

Emergency Communications Preparedness Center

Federal 911 Data Call

Who is conducting this data call?

The Federal 911 data call will be conducted by the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center's (ECPC) Federal 911 Focus Group in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications (OEC).

The ECPC Federal 911 Focus Group seeks to enhance coordination of Federal 911 initiatives by periodically convening to pursue joint projects that will provide insights, recommendations, and thought leadership to 911 stakeholders resulting in practical, useful products to all federal participants. The ECPC Federal 911 Focus Group is diligently working to develop a comprehensive understanding of the availability, nature of assets, and capabilities of public safety answering point (PSAP) and public safety communications center (PSCC) facilities operated by Federal agencies. The Focus Group believes that many Federal agencies operate and maintain a PSAP or PSCC facility within their areas of responsibility, but the members may not know if that means there are tens, hundreds, or thousands of these facilities in operation. The Focus Group lacks sufficient ability to characterize the services offered through Federal PSAP and PSCC facilities, or how the various operators of these facilities maintain their resources or are planning for the future.

DHS OEC is responsible for facilitating data gathering efforts, leading product development, supporting meeting logistics, and transmitting products to the ECPC Executive and Steering Committees for review and approval. OEC is the lead Federal agency working to improve interoperable emergency communications across all levels of government, across all public safety disciplines, to promote effective interagency communications when needed and as authorized. The initial effort of the questionnaire is to identify how large and broad the Federal PSAP and PSCC community might be. To fully illustrate this picture, your agency's participation is paramount.

Data Call Timeline



Why should my agency participate?

The nation's current 911 system is designed around outdated telephone technology and is incapable of handling the text, data, images, and video that are common in personal communications and critical to future safety and mobility advances. In addition, in most instances, 911 PSAPs and PSCCs cannot readily transfer calls from one to another when call volume exceeds the available resources. The nation's 911 system is in need of a significant technology and operational overhaul. Next Generation 911 (NG911) is a nationwide, standards-based, all-IP emergency communications infrastructure enabling voice and multimedia communications between a 911 caller and a 911 PSAP. NG911 is designed as a managed system to provide access to emergency services from all connected communication sources.

The first step in the data collection process is to identify the presence, scale and location of Federal PSAP and PSCC sites. The Focus Group is relying upon *you* to help create an accurate level of awareness about the presence and capabilities of Federal PSAP and PSCC operators, and to develop an accurate common operating picture that documents the gaps between Federal PSAP/PSCC operations and the operations of State, Local, and/or Tribal facilities, especially gaps in the pursuit and deployment of NG911 capabilities. The Focus Group's ultimate goal is to identify every Federal PSAP/PSCC and learn where they are located and who they are serving.

After the Focus Group identifies the demographics of Federal PSAPs/PSCCs, the Focus Group will release a subsequent, detail-rich survey. The second part of the survey will aim to learn deeper aspects of services, systems, and personnel engaged in operating these facilities. Detailed responses will help build a knowledge base and will allow for analysis of results that can lead to the identification of unmet needs, requirements and recommendations. These recommendations can then be used to help participating agencies' PSAP/PSCC operators understand their situation, create budgetary requests, and provide justifications for new investments to make their current systems NG911 compliant.

Upon the release of the questionnaire please disseminate throughout your respective agency.

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National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)

The NECP recognizes the importance of the “whole community” approach and the entire emergency communications ecosystem. The data sought from the survey aims to paint a picture of the Federal PSAP/PSCC community. The modernization of communications and information systems first requires an understanding of the ecosystem.

The 2014 NECP provides information and guidance to those that plan for, coordinate, invest in, and use operable and interoperable communications for response and recovery operations. DHS OEC worked closely with more than 350 federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial jurisdictions, private sector representatives, and other stakeholders to update the NECP with the goal of bringing public safety communications into the 21st century. To address the rapidly evolving emergency communications landscape, the NECP emphasizes the need to enhance and update the policies, governance structures, plans, and protocols that enable responders to communicate and share information under all circumstances. As a stakeholder-driven plan, the NECP aims to maximize the use of all communications capabilities available to emergency responders – voice, video, and data – and to ensure the security of data and information exchange.

The 2014 NECP sets forth five strategic goals based on the SAFECOM Interoperability Continuum. Collectively, the NECP goals aim to enhance emergency communications capabilities at all levels of government and across disciplines in coordination with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and communities across the nation. Each of the five goals can be directly tied to the data sought from the Federal 911 questionnaire.

NECP Strategic Goal	Relation to the Federal 911 Questionnaire
Goal 1 - Governance and Leadership: Enhance decision-making, coordination, and planning for emergency communications through strong governance structures and leadership.	Analysis of the data gathered will equip PSAP/PSCC stakeholders with the information needed to update their governance structures to address the evolving operating environment.
Goal 2 - Planning and Procedures: Update plans and procedures to improve emergency responder communications and readiness in a dynamic operating environment.	The questionnaire asks if PSAP/PSCC operators have standard operating procedures (SOP) in place and how they were assembled. The questionnaire also intends to determine if a PSAP/PSCC is influenced by any external metrics (i.e. federal doctrine, standards, actual events, etc.). The data that is gathered can be used when PSAP/PSCC stakeholders update and distribute SOP content that addresses new technologies.
Goal 3 - Training and Exercises: Improve responders’ ability to coordinate and communicate through training and exercise programs that use all available technologies and target gaps in emergency communications.	Analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaire will help Federal PSAP/PSCC stakeholders identify if any training and exercise challenges exist. If training and exercise challenges do exist, the data gathered can be leveraged to help develop solutions.
Goal 4 - Operational Coordination: Ensure operational effectiveness through the coordination of communications capabilities, resources, and personnel from across the whole community.	The questionnaire aims to develop a baseline assessment that illustrates how big the Federal PSAP/PSCC community might be and the demographics of the community. Developing a Federal baseline is important to understand the capabilities available and to support the advancement of capabilities – including acquisition and implementation of NG911. Having a baseline will support the coordination of efforts across the Federal PSAP/PSCC space.
Goal 5 - Research and Development: Coordinate research, development, testing, and evaluation activities to develop innovative emergency communications capabilities that support the needs of emergency responders.	The data that is gathered from the questionnaire will help raise situational awareness across the federal government regarding: existing capabilities, gaps that need to be addressed, and support for the research and development of operational and technical solutions. This situational awareness will enhance PSAP/PSCC operations and service deliveries which will ultimately help federal responders save lives, property and the environment.

Upon the release of the questionnaire please disseminate throughout your respective agency.