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Report: Personnel and Next Generation 911 Readiness Are the Most Significant Challenges Facing 911 Centers

A new, first-of-its-kind report by Mission Critical Partners summarizes where hundreds of county and local centers stand regarding seven critical aspects of public-safety operations

State College, Pa. (August 23, 2022) — Emergency communications centers (ECCs) — also known as public safety answering points (PSAPs) and 911 centers — face a plethora of challenges across numerous critical factors pertaining to their short-term and long-term technological and operational needs. This is according to a new report produced by public-sector consulting and managed services firm [Mission Critical Partners \(MCP\)](https://www.missioncriticalpartners.com).

The [2022 Model for Advancing Public Safety® \(MAPS®\) Analysis and Insights report](https://www.missioncriticalpartners.com/2022-model-for-advancing-public-safety) highlights findings from nearly 400 completed independent technology and operational assessments and explores the common challenges faced by ECCs and the industry at large. It also highlights strategies and tactics that are required to achieve needed improvements. According to the report, the two most significant threats facing ECCs are Next Generation (NG911) readiness and an acute nationwide shortage of personnel.

"The public safety leaders tasked with managing today's 911 centers face tremendous pressure — staying on top of these factors can seem like an impossible undertaking," said Darrin Reilly, MCP's president and chief executive officer. "The 2022 MAPS Analysis and Insights report can help them make purposeful decisions based on how their organization fares in critical areas. Moreover, the report will enable our industry to collectively see where efforts should be invested in order to build a thriving and efficient public-safety communications environment for the betterment the communities where we live, work and play."

To produce the report, MCP first applied MAPS — a proprietary methodology based on the firm's collective expertise, industry standards and best practices, and accreditation programs — to conduct the assessments. The firm then aggregated the results to generate an overarching set of scores and identify common issues and potential solutions for the following aspect of a public-safety operation:

- Land mobile radio (LMR)
- ECC operations
- Staffing and workforce optimization
- NG911 readiness
- Geographic information systems (GIS)
- Data integration
- Cybersecurity and physical security

Scores ranged from medium risk to high risk across all essential components critical for implementing NG911, which is critical to meeting the rapidly evolving needs of citizens. Of all of the areas assessed, ECCs scored the lowest overall in their ability to implement NG911 systems. When an NG911 system is implemented successfully, ECCs experience a tremendous improvement in locating emergency callers, dispatching the appropriate response, and providing enhanced situational awareness for first responders. Primary industrywide obstacles



contributing to this area of weakness include a lack of funding and other resources, a lack of collaboration at the state and local levels, and limited understanding, foresight, and commitment at the local level regarding the value of NG911 services.

Other observations and analyses contained in the report include the following:

- While many ECCs have improved management and organizational structures in recent years, most cannot hire the full complement needed to meet today's operating needs, let alone future needs.
- Advancements in interoperability have been made, but many LMR systems still operate mainly on analog technology, and many radios lack advanced features.
- ECCs need significant improvement in numerous critical areas required for a proactive and resilient cybersecurity posture — including basics like multifactor authentication, password-management policies, and mitigating the significant risk from within, i.e., their own personnel, and/or third-party personnel, that is managing/servicing their mission critical communications solution sets.

This leading-edge report also identifies advice and strategies that officials can take to address weaknesses, resolve common issues, and contemplate how their organization stands compared with the industry at large.

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About Mission Critical Partners (MCP)

Mission Critical Partners (MCP) is a leading provider of data integration, consulting, network, and cybersecurity solutions specializing in transforming mission-critical communications networks into integrated ecosystems that improve outcomes in the public safety, justice, healthcare, transportation, and utility markets. Our comprehensive experience and vendor-agnostic approach helps us develop modernized solutions for our clients to maximize value and create optimal efficiency while mitigating risk. Additional information and career opportunities are available at www.MissionCriticalPartners.com

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