NG911

NEXT GENERATION 911
FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS

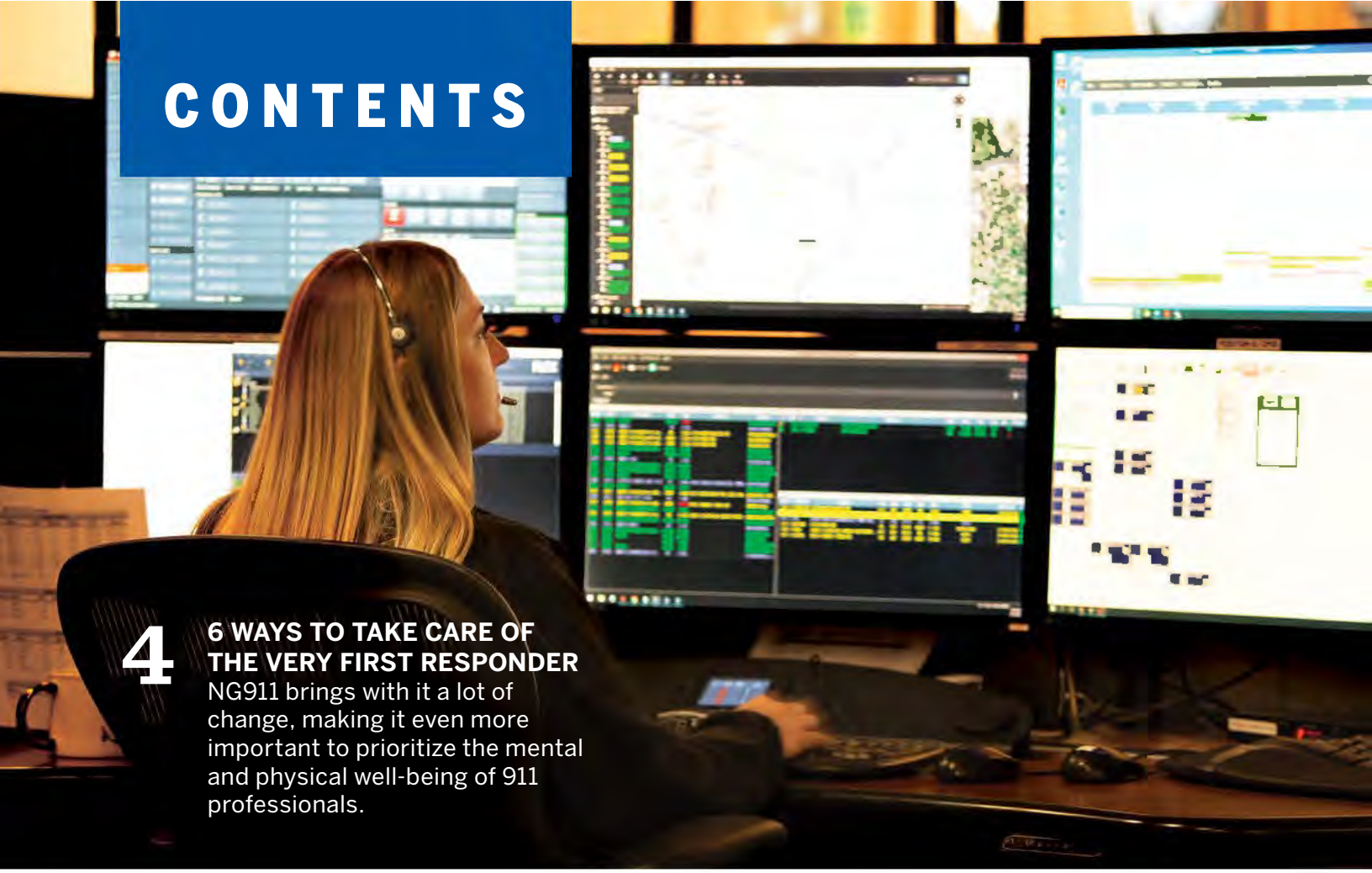
A GUIDE FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS

NG911: WHAT TO EXPECT

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Caring for the Very First Responder | Next Generation 911: The Basics
3 Ways You Can Get Involved in NG911

CONTENTS



As our nation's call centers evolve towards NG911, experts are beginning to reference Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) as Emergency Communications Centers (ECCs). This term encompasses all the emergency events and requests for assistance that extend beyond voice calls. This publication uses the terms interchangeably.

ON THE COVER (LEFT TO RIGHT): Kenneth Gunter, Public Safety Dispatcher I, and Adrienne Gurell, Public Safety Dispatcher II, work at the Shasta Area Safety Communications Agency (SHASCOM-911) in Redding, California.

NEXT GENERATION 911 IS HERE

As a 911 professional, no doubt you've heard rumblings about Next Generation 911 (usually called "NG911"). Maybe your public safety answering point (PSAP) or emergency communications center (ECC) has already taken steps toward making the transition, or maybe NG911 is an open frontier you know little about.

Whatever your situation or knowledge of NG911, you almost certainly have questions and maybe even a few concerns. Telecommunicators and PSAP/ECC managers alike want to make sure that the transition to NG911 isn't just about technology, funding and policy. It's also very much about the people — you — who do this job day in and day out. NG911 is about making emergency communications better for the communities we serve, but it's also about improving life for 911 professionals.

This publication strives to explain NG911 in clear, non-technical language to give you a better sense of how the transition might take place at your center. Also, it includes detail about how NG911's many benefits will help first responders and the public.

Like any big change, this one won't be easy or fast. But it is necessary change. The 911 system that has valiantly supported emergency calls for decades simply can't continue to serve people in need or our emergency responders. The vast majority of Americans — 96% — own a cellphone of some kind, and over 80% of those devices are smartphones. Communication from the public needs to flow efficiently from the wireless phone companies to our 911 centers and out to first responders in the field; for that to happen, every element in the communication chain must work together.

We are excited about this next chapter in 911 because we see the tremendous potential for us to become more effective in what we do every day. The NG911 digital, internet-based network and the tools created by vendors to leverage that power will bring many benefits: far better location accuracy than call-takers and dispatchers have ever had before; much more detail about an incident even before first responders are on scene; more efficiency in the deployment of the right resources at the right time; and greater network resiliency.

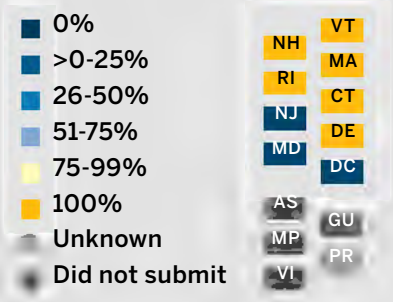
I know that you, like me, chose your career because you wanted to help your community. I truly believe that when the heart, soul and skill of our telecommunicators are combined with all the technical capabilities that NG911 can deliver, there is no limit to our potential for saving the minutes that save lives. ■

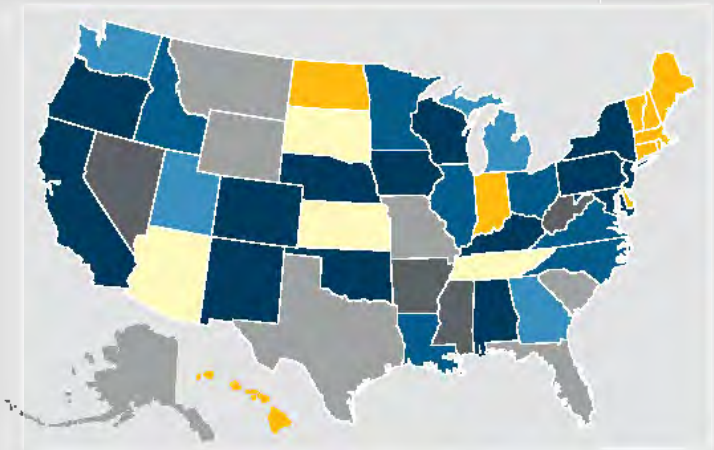
The National Association of State 911 Administrators (NASNA) offers support for 911 professionals and public policymakers at all levels of government by providing information and expertise on the complex issues surrounding the evolution of emergency communications.

Harriet Rennie-Brown
Executive Director, National Association of State 911 Administrators

STATE-REPORTED PROGRESS TOWARD NG911 CALL PROCESSING

The voluntarily reported data shown here identifies the percentage of PSAPs/ECCs in each state that are capable of processing NG911 emergency calls for all service types (wireline, wireless, VoIP) using next-generation infrastructure and GIS that meets nationally accepted standards.





Source: National 911 Annual Report: 2019 Data, National 911 Program

The Next Generation 911 backbone will allow the public to send a wide range of digital data to PSAPs.

WHAT IS NEXT GENERATION 911, REALLY?

NG911 is much more than just receiving text messages or even video from someone in distress. At its best, it will dramatically improve the ways in which all of public safety serves its communities.

What is Next Generation 911 (NG911)?

NG911 is a digital, internet protocol (IP)-based system that will replace the analog 911 infrastructure that's been around for decades. NG911 includes the hardware, software, data and all the procedures and policies that relate to answering every emergency request for help.

The NG911 backbone will support new technology that allows the public to send digital data like videos, photos and texts to PSAPs/ECCs, and also enable telecommunicators to share data with field responders, other PSAPs/ECCs, and other agencies and organizations as needed. One of the most important strengths of next-generation call centers will be their ability to seamlessly, securely and immediately transfer calls and data among PSAPs/ECCs.

How does a NG911 system work?

A next-generation system has four main building blocks: the ESInet (Emergency Services IP Network), Next Generation Core Services (NGCS), NG911 call-taking equipment, and a geographic information system (GIS).

The ESInet is the network that delivers emergency "calls" to the appropriate PSAP/ECC and connects the centers to each other. The NGCS are the software and databases needed to route a 911 call appropriately on the ESInet. NG911 call-taking equipment (sometimes referred to as customer premise equipment or call-processing equipment (CPE)), provides the tools for 911

telecommunicators to receive, process and dispatch NG911 calls. And GIS uses location data to route 911 calls and help responders find callers.

Once the basic building blocks are in place, new technologies will add new functions and information can come from a wide range of sources beyond phones, including computers, smart sensors, alarm systems, vehicle telematics, smart speakers, medical devices, and more. Next-generation systems can help deliver, process and store this additional data and also ensure public safety entities will be able to integrate future technologies while allowing interoperability.

It's worth mentioning that NG911 is different than E911, or Enhanced 911. Similarly, SMS text-to-911 is not synonymous with full next-generation functionality; it's just a small part of all that NG911 will be able to do.

Why do we need NG911?

You already know that most calls made to PSAPs/ECCs — about 78% — are wireless. And just as Americans have moved away from landline phones to cell phones and VoIP, in which calls are made via the Web, public safety must adapt to these new communication tools to best serve our communities. Though the legacy 911 system has served the country well for decades, it has reached the limit of what it can do. Just as important, the old 911 network simply can't take advantage of technologies that will bring greater speed, accuracy and efficiency in responding to requests for emergency help. The legacy system is also not resilient in the ways that next-generation systems will be. When fully deployed, NG911 will do things we only dream of today, like seamlessly working with other public safety, healthcare and government services and with neighboring jurisdictions — even with your public safety colleagues across the country. Best of all, the transfer of highly accurate data will be real-time, allowing call-takers and dispatchers to send the right resources to exactly the right location as quickly as possible.

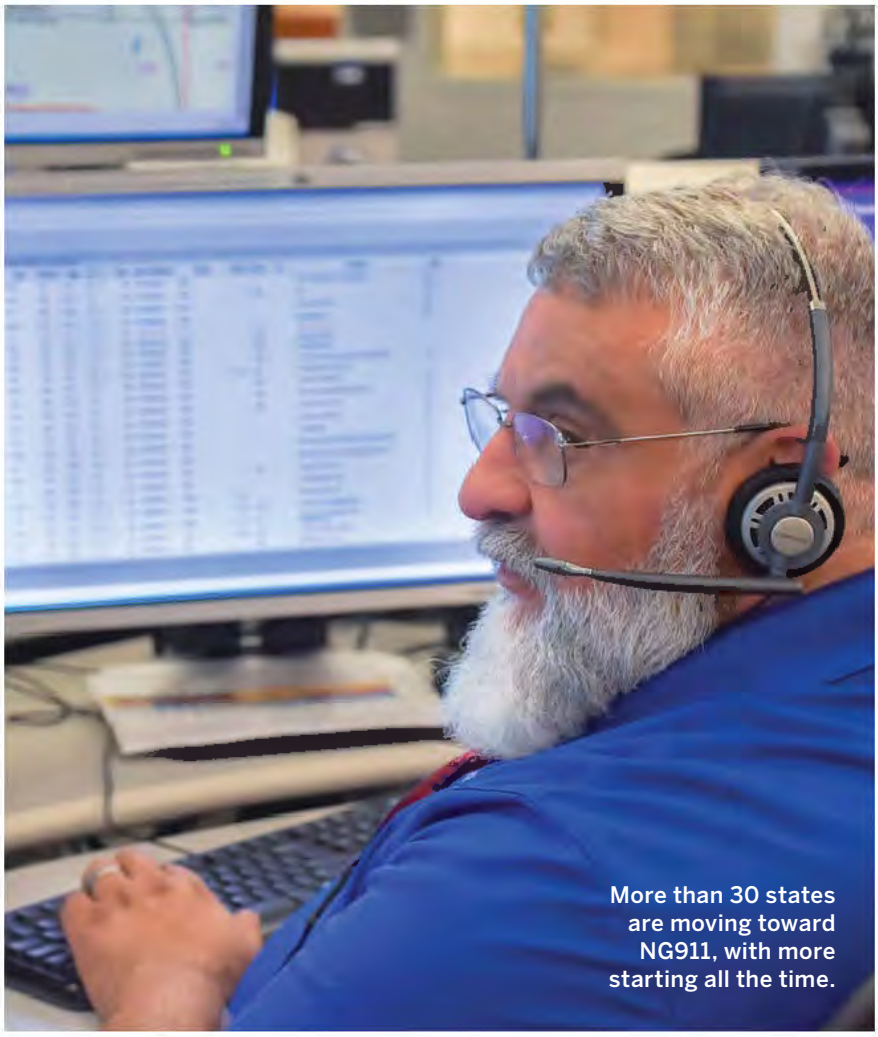
What's the difference between FirstNet and Next Generation 911?

In 2012, Congress passed a law authorizing the creation of the First Responder Network (aka "FirstNet"); its mission is to build and operate the first high-speed national wireless network for first responders.

FirstNet (the network for first responders) and NG911 (the 911 network) are separate but connected efforts that will both be used to make national emergency communications more reliable. To work optimally to serve us all, the entire emergency communications ecosystem must use the same infrastructure.

How soon will my PSAP/ECC move to NG911?

The transition to NG911 varies widely across the country. States, counties, cities and local authorities are figuring out how to start or complete their own switch away from legacy systems. A few have even made the transition to a next-gen network. According to a 2020 report from the National 911 Program, 33 states reported adopting a statewide NG911 plan. These numbers are updated annually, so check www.911.gov for the most current information. ■



More than 30 states are moving toward NG911, with more starting all the time.

When fully deployed, NG911 will do things we only dream of today, like seamlessly working with other agencies and neighboring jurisdictions–even with your public safety colleagues across the country.

Peer support is among the best ways for telecommunicators to weather on-the-job stress.

6 WAYS TO TAKE CARE OF THE VERY FIRST RESPONDER

As PSAPs/ECCs across the country make the transition to Next Generation 911, experts are helping us understand how new technology will affect telecommunicators and how to prioritize their mental and physical well-being.

It would be a true understatement to say it's not easy being a 911 professional. "Oftentimes, [telecommunicators] are hearing people's worst day or worst moments; they're visualizing it in their head and then there isn't closure," says April Heinze, 911 and Operations Director at NENA: The 9-1-1 Association, in Alexandria, Va. "So stress actually affects them quite a bit."

When Next Generation 911 technologies are in place, PSAPs/ECCs will, for the first time, have the ability to receive images and video of what's happening. That, of course, presents a brand-new source of not just information but potential emotional stress. "Unfortunately, seeing images — we don't know how that's going to impact folks," notes Crystal Lawrence, Communication Center and 9-1-1 Services Manager at the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO). "But keeping public safety telecommunicators' stress levels down and making sure they're taking care of their people,

that's something that's at the top of the list for [emergency communications center] leadership."

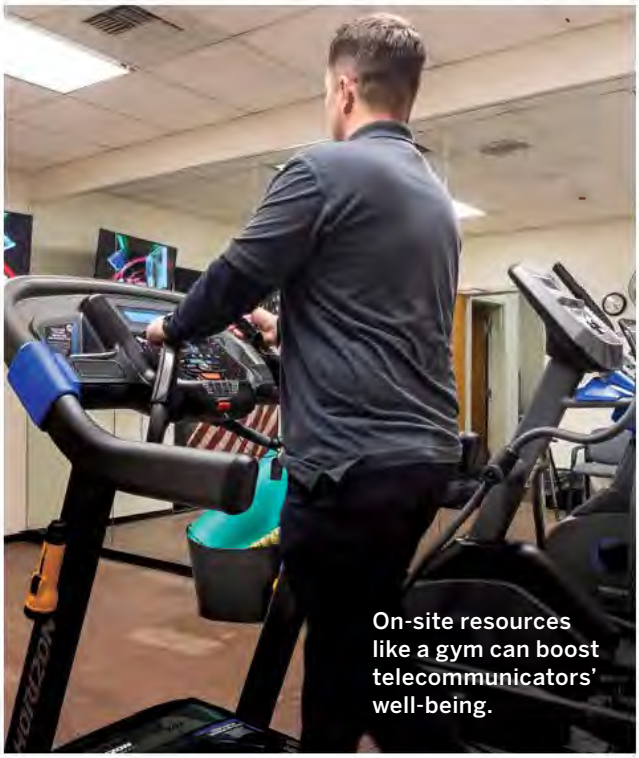
Adds Chris Fischer, an APCO past president and co-chair of NENA's Wellness Committee: "It's making sure that if we have a call or we've seen something that's very disturbing — just like when we hear something that's very disturbing now — we have a healthy way to process that ... We must support the fact that we're going to be seeing things that we haven't had to deal with before, and that's going to take a different level of support to make sure our people stay healthy, mentally and physically."

In fact, more research — in particular, the work led by Dr. Michelle Lilly at Northern Illinois University — is making it clearer how much the job can affect both mind and body. If there's good news here, it's that this research has highlighted the importance of focusing on the health and wellness of PSAP/ECC staff. "There's been a big advancement in the last few years, with emergency communication centers stepping up and becoming systematic in the care of their people," notes Jim Marshall, M.A., co-founder and director of the 911 Training Institute. Many PSAP/ECC employees have access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which refers staff to a mental health professional, and some have peer support programs as well.

In addition to the usual stresses of the job, you might have other concerns, such as:

- the changes that NG911 may bring (though next-gen is expected to make your job easier in some ways, not harder, and help you become even more effective in what you do);
- burn-out, especially if your center is understaffed and overtime has become mandatory; and
- whether efforts to reclassify your role to align with other public safety professionals will be successful.

And that doesn't even include life in the era of pandemics, protests and natural disasters.



On-site resources like a gym can boost telecommunicators' well-being.

With that in mind, we put together six effective and practical ways for PSAP/ECC managers and telecommunicators themselves to prioritize their mental, emotional and physical health:

DO ACKNOWLEDGE WHEN YOU'RE SUFFERING.

In fall 2019, Lee Ann Magoski, president of CALNENA and director of emergency communications for the County of Monterey, California, invited Dr. Lilly to speak to CALNENA members about how telecommunicators could better manage stress. "We really very openly and plainly talked about the fact that it's okay not to be okay," she says. "You need to ask for help. So often dispatchers are in this role of taking care of everybody else, but they don't take care of themselves."

DO PUT PEER SUPPORT TO WORK FOR YOU.

Marshall estimates that only about 10% of PSAPs/ECCs nationwide have a formal peer support program in place. Support can take many forms, including colleagues simply offering each another an informal, real-time emotional safety net.

If your center decides to implement a formal support program, staff might go through intensive training to better understand the challenges they and their peers face on the job and off, including issues like addiction and recovery, marriage and parenting difficulties and health problems, says Marshall, who offers such training virtually and in person. "Team members are then available for quick one-on-ones off to the side after a very difficult call or incident," he notes, "or they can schedule a time when somebody can really unload." (PSAP/ECC staff also learn when to refer a peer to a mental health professional.)

"A lot of what peer support does is preventive," emphasizes Marshall. If your co-worker is, say, worrying about one of their kids who's got a chronic disease or struggling with financial problems, "they're able to unload that to somebody who understands over time, maybe several times in a week through a number of weeks," he explains. "That could save that person from bailing out of 911 or ending up more profoundly depressed or making major mistakes because they're

> **"Often dispatchers take care of everybody else, but they don't take care of themselves."** — Lee Ann Magoski, CALNENA

> **Making telecommunicators true collaborators in the transition to a Next Generation 911 network can decrease their anxiety and increase their investment in actually using NG911 technology.** —Jim Marshall

preoccupied. Plus, you help protect the morale of your center."

Fischer is happy to see public safety waking up to the need for this kind of help: "There are many agencies that are going, 'wow, we need to offer support to our folks to make sure that they know that they have people around them that understand what they're dealing with and can support them.'"

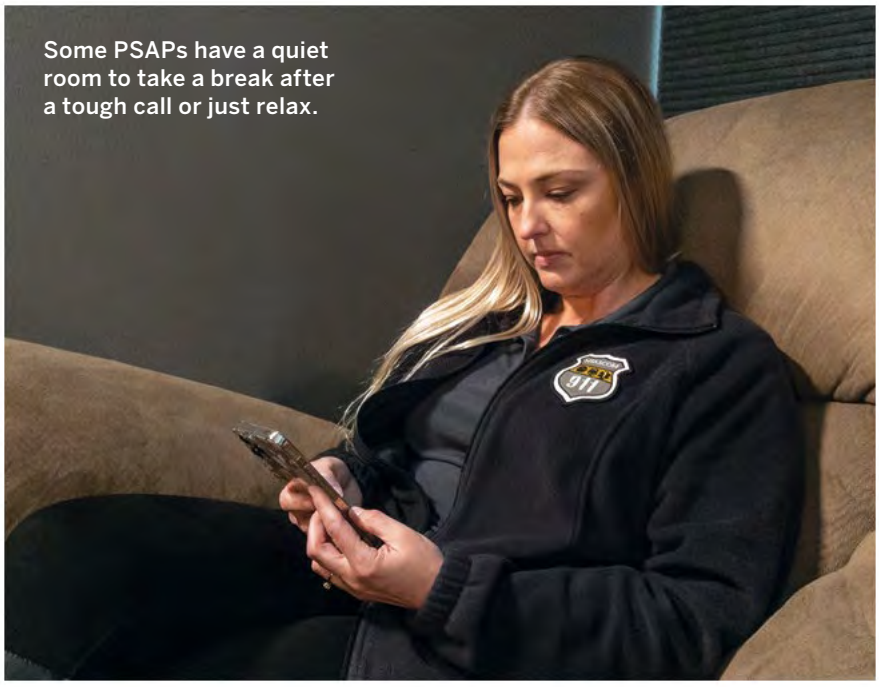
DO CONSIDER HOW NG911 CAN HELP YOU.

"One of the hardest things about doing the job of a telecommunicator is the sense of helplessness, since you can't physically reach the scene and there may be a lack of clear information," notes Marshall, who, with Tracey Laorenza, co-edited *The Resilient 9-1-1 Professional: A Comprehensive Guide to Surviving & Thriving Together in the 9-1-1 Center*.

The additional information you'll get from a next-gen system should be meaningful and useful, not a data dump you'll have to wade through. Receiving video or images, for example, will give you essential information you couldn't get otherwise. "For example, by seeing someone perform CPR, you could realize that they need to shift where they're applying pressure," Marshall explains. "Or, when people don't know their location, dispatchers may be able to identify landmarks the person shows them with their phone." This, he says, can boost a dispatcher's sense of empowerment, which also lowers anxiety.

"The ability to gain richer data from the scene could enable the dispatcher to have a sense of call mastery, feeling, *that didn't turn out well, but I know I did my best.*"

Marshall also emphasizes that exposure to vivid incident-related imagery can increase the potential for traumatic stress among dispatchers. "Fortunately, PSAP policies, recruitment practices and training can be put in place to mitigate these risks," he says.



Some PSAPs have a quiet room to take a break after a tough call or just relax.

"Reducing workload stress, turnover, fatigue — these are all important and can really be assisted with better systems once we have truly interoperable Next Generation 911," adds APCO's Crystal Lawrence.

DO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A VOICE IN NG911 DECISION-MAKING.

Chris Fischer sees 911 pros as an essential part of assessing next-gen tools. "New technology is coming out all the time, but telecommunicators need to be involved in the planning, development and deployment of it," she says. Encouragingly, more vendors creating the software and tools used by the NG911 network are taking the time to include telecommunicators in their research and development. (And, of course, how, why and when you use this tech is up to your PSAP/ECC.)

There's another very good reason to get call-takers on board: When you get to participate — especially on matters that directly affect you and your colleagues, like whether or not you will see disturbing images — the stress and fear you may feel about the unknowns of NG911 drop considerably, says Marshall. "Making [telecommunicators] true collaborators in this can decrease the anxiety and increase their investment in actually using this technology."

DO EXPECT A LEARNING CURVE.

It's the rare person who welcomes a big change; that's especially true if what's changing is a job you're good at. "There's significant anticipatory anxiety about exposure to incident-related imagery among our front-liners of all ages," Marshall says. "But rather than panic about this change, our 911

Don't forget that you are an essential part of the successful deployment of NG911 at your PSAP/ECC.

professionals can, if invited by their leaders, help influence how they will use this technology and practice self-care at the same time."

As your PSAP/ECC makes the necessary upgrades and deploys new tools, you will likely need to undergo training and use both old and new technology for a while.

Worrying about the switch to next-gen can make it easy to let your imagination run wild. But Brian Fontes, chief executive officer of NENA, thinks it's worth remembering what happened when text-to-911 was first introduced: "A lot of 911 centers were absolutely fearful that they would be inundated with text messaging," he recalls. "But it didn't happen. In reality, when it comes to emergencies, most people would rather talk to somebody than not." Today, the benefits of text-to-911 are also very clear, including giving millions of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing and speech-impaired a far easier way to reach 911.

DO REMEMBER HOW MUCH YOU ALREADY KNOW.

"Telecommunicators are some of the most resourceful people in the world," says NENA's April Heinze. "They almost always find a way to find the person or help the person." Chris Fischer agrees: "Every day, in 9-1-1 centers across the country, [telecommunicators] get information and then they have to basically very quickly analyze that to figure out how it all fits together and what it is they're dealing with."

Since your legacy 911 system will need to co-exist with new technologies, like an NG911 CAD system, for some period, your experience and skill with current tools are invaluable. Which means you, the 911 professional, are an irreplaceable part of the transition toward the future of 911. ■

NENA's Wellness Continuum (www.nena.org/wellnesscontinuum) is an online resource designed to support the 911 professional community in matters of mental and physical health. You can also follow the work of NENA's Wellness Committee, which includes professional workgroups on peer support programs and updates to the NENA 9-1-1 Acute/Traumatic and Chronic Stress Management Standard, among other topics, or reach out to join a workgroup yourself.

NG911 FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS

How PSAP/Emergency Communications Center Staff Benefit from Next Generation 911

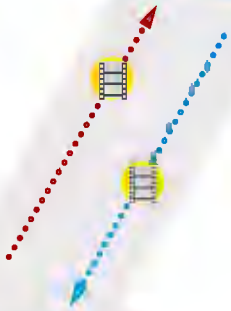
The Next Generation 911 network and related technologies will provide telecommunicators with new opportunities to keep field responders and the public safer, while also giving you tools to make you more effective and efficient as your community's first first responders. "Next-gen can offer public safety telecommunicators an opportunity to get more information, ideally in a more user-friendly form than we've ever received it before," says Crystal Lawrence, APCO's Communication Center and 9-1-1 Services Manager.

Better Location Accuracy

NG911 tools allow you to get not just a caller's latitude and longitude, but an extremely accurate dispatchable location. PSAPs will be able to view, too, a three-dimensional map showing which floor in a building someone is calling from. Even better, all the data that comes in with a next-gen call can be immediately transferred to field responders, medical providers or others who may need the information.

Improved Crash Data

Telematics, already integrated into many vehicles, are capable of notifying 911 with precise location information and crucial details like speed at impact, airbag deployment, number of occupants, and how many seat belts were in use. This data, available at dispatch, helps fire services and EMS prepare appropriate equipment and provides medics with key information to plan for transport to the appropriate hospital or trauma center.



Safer Communities

Once ECCs are able to easily and quickly access media such as photos and video, citizens can readily report crimes, enabling telecommunicators to better understand a situation and dispatch law enforcement. For example, a witness might capture a video of a hit-and-run in progress and send it to 911 so dispatchers, and then officers, can see the situation and the suspect.

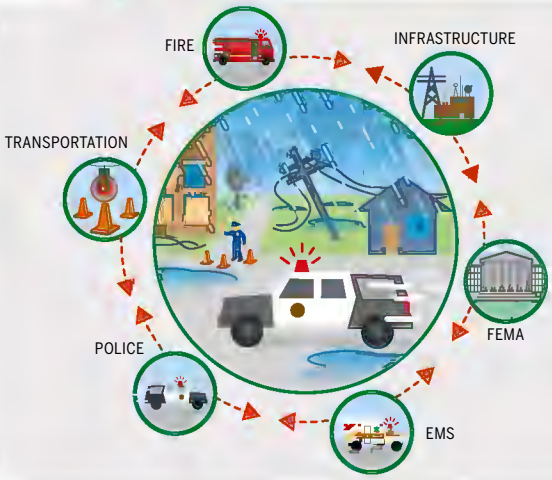
KEY: VIDEO, IMAGES LOCATION DATA

More Ways to Help All Types of Callers

NG911 will enable new services like language assistance/translation for non-native English speakers and help for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. These technologies will be embedded in Next-Gen platforms, making them seamless for telecommunicators to use.

Improved Field Responder Safety & Awareness

New and emerging technologies in the NG911 environment provide information in the form of photos, streaming video, texts and other data that helps your colleagues in law enforcement, fire services and EMS better understand what's happening, even before they're on-scene. Telecommunicators can access building sensors and video feeds, too, helping to identify hazardous materials, environmental conditions or the location of potential victims.



Greater Reliability & Coordination with Other Agencies

During a natural disaster, large-scale emergency, or an event that generates large call volume, the NG911 system can reroute calls when necessary. The system also allows for better coordination with first responders and between other emergency services and agencies in your area and beyond, ensuring that all 911 calls are answered, even if one ECC experiences an outage or call overload.

5 WAYS NG911 MIGHT CHANGE YOUR JOB

You're probably wondering how, exactly, your job might be different once your PSAP deploys NG911 and the new technologies that a next-gen system will allow you to use.

Good question. The first thing to know is that this shift won't happen overnight. Like most big, complex transitions, this will take time, and the expertise you have with your PSAP's legacy system will be an invaluable part of ensuring the change is as smooth as possible. In most places, legacy and NG911 technologies will need to operate side-by-side for a while.

Just as important, a lot will depend on which NG911 technologies your PSAP decides to adopt and how your center decides to use these tools, such as allowing callers to send in real-time video or photos of an incident.

Here are just a few ways your day-to-day might change once you're working in an NG911 environment.

DISPATCHABLE LOCATION

NOW:

Your PSAP's calls are routed via ALI (automatic location identification)/ANI (automatic number identification) to give you the caller's location. Especially for cell-phone calls, the location is approximate, often requiring you to ask multiple question to determine exactly where the caller is or "rebid" due to technical limitations.

NEXT-GEN:

Location-based routing transmits a dispatchable location immediately to the telecommunicator. "Any call-taker will tell you that they've had calls where they just simply feel helpless," says April Heinze, 911 and PSAP Operations Director at NENA: The 9-1-1 Association.

"You've got times where a caller may be calling you from a cell phone that they do not have a good location on and you know they need help, but they have zero idea where they're at. That helpless feeling is one of the worst feelings you can have."

SEAMLESS CALL TRANSFERS

NOW:

A call comes in from someone whose location borders on two PSAPs and you need to be sure the right resources are deployed to help them.

NEXT-GEN:

By knowing the precise location of any device making an emergency "call," the communication can be immediately transferred to the correct PSAP, typically—but not always—the one nearest the emergency.

"NG911 helps us leverage technology that's already currently available and allows us to better do our job, which is to make sure that we get the right resources to the right place," notes Chris Fischer, a founding partner of Presidential Partners Consulting and former APCO president.

Here are the some of the ways your day-to-day work might be different as your PSAP/ECC adopts Next Generation 911.

3-D BUILDING VISUALIZATION

NOW:

A woman calls; she tells you she thinks she's having a stroke. Before she loses consciousness, she gives her address as 301 Hightower Place—a 23-story building. But you don't know which floor she's on.

NEXT-GEN:

New technology allows call-takers to see not only the longitude and latitude of a building's location, but also what's called the "Z axis," or a three-dimensional, vertical map, such as the exact floor of a high-rise. "This is one of the pieces of location technology that I'm most excited about," says Mark Chase, business analyst for police and fire communications in Palo Alto, California and CALNENA treasurer. "Another technology that's coming is the ability for cell phones to be able to provide a location based on wi-fi hotspots in a building. So, if someone is in, say, a ballroom or meeting room in a hotel, the cell phone can pinpoint exactly where they are."

DISASTER RESILIENCY

NOW:

A tornado strikes your area, putting your PSAP out of commission for the next few hours, possibly longer.

NEXT-GEN:

Because greater redundancy and resilience are built into NG911 systems, in the event of a disaster or technical issue, your ECC can forward calls to virtually any working PSAP—locally, regionally, even nationally—until you're back up and running again.

Vermont's statewide NG911 system of six PSAPs, for example, automatically reroutes calls to an available call-taker at another PSAP if the nearest center is unavailable and the system has built in redundancy and resiliency to avoid any single point of failure .

USER-FRIENDLY WORKFLOW

NOW:

Your desk is groaning under the weight of multiple monitors, keyboards and mice; tracking all of these throughout your shift is often exhausting. The idea of adding more screens or programs to learn and watch is, well, overwhelming.

NEXT-GEN:

Interoperability among a wide range of next-gen tools is essential—and a key benefit of this upgrade. While this won't happen tomorrow or for everyone, it's possible that the number of call-taker interfaces could be reduced to just one or two screens.

"Next-gen can offer public safety telecommunicators an opportunity to get more information, ideally in a more user-friendly form than we've ever received it before," says Crystal Lawrence of APCO.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Here are a few steps you can take to ease the transition to NG911 at your PSAP/ECC and feel empowered along the way.

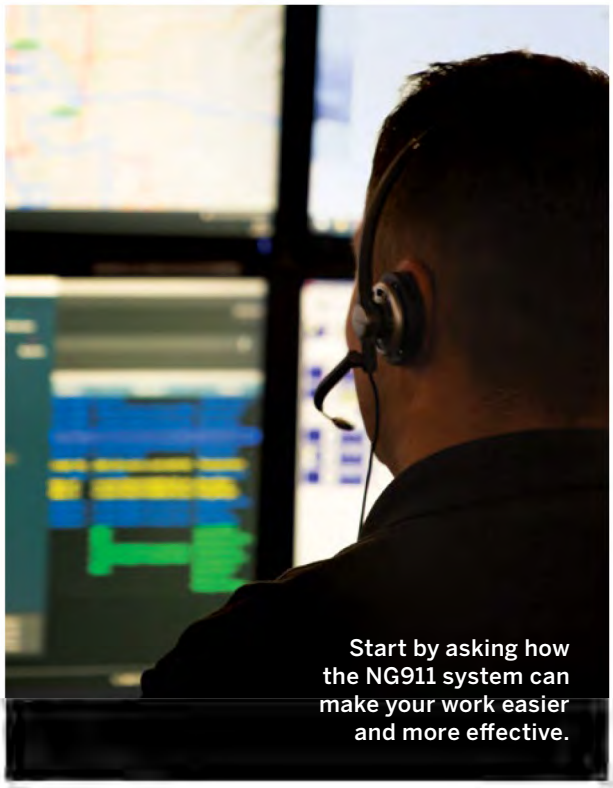
SEE THE POTENTIAL.

Many telecommunicators worry that the switch to NG911 will simply mean more work heaped onto an already overfilled plate. And that is a valid concern, though when next-gen is fully in place, it's likely to make your job less taxing, not more. Chris Fischer, past APCO president and co-chair of the NENA Health and Wellness Committee, sees the transition first as an opportunity to ask an important question: "How can telecommunicators take advantage of this technology to make our job easier, to help us be better at what we're doing?"

To that end, she suggests "educating yourself on what NG911 is and the benefits it can bring to the center if it's implemented in a thoughtful, systematic way." She notes that for a long-time call-takers have been asking for better ways to determine a caller's true location and to get information to responders more quickly and accurately; NG911 already has tools to make both those requests a reality. "We need to open our arms and our minds and say, 'Now we need to find a way to embrace this in such a way that it makes our job better.'"

JOIN A PROFESSIONAL GROUP WORKING ON NG911 STANDARDS.

It's not uncommon for telecommunicators to avoid joining groups that sound too technical, says Crystal Lawrence, Communication Center and 9-1-1 Services Manager at the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO). But APCO routinely includes 911 professionals when developing new standards: "We want to understand not only the technical piece, but is the technical piece what's needed by those on the front lines?" she says. "So get involved where you can. The more you know, the more you can be really helpful in making sure we get to where we need to be."



Start by asking how the NG911 system can make your work easier and more effective.

Adds Fischer, "telecommunicators are the ones that have to live by [the policies and procedures put in place for NG911], day in and day out." She encourages PSAP/ECC leaders to seek out the voice of call-takers and dispatchers when talking with vendors and IT specialists: "They're the best resource any manager could have in trying to develop policies and procedures to support the new technology." See page 13 for organizations where you can share your expertise and make your voice and experience heard.

ASK QUESTIONS.

If you're not sure what's in store for your PSAP/ECC, find out how other centers are handling the transition and be sure to talk to your supervisor to learn more, says Lee Ann Magoski, ENP, director of emergency communications for the County of Monterey, California, and president of CALNENA. "Say, 'tell me about our plans for Next Generation; what is it going to look like?'" she suggests. "Offer to identify policies that need to be [updated] and make suggestions."

Mark Chase, business analyst for police and fire communications in Palo Alto, California, and CALNENA treasurer, recommends asking about how your center will handle, say, incoming video and photos or what your policy will be for texting back on 911 hang-ups, and "lobby your management to be involved in decisions as far as selecting equipment and programs." The introduction of new technologies could also make this the perfect time to revisit your PSAP/ECC's job descriptions for telecommunicators and update them to include any new duties or changes to your job. Your center may even decide to create a new analyst position specifically tasked with leveraging the incoming data these tools will deliver.

Magoski concludes with an important reminder: "You—not the technology—are the most precious resource. It's not next generation that makes 911 work, it's the dispatchers that are doing the job, day in and day out... You have a role to play and you can make a difference." ■

NEXT STEPS: WHERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT NG911

THE NATIONAL 911 PROGRAM
https://www.911.gov/

NEXT GENERATION 911 FOR PUBLIC SAFETY LEADERS
https://www.911.gov/project_ng911publicsafety.html

NG911 ROADMAP: CONNECTING SYSTEMS NATIONWIDE
https://www.911.gov/project_ng911roadmap.html

911 TRAINING INSTITUTE
https://www.911training.net/

Co-founder and director Jim Marshall is a licensed mental health professional and the co-editor of The Resilient 9-1-1 Professional: A Comprehensive Guide to Surviving & Thriving Together in the 9-1-1 Center. *The institute offers a variety of virtual and in-person courses on resilience, peer support, and other mental health topics specifically focused on the emergency communications community.*

ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC-SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL (APCO)
https://www.apcointl.org/

APCO NG9-1-1 RESOURCES
https://www.apcointl.org/resources/ng911/

APCO STANDARDS
https://www.apcointl.org/standards/

APCO has a number of standards in development that relate to telecommunicators.

CALNENA: CALIFORNIA CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER ASSOCIATION
https://calnena.org/

FIRSTNET: FIRST RESPONDER NETWORK AUTHORITY
https://www.firstnet.gov/

FIRSTWATCH
https://firstwatch.net/

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE 9-1-1 ADMINISTRATORS (NASNA):
https://www.nasna911.org/

NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER ASSOCIATION (NENA)
The 9-1-1 Association: https://www.nena.org/

NENA WELLNESS COMMITTEE
https://www.nena.org/page/WellnessCommittee

The committee includes working groups on peer support; an update to NENA's Acute Stress Management Standard; best practices for mental health providers; vetting mental health provider resources for EAPs (Employee Assistance Programs).

NENA WELLNESS CONTINUUM
https://www.nena.org/page/WellnessContinuum

This compendium of wellness resources for the 911 community includes articles, videos, apps, research and other resources on psychological and physical health, with a focus on stress management and coping for the telecommunicator.

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL
https://www.npstc.org/

POLICE EXECUTIVE RESEARCH FORUM (PERF)
https://www.policeforum.org/

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
https://dod.defense.gov/

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
https://www.dhs.gov/

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
https://www.justice.gov/

NG911

NEXT GENERATION 911
FOR TELECOMMUNICATORS

To download a digital copy of this publication, visit 911.gov