

Back-up PSAP Information Document



When creating your back-up PSAP plan, there are several key requirements and best practices that you need to understand in order to fulfill the legal and suggested requirements of a back-up PSAP. As a reminder, you are required by law to have a back-up plan in place by July 1, 2016.

Background

PSAP Defined

The North Carolina General Statutes include the following definitions to apply in understanding the back-up PSAP requirement:

§ 143B-1400. (4) 911 system. -- An emergency communications system using any available technology that does all of the following:

- a. Enables the user of a communications service connection to reach a PSAP by dialing the digits 911.
- b. Provides enhanced 911 service.

§ 143B-1400. (6) Back-up PSAP. -- The capability to operate as part of the 911 System and all other features of its associated primary PSAP. The term includes a back-up PSAP that receives 911 calls only when they are transferred from the primary PSAP or on an alternate routing basis when calls cannot be completed to the primary PSAP.

§ 143B-1400. (7) Call taking. -- The act of processing a 911 call for emergency assistance by a primary PSAP, including the use of 911 system equipment, call classification, location of a caller, determination of the appropriate response level for emergency responders, and dispatching 911 call information to the appropriate responder.

911 Back-up Requirement

The 911 Back-up requirement is as follows:

§ 143B-1406. Fund distribution to PSAPs.

(f) Compliance. -- A PSAP, or the governing entity of a PSAP, must comply with all of the following in order to receive a distribution under this section:

(5) By July 1, 2016, a PSAP must have a plan and means for 911 call-taking in the event 911 calls cannot be received and processed in the primary PSAP. If a PSAP has made substantial progress toward implementation of the plan and means, the 911 Board may grant the PSAP an extension until July 1, 2017, to complete implementation of the plan

and means. The plan must identify the alternative capability of taking the redirected 911 calls. This subdivision does not require a PSAP to construct an alternative facility to serve as a back-up PSAP.

NOTE: The NC 911 Board has defined "substantial progress" as 1) have a plan submitted for approval and 2) have a timeline submitted for completion before July 1, 2017.

Elements for Approved 911 Back-up Plan

The NC 911 Board Administrative Rules (effective July 1, 2016) provide additional information that pertain to back-up PSAPs and elements needed for an approved back-up plan.

09 NCAC 06C .0206 BACK-UP PSAPS

- (a) Each Primary PSAP shall establish a back-up PSAP or have an arrangement for back-up provided by another PSAP. Agencies may also pool resources and create regional back-up centers. Alternate methods for receiving and processing 911 calls may include interlocal agreements among one or more PSAPs for sharing physical resources, entail a use of portable equipment that may be implemented wherever secure network connectivity is accessible, construction and maintenance of a back-up PSAP facility that would only be utilized when the Primary PSAP is inoperable, or other alternative solution.
- (b) Back-up Plan. There shall be a local management approved, written, dated, and annually tested back-up PSAP plan.
- (c) The Board shall disburse 911 Funds for back-up PSAPs to the extent eligible expenses are incurred for such PSAPs, and provided:
 - (1) A back-up PSAP plan is submitted to the 911 Board. The plan shall include start-up costs, projected recurring expenses, and any local agreements which may exist, or which are anticipated, that provide for the back-up PSAP.
 - (2) Any back-up PSAP plan revisions have been provided to the 911 Board staff.
- (d) The back-up PSAP shall be capable, when staffed, of performing the emergency functions performed at the primary PSAP.
- (e) The back-up PSAP shall be separated geographically from the primary PSAP at a distance that ensures the survivability of the alternate center.
- (f) Each PSAP shall develop a formal written plan to maintain and operate the back-up PSAP or, if back-up is provided by another PSAP, a formal written plan that defines the duties and responsibilities of the alternate PSAP.
 - (1) The plan shall include the ability to reroute incoming 911 call traffic to the back-up center and to process and dispatch 911 calls at that center.
 - (2) The plan shall be included in the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).
- (g) The PSAP shall be capable of operation long enough to enable the transfer of operations to the back-up PSAP in the event of an emergency in the PSAP or in the building that houses the PSAP.

Key Questions to Ask and Things to Consider

With an understanding of the requirements outlined above, the following information can be used as a checklist or "best practice" to assist in developing a back-up plan and the means to implement that plan for your agency. The information below is suggested, and is intended to provide helpful guidance as you develop your plan.

- The means to implement the plan includes the resources, both physical and human, identified in the plan that are necessary to answer and process 911 calls.
- Consider what type of back-up solution you need:

- single agency stand-alone facility (not preferred)
 - multi-agency stand-alone facility
 - utilizing another existing PSAP
 - mobile solution
 - hosted third party solution
 - something else (explain in detail)
- If your solution involves utilizing another existing primary or secondary PSAP, or a multi-agency arrangement, do you have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and other applicable agreements? These inter-local agreements are an absolute must.
 - How many positions/workstations are normally manned in your Primary PSAP? Do you and can you staff for more positions to handle peak workloads? How many additional positions are used during these peak workloads?
 - If you are entering into an agreement with another primary or secondary PSAP, how many positions do they staff to handle their call volume, and do they staff extra positions for peak times? Does your backup plan have enough total seats to handle your peak call volume staffing, as well as that of the other PSAP?
 - Will the primary PSAP and the back-up PSAP equipment be connected or stand-alone? If connected, how will CAD, Mapping, and Telephone equipment be connected between the primary and the back-up PSAP? How will 911 trunks be rerouted to the back-up PSAP? Will you use a geo-diverse telephone switch, with one side of the server at the primary site and another server at the back-up site, with a network connection (fiber or microwave) between the two?
 - If you choose a mobile solution, how will 911 ANI and ALI data be delivered to the mobile PSAP? How will the mobile solution obtain access to CAD and Mapping data? The mobile solution cannot be dependent on the equipment at the primary PSAP.
 - How will 911 calls be answered and processed during the transition from the primary to the back-up facility? The transition plan should ensure that 911 calls are delivered in such a way that voice and data are available for mapping the location of any 911 caller.
 - If your back-up solution involves another existing PSAP, are all CAD, Mapping, and Telephone systems interoperable? How will they be connected? Are employees cross-trained on all equipment? Is there sufficient back room space at your proposed back-up site to handle your server and equipment needs?
 - The back-up equipment needs to function to the same capability or capacity as the primary equipment, but does not have to be identical. For example, you do not have to use custom console furniture in your back-up, if you can set your computer workstations on a table top.
 - What type of back-up power system will be in place at the back-up PSAP? Will there be a generator and a UPS? What will be the capacity of the generator and the UPS? How much fuel is stockpiled for the generator, and is it sufficient to cover your plan for uninterrupted operation of the back-up facility?
 - Does your back-up plan include a schedule/plan on how the back-up center will be maintained and tested on regular intervals to ensure it will be fully operational when needed? The plan should also be tested with enough frequency that staff is comfortable operating in the back-up environment.
 - The plan should include both the projected start-up costs and the annual operating costs of the back-up PSAP. Since funding of an approved backup PSAP is an allowable use of surcharge funds, and since future funding will be based on actual expenses, it is critical that 911 Board staff have an accurate cost projection for budgetary purposes.

A guide for creating the plan and providing estimated cost is attached to the document.

Extension Request

To be in compliance with § 143B-1406.f(5) must have **implemented** an approved plan no later than July 1, 2016. If substantial progress toward implementation of the plan and means has not been completed by July 1, 2016, the PSAP may request an extension and the 911 Board may grant an extension for up to one year (July 1, 2017). The 911 Board has defined substantial progress as, 1) have a backup plan submitted for approval, 2) have a timeline submitted for completion before July 1, 2017.

To request an extension, a PSAP must submit the request on agency letterhead to the Executive Director of the North Carolina 911 Board. The letter must indicate when the proposed backup plan was submitted to the 911 Board for approval and include the timeline that the plan will be implemented.

A sample template of a request letter is attached to this document.

Questions

The NC 911 Board staff stands ready to assist you with any questions you have in developing a successful plan.

Tina Bone
tina.bone@nc.gov
919-754-6111

David Dodd
david.dodd@nc.gov
919-754-6625

Request for Backup Plan Approval

PSAP Name:

PSAP Plan Contact (title/telephone number/email address):

Location

Where is the Primary PSAP located (street address)?

Where is the Backup PSAP located (street address)?

For the purposes of defining shared resource expenses, what, if any, other departments are located in the Backup PSAP facility?

How far is the Primary PSAP from the Backup PSAP in airline miles? (There is currently no defined distance requirement but a one mile minimum is a reasonable expectation.)

Positions/Workstations

How many telecommunicator positions are normally manned in the Primary PSAP?

How many telecommunicator positions are in the Backup PSAP?

Equipment

Please describe the make and model of the telephone switch in the Primary PSAP.

Please describe the make and model of the telephone switch in the Backup PSAP.

Please describe the make and model of the CAD in the Primary PSAP.

Please describe the make and model of the CAD in the Backup PSAP.

Please describe the make and model of the recorder in the Primary PSAP.

Please describe the make and model of the recorder in the Backup PSAP.

Radio Equipment

What equipment in the Backup PSAP will be used to dispatch 911 calls?

How will the radio equipment in the Backup PSAP connect to the radio network?

Network

How many 911 trunks are currently in the Primary PSAP and who is the carrier?

How many admin lines are currently in the Primary PSAP and who is the carrier?

How many 911 trunks will be in Backup PSAP and who is the carrier?

How many admin lines will be in the Backup PSAP and who is the carrier?

What is the process to re-route 911 trunks from the Primary PSAP to the Backup PSAP?

How long will it take to re-route 911 trunks from the Primary PSAP to the Backup PSAP?

What is the process to re-route admin trunks from the Primary PSAP to the Backup PSAP?

How long will it take to re-route admin trunks from the Primary PSAP to the Backup PSAP?

How will the Primary PSAP be network connected to the Backup PSAP?
Who is the carrier?
What is the bandwidth?

How will this network connection between the Primary PSAP to the Backup PSAP be used? For instance will it be used to keep the CAD data current at both locations? Will it be used to carry 911 calls from the B side of the switch at the backup location to the A side at the Primary location? Will other applications be running on this network connection?

Transition to Backup PSAP

Who will answer your 911 calls while you are relocating to the Backup PSAP?

How long will it take to relocate staff to the Backup PSAP and begin taking calls?

What is the process to re-route calls from the Primary PSAP to the Interim PSAP while relocating staff to the Backup PSAP?

What is the process to re-route calls from the Interim PSAP while relocating staff to the Backup PSAP?

Please attach a signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and any other applicable agreements. Please insure that the signatories have the appropriate authority to commit their respective agencies.

Power

Describe the back-up power system at the Primary PSAP?
What is the capacity of the generator and the UPS in the Primary PSAP?
How much fuel is stockpiled for the generator at the Primary PSAP and how long will this provide uninterrupted operation?

Describe the back-up power system at the Backup PSAP?

What is the capacity of the generator and the UPS in the Backup PSAP?

How much fuel is stockpiled for the generator at the Backup PSAP and how long will this provide uninterrupted operation?

Additional

Please provide a diagram of your back-up plan. Show the equipment to be supported in the Primary PSAP and the Backup PSAP, the network connections between the Primary PSAP and the Backup PSAP, the trunking to the Primary PSAP and the Backup PSAP, and any other relevant information.

The Plan

Please provide a narrative on how the proposed Backup plan will work.

How often will you test your Backup plan?

How long will you take calls at the Backup PSAP when you exercise your plan?

SAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR EXTENSION REQUEST

Your Agency Letterhead

Date

North Carolina 911 Board
Attn: Richard Taylor, Executive Director
PO Box 17209
Raleigh, NC 27619-7209

Mr. Taylor,

On behalf of (your agency name) I am requesting an extension for the implementation of our Backup PSAP plan. The plan was submitted to the 911 Board staff on (submission date) but has not been approved. Also a timeline for completion and implementation of the plan was submitted (date of submission) (or is attached).

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Signature
name
agency head title