

Report to the Indiana General Assembly: 911 and E911 Services Draft

Introduction

In the 2012 legislative session, the Indiana General Assembly considered the system for funding Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs). The resulting legislation was 2012 SEA 345. One of the issues that was not fully resolved, in the policy discussions that led to 2012 SEA 345, was the establishment of formal responsibilities among state and local governments currently responsible for providing 911. 2012 SEA 345 assigned the Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) to "study the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the state, counties, municipalities, townships, and other political subdivisions in providing 911 and enhanced 911 services in Indiana."

While the assignment from the General Assembly includes only the study of responsibilities (and by inference the distribution of funding based on those responsibilities), this effort also included taking input on the new funding system established in SEA 345 and on the progress that has been made to date on the consolidation required by PL 137-2008 (2008 HEA 1204).

Public Testimony

The IACIR took testimony and conducted its deliberations on 911 and enhanced 911 services at meetings held on September 19, 2012, October 9, 2012, and October 25, 2012. The following individuals provided presentations or testimony to the commission during this process:

- Barry Ritter, Executive Director, Statewide 911 Board
- Rhonda Cook, Director of Government Affairs and Legislative Counsel, Indiana Association of Cities and Towns
- Andrew Berger, Director of Government Affairs and General Counsel, Association of Indiana Counties
- Stephanie Yager, Executive Director, Indiana Association of County Commissioners
- John Koppin, President, Indiana Telecommunications Association
- Les Miller,
- Howard County
 - Sheriff Steve Rogers, Howard County
 - Nick Capazolli, 911 Director, Howard County
 - Commissioner Paul Wyman, Howard County
 - Commissioner Tyler Moore, Howard County
 - Mayor Greg Goodnight, city of Kokomo
 - Randy Morris, Controller, city of Kokomo
- Lake County
 - Rick Cockrum, Capitol Assets, LLC
 - Michael Repay, Lake County Council
 - Larry Blanchard, Financial Advisor
 - Chief Brian Miller, Police Department, Hammond
- Ed Reuter, Executive Director, Bartholomew County Emergency Operations 911 Center

- Timothy Lee, Executive Director, Consolidated Communications Partnership of Fort Wayne and Allen County
- Hendricks County
 - Mindy Westrick, Faegre Baker Daniels
 - Robin Brandgard, Town Council President, town of Plainfield; President, Hendricks County Communications Governing Board
- Mayor Richard Fledderman, city of Batesville
- Scott Fadness, Town Manager, town of Fishers
- Mayor Bryan Conklin, city of Union City
- Mark Grady, President, Indigital Telecom

The minutes of the individual meetings and copies of any formal materials presented to the commission are available on the IACIR website (www.iacir.spea.iupui.edu).

Research and Analysis [to be added]

Policy Recommendations and Issues

A number of specific recommendations emerged from the discussions at the three meetings devoted to 911 and E911 services.

Responsibilities for 911 and E911 services

1. Establish clearly in statute that counties are responsibility for 911 and E911 services and the related public safety dispatch, and will receive the statewide 911 fees that are distributed by the Statewide 911 Board.
2. Establish that counties may delegate their responsibility for 911 and E911 services and related public safety dispatch to a municipality within the county or to another county by interlocal agreement. The statewide 911 fees should be transferred to units that are delegated authority for 911 and E911 services and the related public safety dispatch.
3. Sharing statewide 911 fees across PSAPs within a county?

Funding of 911 and E911 Services

4. Establish a system of funding that will support high quality local 911, E911, and related public safety dispatch services.
5. Define the expenditures that can be covered with statewide 911 fees to include 911 and e911 services as well as the related public safety dispatch, particularly with respect to personnel expenses. Establish that additional public safety duties and accepting calls and dispatching for non-public safety services and agencies should be funded with other local funds (not statewide 911 fees).
6. Consider additional countywide local funding options to supplement statewide 911 fees.
7. Encourage local governments to track costs for 911, E911, and various types of dispatch services across funding sources. Currently, it is difficult to identify all costs associated with 911, E911, and dispatch services, particularly for costs that are imbedded in other departmental budgets.
8. When the statewide 911 fees and county funds are not sufficient to fund all local 911, E911, and related public safety dispatch, encourage contributions from all benefitting local governments.

Consolidation of PSAPs (2008 HEA 1204)

9. As suggested in the IACIR's 2011 report, provide incentives for local government units to consolidate to no more than one PSAP/public safety dispatch center per county and to consolidate across county lines. One option would be to allow the new agency or the sending local governments to keep all the savings that accrue from consolidation. Savings are a natural incentive for units to consolidate operations. Currently, local governments are only allowed to keep half of their savings.
10. As additional consolidations occur, encourage local governments to establish management structures that allow consolidating entities to participate in setting management policies.
11. Lake County?

Operations/Management

12. Make best practices information about consolidation, staffing, etc. available and accessible to PSAP/dispatch centers across the state. Encourage PSAPs/dispatch center to review and adopt best practices.