



January 14, 2022

Sharon Noble
snoble19@shaw.ca

Dear Sharon Noble:

Thank you for your correspondence of August 6, 2021, in which you express your concerns regarding ongoing access to 9-1-1 emergency services via local telephones in British Columbia. I am responding on behalf of the Honourable Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, in my capacity as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Emergency Management and Programs Branch of Public Safety Canada. Please accept my sincerest apologies for the delayed response.

It is important to note that emergency management is a shared responsibility of Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT) governments. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is responsible for regulating telephone and mobile wireless companies that carry 9-1-1 calls to emergency call centres. I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your letter to Secretary General of the CRTC, Claude Doucet, for his consideration.

As you may be aware, the provision of 9-1-1 services throughout Canada is complex and requires coordination between various parties, including telephone and wireless companies, Provincial/Territorial, and municipal governments, and the CRTC. The current state of technology provides Canadians with the tools to make Voice or Teletypewriter (TTY) and Text for hard-of-hearing (T911) calls through landline, cellular and voice-over-IP (VoIP) wherever 9-1-1 emergency call services have been established.

The evolution of technology means more accurate and efficient resources for emergency services and first responders. For instance, the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) will allow Canadians to stream video from an emergency incident, send photos of accident damage or a fleeing suspect, and send personal medical information, including accessibility needs, which could greatly aid emergency responders.

The CRTC initiated consultations on the establishment of a regulatory framework for NG9-1-1 in March 2016. Public hearings were held in January 2017, and presentations were made by telecommunications service providers, Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPS), emergency responder organizations, and provincial and territorial governments. Public Safety Canada participated in these consultations on behalf of Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management which is a forum comprised of heads of Provincial and Territorial emergency management organizations. This body supports a committee of FPT Deputy Ministers and the Council of Ministers.

The CRTC has directed telecommunications to transition their networks in order to be ready to provide NG9-1-1 services, including the ability to communicate with 9-1-1 services in real time using text messaging, by March 2025. For more information on the NG9-1-1, please visit: **www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/phone/911/gen.htm**.

Public Safety Canada recognizes that emergency communications is complex and inter-jurisdictional. However, ongoing engagement and collaboration with different stakeholders involved in 9-1-1 services allows for the development of accurate and efficient 9-1-1 services across Canada.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,



Trevor Bhupsingh
Assistant Deputy Minister
Emergency Management and Programs Branch
Public Safety Canada

c.c.: Claude Doucet
Secretary General
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission

c.c.: Randall Garrison, M.P.