

# Newsletter

March 2009

Connecting emergency services in the Capital Region



## Message from the Chair



Greater Victoria can take pride in having had the foresight to create CREST. With the significant restructuring of our organization and the improvements made over the past couple of years, CREST has emerged with an even stronger resolve to provide a first class service.

With the \$10.6 million borrowed for improvements in 2008, we are now paying off the debt servicing and ongoing operational costs of the expanded infrastructure. This has resulted in a significant increase in the levy for shareholders.

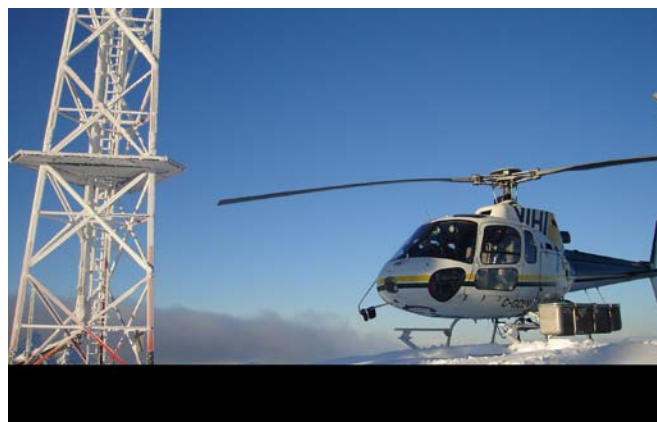
The increase is paying for an emergency radio system that exceeds international standards, and provides reliable communications for its 1800 users. If any shareholders would like an update, please contact general manager Gord Horth or myself. We're happy to provide one.

I'm pleased to chair the board as we embark on an era of stability. And, pay tribute to past chair Hy Freedman and the previous board. The leadership they provided in overcoming obstacles has built a solid foundation for success.

I look forward to working with our new board – both past and new members, and with our small group of highly skilled employees who have worked very hard to provide a system we can count on.

I am committed to continuing to engage our users, to ensure we are meeting their needs, increasing the functionality of the system and maximizing its use for public safety in the Capital Region.

Gordie Logan, Chair of the Board



**Ensuring the system is there when users need it**, operations supervisor James Renfrew had to make a tower site visit during some of December's extreme weather. Storms can cause power outages at tower sites, however all CREST sites have back-up generators to deal with any power loss. As a result, the CREST system provided reliable communications throughout the region during this year's winter.

## User Tip

All you ever wanted to know about radio communications . . . We're sure there's more, but we've made a good start on it by adding a list of technical terms and their definitions to the CREST web site.

Also new to the site are some of our most frequently asked questions and their answers. Check them out at: [www.crest.ca](http://www.crest.ca). The technical terms & definitions are available under 'User Info', and the FAQs can be found under 'About Us'.



## Forum Promotes Interoperability

A recent forum hosted by the Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) brought out public safety officials from across BC to look at ways to improve voice interoperability.

CREST participated in a panel at the forum where it was noted that the technology that enables interoperability – what CREST provides -- is only one part of the equation. Other factors such as training, operating procedures and practice are critical to successful interoperability, which is emergency responders from different organizations having the ability to talk directly to one another.

Emergency service providers in many parts of Canada are deeply, and rightfully, concerned about their inability to talk to one another. Here in the Capital Region, as a result of CREST, the 1800 men and women who provide emergency response for 36 different agencies can talk. However, as the forum pointed out, more work needs to be done to maximize the use of the technology available through CREST.

CITIG brings together public safety officials, industry, academia, government and non-governmental organizations to shape the future of Canadian public safety interoperability.

## New Board Appointed

As a result of the last municipal elections, a slate of new directors were appointed to the board of CREST by its shareholders.

New members appointed to the board include: Chris Coleman (Victoria), Ron Drolet (BC Transit), Ken Hancock (Southern Gulf Islands), Garth Hendren (Saltspring Island), Mike Hicks (Juan de Fuca), Nils Jensen (Oak Bay), Bruce McIldoon (Esquimalt), Cliff McNeil-Smith (Sidney), Heidi Rast (View Royal), Karel Roessingh (Highlands), Larry Tremblay (Metchosin) and Leif Wergeland (Saanich).

Returning directors are: Sheila Beech (Sooke), Shawn Carby (BC Ambulance), Kelly Folk (RCMP), John Garrison (Central Saanich), Gordie Logan (Colwood), Sam MacLeod (Province of BC), Bob Shaw (North Saanich) and Lillian Szpak (Langford).

Colwood councillor Gordie Logan was elected chair of the board. He has been on the board of CREST since 2001 and previously chaired it from Dec. 2004 – May 2006. Councillor Logan has been on Colwood Council for nine years. He chairs their community planning, zoning and health committee and is vice-chair of the committee responsible for fire, policing, bylaw enforcement and ambulance services. Councillor Nils Jensen from Oak Bay was elected vice-chair.

## Upcoming Events

Event	Coordinates
Board of Directors	Wednesday, March 18 <sup>th</sup> 3:30 p.m., CRD Boardroom
Board of Directors	Wednesday, April 15 <sup>th</sup> 3:30 p.m., CRD Boardroom
Board of Directors	Wednesday, May 20 <sup>th</sup> 3:00 p.m. CRD Boardroom
Annual General Meeting	Wednesday, May 20 <sup>th</sup> 4:30 p.m., CRD Boardroom