

dispatch (CAD) system that can handle a robust amount of information coming in the form of phone calls, texts, picture and video messaging, camera systems, officers dash cams or body cams (basically any way that we could obtain info from a citizen or public safety partner), a records management system that can hold this extreme volume of incoming data, a digital radio system, and secure networks to house these systems and data. There are two important aspects that are in the forefront of the implementation of NG9-1-1. One prominent issue is interoperability, meaning that 9-1-1 centers need to be able to seamlessly exchange data and multimedia with each other, without the need for proprietary interfaces or costly, after-the-fact, integrations. This proposed interoperable NG9-1-1 system brings another issue to the forefront — cybersecurity. With internet-based products and services we need personnel and vendors who understand the dangers we have long insulated ourselves from with closed-networks and technology. It is paramount to protect and help stop network attacks from happening, while preparing to recover from inevitable outages and hacks. Allowing any access to public safety systems from any outside computer or smartphone

carries danger, and will eventually lead to an outage or system issue. The only way to prepare and plan for these eventualities is to learn from the public sector, specifically what they see coming for the future. As NG9-1-1 is the current frontier for 9-1-1, cyber security may well be the next frontier for 9-1-1.

Right now, we can text, send pictures, and send videos with a smartphone with a simple click of a button and upload them to the cloud instantly. In contrast, 9-1-1 centers do not have these capabilities and will not until NG9-1-1 is fully deployed. NG9-1-1 should be welcomed and embraced not only because it is the next inevitable phase in our profession, but also to ensure that 9-1-1 will not once again become antiquated and stagnant.

If we do not lead now for the public safety community and push for the speedy implementation of NG9-1-1, by the time it is finally implemented we will have another huge technology gap. What new product or reality awaits us 10, 20 or 50 years from now? The push for NG9-1-1 nationwide implementation has to start now, and local and national leaders need to push for additional funding from both government and private sectors to help agencies of all sizes afford the technology and training NG9-1-1

will entail. You and your ECC leadership's voice can help by lending your voice to the cause. If you currently use newer technology in your center, keep pushing to expand and learn more. If you don't use new technology in your center, get involved. Join an APCO or NENA committee geared toward technology and learn, so you can help push us into the future of dispatch. Change can be intimidating, but this change is long overdue. ●

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#### References

- <sup>1</sup> Industry Council for Emergency Response Technologies. (n.d.). *History of 911 and What It Means For the Future of Emergency Communications*. Washington, D.C.: 911 Education Foundation. Retrieved October 18, 2018, from [https://www.theindustrycouncil.org/publications/iCERT-9EF\\_Historyof911\\_WebVersion.pdf](https://www.theindustrycouncil.org/publications/iCERT-9EF_Historyof911_WebVersion.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2018). *Next Generation 911 Cost Estimate- A Report to Congress*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Congress. Retrieved October 18, 2018, from [https://www.911.gov/pdf/Next\\_Generation\\_911\\_Cost\\_Estimate\\_Report\\_to\\_Congress\\_2018.pdf](https://www.911.gov/pdf/Next_Generation_911_Cost_Estimate_Report_to_Congress_2018.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> Industry Council for Emergency Response Technologies, *op cit*



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