

King County Auditor's Office

Kymber Waltmunson, King County Auditor



King County

DATE: September 6, 2016

TO: Metropolitan King County Councilmembers

FROM: Kymber Waltmunson, King County Auditor

SUBJECT: Follow-up on Enhanced 911 Audit

The King County Enhanced 911 (E911) Program Office has made significant progress in addressing all four of our audit recommendations, resulting in enhanced transparency, accountability, and collaboration with Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) stakeholders. For example, the office is conducting an extensive process to develop governance mechanisms and a strategic plan for the region to provide secure and reliable 911 services while managing budget and technological challenges.

Additional actions are needed, however, to fully implement our recommendations on governance, finance, and Next Generation 911. E911 managers and PSAP stakeholders plan to complete implementation through an extensive strategic planning process, which will be completed by December 31, 2017.

Of the 4 audit recommendations:

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| DONE | 1 | Recommendation has been fully implemented Auditor will no longer monitor |
| PROGRESS | 3 | Recommendations are in progress or partially implemented Auditor will continue to monitor |

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.

Implementation Status as of August 2016

| # | Quick Status | Recommendation | Status Detail |
|---|--------------|---|--|
| 1 | PROGRESS | The County Executive should create a governance mechanism that builds on the County Council-directed strategic planning group. This group should balance King County's statutory responsibilities under Washington state law, with providing a formal, clear, and transparent mechanism for the Public Safety Answering Points and other regional partners to participate in the decision-making process. | <p>Ordinance 18139 (October 2015) established an interim advisory group (IAG) to advise and consult with the King County E911 Program Office regarding technology and operational issues until an ongoing decision-making and governance system is in place.</p> <p>The IAG successfully worked with the E911 Program Office to inform and advise budget decisions for 2017-2018 and addressed immediate operational issues. King County E911 managers indicated that they appreciate the IAG as a forum to connect with customer PSAPs and understand their needs and preferences. In addition, the two groups are jointly developing an understanding of constraints on the E911 program.</p> <p>The IAG will continue to meet with King County E911 staff on a monthly basis for budget and operational updates and recommendations until a formal governance structure is in place, completing the implementation of this recommendation. The development of a formal governance structure is part of a larger strategic planning process and will be in place by December 31, 2017.</p> |
| 2 | PROGRESS | The Enhanced 911 Program Office should collaborate with stakeholders to agree on a financial baseline of required spending and estimated revenues. It should implement a systematic and documented process to regularly update the baseline as elements change, and communicate updates with stakeholders. | <p>E911 Program Office staff have completed an extensive analysis of the budget to determine baseline costs and revenues for 2017-18. Staff collaborated on developing the financial baseline with stakeholders through the IAG.</p> <p>Representatives from IAG stated that they are encouraged to see the increase in</p> |

| # | Quick Status | Recommendation | Status Detail |
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| | | | <p>transparency with the development of a financial baseline as well as more frequent sharing of project statuses and scopes. This added transparency has supported the growing mutual understanding of the overall impact of E911 programs and the challenges faced.</p> <p>E911 staff indicated that the baseline budget will be reassessed as part of the strategic planning process, completing the implementation of this recommendation. That process is expected to finish as of December 31, 2017. Collaboration and communication with stakeholders on the evolution of the budget will be ongoing.</p> |
| 3 | PROGRESS | <p>The Enhanced 911 Program Office should suspend projects intended to support or implement Next Generation 911 until it has created a Next Generation 911 implementation plan and vetted this plan with stakeholders.</p> | <p>The E911 Program Office suspended all projects with the exception of the “text-to-911” and system security projects as specified in the audit. It also increased communication with IAG on critical projects, resulting in greater awareness and accountability to stakeholders.</p> <p>E911 managers stated that implementation of text-to-911 capability is progressing, and they hope it will be operational across the county as of July 2017.</p> <p>Developing the Next Generation 911 implementation plan is part of the strategic planning process and will be complete by December 31, 2017. Finalizing the plan will complete the implementation of this recommendation.</p> |

| # | Quick Status | Recommendation | Status Detail |
|---|--------------|---|--|
| 4 | DONE | The Enhanced 911 Program Office should follow King County Information Technology policies, including the use of the Project Review Board process for all technology-related projects. | <p>All new technology projects now utilize King County Information Technology's (KCIT) Project Review Board (PRB) process. E911 staff are in discussions with council staff to define thresholds for projects so that they receive the most appropriate level of PRB oversight.</p> <p>E911 managers stated that working with KCIT has been informative and a necessary approach to planning for, scheduling, and implementing several critical projects. The E911 office and King County's 911 network has benefited KCIT's disciplined project scoping, budgeting, and review practices.</p> |

Laina Poon, Principal Management Auditor, conducted this review. Please contact Laina at 477-1045 if you have any questions about the issues discussed in this letter.

cc: Dow Constantine, King County Executive
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