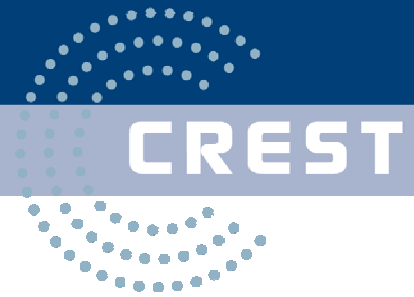


Newsletter

February 2008

Connecting emergency services in the Capital Region



Message from the Chair



CREST has achieved a major milestone.

At an extraordinary general meeting last month, shareholders approved spending \$10.6 million on system improvements. In addition, there was unanimous approval to

borrow the funds needed to make system improvements, and we received consent from all shareholders to move forward with making much needed governance changes.

By amending the agreement that governs CREST, we will be able to operate more efficiently, in a way that is consistent with like organizations, and share costs more equitably.

Under the new agreement, we will continue to ensure that members have appropriate input and involvement in key decisions, but the potential for a veto or stalemate on key financial decisions is eliminated.

Even more significant is the progress being made to improve the system for the 36 organizations and 1800 emergency service providers who rely on it. Purchasing the needed equipment has already begun. We will have five new transmitters in the urban core this spring, and another 16 throughout the region by summer.

With these improvements, we will have a system that significantly improves the ability of our users to meet any emergency.

Hy Freedman
Chair of the Board

User Profile on BC Ambulance Service

Prior to using the CREST radio system, the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) used a common radio channel for voice and data traffic. The result was that ambulance attendants were often competing with data sharing when trying to communicate with their dispatch.

Using CREST allowed BC Ambulance to separate data transmissions on call locations from voice communications with dispatch. Doing so gave them greater capacity on the voice network and allowed them to work more efficiently, says BC Ambulance's former superintendent of the Vancouver Island Communication Centre Dan Froom.

For Ambulance Services, having the capacity to communicate easily with allied agencies responding to the same incident bodes well. As BCAS works through the policies and procedures to use this capacity, CREST is there to provide the service and meet the need.



Capital Region Emergency Service Telecommunications

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Welcome James Renfrew to Network Operations

One of the challenges faced, and advice CREST has received in previous reviews, has been to increase its staff levels to support system operations and users. To that end, we're pleased to introduce and welcome James Renfrew to network operations.



A graduate of Royal Roads University's Internet and network systems program, James comes to CREST with over 10 years experience in telecommunications. Most recently, he oversaw the province-wide radio network for the BC Ambulance Service. Prior to BCAS, James was with RadioWorks, a local company that maintains CREST radios.

For his role, James sees himself, "facilitating the quick implementation of the system improvements, minimizing trouble issues and addressing any that arise quickly." James can be reached at 995-5704 or by email at jenfrew@crest.ca.

James will work with operations manager Bill Sidaway in designing, constructing, operating and maintaining our complex communication system -- a system that is relied on to provide a critical public safety service 24x7.

Upcoming Events

As we move forward with system improvements, the directors of the CREST board will be meeting monthly on a standing schedule – the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. All meetings, unless otherwise notified, will be held in the CRD Boardroom at 625 Fisgard St.

Event	Coordinates
Police Service Committee	Wednesday, February 13 th 9:30 a.m., Victoria Police Dept.
Board of Directors	Wednesday, February 20 th 3:30 p.m., CRD Boardroom
Board of Directors	Wednesday, March 19 th 3:30 p.m., CRD Boardroom

Quote of the Month

"Just a quick note to let you know the success of our communications test. The CREST system performed flawlessly! We had stations checking in on portable, mobile and base radios, over an area of 1000 square kilometres, including from Vancouver. Loud, clear and complete portable to portable."

*Ian G. Elliott, Area Emergency Program Coordinator
CRD Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Program*

Quick Facts about CREST

Month	Total Calls	Total Air time (hours)	Immediate System Access	Average delayed access wait time (seconds)
Sept.	678,493	938:18:24	99.87%	2.11
Oct.	705,653	965:00:49	99.77%	2.32
Nov.	570,726	786:29:36	99.90%	1.89
Dec.	639,844	882:51:14	99.92%	1.92