



**Information
Technology &
Telecommunications**

2020 Annual Report on Implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 in NYC

Pursuant to Local Law 78 of 2016

City of New York
Department of Information Technology & Telecommunications
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NYC Next Generation 9-1-1

2020 Annual Report

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1.0 Introduction

New York City’s 9-1-1 system is the largest and most complex emergency communications system in the country, receiving approximately 9 million calls each year. To enhance the public’s access to this critical 9-1-1 service, in 2014 the Administration began developing a long-term strategy to implement a Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) system, which would allow for the seamless transfer of digital information from the public to the City’s 9-1-1 system. Administration and agency executives recognized that widespread adoption of rapidly advancing technologies like text, video, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and the saturation of high-speed broadband access have changed expectations for how people communicate, not only with each other but with their government, including 9-1-1 services.

Improvements to the core infrastructure of the City’s 9-1-1 system are needed to support these new demands. To this end, the Department of Information Technology & Telecommunications (DoITT) is collaborating with the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to migrate the City to a NG9-1-1 system, technically ensuring the City’s provision of a world class 9-1-1 call-taking operation for decades to come while continuing to provide essential, uninterrupted emergency response services.

In 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, notable progress was made by the team responsible for transitioning the City to NG9-1-1. Procurements were completed for Classes 1, 2 and 3, which include ESINet and Core Services (as committed to in last year’s report); Logging & Recording services; and Geospatial Information System services. The interim solution to enable persons to text 9-1-1 successfully launched in the time frame committed to in last year’s report. And the design for the NG9-1-1 system is underway to meet the intended target of transitioning the City to NG9-1-1 in 2024.

1.1 Background on Next Generation 9-1-1

Telecommunications carriers have been building out an entirely new digital infrastructure, separate from their copper-based legacy networks, to transition from older, analog telephone landline-based systems to current cellular phone technology-based systems. Similarly, 9-1-1 systems across the country have had to transition to an all-digital network infrastructure.

NG9-1-1 systems, built on this new infrastructure, can accept multimedia data (e.g., text, photographs, video, etc.), have improved interoperability between all public safety agencies that share a 9-1-1 system, have improved call routing between neighboring jurisdictions, and have greater accuracy when identifying a caller’s location.

The federal government and the State of New York recognize the importance of NG9-1-1. Congress, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the United States Department of Transportation, and the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services have all initiated efforts to advance NG9-1-1 at national and state levels. The City continues to support, monitor and participate in this dialogue, whenever appropriate.

1.2 Business Need and Technical Benefits

The current 9-1-1 system is based on analog technologies designed to support calls received from landline phones, wireless cellphones and VoIP phones. To support calls from wireless phones and, more recently, from Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phones, accommodations were made to the 9-1-1 system to adapt an older system to current technologies. For NG9-1-1, the system is being designed from the ground-up to interact seamlessly with current and future technologies. The National Emergency Number Association (NENA), which acts as the 9-1-1 standards body for North America, has developed standards for NG9-1-1, which the City is using as a basis for its development of a NG9-1-1 system.

The primary technical benefits of NG9-1-1 include the following:

1. Improved system quality, accuracy, and efficiency (e.g., passing information gathered during the initial interaction with other public safety personnel when 9-1-1 calls are transferred);
2. Enhanced support for all communications devices currently capable and/or required to provide 9-1-1 service (i.e., faster call setup time, quicker delivery to call taker);
3. Support for future communications devices and services that may provide 9-1-1 service (i.e., Text to 9-1-1, transmission of incident data, photos, and video);
4. Increased cost-effectiveness of the system through the use of commercially available, off-the-shelf products. (i.e., computer servers and network elements such as firewalls and routers); and,
5. Enhanced system supportability and maintainability through the elimination of outdated products and technologies.

Of these technical benefits, the critical driver to the program is enhancing police, fire and medical response to the public. By moving to a NG9-1-1 system, the City will position itself to be able to incrementally offer these benefits, resulting in more effective and efficient responses to 9-1-1 calls for years to come.

2.0 Implementation Plan for Next Generation 9-1-1

The City is planning an infrastructure upgrade of its 9-1-1 telecommunications network and the various subsystems that accept, route, and answer 9-1-1 calls so that it can reliably support any IP addressable device or service accessing 9-1-1 and quickly and seamlessly connecting callers to police, fire or emergency medical personnel. The City's NG9-1-1 system will allow its public safety agencies to continue to provide high quality and responsive emergency services that those calling 9-1-1 depend upon.

2.1 Program Objectives

The City's plan for NG9-1-1 is based on the following program objectives:

1. Avoid any disruption to answering and processing of 9-1-1 calls;
2. Limit disruptions to the public safety agency operations of the City's PSACs;
3. Replace the systems that are at end of life prior to cessation of support;
4. Provide a platform that allows PSAC call-taking operations to evolve their methods and procedures at a pace chosen by the NYPD and FDNY;
5. Provide training for the NYPD, FDNY, and DoITT staff who will be interfacing with the new systems;
6. Plan and execute a public awareness campaign, highlighting the benefits of the new system and new features that will enhance New Yorkers' experience with 9-1-1 services;
7. Provide a flexible platform that allows ancillary systems and stakeholder groups to evolve at their own pace; and

8. Deploy a 9-1-1 system that is more accessible to all members of the public because it can accept requests for emergency services in a variety of ways, not simply through a voice call or short text message.

2.2 High-Level Scope

1. Replace the end-of-life components of the current 9-1-1 system.
 - a. Replace the functionality of the current 9-1-1 call routing systems with NG9-1-1 call routing functionality.
 - b. Replace the current call handling systems at PSAC1 and PSAC2. These systems will be replaced with systems that not only answer and process voice calls but handle native NG9-1-1 functionality (i.e., text, photo, video).
 - c. Replace the current network facilities that connect the Originating Service Providers (OSPs, a.k.a. “telcos,” “carriers,” and “telecom service providers”) to the call routing systems and to the PSACs.
 2. Interface to Computer Aided Dispatch and/or other public safety ancillary systems.
 - a. Implement enhanced logging and recording technologies supporting quality controls and agency subpoena systems.
 3. Interconnect with 9-1-1 systems in neighboring jurisdictions.
 - a. Work in parallel with New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) for interconnections with neighboring jurisdictions within New York State and with jurisdictions in neighboring states.
 4. Provide interfaces to public safety agency ancillary systems.
 - a. Provide an interface to the NG9-1-1 system with functionality materially the same or better than as is in place today.
 5. Provide for the implementation of native NG9-1-1 capabilities. This includes:
 - a. Text to 9-1-1.
 - b. Data, photos and video.
 - c. Internet of Things (which would allow for the future support of new communications devices, particularly those that address the needs of people with disabilities).
 - d. Training for all City staff who will be using and/or supporting the new systems.
 6. Provide a platform that supports operational efficiencies.
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- a. Provide a platform that supports operational changes identified by the NYPD and FDNY during the initiation and planning phases.
 - b. Provide a flexible platform that allows for future changes to accommodate police, fire or emergency medical operations.
7. Cybersecurity requirements for vendors and contractors.
- a. The Next Generation architecture and platform will be designed and implemented in a manner that protects the City’s infrastructure and critical systems from malicious attacks through the use of the latest technologies, public-private partnerships, and regular training and exercises for City employees. In implementing the NG9-1-1 system, City agencies, their employees, contractors and vendors will follow the latest established editions of the Citywide Information Security Policies and Standards.

2.3 Process and Methodology

The NG9-1-1 program is being delivered by procuring products and services from vendors who specialize in NG9-1-1 networks and systems, in accordance with best practices and national standards established for NG9-1-1 using the City’s established procurement processes. The program is following the business processes and management plans established by DoITT’s Public Safety IT Program Management Office (the “NG9-1-1 team”). The NG9-1-1 team works in collaboration with the FDNY and NYPD (as mentioned above) as they are the identified 9-1-1 Operational subject matter experts, and both agencies provide functional approval and final system acceptance along with DoITT.

The NG9-1-1 program’s phases and their associated deliverables are as follows:

1. Initiation Phase:
 - a. Assesses high-level requirements for a new system and create a straw-man target architecture, schedule, and implementation plan.
 - b. Issue a Request for Information (RFI) to solicit vendor feedback on the straw-man plan and to further inform the City’s Request for Proposals (RFP) process.
2. Planning Phase:
 - a. Develops RFPs to facilitate the procurement of the required products and services.
 - b. Releases the RFPs and facilitate a process that results in responses from qualified vendors for all products and services required.
 - c. Selects qualified vendors and negotiate contracts.

3. Design Phase¹:
 - a. Defines requirements, establishing initial requirements baseline, including the program schedule, test and training strategies, project management, implementation, business continuity and disaster recovery plans.
 - b. Reviews preliminary design documents, including use cases and business process flows, moving from outline to draft plans.
 - c. Finalizes critical design, equipment lists, the final design of use cases, business process flows, and baseline requirements, including finalized security baseline, subsystem documentation and technical drawings, and final implementation, build and training plans.

4. Implementation Phase:
 - a. Builds, configures and tests all individual NG 9-1-1 system components.
 - b. Integrate, test and migrate all subsystems.
 - c. Test system reliability, availability, resiliency, and capacity.
 - d. Perform quality assurance verification.
 - e. Validate end-to-end functionality.
 - f. Train all end users on the use of the system.

5. Steady-State Operations:
 - a. Place the NG9-1-1 system into production, including both operational cutover and operational support.
 - b. Conduct a lessons-learned process, culminating in the release of a final program report.

3.0 Update on NG9-1-1 Program Delivery

Progress since 2019 NG9-1-1 Annual Report. The NG9-1-1 program is now in the Design Phase (see section 2.3).

1. *Class 1 – Emergency Services IP Network (ESInet) and Core Services.* In June 2020, the procurement process was completed, and the contract was registered by the New York City Comptroller (Comptroller).

¹ Previously, the Design Phase was included in the report as part of the Implementation Phase. It is broken out now to show its complexity and allow for a fuller description of design milestones.

Class 1 completed milestones include:

- Summer 2020: Contract registered, and program kickoff conducted
- Fall 2020: Project requirements and schedule baselined. QA, business continuity, and PMP plans completed
- Fall/Winter 2020: Preliminary design initiated

2. *Class 2 – Logging & Recording.* In June 2020, the procurement process was completed, and the contract was registered by the Comptroller.

Class 2 completed milestones include:

- Summer 2020: Contract registered, and program kickoff conducted
- Fall 2020: Project requirements and schedule baselined. Quality assurance, business continuity, and project management plans completed
- Fall/Winter 2020: Preliminary design initiated

3. *Class 3 – Geospatial Information System.* In June 2020, the procurement process was completed, and the contract was registered by the Comptroller.

Class 3 completed milestones include:

- Summer 2020: Contract registered, and program kickoff conducted
- Fall 2020: Project requirements and schedule baselined. Quality assurance, business continuity, and project management plans completed
- Fall/Winter 2020: Preliminary design initiated

4. *Call Handling System.* Significant progress was made on the Call Handling Statement of Work, along with the completion of high-level project requirements for this project.

5. *Independent Validation and Verification Services (IV&V).* Following the release of the IV&V solicitation in 2019, a contract with the vendor was signed in October 2020, and the signed contract is now under review with the City’s oversight.

IV&V completed milestones in 2020 include:

- Fall 2020: IV&V kick-off conducted with NG9-1-1 team

3.1 Past Accomplishments and Milestones

1. Initiation Phase (2016):

- a. The NG9-1-1 team developed high-level requirements for a new system and created a target state architecture, schedule, and implementation plan.
 - b. A Request for Information (RFI) was publicly released in January 2016 to gain insight into NG9-1-1 technologies and to solicit vendor feedback to further inform the City's Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Eighteen (18) highly qualified vendors responded to the RFI, further informing the City's plans for a NG9-1-1 system with information from experts across the industry on the benefits, challenges, risks, and issues associated with migrating to NG9-1-1 platform.
2. Planning Phase (2017-2019):
- a. The NG9-1-1 team developed RFPs and other related solicitations to begin the procurement process for the primary subsystems that compose the larger NG9-1-1 system: (1) ESInet, (2) Core Services (i.e. the Call Routing Services) and (3) Call Handling (i.e., the Call Answering System).
 - b. The ESInet and Core Services RFP was completed and competitively bid.
 - June 13, 2017: RFP released
 - June 26, 2017: Mandatory pre-proposal conference held
 - July 7, 2017: Deadline for submission of questions from proposers
 - July 28, 2017: RFP Q&A addendum published
 - September 21, 2017: A sufficient number of responsive proposals received
 - 2018: Technical evaluations of RFPs completed; financial evaluations began
 - Spring 2019: Final financial evaluation of vendor submissions completed
 - Summer 2019: Contract negotiation team formed with representatives from DoITT, FDNY, NYPD, NYC Cyber Command
 - Summer 2019 – Fall 2019: Ongoing negotiations with vendors commenced on submissions
 - Fall – Winter 2019: All contractual attachments developed, and legal terms and conditions finalized
 - c. DoITT, in collaboration with Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, reserved contractual authority to hire a Deaf and Hard of Hearing subject matter expert to help DoITT map NG9-1-1 capabilities with NYPD and FDNY operational requirements as they are applicable.
 - d. The IV&V Request for Solicitation was released in the Fall 2019.

3.2 Next Steps

The NG9-1-1 team will continue to drive toward completing the City’s transition to a NG9-1-1 system in calendar year 2024.

4.0 Interim Text to 9-1-1 Solution

On June 2, 2020, the City launched a major enhancement to its existing 9-1-1 system to allow for text message communication between 9-1-1 operators and persons in the five boroughs. The Interim Text to 9-1-1 (TT9-1-1) solution utilizes Short Message Service (SMS), a text messaging service component of phone, web or mobile communications systems, that uses standardized communications protocols to allow fixed line or cellphones to exchange short text messages. Unlike Teletypewriters (TTY), Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) and Video Relay Services (VRS), which are out of date and/or not broadly used, this solution now provides people who are unable to connect via existing voice services with greater access to the 9-1-1 system.

TT9-1-1 allows those who are unable to make a voice call to text 9-1-1 so that they can readily access emergency services. The solution was specifically designed with input from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) community, and it is intended for the DHH community and others who have a need to access emergency services but for whom a voice call is not an option (e.g., persons with speech disabilities and victims of crimes).

4.1 Past Accomplishments and Milestones

The TT9-1-1 team that delivered this interim solution included the same public safety stakeholders as the NG9-1-1 team from DoITT, FDNY, and NYPD.

1. Initiation Phase (2018):
 - a. Preliminary requirements, system architecture and implementation plan were developed with the NYPD and FDNY for an Interim TT9-1-1 system. These were reviewed with existing 9-1-1 vendors and their subcontractors.

2. Planning Phase: (2019)
 - a. Requirements were finalized with the NYPD and FDNY and Change Orders were released to provide TT9-1-1 capabilities, using the existing contract vehicles with the City’s current 9-1-1 vendors. This includes requirements related to cybersecurity and resiliency.

- b. Change Orders were registered by the Comptroller.
- 3. Implementation and Steady State Phases (2020)
 - a. Cybersecurity-related and User Acceptance Testing of the system were completed in the early months of 2020.
 - b. DHH trainings for the NYPD and FDNY were completed in Spring 2020.
 - c. TT9-1-1 launched on June 2, 2020, and transitioned within a week to steady-state operations.

5.0 Program Governance

The City's transition and phased migration to a NG9-1-1 system is a complex, multi-year technology initiative, and its success is contingent on close coordination and collaboration with DoITT's public safety partners at the FDNY and NYPD as well as other City offices and agencies. DoITT is proud of the open and inclusive relationship we continue to strengthen with these agencies, exemplified by their active participation in DoITT's integrated Public Safety IT Program Management Office, and governed by the multi-agency Public Safety IT Steering Committee of agency executives. We also rely on and appreciate the regular feedback and ongoing support we continue to receive from various 9-1-1 stakeholders across New York City, including community partners, government oversights, and local elected officials.