

Statewide Public Safety Communications System Planning Project Stakeholder Update



May 2024

The Public Safety Communications Task Force now has an email address! For direct inquiries to the Task Force regarding the project, contact us at DPS.PSCTaskForce@vermont.gov.

Project Status

- A kick-off meeting with the system planning vendor, Mission Critical Partners (MCP), was held where they introduced their team, explained the scope of work and their process, and reviewed the next steps with the Task Force. Televate and MCP worked together to update the comprehensive project plan to include the MCP tasks and high-level schedule. MCP is currently working on an inventory and data collection schedule.
- The team met to begin coordination of the data collection logistics and activities.
- The team updated the current list of dispatch centers to include addresses and developed a map showing the location of each dispatch center throughout the State.
- A draft questionnaire was developed to guide the PSAP and dispatch center outreach and data collection.
- A draft project FAQ document was developed, comments received and the draft updated and published.
- The program schedule is in final production and initial outreach to the PSAPs and communications centers is expected to begin during the month of May 2024.

Happening Now: Data Collection and Analysis

The Communications System Planning Project will be conducted in three phases: data collection and analysis, design, and implementation. The first phase—Data Collection and Analysis—will consist of a complete inventory and assessment of all aspects of dispatch service currently provided in Vermont. This is to include: all existing dispatch infrastructure and equipment, including facilities, hardware, software, applications, and land mobile radio systems; the number of full-time and part-time personnel currently performing dispatch service; the current total spending on dispatch service in Vermont; identification and an assessment of the communications dead zones in the State, meaning those areas that lack the infrastructure to support public safety land mobile radio communications or cellular voice and data service, or both; identification of the particular challenges or vulnerabilities of each dispatch center, if any, including with regard to workforce, failover procedures, communications technology, costs, and governance.

Did You Know?



As detailed in the 2022 Annual Report of the Vermont State Fire Marshall - [2022 VT FM Report final1.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#), which is published every two years, there are 229 fire departments operating in the State of Vermont. Vermont is one of the states with the largest number of firefighters and fire departments per capita. According to the Vermont Fire Academy strategic plan, there are more than 5,000 volunteer and career firefighters serving their respective communities in the State. The National Fire Registry ([National Fire Department Registry Quick Facts \(fema.gov\)](#)) indicates that 95% of Vermont fire departments are staffed by volunteers (compared with 85% in the country) and only 5% employ career, paid firefighters. During 2022, VT fire departments reported over 59,344 responses to emergency incidents, while residential properties accounted for most Vermont structure fires and civilian fatalities.



The great citizens of the State of Vermont are extremely fortunate to have such dedicated volunteer and career firefighters. The emergency communications systems and solutions of our firefighters are critical to the life saving and property protection of our citizens, and to these essential public safety practitioners. In addition to having access to the most robust, modern, and comprehensive firefighting equipment, apparatus, infrastructure, and training, our firefighters require highly reliable public safety land mobile radio (LMR), paging networks, dependable mobile/portable radios and pagers, and broadband communications and applications from which they can be alerted and dispatched. The input of the Vermont firefighters is fundamental to the success of the Public Safety Communications Planning program, and we thank the firefighters for their service to their communities and encourage your active participation and contributions to the project.

Meet the Public Safety Task Force Team

Each Stakeholder Update will introduce different members of the team.



Vice Chair, Paul White retired from the VT State Police in 2015 after 24 years with the department. At the time of his retirement, he held the rank of Captain and served as Troop Commander for Troop "A" which, at that time included oversight of the Williston,

St Albans, and Middlesex Field Stations, as well as the Williston Communications Center. Since 2016 he has been employed as a Law Enforcement Liaison under contract to the VT State Highway Safety Office (part of the Agency of Transportation). Paul was elected to the Town of Barre's Selectboard in 2016 and has served in that capacity for eight years, the last four years as the Board's Chairman. Prior to serving on this Task Force, Paul served as Chair of the Regional Dispatch Working Group which was created by Act 185 of the 2022 General Assembly.



James Mack is PSAP administrator and a dispatcher with 9-1-1 call taker certification at Shelburne Communications Center, where he has worked for the past 35 years. During and leading up to this time, he has been heavily involved in serving his local communities.

James served as a firefighter with Charlotte Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services from 1984 until 1999, and a Rescue Chief, Training Officer, and Crew Chief with EMT certification from 1985 through 1999. He was also a Patrol Officer, Level 1 certification with the Shelburne Police Department from 1991 through 1998, and a driver with 1st Responder certification at Shelburne Rescue from 1999 through 2017.

Meet Our System Planning Vendor, Mission Critical Partners

Mission Critical Partners (MCP) is a leading provider of data-integration, consulting, network, and cybersecurity solutions specializing in transforming mission-critical communications networks into integrated ecosystems that improve outcomes in the public safety, justice, healthcare, transportation, and utility markets. Their comprehensive experience and vendor-agnostic approach helps them develop modernized solutions for their clients to maximize value and create optimal efficiency while mitigating risk.

MCP was engaged in the Statewide Public Safety Communications System Planning Project to develop multiple potential models (and eventually a final design) for a reliable, secure and interoperable statewide public safety communications system, comprising integrated 9-1-1 call-taking and regional dispatch systems, that will ensure the system is equitably and sustainably financed and universally accessible by all persons throughout the State.



Rance Duffy

With nearly four decades in public safety and 17 years in the military, Rance is a seasoned leader. Skilled in administration, supervision, and fieldwork, he excels in project management, budgeting, policy development, media relations, and community outreach.



Bonnie Maney

As an executive leader, Bonnie specializes in representing clients and tailoring services. With extensive experience in PSAP operations, leadership communications, project management, and emergency management, she excels in driving assessments, strategic planning, and budget management.



Phil Sisk

Phil, with experience in over 200 CAD, RMS, and Mobile implementations across 20 states, brings diverse expertise. He has managed data conversion projects, supervised interface development for CAD and RMS systems, and contributed to data sharing initiatives, prioritizing client satisfaction at MCP.



Scott Neal

Bringing over three decades of wireless communications experience, Scott retired from the Pennsylvania State Police in 2015. Since joining MCP, he has managed multiple projects and led a team of subject-matter experts specializing in supporting clients' wireless networks.

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

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Visit our website at <https://dps.vermont.gov/committees-boards/communications>