

REPORT TITLE: 9-1-1 Annual Update - 2021

FROM: Gary Kent, CPA, CGA, ICD.D, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE

The 9-1-1 Advisory Committee is accountable to provide annual updates on 9-1-1 activity in Peel.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Peel Regional Police, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, the Region of Peel, and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care have partnered to provide emergency communications to Peel residents through the Regional 9-1-1 emergency number service.
 - In 2021, 9-1-1 communicators received 614,933 calls, with 377,302 of them being valid emergency service calls.
 - Call volumes increased in 2021.
 - Misdials, pocket calls, test calls, and hang ups accounted for 237,631 calls to 9-1-1.
 - Efforts continue to build awareness about the proper use of 9-1-1 to reduce unnecessary demand on the system
 - The 9-1-1 advisory committee will continue to collaborate with Emergency Services Steering Committee led by the Commissioner of Health
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

Peel Regional 9-1-1 service was implemented in 1988 and a 9-1-1 Advisory Group was established to ensure collaboration and coordination of the 9-1-1 system which is a partnership between Peel Regional Police, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, the Region of Peel and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It provides emergency communications to Peel residents through a dedicated telephone network.

2. 9-1-1 Performance

From 2020 to 2021, the number of calls to 9-1-1 grew by 11 per cent, which is a normal historical rising tendency. Misuse calls (237,631) climbed by six per cent, while test calls (1,067) increased by 12 per cent and hang-up calls (115,609) increased by two per cent. Mobile technology is a contributing factor, as it provides more opportunities for inappropriate 9-1-1 use, such as pocket dialling and short-duration calls. From 2020 to 2021, the combined misuse of calls, test calls, and hang ups climbed by four per cent.

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9-1-1 Communicators answered 57 per cent of all calls in 10 seconds and 64 per cent in 20 seconds. This is below the National Emergency Number Association standard target of 90 per cent in 10 seconds, or 95 per cent in 20 seconds. Appendix I provides a five-year comparison of call volumes and service levels.

Peel Police hired a total of 12 Communicators between February and May of 2021 to address service levels. Due to natural attrition and staff in this area allocated to support new projects such as the new Motorola Computer Aided Dispatch System going live later this year, staffing levels were not adequate to address the volume of calls. In addition, challenges of Covid-19 were also still present in Communications throughout 2021 where several staff were in isolation according to Ministry of Health and government guidelines.

Peel Police are developing a recruitment campaign this year specific to Communicators to ensure they attract and retain the best qualified people for this very important role.

3. Raising Public Awareness and Community Engagement

As the demand for 9-1-1 services increases in the Region of Peel, there is a need to build awareness on how to use the 9-1-1 services appropriately.

To assist further in educating Peel residents about the proper use of 9-1-1, the Region has developed online resources such as the 9-1-1 Emergency Service informational web page at the Region of Peel's website, media, videos, Connect to Peel newsletter, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram).

We highlighted the appropriate use of 9-1-1 during 9-1-1 Awareness Week, April 10 to April 16, 2022. Emergency Preparedness Week was suspended in 2021 due to the pandemic and the Mass Vaccination efforts.

The Emergency Services Steering Committee, of Ontario (ESSC) established a 9-1-1 Call Volume Reduction Workgroup in 2021. With a three-year mandate, the goal of the workgroup is to address 9-1-1 misuse through evidence informed and targeted interventions with particular attention to address the volume of non-emergency calls and related costs impacting emergency services across Ontario. This working group is being led by the Commissioner of Health. A recommendation report was shared with the 9-1-1 advisory committee with findings and proposed actions. The 9-1-1 advisory committee looks forward to collaborating with the ESSC, as they establish next steps.

CONCLUSION

The 9-1-1 emergency number service is an essential component of the emergency communication network in the Region of Peel. The continued success of the 9-1-1 service reflects the combined dedicated efforts of all the public safety communication professionals within the Region.

APPENDICES

Appendix I - Five-year Comparison of Call Volumes and Service Levels

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