

PS/GO COMM #1  
February 28, 2014

**WORKSESSION**

**MEMORANDUM**

February 26, 2014

TO: Public Safety Committee  
Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee

FROM: Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst   
Dr. Costis Toregas, Council IT Advisor

SUBJECT: **Worksession** – CE Recommended FY15-20 Capital Improvements Program  
**Public Safety System Modernization**

*Expected for this session:*

Chief Tom Manger, Montgomery County Police Department  
Chief Steve Lohr, Chief, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service  
David Dise, Director, Department of General Services  
Asst. Chief Luther Reynolds, MCPD Management Services  
Chief Scott Goldstein, MCFRS Operations Division  
Mike Ferrara, Office of the County Executive  
Mike Knuppel, Department of Technology Services  
Mary Beck, Office of Management and Budget

The County Executive is recommending a total of \$109.708 million for the Public Safety System Modernization (PDF © 1-2). The project was first approved in FY09 and consists of the following five project components and ongoing staff charges to the CIP. These current cost estimates are unchanged from the FY13 CIP.

**Fire Station Alerting:** \$5.965 million.  
**Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD):** \$9.000 million  
**Records Management System (RMS):** \$5.000 million  
**Radio Infrastructure:** \$51.517 million.  
**Replacement Mobile Computers:** \$6 million

In addition, \$20.936 million in the project was appropriated in FY11 and used to purchase P-25 compliant radios that are needed to complete FCC re-banding requirements.

There are only minor changes to the CIP project in terms of expenditures and funding:

- The overall cost of the project is increased by \$1.625 million to reflect additional staff costs in FY16 and \$225,000 for replacement mobile computers for the M-NCPPC Park Police.
- Current Revenue is increased by \$1.4 million for the additional staff costs.
- Short-term financing is increased by \$225,000 for the additional mobile computers.
- The Executive is requesting \$8.046 in FY15 appropriation which will complete the appropriation for the project components and the FY15 staff costs. In FY16, \$2.1 million in appropriation is expected for staff and CAD implementation.

The following tables summarize the FY15-20 recommendation and the FY13-18 approved.

**FY15-20 COUNTY EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDED in \$000s**

	Total	Thru FY14	6 Years	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
Expend	109,708	81,151	28,557	21,567	6,490	500			0
GO Bonds	57,409	1,000	17,411	13,021	4,390	0	0	0	0
Short Term	41,781	21,056	8,225	7,225	500	500	0	0	0
C Revenue	6,453	0	2,921	1,321	1,600	0	0	0	0
Fed Aid	4,065	3,043	1,022	0	0	0	0	0	0

**FY13-18 APPROVED in \$000s**

	Total	Thru FY12	6 Years	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
Expend	108,083	25,099	82,984	17,402	38,650	21,342	5,090	500	0
GO Bonds	57,409	1,000	56,409	13,736	25,262	13,021	4,390	0	0
Short Term	41,566	21,056	20,500	2,000	10,500	7,000	500	500	0
C Revenue	5,053	0	5,053	1,666	1,866	1,321	200	0	0
Fed Aid	4,065	3,043	1,022	0	1,022	0	0	0	0

**Updated Timelines**

The current timeline for each of the components of PSSM is attached © 3. The expenditure schedule in the PDF does not reflect the project's timeline; however, Council staff is not recommending a change to the Executive's recommended PDF. The PDF shows the radio infrastructure as completed in FY16. However, a contract award is not expected until calendar year 2015 after which full build-out will take 24 to 36 months. This project is likely to continue

to FY18 or FY19 which will, at minimum, require additional staff expenditures beyond those in the current project.

In addition, the PDF shows that operating budget impacts for system maintenance (\$125,000 per year), ongoing staff (\$450,000 per year), and other ongoing needs such as planned equipment replacements (\$815,000 per year) start in FY17. The operating budget impacts will start later as system implementation will occur later. In addition, the joint Committee should review new estimates for operating budget impacts for each component of PSSM as contracts are awarded and better information is available. Such a review would include information on the amounts already included in yearly budgets for maintenance of existing systems.

**1. Fire Station Alerting** - When the joint Committee last met to review this project in July 2013, it was expected that the contract for the Fire Station Altering would be awarded by the end of calendar year 2013. This has now been extended to the second quarter of calendar year 2014. After the contract award, it will take 24 to 36 months to build out the system to all fire stations. New fire stations are being equipped with Fire Station Altering as they are built.

**Recognizing that all contract negotiations have their complexities, Council staff is concerned about the ongoing delay in coming to closure on a contract and moving into the implementation phase for Fire Station Alerting. Council staff suggests that if a contract is not awarded by June 30 the joint PS and GO Committee schedule a closed session to discuss the specific reasons for the delay.**

**2. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)** – The timeframe for awarding a contract for CAD is still by the end of the second quarter of calendar year 2014. The Qualification and Selection Committee (QSC) process was completed in the third quarter of 2013 as previously expected. The joint Committee discussed the following regarding CAD at its July session.

- **Ensure that a COTS system is flexible enough to meet the County's needs** – While Council staff agrees that an off-the-shelf or COTS solution can reduce costs, it is critical that the CAD system selected is flexible enough to meet the County's operational response needs. That said, it is also critical that the system not have so many proprietary, customized features that the County is locked into substantial costs if the CAD must be updated to meet new operational requirements over its useful life. This trade off should be discussed at the Executive Committee level, and the balance between technology merits and costs be contrasted against their impacts on user satisfaction and performance metrics. The process which will lead to final choices in such crucial areas should be clarified and established early on.
- **Responses to the CAD RFP should include information or possibly a proposal about provision of a Records Management System** – Originally, it was thought that these two systems (CAD and RMS) might be procured together. Now, DTS believes a CAD vendor should be selected first and a separate process should be used for the RMS. Council staff believes there should be a way to structure the RFP to allow a vendor to

propose both a CAD and RMS if they can provide both, while not excluding or penalizing a vendor that might only provide a CAD system.

- **The impact of mobile devices, smart phones and their pervasive spread in society today is creating major changes in the expectations for how the general public requests help in emergency situations.** The Nation's current 9-1-1 system is designed around telephone technology and cannot handle the text, data, images and video that are increasingly common in personal communications and critical to future transportation safety and mobility advances. The Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Initiative has established the foundation for public emergency communications services in a wireless mobile society. Procuring a CAD system therefore must be done in a way that anticipates and works well with this new development. This linkage should be made explicit and a requirement of any CAD system procurement effort.

Status on each of these three important areas of concern should be discussed at this worksession.

**The FCC is moving forward with requirements and regulations regarding Text-to-911. The January 30, 2014 news release from the FCC and "Text-to-911: Quick Facts and FAQs" are attached at © 4-8. The FCC is proposing that by December 31, 2014 all wireless carriers support Text-to-911.** This does not mean that each public safety agency will have the technology to accept Text-to-911. Attached at © 9-10 is a listing of jurisdictions with Text-to-911 deployment. In Maryland, only Frederick County currently has this capacity. The FCC website provides the following about a "bounce-back message" should someone try to text 911 where the service is not available:

*The FCC has rules to help keep consumers safe during the transition to text-to-911. These rules are intended to minimize the risk if consumers attempt to send text messages to 911 where the service is not available. Specifically, beginning September 30, 2013, all wireless telephone companies and certain other text messaging providers are required by the FCC to send an automatic "bounce-back" message to any consumer who tries to send a text message to 911 where this service is not yet available.*

- *Consumers who receive this "bounce-back" message will be advised to contact emergency services by another means, such as by making a voice call or using a telecommunications relay service (the latter for consumers who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability).*
- *The nation's four largest wireless telephone companies – AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon – have agreed to voluntarily begin sending these "bounce back" text messages across their networks as of June 30, 2013, a few months earlier than the September 2013 deadline established by the FCC's rules.*

**The joint Committee should hear again from Executive staff how the procurement for the new CAD is addressing expected Text-to-911 requirements and how flexibility will**

**be built in to allow for upgrades to allow pictures and video when such technology becomes available.**

**3. Radio Infrastructure** – At the July session it was expected that the RFP would be issued in the third quarter of calendar year 2013 and that the QSC would be completed during the first quarter of calendar year 2014. This timeline is now delayed about 4 to 6 months. The RFP should be released by the end of the first quarter of calendar year 2014 with a contract award expected in the first quarter of calendar year 2015.

Council staff and DTS have discussed the need to review the state of, and County plans for, facilities infrastructure (i.e., HVAC, generators) at antenna sites to determine if there are any changes needed in the PSSM to include remediation or replacement were required. The review will also address if any remediation or replacement may be needed sooner than would occur as a part of the radio infrastructure project.

**4. Law Enforcement Records Management System** – As previously noted, the timeline for this part of PSSM depends on the final outcome of the award for the CAD and whether the vendor selected will also provide the records management system.

**Council staff recommendation:** Approve Executive's recommendation for PSSM. Request the Executive notify the Council when the contracts for Fire Station Alerting and Computer Aided Dispatch are awarded and when the RFP for the Radio Infrastructure is issued. If the contract for Fire Station Alerting is not awarded by June 30, 2014, schedule a closed session to discuss the status of negotiations.

## Public Safety System Modernization (P340901)

Category  
Sub Category  
Administering Agency  
Planning Area

General Government  
County Offices and Other Improvements  
County Executive (AAGE03)  
Countywide

Date Last Modified  
Required Adequate Public Facility  
Relocation Impact  
Status

1/6/14  
No  
None  
Ongoing

Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
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### EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000s)

	Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
Planning, Design and Supervision	7,239	132	4,186	2,921	1,321	1,600	0	0	0	0	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	71,431	0	48,020	23,411	18,021	4,890	500	0	0	0	0
Other	31,038	27,742	1,071	2,225	2,225	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>109,708</b>	<b>27,874</b>	<b>53,277</b>	<b>28,557</b>	<b>21,567</b>	<b>6,490</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000s)

	Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
Current Revenue: General	6,453	0	3,532	2,921	1,321	1,600	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Aid	4,065	2,947	1,118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	57,409	4,027	35,971	17,411	13,021	4,390	0	0	0	0	0
Short-Term Financing	41,781	20,900	12,656	8,225	7,225	500	500	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>109,708</b>	<b>27,874</b>	<b>53,277</b>	<b>28,557</b>	<b>21,567</b>	<b>6,490</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (\$000s)

	Total	Thru FY13	Est FY14	Total 6 Years	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	Beyond 6 Yrs
Maintenance				905	0	0	125	260	260	260	
Program-Staff				1,660	0	450	450	360	200	200	
Program-Other				3,260	0	0	815	815	815	815	
<b>Net Impact</b>				<b>5,825</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>1,390</b>	<b>1,435</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>1,275</b>	

### APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA (000s)

Appropriation Request	FY 15	8,046
Appropriation Request Est.	FY 16	2,100
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		96,562
Expenditure / Encumbrances		28,235
Unencumbered Balance		68,327

Date First Appropriation	FY 09
First Cost Estimate	
Current Scope	FY 15 109,708
Last FY's Cost Estimate	108,083

#### Description

This program will provide for phased upgrades and modernization of computer aided dispatch (CAD), law enforcement records management system (LE RMS), and voice radio systems used primarily by the County's public safety first responder agencies including Police, Fire and Rescue, Sheriff, Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Emergency Management and Homeland Security. The modernization will include replacement of the current CAD/LE RMS system, replacement of public safety mobile and portable radios, upgrade of non-public safety mobile and portable radios, and replacement of core voice radio communications infrastructure. The previously approved Fire Station Alerting System Upgrades project (CIP #451000) was transferred to this project in order to coordinate the upgrades with the new CAD system. The alerting system upgrades will modernize the fire station alerting systems at 43 existing work sites, maintaining the ability to notify fire and rescue stations of emergencies. The alerting system, including audible and data signals, is essential for the notification of an emergency and the dispatch of appropriate response units from the County. As voice, data, and video are beginning to converge to a single platform, this project will provide a pathway to a modern public safety support infrastructure that will enable the County to leverage technology advances and provide efficient and reliable systems for first responders. This project will follow the methodologies and strategies presented in the Public Safety Systems Modernization (PSSM) plan completed in July 2009.

#### Cost Change

Cost increase of \$1.4 million in FY16 to reflect continued staff charges resulting from delays in program implementation. Cost increase of \$225,000 in FY15 to reflect reimbursement for the purchase of 61 Mobile Data Computers (MDCs) for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Park Police.

#### Justification

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## Public Safety System Modernization (P340901)

The public safety systems require modernization. The CAD system is reaching the end of useful life and does not meet the County's current operational requirements, impacting the response time of first responders to 9-1-1 calls. The CAD Roadmap Study, completed in March 2009, recommended replacement of the system to address existing shortcomings and prepare for the next generation 9-1-1 systems. The manufacturer's support for the voice radio system has begun to be phased out as of December 31, 2009. Beyond that date, the manufacturer will only continue to provide system support on an as available basis, but will not guarantee the availability of parts or technical resources. The CAD modernization has initiated a detailed planning phase that included the use of industry experts to assist with business process analysis and to develop detailed business and technical requirements for the new CAD system. This process will allow the County to incorporate lessons learned and best practices from other jurisdictions. As more of the County's regional partners migrate to newer voice technologies, it will affect interoperable voice communications. To ensure that the County maintains reliable and effective public safety (voice radio) communications for the operations of its first responders and to sustain communications interoperability for seamless mutual aid among its regional partners, the County needs to implement a project to upgrade and modernize its portable and mobile radio units and subsequently the radio voice communications infrastructure. Acceleration of the public safety radio purchases was initiated to take advantage of a Partial Payment in Lieu of Re-Banding offer from Sprint/Nextel toward the financing of new, upgraded, P-25 compliant public safety radios and to meet the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated 800 MHz frequency rebanding requirements for nationwide public safety radio frequency interoperability. Now, the installation of the new core radio communication infrastructure is needed. The fire station alerting system upgrades were identified as a need under Section 5 of the MCFRS Master Plan (adopted by the County Council in October 2005) and detailed in the Station Alerting and Public Address (SA/PA) System for Fire/Rescue Stations, Rev 1, 2006. This project allows for the continuous and seamless functioning of the alerting systems within each fire station. A preliminary survey by DTS of existing conditions at all stations revealed system-wide concerns, including inadequate spare parts inventory and lack of available maintenance support for alerting systems.

### **Other**

\$20.936 million was appropriated in FY11 to purchase P-25 compliant radios that allowed the County to complete immediate re-banding within the 800 MHz frequency as required by the FCC. The radio replacement program includes the M-NCPPC Montgomery County Park Police. The future purchase of public safety radios (other than to replace broken equipment) must be able to be supported by a P25 Phase-2 compliant infrastructure. The use of State of Maryland infrastructure will be aggressively pursued in order to minimize costs to Montgomery County. The CAD procurement request will reflect the County's interest in maintaining the station alerting functionality at the current level or better through the CAD system. The RFP for CAD replacement will include replacement of the following systems: CAD, mapping, and the existing Law Enforcement Records Management and Field Reporting systems. Coordination with participating department/agencies and regional partners will continue throughout the project.

### **Fiscal Note**

Funding in FY09 included Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funding of \$2.055 million and Fire Act grant funding of \$988,000. Funds shall not be used to purchase or implement a new Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system or radio infrastructure until the County Executive provides the County Council with a detailed proposal and accurate cost estimates for the total project scope.

### **Coordination**

PSSM Executive Steering Group, Executive Program Directors, Department of Technology Services, Department of Police, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, Sheriff's Office, Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, Department of Liquor Control, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) Park Police, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

## PSSM Program – High Level Procurement Timeline “RFP to Contract Award”

Project	RFP Ready to Review	QSC	Negotiations Planned Time (in months)	Contract Award	System Build Out (after contract award)
Fire Station Alerting	Sept 2012 <i>Completed</i>	2Q 2013 <i>Completed</i>	4 - 6 <i>WIP</i>	2Q 2014	24-36 months
CAD	Feb 2013 <i>Completed</i>	3Q 2013 <i>Completed</i>	4 <i>WIP</i>	2Q 2014	18-24 months
Radio Infrastructure	1Q 2014 <i>WIP</i>	3Q 2014	4 - 6	1Q 2015	24-36 months
LE-RMS				TBD	12-18 months

Quarters are calendar quarters, not Fiscal Quarters

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# NEWS

**Federal Communications Commission**  
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Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500  
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TTY 202/418-2555  
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>  
<ftp.fcc.gov>

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
January 30, 2014

**NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:**  
Rochelle Cohen, (202) 418-1162  
Email: [rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov](mailto:rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov)

## **FCC SETS PATH FOR WIDESPREAD TEXT-TO-911 DEPLOYMENT**

*Building on the Commitments Made by the Nation's Four Largest Wireless Carriers,  
FCC Encourages Other Text Providers to Offer Text-to-911;  
Seeks Comment on Regulatory Proposals to Meet Goal*

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission said today that text providers should enable the public to text 911 in an emergency, encouraging providers that have not begun deploying text-to-911 to forge solutions to meet this goal. The Commission also sought further comment on regulatory proposals to help ensure that Americans will be able to send these texts by the end of the year, regardless of which text provider they use, in areas where 911 call centers can receive texts.

Noting Americans' increasing reliance on text messaging, the Commission said that access to 911 is a core value that should be maintained as technology changes. Reports indicate that 91 percent of American adults own a cell phone, and 81 percent of cell phone owners use text messaging. In addition, Internet-based ("over the top") text messaging applications are an increasingly popular alternative to the text messaging provided by wireless carriers (called short messaging service, or SMS). While voice calling to 911 remains the preferred method, consumers also expect to be able to send a text to 911 and have it reach authorities. Yet text-to-911 is not currently available in most areas or on most texting platforms.

In adopting a policy statement that outlines objectives for text-to-911, the Commission noted that the nation's four largest wireless carriers, with the support of leading public safety organizations, voluntarily committed to make text-to-911 available to their customers by May 15, 2014, in areas where the 911 call center is prepared to receive texts. The Commission recognized the leadership of these wireless carriers and the 911 call centers that are deploying text-to-911, and said that action is needed to make the service uniformly available.

Accordingly, the Commission encouraged all wireless providers as well as other "interconnected" text providers (that is, "over the top" text providers with applications that support sending and receiving text messages to and from phone numbers) to work with the public safety community to develop similar commitments to support text-to-911 in a timely manner and to propose a solution for consideration by the FCC. If stakeholders develop a satisfactory proposal, the Commission stated that it would only need to codify the solution to ensure that it applies to all providers equally, including new entrants to the marketplace, and gives clarity to the 911 community.

In addition, the Commission is considering a proposed rule that text-to-911 be made available by all text providers by the end of this year. To that end, the Commission adopted a Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that seeks comment on the proposed year-end timeframe and several aspects of implementation, particularly relating to the technical ability of "interconnected" text providers to comply with a text-to-911 mandate, as well as longer-term text-to-911 issues. To help inform and protect consumers

as text-to-911 is deployed, the Commission previously adopted rules requiring text providers to send an automatic “bounce-back” text message to consumers who try to text 911 where the service is not available.

Text-to-911 helps keep pace with how consumers communicate today and can provide a lifesaving alternative in situations where a person who is deaf, hard of hearing or has a speech disability is unable to make a voice call, where voice networks are congested, or where a 911 voice call could endanger the caller. Approximately 15 percent of the United States population, or 34.5 million people, are deaf or hard of hearing, and approximately 7.5 million people have speech disabilities. However text-to-911 is a complement to, not a substitute for, existing voice-based 911 service, so consumers should use a voice call to contact 911 during an emergency when possible.

Action by the Commission January 30, 2014, by Policy Statement and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 14-6). Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai and O’Rielly with Chairman Wheeler, Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, Pai and O’Rielly issuing statements.

– FCC –

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## Text-to-911: Quick Facts & FAQs

- Today most consumers cannot reach 911 by sending a text message from their wireless phone.
- In limited areas of the United States [1], however, it is now possible to use certain wireless telephone services to send a text message to 911. This means that in such areas, if you are unable to make a voice 911 call, you can type your message on your wireless phone and send it to a 911 operator. **But even where text-to-911 is available, if you are able to make a voice call to 911, and if it is safe to do so, you should always make a voice call to 911 instead.**
- The four largest wireless telephone companies (AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon) have voluntarily committed to make texting to 911 available by May 15, 2014 in areas where the local 911 center is prepared to receive the texts.
- By September 30, 2013, if you attempt to send a text to 911 where text-to-911 service is unavailable, you will receive an immediate "bounce-back" message that text-to-911 is not available and that you should contact emergency services by another means, such as by making a voice call or using telecommunications relay services (the latter for consumers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability).
- For more information and/or updates regarding text-to-911, please visit <http://www.fcc.gov/text-to-911> [2]. For links to FCC proceedings about text-to-911, please visit: <http://www.fcc.gov/document/text-911-bounce-back-message-order> [3], and <http://www.fcc.gov/document/text-911-further-notice-proposed-rulemaking> [4].

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is text-to-911 and why would I want to use it?

It is the ability to send a "short message" (SMS) or other kind of text message to 911. Texting during an emergency could be helpful if you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, or if a voice call to 911 might otherwise be dangerous or impossible. But if you are able to make a voice call to 911, and if it is safe to do so, you should always make a voice call to 911.

#### How can I find out if my area has text-to-911 capability?

Ask your wireless phone company if text-to-911 is available in your area. You can also ask your state legislators or public safety officials if your local 911 center is prepared to accept text-to-911 messages. Public information lines, such as 211 or 311, also may have more information on text-to-911 service availability in your area. (Also, see information on specific

## areas where Text-to-911 is available. (11)

### **If text-to-911 is available in my area, what type of wireless phone or service do I need to send an emergency text?**

Check with your wireless phone company. In general, you must have a text-capable wireless phone and a wireless service subscription or contract with a wireless phone company. You may also need a "wireless data plan." Remember, you can make a voice call to 911 using a wireless phone that does not have a service plan, but you cannot send a text message to 911 without a service contract that includes texting.

### **Why isn't text-to-911 available everywhere in the country?**

Text-to-911 is a new capability that may require upgrades to local 911 centers and coordination among wireless phone companies, equipment vendors and manufacturers, and state and local public safety agencies. It is likely to become more widely available over time as wireless phone companies provide text-to-911 capability and 911 centers modernize their systems to accept text messages.

### **If I am able to text-to-911, will the 911 center automatically know my location?**

Texting to 911 is different from making a voice call to 911 in this respect. When you make a voice call to 911, the call taker will typically receive your phone number and your approximate location automatically. This is called "Enhanced 911" or "E911." However, in most cases when you text 911 from a wireless phone, the call taker will not receive this automated information. For this reason, if you send a text message to 911, it is important to give the 911 call taker an accurate address or location as quickly as possible, if you can.

### **If text-to-911 is available to me, why should I use it only when a voice call to 911 is not an option?**

Voice calls to 911 are usually the most efficient way to reach emergency help. For example, voice calls allow the 911 operator to more quickly ask questions and obtain information from the caller, while two-way communication by text can take more time and is subject to limits on the length of text messages. In addition, when you make a voice call to 911, the call taker will typically receive your phone number and the approximate location of your phone automatically.

### **What are the FCC's rules on 911?**

The FCC's 911 rules require the following:

- Wireless phone companies must transmit all 911 voice calls to 911 centers (also known as Public Safety Answering Points, or PSAPs).
- Wireless phone companies must send information about your telephone number and location to a PSAP when you make a 911 call so you can get help more easily.
- Wireless phone companies, as well as certain text messaging applications, must provide, no later than September 30, 2013, automated "bounce-back" messages in instances when you attempt to send a text message to 911 in an area where text-to-911 service is unavailable.

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The bounce-back messages will inform you that text-to-911 is not available and direct you to contact emergency services by another means, such as by making a voice call or using telecommunications relay services (if you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability).

- The FCC does not currently require any companies to transmit text messages to 911 centers. However, the FCC currently is seeking public comment on proposed rules that would require wireless phone companies and certain other text message providers to begin transmitting text messages to 911 in the future.
- The FCC does not have authority to issue rules regulating 911 centers, and so it cannot require these centers to accept text messages.

### For More Information

To learn more about FCC programs to promote access to telecommunications services for people with disabilities, visit the FCC's [Disability Rights Office website](#) [5].

For information about other telecommunications issues, visit the FCC's [Consumer website](#) [6], or contact the FCC's Consumer Center by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to:

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

### Print Out

[Text-to-911: Quick Facts & FAQs](#) [7] (pdf)

#### Dates

**Updated/Reviewed Date:**  
Fri, 2013-06-28

#### Quick Links

**Quick Links:**  
[Consumer Guide: What You Need to Know About Text-to-911](#) [2]

**Source URL:** <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/text-911-quick-facts-faqs>

#### Links:

- [1] <http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/text-to-911-deployments.pdf>
- [2] <http://www.fcc.gov/text-to-911>
- [3] <http://www.fcc.gov/document/text-911-bounce-back-message-order>
- [4] <http://www.fcc.gov/document/text-911-further-notice-proposed-rulemaking>
- [5] <http://www.fcc.gov/disability>
- [6] <http://www.fcc.gov/consumers>

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## Text-to-911 Deployments as of January 15, 2014

State	County	Jurisdiction	PSAPs Accepting Texts	Serving Carriers	Text-to-911 Platform Deployed	Deployment Date
California	Los Angeles	Los Angeles County	CSU Long Beach Police Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	11/20/2013
Colorado	Pitkin	City of Aspen and Pitkin County	Pitkin County Emergency Dispatch (Pitkin County and Roaring Fork Valley portion of Eagle County)	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	10/28/2013
Iowa	All	All	All	i-Wireless	Intrado - TXT-2-911	8/1/2009
Maine	All	All	Gray & Orono DPS (for entire state)	Verizon	TCS - SMS to TTY	6/1/2013
Maryland	Frederick	Frederick County	Frederick County Emergency Communications Center	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	3/21/2013
Montana	Missoula	Missoula County	Missoula County 911 Center	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	10/31/2013
New York	Chemung	Chemung County	Chemung County Communication Center	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	8/1/2013
	Monroe	Rochester	Monroe County 911 Center	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	5/24/2013
	Montgomery	Montgomery County	Montgomery County Sheriff's Office	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	7/15/2013
	Montgomery	Montgomery County	Montgomery County Sheriff's Office	T-Mobile	Not Reported	11/20/2013
	Oneida	Oriskany	Oneida County Sheriff's Office	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	6/6/2013
	Onondaga	Onondaga County	Onondaga Police Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	9/27/2013
	Steuben	Bath	Steuben County E911	Verizon	TCS - SMS to TTY	3/12/2013
North Carolina	Durham	City of Durham	Durham Emergency Communications Center	Verizon	Intrado TXT2911	8/1/2011
Ohio	Geauga	Geauga County	Geauga County Department of Emergency Services	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	8/20/2013
	Hamilton	Hamilton County	Hamilton County Communications Center	Verizon	Intrado TXT2911	11/21/2013
Pennsylvania	Dauphin	Dauphin County	Dauphin County EMA	Verizon	TTY	7/15/2013
	Lancaster	Lancaster County	Lancaster County-wide Communications	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	7/10/2013
	Luzerne	Luzerne County	Luzerne County	Verizon	TTY	8/14/2013
South Carolina	Greenville	Greenville County	Fountain Inn Police Greenville County Sheriff's Office Greenville Police Department Greer Police Simpsonville Police Department Mauldin Police Department Travelers Rest Police	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	10/28/2013

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**Text-to-911 Deployments as of January 15, 2014**

State	County	Jurisdiction	PSAPs Accepting Texts	Serving Carriers	Text-to-911 Platform Deployed	Deployment Date
Texas	Collin	County-wide except city of Plano, city of Garland, city of Richardson, and city of Wylie	Allen Police Department Collin County Sheriff's Department Frisco Police Department McKinney Police Department Murphy Police Department Prosper Police Department Sachse Police Department Emergency Communications Center	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	7/18/2013
	Erath	Erath County	Erath County Sheriff's Office	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	9/24/2013
	Hood	Hood County	Hood County Sheriff's Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	9/24/2013
	McLennan	McLennan County	Woodway Public Safety Department	Verizon	TTY	7/22/2013
	Parker	Parker County	Parker County Sheriff's Department Weatherford Police Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	9/24/2013
	Somervell	Somervell County	Somervell County Sheriffs Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	9/24/2013
	Wise	Decatur	Decatur Police Department Wise County Sheriffs Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	1/17/2013
Wise	Bridgeport	Bridgeport Police Department	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	1/17/2013	
Vermont	All	All	Vermont State Police - Williston (for entire state)	Verizon	Intrado - TXT-2-911	4/16/2012
	All	All	Vermont State Police - Williston (for entire state)	AT&T	Not reported	6 month trial August 2013 - February 2014
Virginia	James City	James City County	James City County	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	9/19/2013
	Southampton	Southampton County	Southampton County Sheriff's Office	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	10/1/2013
	York	Yorktown	York-Poquoson-Williamsburg 911 Center	Verizon	TCS - Web Browser/GEM911	12/10/2012