



CITIG

CANADIAN INTEROPERABILITY TECHNOLOGY INTEREST GROUP
GROUPE D'INTÉRÊT CANADIEN EN TECHNOLOGIE DE L'INTEROPÉRABILITÉ

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RESPONDER GROUP SAYS COOPERATION, FUNDING AND PUBLIC AWARENESS ARE KEYS TO THE FUTURE OF 9-1-1 IN RESPONSE TO CRTC CONSULTATION

(Ottawa) - Today, the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) publically released its response to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) call for comments regarding the Appointment of an Inquiry Officer to review matters related to 9-1-1. The response – created in consultation with a wide range of public safety stakeholders - includes 13 recommendations that will help pave the way for Canadian implantation of Next Generation (NG) 9-1-1, a digital version of the existing 9-1-1 system.

“Next Generation 9-1-1 is an absolute priority for public safety organizations,” said Inspector (Ret.) Lance Valcour O.O.M., Executive Director for CITIG. “While the existing 9-1-1 system is decades old, it continues to perform well and remains the main conduit for Canadians to reach emergency services in most jurisdictions. However, there are some serious weaknesses with the current system and a lack of a standard approach to 9-1-1 across Canada.”

A major concern for those who handle 9-1-1 calls, known as Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), involves the ability to consistently provide a precise location for cellular callers, which makes up the majority of 9-1-1 calls. In addition, as the Canadian public embraces social media and new technology, they have come to expect to use these capabilities when contacting emergency services.

“Right now, in Canada, you cannot text, send pictures or videos to 9-1-1,” adds Valcour. “That capability may never be fully realized, but what Next Generation 9-1-1 does promise is the ability to transfer calls, messages and data, like pictures or video, between any interconnected NG9-1-1 systems or responder communications system anywhere in the country or beyond. It’s about the ability to share data and become interoperable with other systems. It’s about more efficiently responding to life and death incidents.”

The CITIG response to CRTC also points to funding challenges to implement NG 9-1-1. PSAPs across Canada cannot bear the significant capital and operating costs that will be necessary to make NG 9-1-1 operational. The majority of PSAPs are managed and funded at the municipal or regional levels. As such, the Tri-services are strongly recommending that every Province and Territory that does not currently have legislation with respect to the collection of funds for the

financial support of PSAPs begin the process of creating it. Ideally, funds should be designated exclusively for funding public safety interoperability efforts, including 9-1-1 and NG 9-1-1.

The entire Tri-services response to Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2012-68 is available for download at www.citig.ca.

CITIG works to improve Canadian public safety interoperability at home and abroad through collaborative efforts, innovation and leadership. CITIG is a not-for-profit Canadian corporation managed in partnership by the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada (PCC), the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs (CAFC) and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP). Today, CITIG is made up of more than 1300 volunteers from the responder community, all orders of government, non-governmental organizations, associations, academia and industry dedicated to improving the safety and security of first responders, and the people and critical infrastructure of Canada.

For further information, media representatives may contact:

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