

# Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act

A night-time photograph of emergency vehicles. In the foreground, a police car is visible with its red and blue lights flashing. Behind it, an ambulance is parked with its red lights on. The scene is dark, with the primary light sources being the emergency lights of the vehicles.

## Opportunities to End Public Safety Inequities by Transforming B.C.'s 9-1-1 Emergency Communications System

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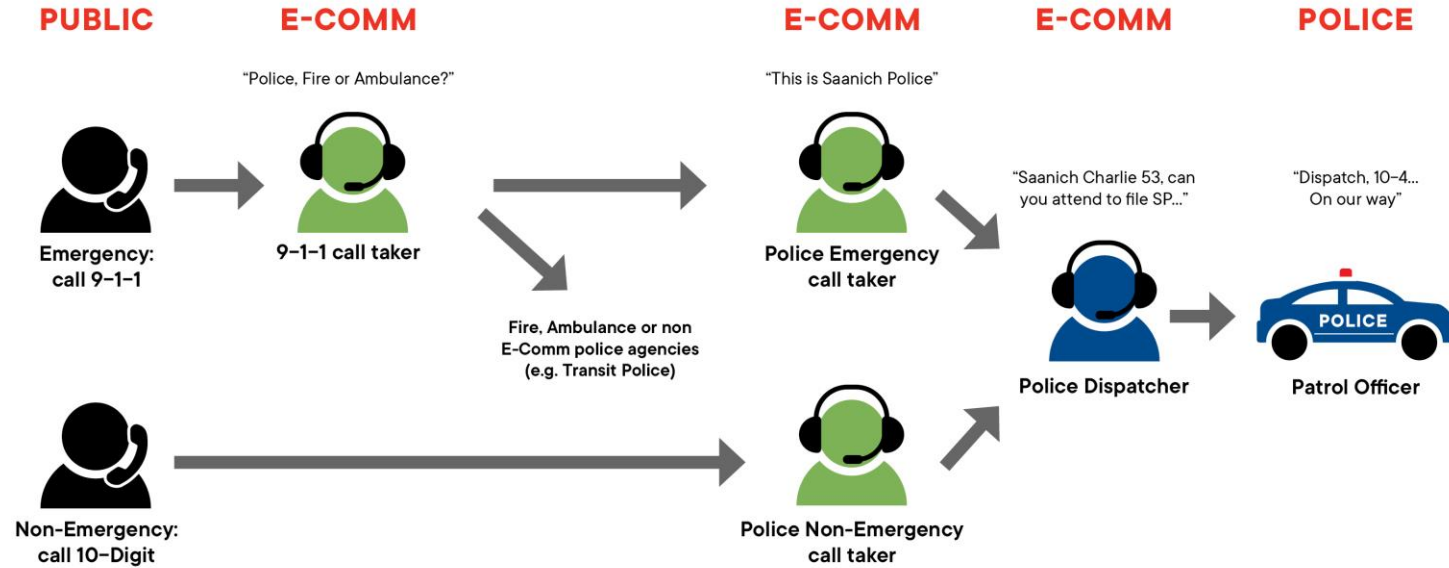
**E-Comm 9-1-1**  
Helping to Save Lives and Protect Property

# Who is E-Comm?

- Answer point for ~2M 9-1-1 calls annually
  - Split 65% Police, 30% Ambulance, 5% Fire
- We answer the calls for emergency police service on behalf of 33 agencies
  - Lower Mainland and south Vancouver Island
- ~650,000 police emergency calls annually
  - ~50% of all B.C. police calls to 9-1-1
- Also answer ~700,000 non-emergency calls
- Also provide the dedicated LMD radio system
  - Over 10,000 radios for police, fire, ambulance and others



# How Do We Work?



# Opportunity #1: Enhanced 9-1-1 Call Triage and Intervention

*Specialised emergency response services for complex social issues to be selection options when calling 9-1-1.*

- E.g., acute mental health crises, non-violent but highly emotional family incident or a call requiring a culturally-sensitive responder
- New options may be a psychiatric specialist (nurse) service, social/family services or an Indigenous responder, which could be offered remotely
- E-Comm's triaging can be elevated to a more sophisticated level
  - identify the most appropriate downstream service for the call
- We can remove the stigma 9-1-1 has among vulnerable population segments
  - restore it as a trusted source of reliable, safe and confidential emergency help



## Opportunity #2: Improve the Police Interaction Experience

*Enhance emergency communication centres to relieve patrol officers from routine interactions and introduce more deeply-skilled resources to help resolve police calls.*

- E.g., shoplifting without suspect, breaking/entry not in-progress, vehicle theft
- Will be supported by Next Generation 9-1-1 technologies allowing callers to submit images and videos directly
- Train, develop and retain more highly-skilled emergency communicators who can truly augment patrol officers
- Broaden the interaction options with police, to better support the objectives of UNDRIP, address systemic racism and end service inequities in public safety.



# Obstacles to Overcome

- 9-1-1 policy and funding are entirely the responsibility of B.C.'s 27 Regional Districts
- Police dispatch work and associated activities, such as policy setting, are under the authority of individual municipalities in the province
  - LMD/CRD municipalities set their own policies and determine their own dispatch practices
  - In the rest of the province this is currently handled by the RCMP, but the future of this model may be uncertain
- This model of distributed responsibility and authority makes consistent and timely realization of the opportunities identified by E-Comm extremely challenging to achieve.



# We Have Two Recommendations

1. *Establish provincial-level authority for 9-1-1 setting policy and standards of service*
  2. *Elevate police dispatch authority from the municipal to the provincial level, and support a single, integrated provincial call-taking and dispatch service*
- This is a significant undertaking that will take multiple years to achieve
  - It requires commitment and collaboration from many parties
  - E-Comm can play a key role in achieving these objectives:
    - take a leadership position alongside the B.C. government and police partners
    - modernize and enhance 9-1-1 services to make the system more resilient
    - help end service inequities and better serve British Columbians.

