

Vermont Enhanced 911 Board Current Issues and Updates

Presented to the House Committee on Energy and Technology

March 15, 2019

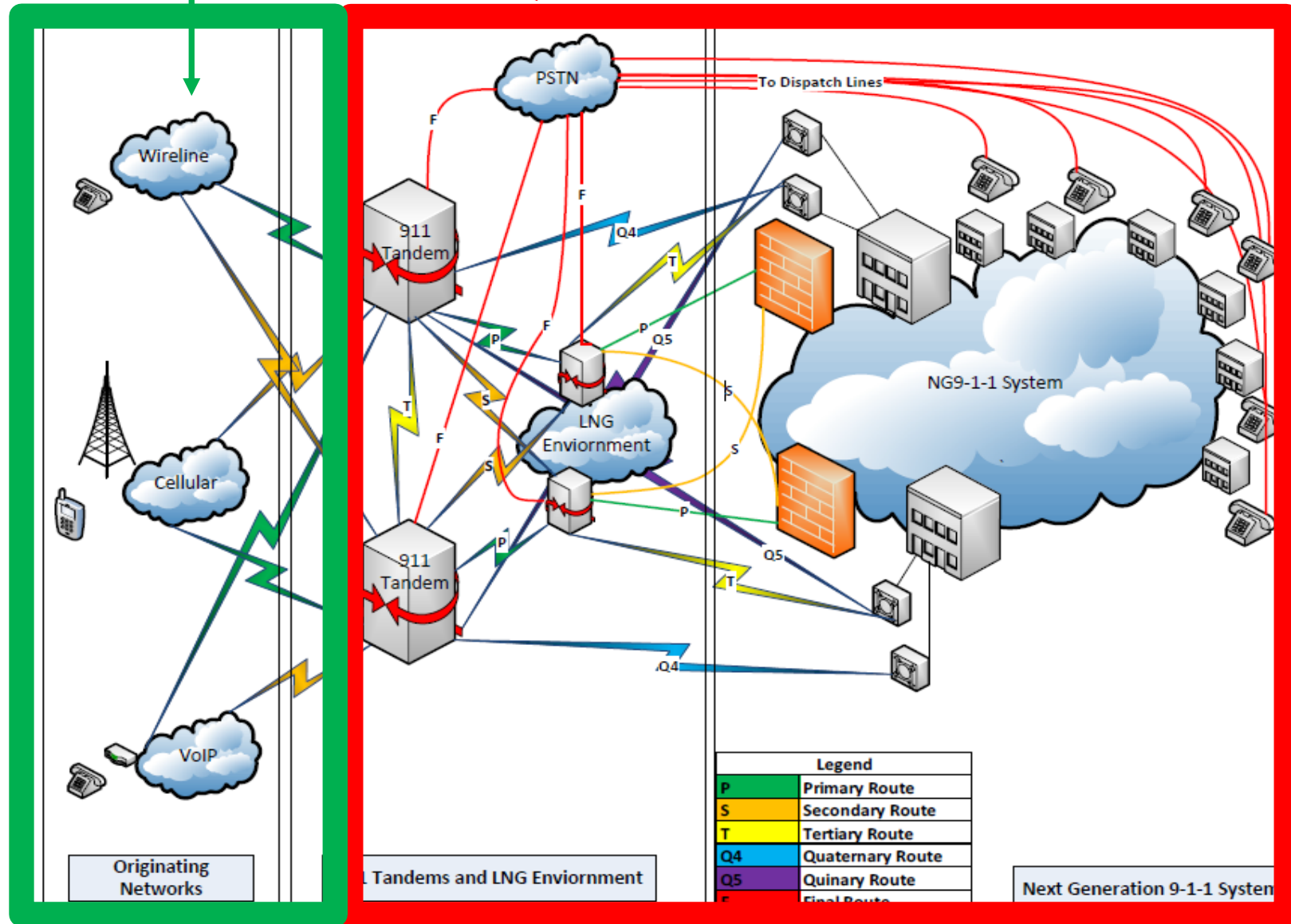
Barbara Neal, Executive Director

Two Distinct Current Key Issues

1. NG911 System Procurement and Contract Status
2. Isolation Issue

Originating Service Provider Networks

Next Generation 911 System Fully Hosted (Contracted)



NG911 System Procurement and Contract Status

- ▶ Board contracting for a fully-hosted Next Generation 911 system which will:
 - ▶ Provide all the equipment and functionality needed to process 911 calls delivered to it from originating service providers.
 - ▶ Originating service providers will deliver their customers' 911 calls to a Board-defined point of interconnection with the NG911 system.
 - ▶ *This is not a new approach in Vermont; the same approach has existed for years and aligns with national standards and recommendations for a statewide Next Generation 911 system.*

NG911 2020 System Procurement Timeline

- ▶ The existing contract with Consolidated Communications for Vermont's NG911 system expires in July 2020.
- ▶ Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in March 2018.
- ▶ Three responses, all from well-qualified bidders, were received in August 2018
- ▶ Selection of Vendor - October 30, 2018
- ▶ Contract Negotiations Complete as of 3/6/2019
- ▶ Special Board Meeting 3/7/2019: Board approved moving contract forward for final approvals and execution. The process is ongoing now.

NG911 2020 Implementation Timeline

- ▶ Contract Execution by March 29, 2019 or sooner
- ▶ System buildout and certification (Q2 2019 - end of Q1 2020)
- ▶ Planned IVV prior to system implementation (Q2 2020)
- ▶ System Cutover (July 2020)

- ▶ This timeline was developed to help ensure adequate time for contract negotiations and to allow for a safe, managed, responsible implementation of and transition to the next NG911 system in Vermont (regardless of what vendor was chosen)

Isolation

▶ What Is Isolation

- ▶ Isolation is a specific type of wireline telephone system outage that results in the inability of a wireline subscriber to complete certain calls. The subscriber still has dial tone and the ability to complete local calls to subscribers on the same switch, however long distance, off-network, and 911 calls are not possible.

▶ Who Is Impacted

- ▶ Isolation events impact wireline telephone service customers in the affected exchange
- ▶ 11 of Vermont's 14 counties have exchanges that are vulnerable to isolation events.
- ▶ It is unknown how many of these customers are reliant exclusively on wireline service, or how many may also have cellular coverage.

▶ How Often Do Isolation Events Occur

- ▶ Wireline telephone service providers reported 4 isolation events in each of the years 2017 and 2018.

Isolation

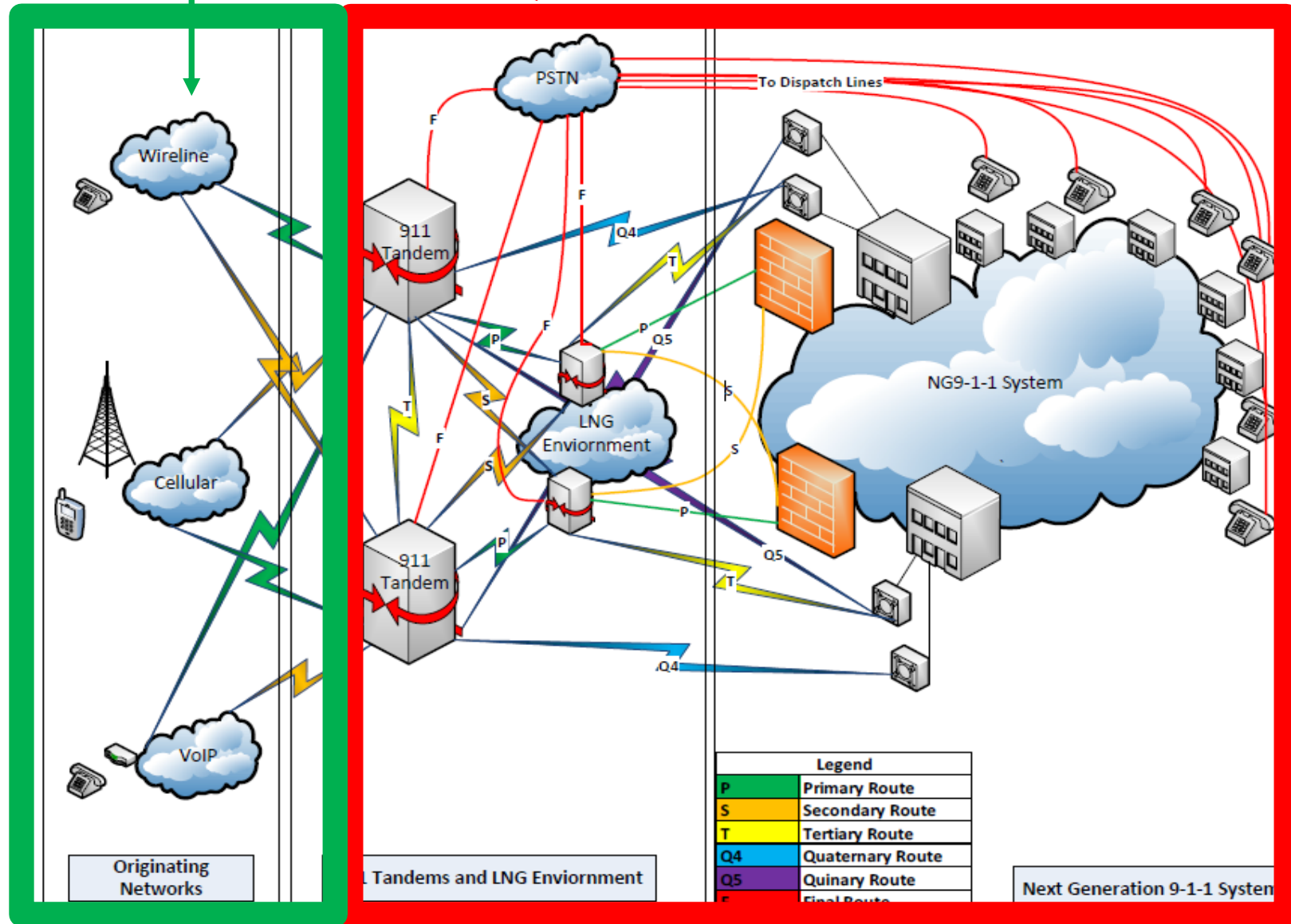
- ▶ **How Long Have We Known About Isolation Vulnerabilities:**
 - ▶ Isolation has been a known vulnerability in the wireline network(s) since the inception of the 911 system in Vermont. It is not, however, a problem specific to Vermont; similar vulnerabilities exist in other states as well.
- ▶ **What Steps Have Been Taken to Address the Vulnerabilities and/or Mitigate the Impact of Isolation**
 - ▶ In areas where a 24 x 7 emergency local number exists, calls to 911 during an isolation event will automatically go to that number.
 - ▶ 2006-2007 Rulemaking Workshop: The Enhanced 911 Board petitioned the Public Service Board (now the Public Utility Commission) for rulemaking related to isolation. A series of workshops were held which resulted in a draft rule, but that rule did not move forward at that time.

911 Board Action on Isolation

- ▶ On March 14, 2019 I recommended, and the 911 Board approved, taking the steps necessary to:
 - ▶ Get all parties back to the table in the appropriate proceeding at the Public Utility Commission
 - ▶ Identify the facts - as they exist today -on the status, locations and impacts of the isolation vulnerability.
 - ▶ Identify potential solutions, including costs, for resolution and/or mitigation of the isolation risk.

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