



STAFF REPORT TO THE BOARD

DATE OF REPORT January 2, 2024
MEETING TYPE & DATE Regular Session Board of January 24, 2024
FROM: Emergency Management Cowichan
Strategic Services Department
SUBJECT: Emergency 9-1-1 Agreements (2024)
FILE: 2240-55, 2240-85, 2240-85

PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to request approval to renew two (2) agreements related to the provision and operation of Emergency 9-1-1 and radio services under Function 109 - Emergency 9-1-1

RECOMMENDED RESOLUTIONS

1. That a five-year (5) agreement with the Canadian Coast Guard beginning January 1, 2024 and ending December 31, 2028 for the purposes of a 911/Fire Dispatch radio repeater site located at Mt. Sicker near Duncan, BC, be approved.
2. That a one-year (1) agreement between the Central Island 9-1-1 Partnership and E-Comm 9-1-1 of Vancouver, BC for the purposes of Primary 911 Call Answering in 2024, be approved.

BACKGROUND

Canadian Coast Guard Mt Sicker Tower Site Sub-License Agreement 2024-2028

The CVRD operates numerous fire dispatch radio repeaters located at Mt. Sicker near Duncan, BC for the purposes of providing paging, operational radio and alternate radio repeaters for the fire dispatch network. These repeaters are located on a communications tower under a sub-license agreement with the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG). The CCG holds the site as a licensee from TimberWest Forest Company.

The agreement includes use of the tower and radio shelter, electricity/backup generator, site access, security costs, and site maintenance. The current term of the agreement ends December 31, 2023. The CVRD wishes to enter a new five (5) year term for the period of 2024-2028

Central Island 911 and E-Comm 9-1-1 Primary Call Answering 2024

The CVRD provides 911 Primary Call Answering Service to the region via the Central Island 9-1-1 Partnership Agreement (Partnership), which is an agreement between the City of Nanaimo (City), the CVRD and the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). The Partnership collaborate and coordinate for the purposes of providing 911 Primary call answering to the respective citizens of their jurisdictions. The Partnership contracts 911 Primary Call Answering services to E-Comm of Vancouver BC. E-Comm has provided a one-year agreement to the Partnership for the 2024 calendar year.

ANALYSIS

Canadian Coast Guard Mt Sicker Tower Site Sub-License Agreement 2024 – 2028

The Mt. Sicker site above Duncan, BC is a key operational site for 911, Fire Dispatch and Emergency Communications systems. This site provides secure and robust radio communication support for the following systems:

- Paging and operational fire radio repeater for Thetis Island and Penelakut Island Fire Departments
- Backup/alternate fire dispatch paging/radio system hub
- CVRD Disaster Radio program
- CVRD Regional Bylaw Radio
- CVRD Utilities Radio
- Emergency Management Cowichan (EMC) operations
- Ground Search & Rescue operations
- Amateur radio repeater for emergency communications
- Packet radio equipment for emergency communications

Radio program staff recommend continued operations from this key radio site. Cost effective alternatives are not available in the immediate area.

Central Island 911 and E-Comm Primary Call Answering 2024

As 911 services are in a state of rapid change and modernization due to Next Generation 911, E-Comm has provided a limited duration, one (1) year contract agreement for the 2024 period. A new, long term contract between E-Comm and the Partnership is expected for 2025-2029.

EMC Radio program staff recommend endorsement and approval of the one (1) year term agreement, in line with the other partner's position.

In the coming years, EMC radio program staff expect the Province of BC to consider 911 legislation, allowing for a provincial call levy on all phones (mobiles included). This will allow for a large funding source that may provide centralized funding for 911 services in the future.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Canadian Coast Guard Mt Sicker Tower Site Renewal 2024 - 2028

The renewal agreement has increased costs of \$625 (\$125 per annum) over the course of the 2024 – 2028 term versus the previous 2019 – 2023 term. This very modest increase is attributed to a slight inflationary increase on behalf of the site owner, TimberWest Forest Company. The CCG has provided zero cost increases for the sub-license in the same five (5) year term.

The fee schedule for the 2024-2028 term is as follows:

Due Date	Access Fee (to be paid directly to TimberWest)	Sub-License Fee (to be paid directly to DFO-CCG)
01-01-2024	\$6,500.00	\$5,700.00
01-01-2025	\$6,625.00	\$5,700.00
01-01-2026	\$6,750.00	\$5,700.00
01-01-2027	\$6,875.00	\$5,700.00
01-01-2028	\$7,000.00	\$5,700.00

Central Island 911 and E-Comm Primary Call Answering 2024

The fee for the E-COMM 911 service for the 2024 one (1) year agreement term is \$459,841. This fee is split amongst the Partnership, based on census population. In 2024 the share of costs by jurisdiction have been updated to reflect the City at 47%, CVRD at 44% and the RDN at 9%. The CVRD portion is \$202,330.

To date, the contract 911 service costs have been offset by a Call Answer Levy (CAL) collected from telephone landlines on behalf of the Partnership. This CAL does not include mobile phones and as such, revenue from the CAL has been dropping over time, in 2024, the CAL will no longer offset the cost of the 911 services contract and therefore, the CVRD has raised requisition in order to cover the shortfall, estimated at \$29,000 in 2024. This amount has been budgeted in the 2024 Function 109 budget.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

n/a

STRATEGIC/BUSINESS PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Both agreements mentioned in this report support public safety in the region.

Referred to (upon completion):

- Community Services (*Cowichan Community Centre, Cowichan Lake Recreation, South Cowichan Recreation, Arts & Culture, Facilities & Transit*)
- Corporate Services (*Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Legislative Services*)
- Operations (*Utilities, Parks & Trails, Recycling & Waste Management*)
- Land Use Services (*Community Planning, Strategic Initiatives, Development Services, Building Inspection & Bylaw Enforcement*)
- Strategic Services (*Communications & Engagement, Economic Development, Emergency Management, Environmental Services*)

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Reviewed for form and content and approved for submission to the Board:

Resolution:

Corporate Officer

Financial Considerations:

Chief Financial Officer

Chief Administrative Officer's Comments / Concurrence



Danielle Myles Wilson
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – 2024-01-11 CVRD Mt Sicker License Agreement 2024-2028.pdf

Attachment B - C2024-008-DS-505-CENISL Central Island 911 Partnership Call Answer Service Agreement (Jan 1 2024 - Dec 31 2024).pdf