

**For immediate release – October 7, 2014**

**Northern Interior 9-1-1 call-answer service successfully transferred to E-Comm**

Vancouver, B.C.— At 10:25 am today, E-Comm—British Columbia’s largest 9-1-1 public-safety answer point—also became the first point of contact for 9-1-1 callers in the Fraser-Fort George, Cariboo, Kitimat-Stikine and Bulkley-Nechako regional districts.

The approximately 71,000 emergency calls placed each year from these four regional districts will now be routed to E-Comm, where a substantial team of trained 9-1-1 call-takers will quickly confirm which agency the caller requires and in which location. Calls will then be transferred to the same dispatchers in Prince George and Kamloops who currently dispatch police officers, firefighters and paramedics to emergency situations.

After seven months of collaborative technical and operational planning, including the engineering, design and installation of new 9-1-1 infrastructure, the changeover was successfully completed this morning. This followed more than 160 test calls across all regional districts as representatives of the Fraser-Fort George Regional District looked on.

“This is an important day for all residents of the regional districts of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG), Cariboo, Kitimat-Stikine and Bulkley-Nechako, who are accustomed to high-quality 9-1-1 service,” said Art Kaehn, RDFFG Board Chair, who was in the emergency communication centre for the official changeover.

“We chose to relocate our service to E-Comm because it is able to deliver increased staffing during sudden influxes of high 9-1-1 call-volume, provide a robust infrastructure with many layers of redundancy for our residents, and provide the necessary expertise to satisfy current and future technical 9-1-1 requirements—all at a significant cost savings,” added Director Kevin Dunphy, Chair of the RDFFG 9-1-1 Committee.

Part of the robust planning prior to transition also included more than 540 hours of training to familiarize E-Comm staff with the many geographical and other special attributes of the regional districts, even though dispatching will continue to be managed locally. The switch will be transparent and seamless for callers and anyone in need of emergency services should dial 9-1-1 as usual.

“E-Comm has managed more than 14-million incoming 9-1-1 calls in our 15-years of service,” said David Guscott, E-Comm President and CEO. “We remain committed to maintaining our

excellent track record of swift and efficient 9-1-1 call-answer for our new partners as our focus is on safer communities in B.C. whether you live in Quesnel, Smithers, Terrace or Richmond.”

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*E-Comm 9-1-1 is the largest 9-1-1 call centre in B.C., serving Metro Vancouver, the Sunshine Coast, Whistler, Squamish, SLRD (south) and now the regional districts of Fraser-Fort George, Cariboo, Kitimat-Stikine and Bulkley-Nechako. Total 9-1-1 call volume in 2013 was almost 862,000. E-Comm also provides dispatch services to 33 police and fire departments throughout the Lower Mainland, Sunshine Coast and Squamish-Whistler areas, and operates the wide-area radio system used throughout Metro Vancouver by police, fire and ambulance personnel.*

*In October-November of 2014, 15 other regional districts (Northern Vancouver Island and Central Interior) will also move its 9-1-1 call-answer to E-Comm.*

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