



# Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board

APCO Canada

Association of  
Municipalities of  
Ontario

City of Toronto

NENA Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Chiefs of Police

Ontario Association of  
Fire Chiefs

Ontario Ministry of  
Health and  
Long-Term Care

Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board  
c/o  
Peel Regional Police  
Telecommunications  
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## Resolution to all Members of Council

From The Ontario 911 Advisory Board

May 25th, 2006

Re : OGRA / ROMA Workshop  
“Call 911 We’re Out of Money Workshop”

Dear Members of Council

Thank you to those of you who attended the above named workshop. By all accounts workshop attendees felt better informed about a critical, behind the scene service. It was as a result of a suggestion put forward by members present that we write to you today.

The session highlighted how 911 works, some of it’s challenging technological issues and some of the regulatory hurdles that face you, the consumer concerning the universal “safe” delivery of Police, Fire and Ambulance service in this Province and across the land. There was a three-part power point presentation and then a verbal presentation that is summarised as follows:

In 1994 an Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) task force recommended the formation of a province wide advisory board to:

- serve as a source of technological expertise to the Ontario municipalities respecting the implementation and operation of 9-1-1 emergency number systems;
- serve in an advocacy role to represent interests of Ontario ratepayers during CRTC application hearings;
- provide public education on matters related to 9-1-1.

After a period of negotiations with other related organisations the Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board (OAB) was formed in 1995.

The current mission of the OAB is “To serve as an authoritative source of information and expertise to Ontario Municipalities respecting the implementation and operation of 9-1-1 Emergency Number Systems; to develop operational, training and performance standards for 9-1-1 systems; and to promote public education and serve in an advocacy role to represent the interests of Ontario ratepayers.

## **9-1-1 Financing:**

9-1-1 systems are provided only within municipalities electing to provide the service (that is approximately 90 % of the province currently) and the cost components are twofold:

- 1) Direct charges to telephone subscribers (subscriber billing) to cover the network infrastructure (CRTC approved rate for 2006 was \$0.19 per month; and
- 2) Costs to municipalities for staffing and terminal equipment within the dispatch centres.

Bell Canada introduced subscriber funding of 9-1-1 service in 1994 at the request of the Western Ontario Wardens Association. The principle to move to a subscriber funded emergency service provisioning was to ensure that a standard level of 9-1-1 service was available across the province regardless of the resources of individual municipalities. The OAB was formed in 1995 to represent municipalities and emergency service agencies, seeking equal treatment and service standards, regardless of municipal size.

The role of the OAB has transitioned from that initial perspective to its current mandate, which deals with technological evolution and regulatory changes.

The current makeup of the OAB includes representation from:

- Each Caucus of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario along plus one AMO staff representative (Currently 7)
- City of Toronto
- Association of Public Safety Officials APCO Canada
- National Emergency Number Association NENA Ontario
- Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police
- Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs
- Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Technical Advisors:
  - Provincial Ministries, OPP and Bell Canada, etc.

In the past the board had operated with donations from municipalities and emergency services and relied on the dedication of members and their employers to fund regular meeting attendance. One time funding from the Province was provided in 1999 from 3 provincial ministries, Health and Long-Term Care, Northern Development and Mines and Municipal Affairs and Housing.

## **Accomplishments:**

Over the past years the OAB has had significant accomplishments. The greatest of which was the Wireless Trial in Ontario between York Region and Toronto. The trial tested the technology necessary to improve the detail provided on cellular 9-1-1 calls to deliver call back number and tower location to the emergency call takers. In order to represent the municipal emergency services issues meetings, dialogues and co-ordination were required amongst the four Wireless carriers, Bell Canada, the CRTC, the Canadian Wireless Telecom Association (CWTA) and the OAB. The OAB lobbied the CRTC and assisted with a mandatory protocol that saw all wireless carriers provide “ani/ali” (name and location) to the call takers.

With call volumes from wireless callers accounting for as much as 40% to 60% of the total volume in some emergency call centres, the benefits of this trial were felt across the entire province.

The Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board made great progress in resolving issues concerning deregulation of land line telephone service, wireless 9-1-1 service, and cost recovery for wireless use of 9-1-1. In addition to these initiatives, the Board has been a watchdog of Bell's performance and product delivery. The OAB has also represented local concerns regarding 9-1-1 service in Ontario, including addressing and mapping, operations and equipment, telecommunicator training and materials, public education, and the special needs of the challenged residents of Ontario.(e.g., telephone devices for the deaf - TDDs).

We are currently dealing with the CRTC and Niagara Falls with regards to the issue of Community Emergency Notification Service. It is very difficult to implement a system that will determine who makes the call and once in effect will not jam up the system for incoming calls while preserving and protecting the privacy of the subscriber information database. The OAB has just completed hearings in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Montreal and Vancouver with the CRTC and its various working groups in order to begin the creation of a safe and cost efficient system for the provision of 911 service via the Internet. Unlike the USA solution where the 9-1-1 call taking equipment must be replaced, the resulting CRTC paper suggests working with the existing equipment and a new protocol in order to interpret and identify the caller at a far less expense. Funding is of utmost importance. Along with hearings there is also ongoing meetings with the CRTC Working Group, (CISC) where all industry participants attend and try and impose their thoughts on each other. We are the only ratepayer representatives from Ontario, there again to ensure that their ideas are not counter productive to municipalities and their ratepayers, in the safe equitable service delivery of 911.

The OAB is gaining a higher profile with related public services. The OAB has been copied on inquest reports by the Regional Coroners and have been asked in some cases to provide input. Given the rapid pace of technological evolution and the related regulatory issues it raises, it is very likely the workload for the OAB will continue to increase. The need to increase the profile and the activities spearheaded by the OAB is being requested by municipalities and emergency services across the province. The latest technological challenge in "Voice Over Internet Protocol" (VOIP). A simplified explanation is where a consumer's Internet connection can be used to provide telephone service that is not compatible to 9-1-1 and the location of the caller is unknown to the 9-1-1 call taker. No one is allowed to know the location of the caller, because the World Wide Web is not required to provide the data. Couple that with the ability to use a 416-based telephone in Vancouver or out of the country and the difficulties of properly responding to a distress call magnify.

Representation of municipal emergency service response interests is necessary. The OAB requires funding to continue its work.

The Municipalities of Ontario created this group of very dedicated individuals in 1995 but no funding has been committed to support the ongoing work of the OAB. Current legislation prohibits AMO from assessing a tariff on municipalities or individual subscribers as in other Provinces and while The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services has on numerous occasions publicly thanked us and praised our efforts in keeping Ontarians safe, requests to the Province for more funding have fallen on deaf ears. Some provinces operate the 9-1-1 system themselves. In 1993, the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General had a 9-1-1 Co-coordinator earning \$60,000 per year, we merely asked the Minister for just over half of that amount annually to cover our bare bone expenses, but to no avail

This Board is definitely a child without a home and soon will either have to resort to its own member's pockets or cease to exist. The result would be the little or no representation of the municipal or ratepayer perspective at CRTC hearings while the carriers and modern technology developers would continue to represent their business interests..

We recently had a discussion about the word “neutral” in describing the content of our presentations to the CRTC. We are definitely and have never been neutral; we have always been on the side of the consumer, in trying to find the solution that ensures the best response to each member of the public when he or she needs help most.

The Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board is a volunteer organization. There is no membership fee, currently. The employers of those members contribute their time and cover the cost of their expenses. I am particularly grateful to the ROMA & OSUM Executive for their support of Bryan Baxter and I as the only AMO Representatives that receive our travel expenses from the Association. However, the Board cannot publish standards and educational material, or send representatives to meet with other organizations to develop solutions to such problems as deregulation and wireless technology, without some financial assistance, in the best interests of Ontario Municipalities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this 911 Advisory Board is definitely a child without a home and soon will have to resort to its own member’s pockets and probably cease to exist, thus leaving the carriers and modern technology to their own devices and our citizens at their mercy in times of crisis.

We need your help. It is our hope that, with an understanding of the vital role played by the Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board, that you will, as the AMO web site indicates, “SUPPORT” the continued success of this Board. By working together, we can and will ensure that all Ontario Municipalities will continue to be a safer place, in which to live, work and play.

Please consider raising the issue with your various associations and municipalities. What is a minimum contribution of \$100 or more for each of your municipalities to pay in order to help ensure that your ratepayers are the safest they can be, when they dial 911?

We’d be happy to respond to any of your questions. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Dan Van Londersele  
Chair Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board

Please make cheques payable to:

**The Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board**

And mail to:  
The Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board  
C/o Peel Regional Police  
Telecommunications  
7750 Hurontario Street  
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Our Secretary Treasurer is:  
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**Website: <http://oab911.ca>**

**Following are two sample resolutions for you to consider:**

**SAMPLE #1**

Whereas The Ontario 911 Advisory Board was formed at the request of Ontario Municipalities

AND

Whereas it is now in great need of financial assistance in order to continue to represent our Ratepayers in the face of ever-increasing technological advancement

AND

Whereas it is necessary to represent our Ratepayers at the Canadian Radio Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) and the CRTC Interconnection Steering Committee (CISC) on a regular basis to protect the interests of our Ratepayers in the face of technological advancement and deregulation. of the local telephone market.

Therefore be it resolved that:

We contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board budget, in order to allow it to continue to provide our Ratepayers with a safe delivery of 9-1-1, Police, Fire and Ambulance Emergency Service in our Municipalities and indeed throughout our Province.

Moved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded By: \_\_\_\_\_

Carried: \_\_\_\_\_

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE

*Huntsville Town Council*

No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Moved by:

Seconded by:

**AND WHEREAS:** the mission of the Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board is "To serve as an authoritative source of information and expertise to Ontario Municipalities respecting the implementation and operation of 9-1-1 Emergency Number Systems; to develop operational, training and performance standards for 9-1-1 systems; and to promote public education and serve in an advocacy role to represent the interests of Ontario ratepayers";

**AND WHEREAS:** in the past, the Board has operated with donations from municipalities and emergency services and relied on the dedication of Volunteer Members to pay for meeting attendance from their own pockets. In 1999, the Province of Ontario establishing funding for the Board with a one-time donation and since that time Provincial funding has ceased;

**AND WHEREAS:** the Board is a volunteer organization, in which the employers of the Members contribute their time and cover the cost of their expenses. As well the Board cannot publish standards and educational material, or send representatives to meet other organizations, such as the CRTC, to develop solutions to such problems as deregulation and wireless technology without some financial assistance from Ontario Municipalities;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:** the Council of the Town of Huntsville has an understanding of the vital role played by the Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board and to support the continued efforts of the Board, the Town of Huntsville provides a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_