



# News Release

## For Immediate Release

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### CREST Meeting Agencies Needs

Victoria – Recent media reports cite VicPD wanting further enhancements to the current radio system used by 36 agencies in the region. To that end the City of Victoria hired an engineering firm to review work done by various parties and concluded that further improvements to a radio system were necessary for VicPD.

CREST disagrees with some of the conclusions drawn by the Systek report. Results of testing done on the CREST radio system show significant improvements in reliability and building penetration says a report from consultants hired to do the tests. RCC Consultants, Inc. conducted the tests as part of an independent review of \$10.6 million in improvements made to the CREST system over the past year. Tom Gray, vice-president and general manager of RCC's western region said, "based on our analysis, the CREST system meets public safety performance expectations for the urban and rural areas served in the CRD service area."

When RCC did the tests part of their report stressed the need "to continuing to make improvements, specifically in the downtown core and in moving towards 700 MHz – a spectrum used exclusively for public safety communications with the ability to penetrate barriers more effectively. Doing so, will also help to address VicPD's ongoing operational needs." VicPD and CREST have been examining this option for some time and have been actively reviewing the Olympic system which used the 700 MHz spectrum. That review is ongoing.

As part of the recent upgrades, CREST put a new transmission site in the urban core, made improvements to seven existing transmission sites, added 16 new receivers throughout the Capital Region, and installed in-vehicle repeaters in over 50 fire department vehicles.

"The RCMP has been part of CREST from the outset as it has seen the benefits to a shared radio system that reflects urban realities and integrated policing and public safety interests". said RCMP Superintendent Mike Dunbar responsible for radio systems in the pacific region. "Coordinating the improvements to the CREST system to meet evolving needs is difficult. We are pleased to see CREST working to meet all the partners' interests with regard being given to priorities and costs."

The upgrades done on behalf of all 36 user agencies (police, fire, ambulance) was seen as successful by 35 agencies. Victoria has asked for a higher level of service, beyond what was recently provided. "CREST is willing to provide that service but there are costs associated with additional infrastructure" said CREST chair Gordie Logan. "In this instance only VicPD would benefit from this additional infrastructure so we would expect that they would pay for this additional service."

CREST operates a wide-area radio system that processes a call every four seconds on average for 36 emergency service providers in the Capital Region.

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