

Statewide Public Safety Communications System Planning Project Stakeholder Update



July 2024

Happening Now: Data Collection and Analysis

As reported last month, the project is in the Data Collection phase and the project team is working to develop a complete inventory and assessment of all aspects of dispatch service currently provided in Vermont. A detailed data collection questionnaire was distributed to all dispatch centers within the State to be completed by dispatch center leaders and representatives to accurately document the equipment, processes, and facilities currently used at each PSAP and 911 center to provide dispatch service. Many questionnaires have been completed and returned to date, and those agencies that have not yet returned their questionnaires are encouraged to complete them prior to the project team's on-site visit. On-site visits with each of the dispatch centers will begin during the week of July 15th and continue into August. Following completion of the on-site visits, the detailed data analysis and system inventory and assessment will take place.

The Task Force would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all the dispatch centers for your efforts to complete the lengthy inventory survey. This information is required in response to the data collection objectives established by the Vermont General Assembly's Act 78. Importantly, this data, and the additional insights you are providing regarding your particular Public Safety communications infrastructure, staffing, best practices and governance establishes the foundation on which the Task Force will develop its recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the future of Public Safety communications. Please do not hesitate to contact Task Force members if you have questions or recommendations regarding the data collections efforts, or on the Statewide Public Safety Communications System Planning program in general.

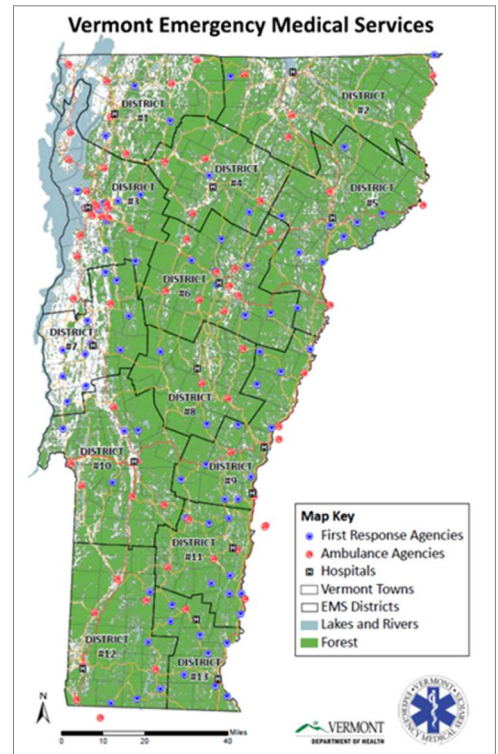
Project Status

- MCP continues to collect questionnaire data and has expanded distribution to agencies in neighboring states that dispatch Vermont agencies. The team has also been reaching out to individual agencies that have not yet returned their questionnaires. All agencies have been contacted.
- MCP continued organization of on-site meetings to dispatch centers – to begin July 15th.
- MCP continued organization of on-site investigation of wireless and dispatch systems and will be meeting with Radio Technology Services (RTS) on July 29th.
- Televate provided recommendations related to dispatch projects to MCP for monitoring and has also presented their findings related to the COPS grant programs to the Task Force and provided a summary of the recommendations to the Vermont Department of Public Safety (DPS).
- Televate reviewed the dispatch status of each of the 14 Sheriff's offices and updated the dispatch agency list.
- Televate developed a graphical schedule tool and key data tracker to provide a quick visual assessment of the ongoing project status.

Did You Know?

The highly skilled and dedicated pre-hospital Emergency Medical professionals of Vermont are as reliant on the quality and availability of local and statewide public safety communications systems and technologies as are all other Vermont first responder practitioners and agencies. Reliable **mission critical communications systems and practices** including 9-1-1 call taking, emergency dispatch, land mobile radio, paging, high-speed mobile data, records management and others support the fundamental lifesaving activities of these professionals. As with all State of Vermont first responder agencies, a comprehensive understanding of the communications requirements and existing communications service gaps of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) community are a key focus of the Public Safety Communications Task Force. The participation of the EMS practitioners and the agencies they support in the Statewide Public Safety Communications System Planning program is essential to the successful outcome of the program. Vermont's EMS agencies are represented on the Task Force by Michael J. Wright, Chief Executive Officer for CALEX Ambulance Service.

Vermont's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system provides the public emergency medical treatment and ambulance transportation services over every hour of every day of the year. The Vermont EMS system is organized into 13 EMS Districts (see the EMS district map to the right) that are based generally on distance to the nearest hospital. There are currently 167 ambulance and first responder agencies in the state, an estimated 3,277 licensed emergency medical service (EMS) practitioners, and over 400 providers certified as Vermont Emergency First Responders ([Emergency Medical Services | Vermont Department of Health \(healthvermont.gov\)](https://healthvermont.gov)).



The available EMS services are provided from 75 private and public ground ambulance providers, 1 air transport provider, and over 88 first response services agencies. The delivery of these critical emergency services often relies on neighboring communities and mutual aid to meet the increasing demand for service. Such mutual aid places considerable demand on and emphasizes the need for shared and interoperable voice and data communications systems and inter PSAP and dispatch communications solutions, practices and operational standards.

As reported by the Vermont EMS Advisory Committee ([Report to The Vermont Legislature - EMSAC](#)), on average, Vermonters request an ambulance 342 times per day. EMS professionals responded to 124,740 calls for service in 2023, which represented an increase of 22% over the last five years.

It is important to highlight that based on an academic study of paid and volunteer EMS professionals across the United States conducted in 2020 ([Comparison of Volunteer and Paid EMS Professionals in the United States: Prehospital Emergency Care: Vol 25 , No 2](#)), Vermont ranked highest in the country in terms of percentage of volunteer EMS professionals at that time. The number of volunteers in Vermont represented 47% of the total EMS workforce in the state while the average number of EMS volunteers across the United States was 13%.

We want to know what topics you'd like to learn more about!

For direct inquiries to the Task Force regarding the project, please contact DPS.PSCTaskForce@vermont.gov

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