# Vermont Act 78
# Public Safety Communications Plan
# Task Force
# Recommendations Summary

**February 25, 2026**

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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE

# Recommendations

| Strategic Objective | Task Force Recommended Action |
|---|---|
| Governance | Establish a Governance Board that:<br>• Operates as an independent entity<br>• Has decision-making authority and the authority to approve minimum technical and operational standards, hire staff, and enter into agreements<br>• Promotes service improvement and organic consolidation based on common performance benchmarks |
| Reliability | Governance Board to Establish:<br>• A minimum set of policies, procedures, and protocols to be followed by all dispatch centers serving Vermont<br>• Standardized QA process and resource materials in support of dispatching<br>• A list of approved initial and ongoing training programs, followed by a statewide certification program<br>• Templates to standardize job classifications, job descriptions, and promote dispatcher professional reclassification<br>• Ongoing dispatcher training and leadership workshops covering strategic planning, change management, and continuity of operations<br>• Support for hybrid staffing across centers for resource backfill and staffing emergencies<br>• Solutions and best practices to facilitate statewide public safety communications system technical and operational fail over |
| Interoperability | • Secure a new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system with multi-discipline functionality (police, fire, EMS), CAD-to-CAD interoperability, interfaces to location data, mapping, the State's records management systems, paging and alerting<br>• Expand the use of RapidSOS and state GIS resources for all dispatch centers<br>• Update the Land Mobile Radio (LMR) infrastructure, while taking into account existing systems and expansion plans, to deliver reliable public safety radio across common dispatch areas to enable regional and statewide interoperability based on robust LMR network design coverage, channel capacity, and interoperability standards |

# Recommendations (cont'd)

| Strategic Objective | Task Force Recommended Action |
|---|---|
| Sustainability | • Governance Board and operations to be covered by remaining Act 78 funding for three years, at which time proposed dispatch fee assessments will continue to provide funding |
| Equity | • Establish a fee formula that incorporates towns not currently paying for dispatch service and adjusts rates according to system utilization.  This formula will be designed to offset ongoing costs of the common LMR system, shared statewide dispatch technologies and services, and actual dispatch service to municipalities.  It should be introduced in an incremental structure to allow stakeholders to make appropriate adjustments, and the formula should reflect reasonable and relatively equivalent fees representative of existing dispatch agreements. |
| Security | • Establish statewide cybersecurity Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) framework<br>• Perform periodic assessments and direction |
| Accessibility | • All dispatch centers provide dispatch service subject to specific policy and technology benchmarks as defined by the Governance Board<br>• Collected dispatch fees support technology and shared resources for all dispatch centers<br>• The Governance Board will work with the Community Broadband Board and Public Service Department to provide coverage gap data to cellular providers |

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# Funding

| Recommendation Category | Proposed Funding Allocation |
|---|---|
| Governance | • Operation of the Governance Board for the first three years - $1.59M<br>• Funding supports dedicated staffing and funds ongoing committee activity. |
| Dispatch Operational Standards | • Included in the Governing Board operations plus an initial investment of $30k that is continued for two additional years |
| Training and Staffing | • An initial investment of $150k that is continued for two additional years |
| Public Safety Technologies | • A new multi-discipline CAD system – up front 5-year investment of $2M<br>• Short-term mapping support of $40k that is continued for two additional years<br>• Development of a Cybersecurity Governance, Risk, and Compliance framework - $150k |
| Land Mobile Radio (LMR) | • Initial investment to support the development of a reliable interoperable public safety LMR network to address existing coverage and performance quality service gaps - $4.5M to include planning and initial deployment<br>• Much of the initial deployment is to be done in conjunction with VSP's COPS grant work to maximize efficiencies<br>• This initiative will create a strong foundation supporting future improvements |
| Dispatch Center Facilities | • Development of benchmarks included in the Governing Board operations |
| Dispatch Equity Funding Strategy | • Dispatch fees post Year 3 based upon a fee formula, under development, that may include elements such as a base fee and separate assessments for services.<br>• Consideration of alternative funding options that have been leveraged by other states and municipalities to fund Public Safety communications systems |

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# Vermont Legislature Requests from the Task Force

- Authorize the Task Force to allocate a percentage of the remaining Act-78 program funding to advance key initiatives addressing public safety communications including the following:

  - Prepare a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) request for proposal (RFP) requirements list with support from a focused stakeholder requirements gathering and RFP evaluation sub-committee (in coordination/collaboration with the Department of Public Safety)

  - Funding to provide all Vermont dispatch centers with licensing to integrate the new RapidSOS application to standardize on this critical GIS solution

- Direct the Task Force to initiate activities to create the proposed Vermont Public Safety Communications Governance Board

- Authorize the Task Force to continue the leadership and support of the Vermont Public Safety Communications System program until the Governance Board is established

  - Permit the Task Force to begin recruiting sub-committee members for the Dispatcher Training and Operations sub-committees

  - Continued modeling efforts on the dispatch service equity model

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