

**Additional Background to support  
9-1-1 Resolution for UBCM  
New provincial mandate and funding for 9-1-1  
May 9, 2022**

**Additional background to support 9-1-1 resolution**

1. 9-1-1 is an essential public safety service and emergency preparedness tool that should be available to as many British Columbians as possible, in every region of the province.
2. There is currently no provincial Crown corporation or agency responsible for the planning, operation and coordination of 9-1-1 service, or police, fire and ambulance dispatch services, across the province.
3. E-Comm (Emergency Communications for British Columbia Incorporated) is a non-profit corporation, established under the *Emergency Communications Corporations Act*, that began as a municipally-funded and governed agency, based in the Lower Mainland.
4. E-Comm has since grown to provide 9-1-1 service in most parts of the province, serving as the first point of contact for 99% of callers who dial 9-1-1 in B.C., and provides call-taking and dispatch services for 33 police agencies and 40 fire departments across the province, but still receives no direct provincial funding or oversight.
5. Governance oversight and funding for 9-1-1 has not evolved to keep pace with E-Comm's increased scope and demand for its public safety services across B.C., impacting the organization's ability to maintain sufficient staffing and respond as effectively as possible to 9-1-1 calls, particularly during public emergencies when call volumes increase, such as during the heat dome event of 2021.
6. Public emergencies caused by extreme weather events, such as heat waves, fires, flooding, wind storms and cold air-flows, are only expected to grow in frequency, geographic impact and severity as a result of climate change.
7. Other challenges such as the opioid-overdose crisis and fragmented mental health supports have further compounded the strain on municipally-funded 9-1-1 and public safety services.
8. The CRTC has also mandated modernization to move from 9-1-1 voice calls to digital or IP-based infrastructure, which is to be completed by March 1, 2025.
9. As part of the federally mandated rollout of "Next Generation" 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1), E-Comm is preparing for the transition from 9-1-1 voice calls to digital or IP-based infrastructure in accordance with direction from the CRTC and has communicated the

need for a significant additional funding commitment from its local government 9-1-1 service partners in 2022 and beyond.

10. Local governments in B.C. are constrained in their financial revenue sources and financial capacity to fund these necessary and essential federally-mandated 9-1-1 service enhancements.
11. Local governments in B.C. have not been granted the legal or regulatory authority to collect a 9-1-1 call answer levy from cellular telecommunications, which has become the dominant funding mechanism to support 9-1-1 services in other provinces.
12. Local governments in B.C. are only able to fund 9-1-1 services through property taxes, or by collecting a 9-1-1 call answer levy from landline subscriptions, and landline subscriptions and revenues are plummeting.
13. Local governments have called repeatedly for new funding sources to support local 9-1-1 services, as exist in other provinces, and have adopted resolutions through the UBCM calling for a provincial wireless call-answer levy to fund local 9-1-1 service in 2004, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2019 and 2021, without any progress from the provincial government.
14. The need for operational change and infrastructure investment to ensure the stable delivery of appropriate levels of day-to-day and emergency level services expected by British Columbians is readily apparent and inherently in the public interest and the interest of public safety.