



REGIONAL DISTRICT of Fraser-Fort George

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REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION

TO: Chair and Directors

File No.: EP ADM 1.0

FROM: Melanie Perrin, Senior Manager of Public Safety Services

DATE: July 2, 2024

SUBJECT: Reciprocal Back-Up Agreement for Regional Fire Dispatch Service

SUMMARY: Purpose: Consider Extension to the Fire Dispatch Back-Up Agreement with North Island 9-1-1 Corporation

Attachments: Fire Dispatch Back-Up Services Agreement – Amendment for Extension

Previous Reports: Item #13.3.2, June 2021

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. THAT the report dated July 2, 2024 regarding “Reciprocal Back-Up Agreement for Regional Fire Dispatch Service” be received for information.
2. THAT a Fire Dispatch Back-Up Services Agreement extension be entered into with North Island 9-1-1 Corporation for a one-year term.

ENTITLEMENT	HOW VOTE COUNTED
All 1 Director/1 vote	Majority
All Weighted	Majority

ISSUE(S):

At its June 2021 meeting, the Board approved entry into a reciprocal agreement with North Island 9-1-1 Corporation (NI 9-1-1), operated by the City of Campbell River located on Vancouver Island, for the provision of back-up fire dispatch services to both the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Emergency Response Service (FFG 9-1-1) and NI 9-1-1 fire dispatch centers. This agreement has now reached the end of its initial three-year term, expiring on July 1, 2024.

Public Safety Administration has been working with NI 9-1-1 regarding the extension of this agreement in its current form. Section 11.2 of the current agreement provides for two one-year extensions. This would be the first extension of this agreement. The reciprocal back-up services are currently continuing without interruption while the service agreement extension is being addressed.

The Infrastructure Upgrade Implementation Strategy (IUI) approved by the Regional Board in 2019, identifies considering opportunities for improvements to the fire dispatch service that will increase operational resiliency and business continuity. This Agreement facilitates the business continuity planning and capacity enhancement process, for NI 9-1-1 and the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Emergency Response Service (RDFFG 9-1-1), including the Fire Operation Communications Center (FOCC).

The Board is being asked to consider:

- entering into Fire Dispatch Back-Up Services Extension Agreement with the NI 9-1-1 Corporation.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

NFPA Standard 1221

- establishes standards for the installation, maintenance and use of emergency services communications systems.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- ☒ Climate Action ☐ Economic Health ☐ Indigenous Relations ☒ Strong Communities
- ☐ None – Statutory or Routine Business

SERVICE RELEVANCE:

The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George 9-1-1 Emergency Response Service was established in 1990 to provide three functions:

- Primary Public Safety Answering Point 9-1-1 Call-Answer service which allows for individuals to reach emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) by dialling 9-1-1
- Secondary Public Safety Answering Service Point for Fire Dispatch call-answer services (FOCC fire dispatch) which receives fire/rescue emergency calls, dispatches fire/rescue services and supports the responding fire/rescue agency during incident response
- Radio Communication for all fire departments within the RDFFG region which includes radio system supply and maintenance, communication tower network maintenance and operation and maintenance of support systems

The service is a region wide service with all member municipalities and electoral areas participating. Service delivery to other local governments is a fee-for-service arrangement based on term service contracts.

Contracts with the Cariboo, Bulkley-Nechako and Kitimat-Stikine Regional Districts include FOCC fire dispatch and E-Comm 9-1-1 call-answer services. The contract with the Central Kootenay Regional District is exclusive to FOCC fire dispatch services only.

The 9-1-1 Emergency Response Service further supports the operation of two centralized fire dispatch facilities located within the City of Prince George. It supports a reciprocal agreement for the provision of fire dispatch back-up service with North Island 9-1-1 Corporation.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

Provisions have been made within the agreement for reimbursement of eligible staffing costs should the need for an activation occur. There are no direct financial investment or fees associated within the agreement as most of the proposed readiness investment would be staff time and resources for both parties.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

The intent of the Fire Dispatch Back-Up Services Agreement is to provide reciprocal emergency support during short-term events that could require staff to move from primary to alternate back-up facilities.

NI 9-1-1 currently operates and maintains a fire dispatch centre and the necessary communications and mapping systems for dispatching 80 fire departments in a service area covering approximately 180,000 square kilometres. This full-service dispatch centre operates as a state-of-the-art facility meeting and exceeding the National Fire Protection Association Standards. The dispatch centre processes an average of 19,000 fire and medical requests annually, resulting in approximately 13,500 dispatched incidents.

A commitment to community sustainability in the Regional District will safeguard communities through the provision of 9-1-1 emergency response and comprehensive emergency management while being a catalyst to opportunities that enhance the economic prosperity of the region, including preparing for climate change impacts.

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. Approve recommendations.

- a Fire Dispatch Back-Up Services Agreement extension will be entered into and executed with NI 9-1-1

Other Options:

a. Do not approve recommendations:

- Public Safety Administration will take no further action on the Agreement extension with NI 9-1-1 Corporation
- the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Emergency Response Service (RDFFG 9-1-1), and NI 9-1-1 will be at risk by not having a back-up reciprocal service agreement in place

COMMENTS:

If FOCC were to be compromised forcing operations to move to the back-up site, NI 9-1-1 would activate under the current back-up services agreement and provide fire dispatch services for RDFFG fire dispatch agencies in the interim during the transition time of moving to the back-up site at the PSOB. Working with NI 9-1-1 greatly assists in meeting this geographically diverse operational business continuity planning objective.

A key recommendation within the *Infrastructure Upgrade Implementation Strategy*, as approved by the Board, was a commitment to 'ensuring the 9-1-1 Emergency Response Service allows for growth potential and operational resiliency of call-answer, dispatch and radio communication public safety services.' Participating in this reciprocal fire dispatch back-up agreement significantly furthers the goal of enhanced public safety for the residents of British Columbia served by NI 9-1-1 and the RDFFG 9-1-1 Emergency Response Service.

Respectfully submitted,

"Melanie Perrin"

Melanie Perrin
Senior Manager of Public Safety Services

MP:tb

NORTH ISLAND 9-1-1 CORPORATION

*- serving the Regional Districts of Alberni-Clayoquot, Comox Valley,
Mt. Waddington, Nanaimo (School District #69), qathet, and Strathcona -*

AMENDMENT #1

Re: Fire Dispatch Back-Up Services Agreement

Original Agreement Date: 18th Day of June, 2021

The North Island 9-1-1 Corporation wishes to amend the above agreement between the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George and the North Island 9-1-1 Corporation as follows:

- The agreement be extended for a further term of one (1) year commencing on July 2, 2024 and terminating on July 1, 2025.

All other terms and conditions of the agreement remain unchanged.

Agreed between the parties this _____ day of _____ 2024, on behalf of:

NORTH ISLAND 9-1-1 CORPORATION

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF
FRASER-FORT GEORGE

Authorized Signature

Chairperson

Secretary

GM of Legislative and Corporate Services