little bit more on the topic of pre arrival instructions.

So you're right, Bonnie.

All 911 call takers in Vermont are certified in emergency medical dispatch, or EMD, and they do provide those medical instructions instructions.

They are also required to provide pre arrival instructions for law enforcement situations and fire events.

And the point of the pre arrival instructions, which by the way, are all scripted.

There's all protocols for for many different kinds of events that can happen.

So the scripted instructions are there and are designed to hopefully keep the situation from getting worse before responders arrive and they're geared towards, well, certainly in a medical situation towards patient.

Safety and care, but also caller safety and bystander safety.

These events, so just a little bit more on on the protocol process in Vermont 911.

 **Speaker 2** 43:07

Thank you, Barb, for reminding me about the fire and the the police protocols as well. And I would highlight that even as I mentioned having the emergency medical dispatch statewide, not all states have that and it's even more rare that the

emergency fire in emergency police dispatch pre.

Arrival instructions and protocols are used statewide so.

That's definitely a very positive, you know.

Part of the emergency communication system in the state.

Any other thoughts as far as expectations you have for your community when it comes to public safety communications?

Somebody wants to expand on the answers or resources for people trying to prevent or ease emergency situations.

 **Speaker 8** 44:03

I mean, Megan, in the chat said having resources for people in domestic violence or stalking situations and trying to figure out what they can do if an emergency situation occurs.

 **Speaker 2** 44:04

Yes.

 **Speaker 8** 44:15

She lives in Bradford and the Police Department doesn't answer the phone and we're unable to help with questions. When it came to easing a stalking situation.

 **Speaker 2** 44:28

Oh, OK. Megan.

I'm sorry you had to go through that.

You know, thank you for for sharing your your concern and your your your information there so.

Definitely making you know when making sure that resources and information is available is very important to our communities for sure.

 **Speaker 8** 44:52

And Bonnie, to go back to the beginning, Paul has now completed his phone call and has Jonathan's information and can share it whenever.

 **Speaker 2** 45:01

Absolutely, Paul.

Let's go right ahead.

 **Speaker 4** 45:05

OK.

So Jonathan, it's actually he had a a medical event.

This is actually two years ago, but I'm not sure that anything has changed since then.

He lives in Braintree, Vermont, which is pretty much dead center of the state and very rural.

He had a medical emergency and he tried calling 911 from a cell phone and nobody answered and.

After a period of time, he says he got I've I've not heard this before, but he got a recorded. He got a phone call back from a Massachusetts number with a recorded message saying you are outside of our service area.

We're not able to help you.

I'm not sure if that was from a first responder agency or from.

A phone company or who it was from, but in the meantime he was able to.

Someone was able to get to a landline phone call for help.

He ended up going to the hospital by private vehicle, but his problem is that he was unable to reach anyone by calling 911 on his cell phone. He since then has tried to get permission.

He called.

The state police and asked if can I place a test call to 911 just to make sure that it's going to work next time I need it and was told no, you're not allowed to do that.

And so he's concerned that if he ever has another need to call 911 on his cell phone, he has low.

Expectation that it's gonna be successful.

 **Speaker 2** 46:25

First of all, thank you for for helping with that with Jonathan and Jonathan.

Thank you for for being persistent and and letting us get to you. And so you can Share your story, Barb, yes.

 **Speaker 1** 46:38

A couple things.

First, I just wanted to let Jonathan know that if you would like to arrange a time on one test call, he can call our office and we will make that arrangement.

The number is 802-828-4911.

And we'll get that arranged.

I can't really speak to the incident that happened a couple years ago because there may be many factors involved. The the circumstances aren't something that that I'm familiar with.

Or have heard of.

So there must be some very specific things that happened that time. But if in generally speaking if there is ever an issue getting through to 911.

You can call that number again right after it happens, and we may be able to investigate what happened, whether the call never got through the originating carrier through the telephone company to us or.

Where any breakdowns occurred.

So.

I just wanted to put that out there that if there are ever any concerns about a 911 call call our office or you can contact me by e-mail.

And we will do our best to get to bottom of it.

 **Speaker 2** 47:53

OK. And thank you Barb for letting him know that to get a hold of your office to arrange that that test call for sure.

 **Speaker 8** 47:53

And.

 **Speaker 1** 48:00

Yes, absolutely.

 **Speaker 2** 48:02

OK.

 **Speaker 8** 48:03

Have two more in chat.

One of them, Barb.

I believe this is gonna be a question for you.

Is there a contingency plan for maintaining or redirecting 911 and dispatch communications during a disaster event when cellular, landline and power grid and Internet are down, similar to what occurred in Washington County during the 22 winter storm?

 **Speaker 1** 48:29

So within the 911 system itself, so I'm talking about those six public safety answering points. If there is a failure within that system, say one of the peace apps goes down or is not available to take a 911 call for any number of reasons.

The calls the 911 calls will automatically and seamlessly reroute to an available call taker in one of the other five centers.

There are various levels of failover and redundancy.

Within the 911 system, to ensure that calls get to a 911 call taker one way or the other. As far as the power of concern, certainly our our peace apps and our system are backed up, if you will, by generator power and and and.

Of thing.

Addressing the the harder issue.

Is the events where cellular landline and avoid telephone service itself is down.

And so it can be helpful to have various various mechanisms to reach 911 in those events.

But but that is a a trickier problem.

As for the dispatch communications.

That will likely fail over and redundancy within the dispatch centers those 37 centers.

Will vary by agency.

It is something that this task force is actually looking at, right?

What mechanisms are in place for backup and failover and contingency planning?

So I hope that addresses the question, at least to some extent.

 **Speaker 2** 50:19

Thanks, Barb, and thanks for the question, Nick, Bob Melcher noted and noticing this in chat dialing 611 on your mobile phone and ask the phone company that lost a 911 call, why that happened.

Generally, they take those things very seriously, Bob says.

I guess that's another Ave. to Jonathan to inquire.

Alright, thank you guys for, you know, warming up a little bit and ensuring a little bit more information. Really appreciate that.

Let's see. What do we have next? Is the next question.

What is something you would not want to change?

So as you know, we're, you know, trying to make recommendations to the state and states considering in that well the task force and such as considering those recommendations, are there things that you would not absolutely not want to see change when it comes to your, your public safety?

Communications.

Takes a minute for folks.

Anything you would like not to change.

Are you open to anything that can make the system better?

Some questions. I know, Bob, you mentioned about having.

Not necessarily local.

Call takers local dispatchers.

But at least that those that were taking the calls would know.

Know about the geography, know about the the local information about where they're dispatching for.

So you know, is it important to have an actual physical call taker or dispatcher in your community as long as they know about your community? I guess that's my question, Bob. If you have something to share on that, people who understand the local situation is coming in on.

The pole.

Keep dispatch local, yes.



Speaker 8 52:47

Bonnie. Sorry, Bonnie.

Also, Matt does have his hand up when there's an opportunity.



Speaker 2 52:52

OK.

Yep. Give me one second, Matt.

People who understand the local situation, that kind of speaks to what does speak exactly to what I was just mentioning. Keep it local.

Ours is out of state, but it's critical knowledge.

So with that comment, it's out of state, but you want to keep it local.
So is it still local because you're so close to the center, even though it's out of state?
Just want to kind of get again a little bit more context there.
Whoever did that one.
Not like to see consolidation to the point of losing local knowledge, OK.
All right, totally understand that.
Yes, out of state dispatch is 2 mile, OK.
So it is, even though it's out of state, you're on the border, it's very, very close, OK.
I got that awesome Matt. Go ahead.

 **Speaker 5** 53:56

Yes, digital assets.
For the state now in one system most, most everything is digital.
Digitalized, you know, even in nine on one systems and files you know and
dispatching you know data you know it's you know one thing I do not want to lose is
that digital fingerprint as like most police station fingerprint you but they're just
saying it's also digital ****.

 **Speaker 2** 54:06

No.

 **Speaker 5** 54:23

Within Vermont's.
You know, trail, so we can go back to that if there's any problems. So that digital
asset or digital fingerprint of the system, you know, to come back to if we have any
other questions. So we don't lose that you know collaboration.

 **Speaker 2** 54:33

OK.

 **Speaker 5** 54:44

So we do not want to lose the collaboration effort, you know.

 **Speaker 2** 54:45

Mm hmm.

OK.

 **Speaker 5** 54:49

As a as you know, emergency dispatch altogether. So thank you.

 **Speaker 2** 54:54

Right. And that actually Matthew that speaks a bit to well quite well to you know Jonathan's, you know challenge and you know kind of trying to figure out back then what what had happened.

So that is very important when you do have a lot of.

Barbara said.

You know, 37 dispatch centres, there's a lot of there, could be a lot of transfer points to try to keep the the the flow of the call and what happened at each point should something.

Unfortunate.

Her. So thank you for that. Any anybody, any other thoughts? Again there are there are several of you on this call there's 15 or so that are not including you know myself and Jason and the task force members and televate so but there's you know still about 15.

Of you all.

Any other thoughts?

Something you don't want to have change.

OK.

Most of it is focused around local knowledge from those that did respond.

Before I move on to our last question, which is the conversational questions, are there's gonna be a little trick here 'cause I I am going to try and go around the room. And make sure.

 **Speaker 8** 56:33

I think we do have one that just came in on chat.

 **Speaker 2** 56:34

Oh yes.

Yes, please go ahead.

 **Speaker 8** 56:37

Bob Melcher said he's met one of the dispatchers once, but still because most of our calls go through the same people, local knowledge and a radio relationship are critical.

They don't have to be local.

 **Speaker 2** 56:50

OK.

Thank you, Bob. Appreciate, appreciate that.

So. So the last question and like I said, this can be a little trickier because I want to go around the room to each person and hopefully if you can unmute and and share your thought, that would be great. If you could put it in the chat when.

We call up on you.

If you can't unmute, that's OK as well.

But wanna make sure that again, everybody has had an opportunity to speak.

How do you think the emergency communication system could be improved?

Is going to be the question before I get to that. So y'all can think about it a little bit.

Is there anything you know? Barb. Paul. Michael.

Dom Rick Jason from our team here that you know anything based on the conversation and what we've heard so far that you would want to share or ask back.

This bar.

 **Speaker 1** 58:01

Sorry, I was muted.

I just posted in the chat.

Three links that might be useful to some of the issues that have been mentioned today.

One is a link to Vt Alert which is a program managed by Vermont Emergency Management that allows Vermonters to sign up for public notifications of issues and events.

So that might be one tool as far as getting people notified in the event of certain emergencies.

Then also there is a link to the care program that Citizens Assistance Registry for emergencies.

That is a partnership between 911 Vermont Emergency Management and the United Way of Vermont that allows individuals with.

Specific needs.

To register with the program.

Responders can access that information during widespread events like flooding or storm.

That are leading to evacuations or isolations so that people with you know extra needs perhaps functional needs can get the assistance that they need.

So that's the care program and then there is another program called Supplemental Alley.

Which allows you to attach information to your phone number that you would want a 911 call taker and then a responder to know about should you need to place a call to 911. So those links are in the chat if people find them, use.

Thanks.

 **Speaker 2** 59:43

Thank you, Barb.

 **Speaker 8** 59:45

We do have one in the chat so far, Bonnie.

 **Speaker 2** 59:48

OK.

Go ahead.

 **Speaker 8** 59:49

So Jane English says most of the discussion so far seems to focus on specific localized incidents.

The Calais Emergency Management Committee is looking at things like larger situations, floods, blizzards, hurricanes.

So specifically, they're looking how to improve town to town communications.

Local EOC to local shelter, Communications, Rd. crew communications, etcetera.

 **Speaker 2** 1:00:17

Jane, that's really important element. I think when it comes to communications,

right?

We think about it from the number one to dispatch to the initial field responders. But when we look at larger incidents like that, there's a lot of communication that happens over radios and cell phones that are need to be timely.

When it comes to engaging other emergency responders or what we not emergency responders.

Sorry, what we would call mutual aid.

Whether that be public works, Rd. crews, shelters, those things that you mentioned in your chat. So.

Really appreciate.

Understanding at based on the question here on the screen, those are. That's something that you think needs to be improved upon is the communication in those events.

All right.

Anybody else from the?

From the the the project team from this, from the task force.

Any thoughts before I go around the room?

OK.

Excuse me.

Let's see whoever is representing.

The gather mode is that no, that's somebody's mode.

Never mind. That's how you're observing things.

Bob Meltzer, what is?

Something you think. How do you think the emergency communication system could be improved?

You would come off of mute and share your thought.



Speaker 11 1:01:59

Just more more radio towers and a comprehensive plan and training for when you're out of radio.

Communication again in Pennsylvania, the County of Lancaster.

We don't have county which which is the size of Vermont in terms of population.

Provided all the radio towers and there were no blind spots for at least the police reported there were no blind spots.

That's about it.
And the purview of this.

 **Speaker 2** 1:02:39

OK.

Thank you, Bob.

Brent Demers, if you could come off of mute, if you wouldn't mind and share, how do you think the emerging communication system could be improved?

 **Speaker 13** 1:02:59

I didn't realize I had my hand raised, but.

I'm trying to get an understanding of what.

The system is exactly that.

We have.

I've been doing a little research looking into what some other cities have done, states.

With something called new Generation 911 and if anyone can speak to that.

 **Speaker 2** 1:03:24

There are any anything to share on next Generation 911 in the state?

 **Speaker 1** 1:03:29

Right. So Vermont does have well next generation 911. First of all is an evolution right of technology and Vermont has been.

Evolving since about 2007 with elements of next Generation 911 and we started with what's called an ezi net, which is a network that allows for emergency traffic to to traverse it. In the case of Vermont, it is the system.

That connects 911 callers to A911 system.

So that part of NG911 next Generation 911 is in place in Vermont and has been in place for quite a long time.

And there are many other elements of next generation technology. And for Vermont is at the forefront of many of those components of Ng 911 and we continue to.

Remain engaged at the national level with the standards.

They're developed and then deploy those or implement those standards here in Vermont as they come along.

So one a couple of examples of how Ng 911 helps. Earlier I spoke of if if AP SAP is unable to answer a 911 call or all the call takers are busy on other 911 calls, the system will automatically and seamlessly rout.

The call to one of the other five.

Peace apps in a in a legacy system, those that fail over and back up was much more of a manual process.

This happens within the system itself, so that serves the caller better.

It prevents them from being sitting from sitting in a queue waiting to be answered and gets them to a live call taker sooner.

So that's one aspect, another aspect that many people I think don't realize we have in Vermont is text to 911 capability.

So anywhere in Vermont, you can text to 911 to get assistance.

That's from any carrier. This is a tool that is helpful for.

For situations when making a voice call to 911 might endanger the person.

It's also helpful for our deaf and hard of hearing community to reach 911 directly.

And it is also helpful in situations where you may not have enough signal to make a 911 call, but you can get a text through.

So the the we refer to it as call. If you can text if you can't. So a voice call is typically smoother.

And a little bit easier to convey information.

But if you're unable to make a voice call for any reason, text to 911 is available in Vermont.

So so we are on it as far as next Generation 911 goes and continue to to watch the industry for advancements which we will then consider and implement as appropriate.

 **Speaker 13** 1:06:43

Thank you.

May I ask one more question?

 **Speaker 2** 1:06:47

OK.

 **Speaker 13** 1:06:50

Does has Vermont looked into or have that I'm not aware of real time information centers.

 **Speaker 1** 1:07:02

Information centers. I'm not sure.
I'm not familiar with that term.

 **Speaker 13** 1:07:07

Some other cities larger cities have built these systems where it's a funnel for all of the emergency.

Situations that are happening and unfolding in the moment, and some of those are like mental health crisis.

Which, you know, law enforcement doesn't necessarily need to respond to.

But so it's sort of this umbrella or funnel where?

They're determining in the moment what resources to dispatch.

And it's it's something that.

A lot of other cities, I think Seattle.

And some other cities in Oregon have implemented that have really been successful.

That could.

There's actually a Forbes article on on it.

But yeah, it's just something that seems to be.

A lot of success.

In getting information where it needs to be much more quickly.

 **Speaker 2** 1:08:22

Is that mostly from the articles you're reading? And I know you cited Seattle in in Oregon, around the mental health aspect in crisis services.

 **Speaker 13** 1:08:33

No it.


 **Speaker 2** 1:08:34


Rather no.


 **Speaker 13** 1:08:35


It's it's overarching. I I say that I'm in Burlington.
You know I'm Burlington.


 **Speaker 2** 1:08:40
OK.

 **Speaker 13** 1:08:41
So yes, that is one thing.
But as far as in general emergency services go?
You know it gets more information to whoever's being dispatched.

 **Speaker 2** 1:08:55
Yeah, I've heard referred to in some cases called real time crime Centers, RTC Cs.
I've heard not as common.
The Rtic the real Time Information Center, which is more of a broader umbrella or a
fusion center.
Same type of concept. They'll kind of go by various different names.
Barb does that more of thinking of the Rtcc arena ring true anywhere in in Vermont.

 **Speaker 1** 1:09:26
Well, there is certainly a fusion center in Vermont, but I could not speak to their
operations.
I wonder if maybe Paul could.
And I don't mean to put him on the spot, but.

 **Speaker 4** 1:09:37
Yeah, the, the the fusion center, as I know a fusion center is more.
It's a it's a law enforcement, intelligence and information gathering center.
It's not it all involved in emergency response. It's it gathers and catalogs and shares
criminal intelligence.

 **Speaker 1** 1:09:57
Gotcha. So I think in terms of of as you were speaking about this real time
Information Center, I had AI had a picture in my mind of like essentially a heat map
right of ongoing activity maybe identified by the nature of the call as well.

 **Speaker 2** 1:09:57

Yeah.

 **Speaker 1** 1:10:17

The 911 system in Vermont does not have that per say, though call takers throughout the state can see where other calls are happening.

It's really more for situational awareness, though it does not provide a deep dive into the type of call that's going on in each of those locations. I can't.

I don't know if any of the dispatch centers around the state may have some of this technology or or functionality.

But I mean, it's something we could certainly have on the table for for discussion as we move forward.

 **Speaker 2** 1:10:58

Thank you for your question, Brent. And and one of the things that is coming out of all of these listing sessions and town halls and all the research so far that's been conducted is to create an inventory for what the communication centers, the dispatch centers, the peace app.

Have currently and that does include different software programs and things like that as well that can enhance their capabilities.

So thank you for bringing that that question.

Down patch.

Donna, can you unmute and let us know how you think the emerging communication system could be improved?

 **Speaker 14** 1:11:39

Yes, I think one improvement that could be made that I think people have been trying to do for many years.

Is the, you know. Be careful how you say this, but kind of the separation between a 911 center and a dispatch center.

We our expectations that we put on dispatch centers has grown tremendously over the years.

The more technology we have, the more expectations we put on the dispatch center.

And I'm wondering at some point if we would be better served to make that

separation between the two.

While at the same time identifying.

Where people would get their dispatching from, IE creation of either larger or more dispatch centers, if that makes sense.

 **Speaker 2** 1:12:32

OK. It does. Don. Thank you very much for that.

EMC Panton. EMC Panton. Whoever is representing there.

 **Speaker 15** 1:12:42

No, hi, this is Bob Groff from Panton.

Sorry, it's a generic account.

That's why it's.

 **Speaker 2** 1:12:48

Gotcha.

 **Speaker 15** 1:12:50

First off, I'd like to say thank you for the others for having this talk. And also I'd like to point out that the centres seem to be doing a really good job and I really appreciate that. I'd like to point the the camera, the other direction and it.

People trying to call into the centres and it's been, I think, gone over several times about not being able to connect in because of lack of connectivity.

And the text of 911 is a really good one to to put out there, but in a major event, many of the towns in this area would have no contact at all, and I think something like.

Encouraging the towns to start up a small eoc with maybe a ham radio in it because the races people do a great job, but they're going to be overloaded if the major event occurs and I don't know if they'll be able to go to every town like Wal.

And and Panton and Addison.

And the other.

Areas and be able to cover this whole area and take care of it.

So a way to encourage the towns and help out the towns, maybe start up an EOC.

Thank you.

 **Speaker 2** 1:13:55

All right.

Thank you.

Thank you so much, Jane.

I know you've been having.

You haven't been coming off of mute. You've been putting your information in chat.

If you would want to share one thing, you would want to see improved. That would be great.

And we'll be on the.

We'll be on the lookout for that, Jason.

Be watching for that, Jonathan.

You as well. I know you cannot speak.

If there is a way that you could put a response into chat if not.

We will follow up with you as well.

I wanna make sure we get your perspective.

Oh, Jane, thank you.

Neighboring towns working together appreciate that.

Matthew, I know you've shared with us before. What is one thing that you think you would like to see improved in the emerging communication system?

 **Speaker 5** 1:14:48

Yes, I do think, you know, like I said, there's new technology out there. There's AI, the artificial intelligence that, you know, that help, you know, you can think. Vermont Electric Co-op, because they're the 1st in the state of in the state of Vermont to utilize this you.

Know software program to basically optimize manage their grid electrical grid.

Basically, optimize it in a way where like I said, with this there's an opportunity for us to, you know, to see a better outlook. Plus AI will be able to look see.


Future outlook and help manage, so it ain't like one person's, you know, doing everything it would do. The technology would basically.


Help out. You know what I could see is having, you know, AI technology and all the systems. It helps optimize the system of Vermont.


Basically it takes a lot of guesswork out of us, guesstimating and guesstimating a dangerous, you know, thing for Vermont.


We guesstimate all the time in our surveys and it doesn't help you know.
Help solve those problems. So AI technology.
Emerging technology like Barbara Pudding said about having that new new
generation 911, but also there's a new forefront of having AI technology that could
be fused in a system you know or emerging technology to be added to the
system to basically have a better outlook but.

 **Speaker 2** 1:15:57
OK.


 **Speaker 5** 1:16:17
Also.
Have a better.
System.
I'll be optimized in a way where it doesn't, you know, rely on heavy bandwidth
because bandwidth for radios and stuff. It takes a lot.

 **Speaker 16** 1:16:25
Simultaneous images.

 **Speaker 2** 1:16:32
Yes it does.


 **Speaker 5** 1:16:33
And it just you know how to make it more efficient.
You know when we're communicating because there's a lot of bandwidth, you know,
a lot of band between radios.


 **Speaker 2** 1:16:36
OK.


 **Speaker 5** 1:16:42
Just trying to get if everybody uses one radio band, you know it gets bogged down
or it gets, you know, constricted. Or as if you use.
You know a multifunctional like like a mesh radio system. You could be able to get a


lot of calls out there.

More efficiently, the efficiency did better for the system itself as a whole, so it doesn't break down.

 **Speaker 2** 1:17:01
Right.

 **Speaker 5** 1:17:05
And that's, you know why we have emerging technologies to optimize that.
So it doesn't, you know, become overloaded. Thank you.

 **Speaker 2** 1:17:14
Thank you, Matthew.
Appreciate that.
And that is an aspect of the study as well as looking at the radio communications piece of it.
So thank you so much. And emerging technology as well. Megan, would you come off of mute and share what you think how the communication system could be improved or if not off of mute in the chat please?
No, Megan, if you are able to do that, that would be great.
We'll be watching for that.
Nick Nick emlin.
See, you already have a mute. How would you? Do you think the emergency communication system could be improved? No. And it went back on mute.

 **Speaker 16** 1:18:03
Oh, hi.
Yeah, I had a question, I guess, is wondering if the public Safety Communications task force is collaborating with Vermont Emergency Management on this project.
And I'm asking because the EM and FEMA are working on ways to maintain emergency communications during simultaneous outages, long term outages of the elect.
Grid the Internet and landlines.
So I'm just wondering if you are working with.
Vermont Emergency Management on that aspect of it.

 **Speaker 1** 1:18:42

So I can speak to that a little bit.

Certainly, Vermont Emergency Management is a is a good partner for having these conversations with.

I'm not aware that that specific conversation has happened, but certainly we have an easy opportunity for that given that they are part of the Department of Public Safety and the Commissioner of that department is a Co chair of this.

Of this task force.

So we will.

I will have a discussion with her about where we stand exactly on that question.

 **Speaker 16** 1:19:15

Great. Thank you.

 **Speaker 1** 1:19:16

Hmm.

 **Speaker 2** 1:19:17

And and Nick, what is something that you think you know?

How do you think the emergency communication system could be improved?

 **Speaker 16** 1:19:26

Well, I I guess on that same point it goes to what Jane was talking about on some local communities have are developing gmrs and ham radio.

Capability.

And that is wonderful because it doesn't rely on its independent of any external infrastructure.

So to develop a way to integrate that with.

The with the 911 and dispatch system.

Don't know if that's feasible, but that would be a a goal.

 **Speaker 2** 1:20:03

Great. Thank you, nick.

Appreciate that we have like 10910 minutes left.
Sharon Ellingwood, would you mind sharing your thoughts?

 **Speaker 17** 1:20:14

Hi, thanks.

I'm the one from Essex County.

We rely on an out of state dispatch in New Hampshire and we do not have radio contact.

 **Speaker 2** 1:20:17

OK.

 **Speaker 17** 1:20:23

We do not have sufficient radio contact in our area.

Is blocked by the mountains and we cover a very rugged, remote forested terrain.

 **Speaker 2** 1:20:34

Mm hmm.

 **Speaker 17** 1:20:34

I've spoken with our dispatch, the head of our dispatch.

Our kids are in 4H together.

It's a small community on both sides of the river.

The river doesn't divide us.

It it joins our communities.

 **Speaker 2** 1:20:45


Uh.


 **Speaker 17** 1:20:45


Connecticut river.

So that's that absolutely needs to be improved. We go from 7000 people on both sides of that river up to 50,000 on a weekend with ATV and snowmobiling and recreation. And it's a very low population area to staff and fund dispatch and our first responders and.

Our ambulance company, the other thing I'd like to see improve is communication between departments like VEM and the Department of Health. Are some things are tied to like your RPC which ours is mvda. Some are attached to your county, some are attached to your Vermont Department of Health District right now, Essex County is divided into Essex, North and South, both affiliated with either the MVRH service area or the North Country Hospital area. And our medical providers are out. Of state in the same town are dispatches, so communications.

 **Speaker 2** 1:21:38
Hmm.

 **Speaker 17** 1:21:41
Don't always.
Get to us.

 **Speaker 2** 1:21:45
Thank you.
All right, great.
Thank you so much for for sharing of that. And I see Megan.
Responded in chat.
So thank you.
You like the real time crime center you think is a great idea and then in general, having more education, knowledge and resources for the emergency departments for prevention and how to handle emergent situations while people wait for emergent emergency departments to come.
So thank you so much.
Sharing that.
I would like to ask in just the last couple minutes before I'm going to turn it over back to Barb.
I mean a Barb, you as a task Force Member, I'm going to give you the, you know, the last word. But our other two task force members, Paul and Michael, is there anything you would like to share?
From your task, force perspective of what you what you're hearing about how to improve the system, what are your own thoughts?

 **Speaker 4** 1:22:48

Well, I'll go.

I guess one of the concerns that I hear a lot locally, I live in the town of Barrie.

And you know for well, I'll give 2 examples.

There's the town of Berry and the city of Berry and the town almost completely surrounds the city.

We rely on each other very heavily for mutual aid, but yet we use two different dispatch centers and don't necessarily know what the other one is doing.

Another example is right next door to me in the town of Berlin. If you have some kind of an incident in the town of Berlin and you call 911.

Your law enforcement is coming either from the state police or from the Berlin police, depending on whether you're on or off the Interstate.

And that comes from 1 dispatch center. If you need a fire truck that comes from the Berlin Fire Department, which is dispatched by the city of Montpelier.

And if you need an ambulance that comes from the town of Barry, which is dispatched by Lamoille County, so you have 1911 call needing to be forwarded to three different dispatch centers to get.

To get first responders to the scene, which is just built in delays.

So that is something that I know locally.

It's it's tough in that we we allow the municipalities to choose who they have for a dispatch center serving them.

And then that could be based on financial reasons or customer service reasons, a whole host of reasons why a community might choose one dispatch center over another. But in order for this to work on a regional basis, somehow we have to get over those hurdles.

 **Speaker 2** 1:24:20

All right, great. Thank you, Paul, Michael.

 **Speaker 9** 1:24:26

Yeah, I was just gonna.

I'll tie on to what Paul said, I mean.

I think as a you know an EMS chief here locally in the St. Johnsbury area and still clinically, you know jumping on the ambulance and QA ING these calls from a

management perspective, Paul's right.

I mean, there's just there's so many delays with so many different dispatch centres across the state, you know, using, you know, our colleagues in the Chittenden County area. It's not uncommon for.

One single 91 call to have to go through multiple upwards of 567 dispatch centers to get to get the resources need to for one single emergency.

You know, and I get and understand the local control and some of the benefits.

That come from that. However, jumping through six or seven dispatch centers creates delays and problems.

And and again, we're fortunate in some areas in our area here we have a single dispatch center.

But however, we're still relying on that information to come down and and cross over to Vermont State Police.

And again, it's not uncommon for.

Law enforcement to be updated with information even on medical or traumatic motor vehicle accidents and have.

Have more up to date.

Information on a response than the actual responders that need that information.

So I think we need to get to a place where we have consistent, reliable and timely dispatch across the entire system. And again, certainly echoing everybody's.

Sediment on on cellular and radio coverage across the state. We have a lot of areas and gaps that we need coverage.

I was actually.

Earlier this morning, answering a survey that Firstnet put out and you know, they broadcasted that network very widely.

However, I haven't really seen a lot of improvements with that. You know, one of the things that we need again is more towers in the areas where we have unreliable coverage.

So I guess that's that's all I got for now.



Speaker 2 1:26:54

Great. Thank you. All right.

And I am going to say I'm going to turn it over to Barb and she'll she'll have her closing statements. But thank you all of you for participating today for sharing your thoughts.

I hope you found value in you know and again inclusive that you could. Everybody can have an opportunity and with that, Barb, I'm going to turn it over to you for our summary and. Our last contact slide.



Speaker 1 1:27:25

And thank you, Bonnie.

I'll echo exactly what you just said of thanks to everybody that participated today. I've got notes all over the place on my papers here, but one of the things that I think I heard the most was about.

The the need for improvements really just in communications generally, right?

So access to 911 with better cellular coverage, certainly better radio coverage. As Michael just pointed out.

And also more effective communications between and among.

The response agencies and with the public in general. So but if I had to summarize what I pulled from this meeting today, that would be it.

Hopefully that was one of the things that that a participant hoped we'd take from this meeting.

But now the the our vendor partners Televate mission critical are going to take the feedback that you've provided today.

We have another community listening session coming up this week.

And they are going to develop reports for the task force to use to further this conversation, including with the legislature.

So lots of discussion yet to be had.

Thank you for being here and participating today. If you need more information, you can visit the public safety Communications task force.

It is the web page.

Rather, it is located located.

On the Department of Public Safety website, if you go to that website, you will find boards and commissions listed and dig down in there a time or two and you will find the task force. There you will find all the information linking to our regular meetings which are.

Held every other Wednesday. Typically, the next meeting is on the 30th of October.

And also stakeholder updates and and status reports for the project.

So there's lots of information there.

And then you see listed here as well. Is the task force e-mail address.

Should you ever need to reach us or want to share more information with us.

So with that, nobody has anything further.

I'll thank you once again for attending and hope to remain in touch as we go along in the conversation. Thank you.

Hey there, I wasn't sure how many people are still in the meeting, but I took myself out too quickly, so I'm just checking back in to see if we're all set OK.

 **Speaker 2** 1:30:57

Yeah.

Do do we want to?

Drop. All right. Well, then I can remove a couple folks. Thank you. Our ASASL interpreters so much.

Appreciate it. OK.

Somehow I'm in together mode, which is kind of weird looking.

 **Speaker 1** 1:31:17

Yes, it is weird looking like.

 **Speaker 2** 1:31:19

Like that.

OK, I didn't even know how to get it off of here.

Now let's just get rid of that.

Remove that from the meeting, maybe.

There there we go.

 **Speaker 1** 1:31:30

Here we go.

 **Speaker 2** 1:31:31

Alright.

I guess we lost.

 **Speaker 1** 1:31:33

So look, I think we've lost just about everyone.

 **Speaker 2** 1:31:39

We don't have Rick and them back, but if you wanted to debrief really quick.

 **Speaker 1** 1:31:48

Yeah.

Let me see if I can reach them.

Now.

Not working so well.

 **Speaker 2** 1:32:15

I thought maybe I could get them back, but they're not in my.

As far as participants, yeah, maybe ask them just to jump back in.

 **Speaker 8** 1:32:24

I can send them a quick e-mail real quick if you want.

 **Speaker 1** 1:32:26

Yeah, that's what I meant.

Get Paul to.

There.

Are we still recording?

 **Speaker 2** 1:32:51

Hmm.

Nap.

 **Speaker 2** stopped transcription