



# Navajo Nation 9-1-1 News

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Window Rock, Arizona 86515

## Taskforce Members Tour Three Dispatch and Communication Centers



**Taskforce Members Tour McKinley County Communications Center**

On June 2, 2006 six members of the E 9-1-1 taskforce visited the Window Rock dispatch center, the McKinley County Communications Center and the New Mexico State Police dispatch center. The purpose of the visits

was to understand the day to day operations, procedures and technologies each center used. Also to understand the types of funding and technologies that will be required for future Navajo Nation 9-1-1 operations and communications centers, also known as the Public Safety Answering Points or PSAPs. We interviewed and questioned the dispatchers or 'telecommunicators' to understand operations, technologies and to understand where they felt improvements were needed.

In the morning the taskforce first visited the Window Rock dispatch center. The dispatch center telecommunicators handle all of the day-to-day communications and dispatching for Window Rock area police officers, fire department and emergency medical services (EMS). They use radio

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## NENA Conference Held in Pittsburgh, PA



**Terralyn Begaye, Task Force Member, attending the NENA Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

This year's annual NENA conference was held in Pittsburgh, PA from June 10<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The conference celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year. The NENA organization stands for the National Emergency Number Association, it's the only educational organization dedicated solely to the study, advancement and implementation of 9-1-1 as America's universal emergency

number. It was established in 1982, in a small Illinois firehouse, to integrate a "One Nation-One Number" into our community culture. Now, NENA has more than 7,000 members.

There were some important concepts that were emphasized at this year's conference, concepts such as 'Next-Generation', 'Phase 1 & 2', and 'Contingency Planning'. These concepts dealt with wireless communications, VoIP communications, and contingency planning, in light of some of America's tragic events in the last few years.

Many participants were astonished when I explained the state of the lack of a 9-1-1 operation for the Navajo Nation, especially when I explained our nation's occupancy and landmass. But with each NENA vendor, educator and participant, I was encouraged and thanked for the contribution in our nation's development; and to my amazement I found we are not alone. Today, there are still 400 counties in the US that are without a 9-1-1 operation.

On June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, the Saturday and Sunday before the main conference events, there were pre-courses held. Ranging from introduction courses on basic 9-1-1 technology, VoIP, and PSAP design to advance

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### When should you use 9-1-1?

- In an emergency situation only when immediate assistance is needed from police, fire or medical emergency personnel.
- A call to 9-1-1 should always be a call for HELP!!
- It is free to call 9-1-1 from a pay-phone.

## Hopi Attends Navajo Nation E9-1-1 Meeting



**L-R: Leah Secakuku (Telecommunications), Viola Lopez (Lead Telecommunications) and Anthony Huma (CEP- Director Hopi EMS)**

The Hopi Tribe Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Telecommunications Unit attended the Navajo Enhance 9-1-1 Task Force Team meeting held on June 7-8, 2006. The Hopi Tribe has been in the process of implementing their Enhance 9-1-1 system since 2002.

The Hopi Tribe currently has call forward services on the reservation. The services include the surrounding Navajo communities such as Jeddito, Pinon, Hardrock, and Low Mountain. EMS will provide mutual aid to these service areas when medical units are requested. Law Enforcement calls are redirected to Chinle, Tuba City or Dilcon police departments for their service areas.

As we proceed with the implementation process of Enhanced 9-1-1 for both Navajo and Hopi, we will continue to work cooperatively with Tuba City, Chinle and Dilcon Districts to provide EMS, fire and law enforcement services for the people.

By: Viola Lopez, Lead Telecomm.

Equipment Operator

BIA-Hopi Law Enforcement Services

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## June 2006 E9-1-1 Task Force Meeting



**E9-1-1 Task Force Members Posing with Hopi Delegation Team**

On June 7 & 8, 2006 the Navajo Nation Enhanced 9-1-1 Task Force held their bi-monthly meeting at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Arizona. The two-day meeting focused on Rural Addressing and Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) tasks. The first day began with identification of critical items that needed to be finalized before the start of rural addressing field work. Eight critical areas were identified as follows:

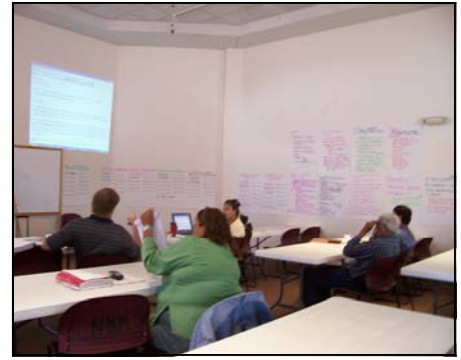
- Service Plan (AZ & NM) approval to receive funding
- Rural Addressing Prerequisites
- GIS Mapping & Rural Addressing Field Work Scenario
- Establish Rural Addressing Guidelines
- Inventory GIS System Data Sets
- Chapter Prioritization
- Chapter Level Communications
- Transition responsibilities to Functional Or-

ganization

Although all are considered critical, the members focused on identifying the Rural Addressing Prerequisites and the Chapter Prioritization with the other critical items discussed briefly and to be handled through subsequent workgroup meetings.

The identified rural addressing prerequisites were data storage area, data collections techniques, service plan approval, JPA with counties, agency council resolutions, Navajo Nation Council Resolution, coordination with chapters (LGSC), rural addressing plan and guidelines, identified resources (budget, funding, people and equipment), chapter resolution and memorandum of understanding, chapter-level communications plan and map of existing roads and structures (inventory).


Once those prerequisites were reviewed and discussed, the next question would be "How do we prioritize Chapter Rural Addressing Readiness?" Various factors were considered and discussed, including chapters that had approved land use plans, satellite chapters where the county has already performed rural addressing, and to target area where the local telephone company had an operational E9-1-1 system. It was decided to focus on the chapters that responded positively to the rural addressing readiness survey and factor in the already mentioned items.



**Task Force Meetings include the use of Audio Visuals and Brainstorming Sessions**

We agreed to begin with Tohajiilee as our first chapter, the driving factor being that Bernalillo County has remaining funds available in their grant from State of New Mexico to complete Tohajiilee's rural addressing. Two meetings have been scheduled the next two weeks to meet with Tohajiilee Chapter representatives and Bernalillo County representatives to discuss this approach.

Other topics discussed were PSAP/Dispatch tours, current dispatch issues and alternative PSAP organization which are featured in separate articles of the newsletter.

Lastly, the task force members heard first hand from the Hopi Tribal representative of their 9-1-1 situation (see separate article) and how they would like to coordinate with Navajo Nation in their implementation. 

Continued from Page 1: NENA Conference....

courses for those PSAPs that were in the midst of I1 and I2 development or courses that helped with the management or continuing improvement of PSAPs. I decided to attend the Introduction to 9-1-1 technology and Introduction to VoIP for PSAPs courses. Many basic concepts about 9-1-1 call flows, operations, and advancing technologies were taught and I was able to clarify some of my misunderstandings I had about some of the lingo and concepts used in the 9-1-1 technology and operation. There are many types of PSAPs in our country, none that can be classified as 'wrong' or 'incorrect' but just a different way emergency communications are handled based on county or state governance, jurisdiction and politics and geographical situations.

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, the official opening of the conference was held starting with a welcome reception that got a chance for everyone to get acquainted. I received many business cards from other PSAPs who were more than willing to help in our development of our 9-1-1 opera-




**NENA Exhibit Hall, Exhibitors willing to help the Navajo Nation**

tion, from the willingness to share policy and procedures, or budgets to just an invitation to share project experiences and 'war' stories of emergency operations. Monday's general session gave NENA the opportunity to share its history and share its vision for the future to help in the promotion of a worldwide operation of quick emergency communication and response. The exhibit hall opened on that day, I was able to walk from vendor to vendor and shared our nation's situation and each vendor was able to explain how their solutions and services could help

our development. On Tuesday's general session Congressman Curt Weldon of Pennsylvania spoke of many touching experiences of emergency response in the 9-11 occurrence, and the Katrina disasters and many of the different types legislation he is working towards to support 'first responders'. Through out the conference days there were many sessions available; I attended sessions, such as project concept development and implementation, policy and procedures, 'next generation' technology, homeland security and funding, wireless deployment, and national addressing standards. The atmosphere for the NENA conference was very welcoming, each member treating me as though I was a member of the NENA family. The feeling of the conference was warming because many of us were there to share and gain information and knowledge with one selfless purpose in mind, to save lives through 9-1-1.

Next year's conference will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina from June 9<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007. I think that it would be enriching for taskforce members and current Navajo Nation dispatchers to attend. It has been a motivating experience that I encourage.

Article by: Terralyn Begaye, Task Force Member 

## Emergency Communications Center

In their June meeting, task force members discussed the organizational structure for the Navajo Nation Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). One option is some PSAP organizations are established with career professionals in the Director, Manager, and supervisory roles. Their primary focus is operating and maintaining the PSAP to provide services to both the communities and the public safety organizations they serve. They plan and budget for capital and operational expenses, anticipate problems and issues, proactively work to mitigate those issues, remain educated on technological changes in the industry and work to maintain their PSAP state-of-the-art, network with peers to keep abreast of emerging issues, and work to develop their staff professionally and gain the necessary accreditations for their employees and their PSAP. This helps establish ownership and higher morale than when they are thought of as a necessary burden. This type "Emergency Communications Center" operation frequently serves a group of communities and the police, fire and EMS in each of those communities. Typically, the PSAP Director reports to an Executive Board made up of public safety professionals and elected officials. The Director serves at the pleasure of the Executive Board and runs the day-to-day operations. A representative cross section of police chiefs, fire chiefs, EMS directors, and elected



**McKinley County Communications Center**

officials from the communities served make up the Executive Board. The Executive Board votes on the budget and has control over money issues, typically approving the budget and all expenditure in excess of \$5,000. A Finance Committee is chartered by the Executive Committee to prepare consolidated budgets, analyze them, and make recommendations. There is an Operations Board made up of users and they meet monthly.

Continued from Page 1: Taskforce Members Tour... communications, paging systems and telephone communications to dispatch police, fire and EMS services. They average 10-15, 9-1-1 calls per day, depending on the season. Not all calls are received through the 9-1-1 line some of the calls are handled through the non-emergency lines; 871-6111 and 871-6112. Telecommunicators require about 40 hours of training annually in order to receive their annual renewal of the National Crime Information System (NCIS) certification. At this time, they do not have any official procedures or policies in place; each telecommunicator learns their own way of communication through experience and training. There are 8 telecommunicators in Window Rock; 2 for every 8-hour shift and 1 for the relief shift and they rotate shifts every 8 weeks. The dispatch center has been trying to make some technical advances. The computer aided dispatch (CAD) system is one of the modules in the CODY system, a recent system implemented about 2 months ago that the Navajo Nation Police department is using for most areas of operation, like jail operation, dispatch, reporting or records management. According to one of the CODY FAT client workstation. The estimated cost for the upgrade plan is around \$70,000. IT staff has indicated that licensing for the Oracle database, which CODY operates under is very expensive. Another technical upgrade is the implementation of a GPS tracking system for officers, however in order to help the telecommunicators to focus on the functionality and familiarity of the CODY system, the technology has been 'turned off'

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### Task Force Members to give update on E9-1-1

At the upcoming Navajo Nation IT Summit scheduled for June 19-22, 2006 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the E9-1-1 task force members will be holding two sessions on Tuesday, June 20, 2006 to discuss the status of the Navajo Nation's E9-1-1 implementation. The summit is in its second year and will bring together all Navajo Nation Branches, Departments, Divisions, Chapters Houses, Entities and other Information Technology (IT) consortiums that have vested interest in the information initiatives within the Navajo Nation. One being the implementation of a Navajo Nation Enhanced 9-1-1 system that will aid in locating and dispatching the emergency first responders to the emergency scene quickly for the protection of the life, safety and health of the Dine' citizens.

The task force members' objective is to bring organizational and public awareness to the Navajo Nation effort and seek cooperation, coordination and support. Thereby, ensuring that the rural addressing and enhanced 9-1-1 initiatives enjoy the same level of sponsorship and commitment as other technology programs that will advance the Navajo Nation and provide a state-of-the-art Enhanced 9-1-1 system and organization.

The purpose of Communication & Utilities Department is to plan, administer and managed the communications (telephone and radio) needs for the Navajo Nation. They procure public safety radio equipment through leasing or outright purchases. The department also manages Navajo Nation FCC licensing and radio equipment installation and maintenance in police vehicles along with tower maintenance. Most maintenance is furnished by NCC, Systems.

It is not a giant leap to begin building the case for establishing a **Navajo Nation Emergency Communications Network** organization, possibly within or as an equal to the Communications and Utilities Department.

The organizational leadership would include a Director, a Communications Center Manager (includes both 9-1-1 call processing and radio dispatch), an RF Infrastructure Manager, and an MSAG/Addressing Coordinator.

Recently, some task force members toured the McKinley County Communications Center and were able to see firsthand how this type of organizational structure operates.



### District Council Updates

The E9-1-1 Task Force will need to work with the Navajo Nation 110 chapters in implementing the rural addressing.

The first level of support to be obtained immediately will be the 19 District Councils, who in turn will seek community support from their respective chapters' areas. The exact chapter support being sought after is to gain chapter resolutions that will commit their support and cooperation to establish and implement rural addressing, which basically will institute a system of rural streets or location addresses which will be electronically recorded in what is call the master street addressing guide (MSAG) for the E9-1-1 emergency communication system. The MSAG will bring the system one step closer to a automatic call location system for a 9-1-1 caller. Letters and formatted resolutions will be sent by the E9-1-1 Task Force to all district chairpersons. We ask chairperson to please respond to these requests as soon as possible.

The primary need to collaborate with the communities for rural addressing is because much of the actual field work could be done by outside resources, such as, municipalities, counties, communication companies, state agencies, private companies, or Navajo Nation programs. Some of the field work will require a local citizen to locate residences and community facilities, to give common name to the streets and roads that everyone will recognize.

At the present time, the Navajo Nation does not have the resources, personnel, and appropriate advanced technologies to implement a nation-wide emergency communications system, and will need and rely on communities, Navajo Nation volunteers, authority officials, taskforce members and outside expertise to get the system started, this effort cannot be delayed because we need an advance system to improve the level of public safety.



**NAVAJO NATION ENHANCED 9-1-1**

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We're  
on the Web!  
[www.e911.navajo.org](http://www.e911.navajo.org)

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR POLICY**

Navajo E9-1-1 Newsletter welcomes letters from readers on the Navajo Nation who have used 9-1-1 for help. Tell us your experience. Letters should be limited to 120 words or less.

Letters libelous or slanderous will not be accepted. Letters must have writer's true name (no fake) with address and telephone number in the event we must contact you.

Address: Editor, Navajo E9-1-1 Newsletter  
COMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES  
P.O. Box 2928  
Window Rock, Arizona 86515

**ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**Navajo Nation Enhanced 9-1-1**  
**TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**Navajo Nation Museum**  
**August 15 & 16, 2006**  
**8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day**

## How can you help E9-1-1 ?

**The program remains UNFUNDED and UNSTAFFED since it started.**  
**Without funding and staffing, we will not be able to complete the 9-1-1 Service Plan,**  
**obtain outside funding and move forward and implement the Navajo Nation Wide 9-1-1 Emergency Communication Service System**

- \* **Contact your Elected Officials**  
**Voice your support for Enhanced 9-1-1**
- \* **Express your concern that this effort requires**  
**their support & funding in Fiscal Year 2007 to provide**  
**an improved level of public safety response to**  
**emergencies on the Navajo Nation.**

Continued from Page 3: Task Force Members Tour.... for the telecommunicators.. Although the dispatch center does not have a primary technician dedicated to their department they turn to three intermediate technical support representatives for help, which are assigned from different departments within the Public Safety division.

The Window Rock telecommunicators believed 9-1-1 calls are recorded from the telephone company. However, Victoria Taliman, Account Manager for Frontier Communication has specified, "The calls are not recorded, but the "Call Trace" feature is activated..."

Window Rock dispatch center's biggest concern is prank 9-1-1 calls, especially from youngsters. To resolve the issue, they try to call back residential un-blocked phone lines but are not able to identify cell phones and blocked phone lines.

They would like to know if the technology exists to identify cell phone numbers and private blocked lines.

Some improvements that Mary Fernando, a dispatcher of 28 years, would like to see, are more personnel, the completion of the technical projects, another CODY terminal and a better understanding of the CODY system to operate at a faster pace.

In the afternoon, the taskforce group traveled to Gallup to visit the McKinley County center. The McKinley County Communications Center handles communication services for the city and county police departments, fire departments, EMS, and for three volunteer fire departments. The facility was secure, where employees used a key code to enter the building; visitors have to use an outside phone to ask permission to enter, then are buzzed in and escorted through the building.

Currently the facility is being expanded, to a larger emergency operations center (EOC), larger training facility, implementing a special operations center and larger equipment room.

The McKinley County Communications Center operates under the authority of a city board of five members; three of which are police officers, a director who handles the funding, the budget and operations, a deputy director who oversees operation, operation compliance and training and a supervisor for every shift who is in charge of scheduling. They have four 12-hour shifts of five telecommunicators and a shift supervisor. So far in 2006, the communications center has processed about 29,000 calls.



Window Rock Dispatchers at Work

Their equipment room had their Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems mainframe, a big battery backup, and plenty of grounding to protect their systems from natural disruptions, like lightning storms.

All day-to-day calls and dispatching communications including 9-1-1 communications are recorded and stored up to 3 years in digital format on a server. Each recording can be easily referenced by day and type of call. Glendora Orphey, Administration Operations Manager, for the McKinley County Dispatch Authority, indicated that running a communications center is "very expensive".

Telecommunicators use the CAD system. The center had advance communications desks, and adequate equipment for operation. These desks were ergonomically designed for telecommunicators who work 12-hour shifts.

Training for telecommunicators is "key". All of

the McKinley county telecommunicators are NCIC certified which require 20 hours of training annually. Future plans include providing training not only to McKinley County telecommunicators but other area telecommunicators for various subjects like Stress Management.

Glendora is also working towards gaining larger salaries for the County telecommunicators. The turn-over for telecommunicators is high because the career field does not pay enough for a position that requires lost of stress management in emergency situations, multi-tasking, and training.

After the expansion of their facility is complete they plan to upgrade to a Positron telephony system that is primarily IP-based with an analog fall back and a "Phase 2" operation that involves wireless technology and GPS mapping.

Thereafter, we decided to visit the State Police District 6 Dispatch Center. Since they are separate from the McKinley County Communications Center, we wanted to understand how they operated. State Police District 6 Dispatch Center's area of responsibility is for US Interstate 40 for McKinley and Cibola counties. On an average 8-hour shift there are two telecommunicators. All telecommunicators attend 3-week training and they also require 20 hours of annual training. They use clear text communications in their dispatch communications.

The State Police dispatch center has four 9-1-1 trunks and two 9-1-1 wireless trunks for specific cell phone prefixes depending on the cell's service provider, such as Cellular One, Sprint or Verizon. Their next phase is to implement GSP tracking of the officers and for incoming wireless calls.

For areas that include the Navajo reservation, they do not rely on the rural addressing system but on physical location descriptions and mile post markers. Overall the dispatch centers all were trying to make improvements to their current operations. Each center understood that technologies in the area of emergency operations are moving along quite fast. Now it is up to the Navajo Nation E 9-1-1 taskforce group to try to help our Navajo Nation progress and keep up with those changes.