

**SUBJECT: 9-1-1 Annual Report 2019 and 2020**

**File Number: ACS-2021-EPS-SEM-0002**

**Report to Community and Protective Services Committee on 21 October 2021**

**and Council 27 October 2021**

**Submitted on October 12, 2021 by Beth Gooding, Director Public Safety Service**

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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE**

**OBJET : Rapport annuel 2019 et 2020 sur les services d'appel au 9-1-1**

**Dossier : ACS-2021-EPS-SEM-0002**

**Rapport au Comité des services communautaires et de protection**

**le 21 octobre 2021**

**et au Conseil le 27 octobre 2021**

**Soumis le 12 octobre, 2021 par Beth Gooding, directrice, Service de sécurité publique**

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**Quartier : CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE**

#### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Community and Protective Services Committee recommend Council receive this report for information.

#### **RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT**

Que le Comité des services communautaires et de protection recommande au Conseil de prendre connaissance du présent rapport.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Service Agreement for the 9-1-1 emergency call service for the City of Ottawa is managed through the Security and Emergency Management service.

This report provides information on Ottawa's 9-1-1 service for 2019 and 2020, including key performance metrics and call volume statistics. Of note, all performance targets were consistently achieved, as well as all contractual obligations in 2019 and 2020.

Security and Emergency Management underwent a re-branding in March 2021 and is now officially called the Public Safety Service. However, for this report, which spans the 2019 and 2020 reporting periods, the service area will be referred to as Security and Emergency Management throughout.

Going forward, Security and Emergency Management will be working with the Ottawa Police Services Board (as represented by the Ottawa Police Service) to ensure that the City's 9-1-1 service continues to meet resident needs, including for Next Generation 9-1-1, which will see infrastructure upgrades to enable new user functionality.

## **RÉSUMÉ**

L'entente de prestation de services de la Ville d'Ottawa pour les appels d'urgence au 9-1-1 est gérée par les Services de la sécurité et de la gestion des mesures d'urgence.

Le présent rapport porte sur les services d'appel au 9-1-1 de la Ville d'Ottawa pour 2019 et 2020; il présente notamment les mesures de performance clés et des statistiques sur le volume d'appels. En 2019 et 2020, toutes les cibles de rendement ont été atteintes avec constance, de même que toutes les obligations contractuelles.

Les Services de la sécurité et de la gestion des mesures d'urgence ont changé de nom en mars 2021; ils sont officiellement devenus le Service de sécurité publique. Toutefois, pour les besoins du présent rapport, qui couvre les années 2019 et 2020, nous parlerons des Services de la sécurité et de la gestion des mesures d'urgence.

Pour la suite des choses, les Services de la sécurité et de la gestion des mesures d'urgence travailleront avec la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa (représentée par le Service de police d'Ottawa) pour veiller à ce que les services d'appel au 9-1-1 de la Ville demeurent au diapason des besoins des résidents, y compris ceux de prochaine génération, qui seront le résultat d'une mise à niveau de l'infrastructure visant l'offre de nouvelles fonctionnalités aux utilisateurs.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Security and Emergency Management service within the Emergency and Protective Services department has the responsibility to manage the 9-1-1 service contract for the City of Ottawa. 9-1-1 is an emergency call-for-service, telephone-based response system to access first responders including Police, Paramedic and Fire Services. Ottawa's 9-1-1 service is contracted to the Ottawa Police Services Board, as represented by the Ottawa Police Service. Security and Emergency Management manages the contract with Ottawa Police Services Board and negotiates the provision of the 9-1-1 telephone service with Bell Canada.

Security and Emergency Management is required to report to Committee and Council annually on the Ottawa Police Services Board's compliance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement but due to the COVID-19 response last year, the 2019 report was deferred. This report provides information for 2019 and 2020, including key performance metrics and call volume statistics.

In Ottawa, the 9-1-1 system operates in the following manner. An individual calls 9-1-1 from a landline or cell phone. The telephone service provider (Bell Canada) directs the call to the Primary Public Safety Answering Point, which in Ottawa is the Ottawa Police Service at 474 Elgin Street. Calls for Ottawa Police Service are handled by the Primary Public Safety Answering Point agent directly without transfer. Calls for other types of assistance are transferred to the appropriate Secondary Public Safety Answering Point at one of the other emergency services (i.e., the Ottawa Paramedic Service, Ottawa Fire Services, Ontario Provincial Police, Quebec 9-1-1, Royal Canadian Mounted Police or Canadian Forces Support Unit). Call takers at the Secondary Public Safety Answering Point assess the call and dispatch the appropriate response resources.

## **DISCUSSION**

Since amalgamation, the City manages the Service Agreement with the Ottawa Police Services Board, as represented by the Ottawa Police Service. The Service Agreement includes items related to performance management, reporting processes, testing of back-up equipment, staff training, staffing levels and contract management. Information related to the key components of the agreement are provided in further detail below.

### **Performance Management**

The following contractual performance management requirements have been met by the Ottawa Police Service in 2019 and 2020 as outlined below:

- That 97 per cent of all calls be answered within six seconds from the time a call is received. In 2019, the average annual performance was 97.9 per cent and in 2020, it was 96.9 per cent.
- That a minimum number of 9-1-1 call takers are on duty at all times.
- That the number of call takers is adjusted according to call volume demand.

These annual performance measures have been consistently achieved.

## Call Volume

Call volume for the purpose of this report refers to emergency calls answered by the 9-1-1 service only. On occasion, 9-1-1 calls are made directly to the emergency services (The Ottawa Paramedic Service, Ottawa Fire Services and other Secondary Public Safety Answering Points). Accordingly, there is not a direct one-to-one relationship between calls answered by the 9-1-1 service and total calls received individually by the Ottawa Paramedic Service, Ottawa Fire Services and other Secondary Public Safety Answering Points at their respective dispatch centres. Therefore, the data in Table 1 below is the sum of emergency phone calls received by 9-1-1 and does not correlate with overall calls for service.

**Table 1: 2018 to 2020 Summary of Call Volume**

Type of Call Volume	2018	2019	2020
Total Calls	280,102	303,328	284,259
Daily Average	767	831	779
Calls for Service - Ottawa Police Service	53.8%	64%	64.1%
Calls for Service - Ottawa Paramedic Service	38.9%	30.4%	30.5%
Calls for Service - Ottawa Fire Services	3.6%	3.0%	3.1%
Calls for Service - Other Services <sup>1</sup>	3.7%	3.1%	2.7%

<sup>1</sup> Other services include the Ontario Provincial Police, Quebec 9-1-1, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Canadian Forces Support Unit.

Table 2 below outlines the call source data of 9-1-1 calls from 2016 to 2020.

**Table 2: 2016 - 2020 Call Source Data**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Cellular</b>	<b>Residential landlines</b>	<b>Other<sup>2</sup></b>
2016	66%	14%	20%
2017	67%	14%	19%
2018	73%	10%	17%
2019	74%	10%	16%
2020	77%	9%	14%

In March 2020, there was a slight decrease in 9-1-1 calls due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions where most residents remained at home; however, the balance of 2020 saw steady call volumes to the 9-1-1 service.

### **Complaints Reporting**

As part of the Service Agreement with the Ottawa Police Services Board, complaints must be reported to the Manager, Security and Emergency Management. Once a service complaint is received from the public to 9-1-1, the complainant is contacted by Ottawa Police Service to review the circumstances surrounding the complaint including the information exchange that occurred with the call taker. Where issues and/or complaints are of a significant nature and could result in corporate risk; the Bureau Manager, Support Services at the Ottawa Police Service is required to contact the Manager, Security and Emergency Management. In 2019 and 2020, no complaints of this nature were received. All complaints were service-related only.

In 2019, the 9-1-1 service received seven public complaints, and in 2020, there were two public complaints. All nine complaints over the two-year reporting period were service-related. Upon investigation by the Ottawa Police Service Bureau Manager, it was determined that in four out of the nine incidents over the two-year period, the call centre agents' actions were deemed appropriate. In the remaining five incidents, some

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<sup>2</sup> Other sources include commercial single line and push button, public pay phone, Centrex, multi-party line (commercial and residential) and unknown.

follow-up was initiated with the operator, as a learning/service improvement opportunity.

### **Testing of Backup Equipment**

The 9-1-1 backup facility and equipment is visually inspected and tested by Ottawa Police Service on a monthly basis and a log is maintained and submitted to Security and Emergency Management on an annual basis.

### **Training Requirements for Staff and Staffing Levels**

Ottawa Police Service is responsible for providing on-the-job and classroom training to all staff performing 9-1-1 duties such that performance standards, standard operating procedures and accredited standards for Communicators/Dispatchers as provided by the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Ontario are met. The minimum staffing levels as outlined in the 9-1-1 Purchase of Service Agreement were met in 2019 and 2020.

### **Contract Management**

The Service Agreement is reviewed annually, prior to budget, by the Bureau Manager, Support Services at Ottawa Police Service and by the Manager, Security and Emergency Management. In addition, the Ottawa Police Service submits a bi-annual report to the Manager, Security and Emergency Management outlining performance measure results and other relevant information regarding the operation of the 9-1-1 system.

The City of Ottawa, through the Security and Emergency Management service, and the Ottawa Police Services Board had a “Renewal of Purchase of Service Agreement” for 9-1-1 Services (Service Agreement) that ended in March 2018 (three-year term). The agreement included a bridging clause to ensure no interruption of 9-1-1 services; therefore, the contract has been able to remain in effect past its expiration. While the City’s COVID-19 response activities delayed work on the contract renewal, Public Safety Service (formerly Security and Emergency Management) and the Ottawa Police Service are actively collaborating on an updated Service Agreement.

### **Infrastructure Upgrades**

#### **Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1)**

In 2015, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) instituted a Deaf, Deafened, Hard of Hearing, and Speech Impaired hardware upgrade for the 9-1-1 service. This was implemented in Ottawa in Q1 2016 and enables

registered Deaf, Deafened, Hard of Hearing, and Speech Impaired callers to send text messages once a traditional call connection to 9-1-1 is made.

The CRTC technology upgrade was the first of several 9-1-1 initiatives that will enhance the current 9-1-1 system over the next decade, and which is commonly referred to as Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1). The Ottawa Police Service and the City are working together (along with all implicated emergency services) to ensure that the necessary infrastructure upgrades continue to be made so that in future years, additional user capability can be implemented (e.g., NG9-1-1 multi-media tools). The NG9-1-1 is a significant initiative for which a multi-year strategy is being developed.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report for information purposes.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to receiving the information in this report.

### **COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)**

This is a City-wide report.

### **CONSULTATION**

There was no public consultation required as part of this information report.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

The 9-1-1 service provides emergency response for people with disabilities in line with the obligations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, 191/11.

### **ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no asset management implications associated with this information report

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

## **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

The 9-1-1 service fits into the Thriving Communities Term of Council Priority, as it promotes the safety and physical well-being of City residents and visitors.

## **DISPOSITION**

Security and Emergency Management will action any direction received as part of consideration of this report.