

911 Wireless Call Answer Levy Initiative

Governance and Services Committee Meeting

March 12th,
2020

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Introduction

- What is a 911 call answer levy?
- Why do we need a wireless 911 call answer levy?

Background

- UBCM Resolutions calling for a Provincial 911 call answer levy date back more than 30 years:
 - 1987 Resolution from Nanaimo RD called for a Provincial approach to 911
 - 1992 Resolution from Qualicum Beach called for a Provincial approach
 - 1995 Resolution from Merit called for a Provincial approach
 - 2004 Resolution from UBCM Executive supported a Provincial call answer levy
 - 2011 Resolution from the Cariboo RD called for a Provincial call answer levy based on an “equitable system” other than assessed values.

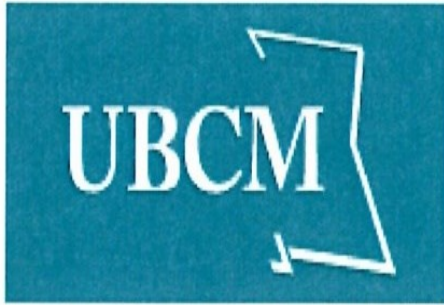
Background Work

- In 2012 UBCM retained a consultant and formed a Steering Committee comprised of local government, UBCM & Provincial representatives;
- A background paper capturing the Steering Committee's work was published in July, 2013:
 - Examined how 911 services were being delivered
 - Reviewed call answer legislation in other jurisdictions
 - Set out a framework of the options and issues facing the introduction of a wireless call answer levy in BC



9-1-1 Services in British Columbia:
Background Review in Relation to a
Province-Wide Call Answer Levy

Dave Mitchell & Associates Ltd.
12 July 2013

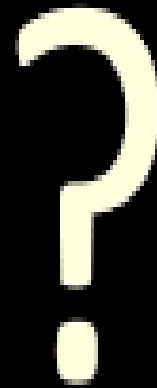


911 Levy No Longer Under Consideration

May 28, 2014

A UBCM working group looking into the potential for a province-wide levy on all wireless devices that connect to 911 services has concluded that there is not sufficient support for this initiative among BC local governments.

- “not sufficient support” explained ...



WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?

Provincial Call to Action

- In 2015 the Province undertook a consultation process seeking input from key stakeholders to better inform future decisions dealing with emergency communications in BC.
- In July 2016 UBCM issued a letter to the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General in support of provincial intervention to implement a wireless call answer levy with third party administration of funds.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
SERVICE DELIVERY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Police Communication Centres and 911 PSAP

STRATEGIC VISION
DISCUSSION PAPER

MARCH 2015



CRTC Direction

- In June 2017 CRTC issued the following direction:
 - “...the lack of provincial legislation and leadership in Ontario and British Columbia, two very populous provinces, ...[is] of significant concern. [The] variations in NG911 deployment across the country could not only create an inconsistent user experience but could also be dangerous for Canadians.”
 - “(CRTC) recommends that provinces and territories that do not currently have 911 legislation...enact...legislation to address issues [of]...coordination, funding, PSAP standards, ...public education, [and]... to assist their PSAPs in preparing for NG911.”
 - CRTC mandates networks to be ready for NG911 by December 31, 2020.

NG 911 – Window of Opportunity



- The Province has been seriously relooking at its role regarding 911 services:
 - Shift to Wireless Call Answer Levy
 - Implement National Service Standards
 - Address Gaps in System
 - Create Strategic Governance Body
- All legacy 911 PSAP systems to be decommissioned by June 30, 2023.

National Context

- Most other Provinces already have a financial framework and public safety answering point (PSAP) guidelines to ensure 911 service delivery is consistent:

| Province | Phone # Levy / Month |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Alberta | \$0.44 |
| Saskatchewan | \$0.94 |
| Quebec | \$0.46 |
| New Brunswick | \$0.53 |
| Prince Edward Island | \$0.70 |
| Nova Scotia | \$0.43 |
| Newfoundland & Labrador | \$0.75 |

Current State in British Columbia

- No mandatory standards.
- No singular mechanism to assess adherence to standards.
- Inconsistent and voluntary adherence to national standards.
- No geographic data for mapping.
- Current state may stall NG 911 implementation or create tenuous situation for citizens expecting the same service throughout BC.

What's Happening Now?

- In October 2018 the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General notified UBCM that its Ministry was reinvigorating work related to 911 emergency communications service delivery in BC,
- Mr. David Guscott was engaged to assist with this work,
- In 2019 a new 911 Steering Committee was established comprised of:

| Representatives From | Representatives From |
|--------------------------|--|
| Local Governments | Telus |
| Indigenous Organizations | E-Comm 911 |
| RCMP | National/Provincial 911 Working Groups |
| Fire | Provincial Government |
| Ambulance | |

911 Steering Committee

- Tasked with providing advice to the Province regarding the UBCM recommendation for the potential establishment of a province-wide 911 call answer levy on cell phones and 911 standards.
- The initiative seeks to address:
 - 911 service gaps in BC
 - The reduction of traditional funding sources with shift away from landlines towards cell phones
 - The CRTC timeline for the implementation of NG 911 by the end of 2020.
- The intent is to enhance the safety of BC citizens.

911 Steering Committee

- This initiative is a work in progress.
- Committee meets on a quarterly basis.
- The Province recognizes the advantages of a 911 call answer levy on cellphones alongside provincial standards.
- *Committee members recently reviewed and discussed a draft Bill that would implement these recommendations.*
- The Bill is progressing however the completion date and whether the Bill will be introduced or not remains to be determined.

In Conclusion

- The 911 Steering Committee is nearing the completion of its mandate and has been permitted to share some information publicly;
- Work continues at the Provincial level;
- The Province recognizes this is a significant public safety issue needing a Province wide approach;
- Local Governments and the Province of BC can't afford to get this wrong or further delay implementation of a provincial approach that is aligned with the federal network of public safety answering points;
- Is this an issue the Committee wishes to advocate for?

Recommendation

THAT the Governance & Services Committee receive this report for information;

AND THAT the Governance & Services Committee recommend the Regional Board agree to advocate for the establishment of a province-wide 911 call answer levy on cell phones and the consistent application of 911 service standards that are aligned with the federal network of public safety answering points across Canada;

AND FURTHER THAT Chair Given send a letter to the Honourable David Eby, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General in support of this matter and cc'd to all Regional Districts in British Columbia.



Thank you.