

## 911 Data for Decision-Making

# Introducing the 911 DataPath Initiative



### Imagine a Future...

Imagine the ability to exchange timely data and information with other Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)/Emergency Communications Centers (ECCs), regional 911 authorities, and state or national agencies to provide a clear picture of the effectiveness and efficiency of 911.

Dependable and consistent information exchange for decision makers is central to the **911 DataPath Initiative**—a 911 community-wide effort to implement the strategic plan, “911 Data & Information Sharing.” The Strategic Plan, developed by the 911 community in partnership with the National 911 Program, describes an ideal future environment where data can be exchanged on a scheduled, ad hoc, or live basis, so decision makers can make more informed and accurate decisions.

For years, the 911 community has experienced the need for a measurable understanding of the 911 environment. This has been shown in a variety of ways:

- Elected officials inquire about 911 agency needs;
- Federal grant programs are funded at only fractions of their appropriations; and
- Local/state funding legislation is side-tracked due to the lack of clear data to illustrate need.

Fully enabling the 911 DataPath Initiative may take a while, yet the demonstrated need is apparent. As jurisdictions transition to Next-Generation 911 (NG911) capabilities, the need to efficiently collect, use, and share authoritative data continues to intensify, especially as the 911 community shifts from multiple independent systems to a nationally interconnected NG911 system of systems. Therefore, 911 agencies should adopt a consistent and collaborative approach to using data and information—administratively, operationally, and technically. Sound formidable? It is. Progress is not progress without change. However, a future that includes—at your fingertips—all the information you need to tell your “911 story” will help you make the case to continuously improve and expand 911 service delivery.

## Why Was the 911 DataPath Strategic Plan Developed?

The 911 community has expressed the need for 911 data and information to help jurisdictions operate more efficiently, secure the funding necessary to achieve NG911 transition, and collaborate more effectively with other 911 agencies. In 2016, the Federal Communication Commission's Task Force on Optimal PSAP

**The 911 DataPath Initiative begins with the 911 DataPath Strategic Plan, which was developed by the 911 community as a guide for achieving the future vision of enhanced use of 911 data and secure, automated 911 information exchange.**

**Action on this vision will result in a framework for 911 agencies at all levels of government to utilize—if they choose—to enable the exchange and sharing of data and information.**

Architecture recommended creation of a nationally uniform 911 data system to provide a framework to help the 911 community transition to NG911 operations. While the National 911 Program has been involved with other data sharing systems, it was clear the solution needed to be more than technology. Through the release of a Request for Information, the Program asked the 911 community to help define the requirements to build and implement a "nationally uniform 911 data system." Next, the Program formed a team of public- and private-sector 911 community members who wrote the first version of the Strategic Plan.

## What is the 911 DataPath Initiative's First Activity?

Currently, the National 911 Program is working with the 911 community on achieving aspects of the Strategic Plan's first strategic goal—Data Uniformity—which involves the identification and definition of essential 911 data elements. Stakeholders are in the process of producing a resource that defines 911 administrative data elements collected throughout the community today and provides a standards-based data exchange model the community can use to share such data and make decisions on how to best implement NG911. From there, the 911 community will continue to move toward the vision of secure, automated data sharing by addressing data uniformity for other forms of 911 data (e.g., 911 call data, 911 agency financial data).

*Simply put, the entire 911 community will benefit by identifying a common data language. For example, when we talk about NG911 deployment across the country, it would be helpful if we all knew and agreed on exactly what "NG911 deployment" means and exactly which data demonstrate the various levels of maturity as deployment takes place. When requesting funding for NG911 systems and agencies, it is important to understand how many primary and secondary PSAPs/ECCs have transitioned to an NG911 call handling system out of the total number of PSAPs/ECCs across the country. The list goes on...*

## Learn More & Get Involved

- You can find "911 Data & Information Sharing: A Strategic Plan," at [https://www.911.gov/pdf/911\\_Data\\_Information\\_Sharing\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_Final.pdf](https://www.911.gov/pdf/911_Data_Information_Sharing_Strategic_Plan_Final.pdf).
- If you want to get involved in helping the 911 community address the Strategic Plan's Data Uniformity goal or become involved in the 911 DataPath Initiative in any other way, contact the National 911 Program at [NHTSA.National911@nhtsa.gov](mailto:NHTSA.National911@nhtsa.gov).