

OAS DPS

Strategies, Tools, and Actions to Prevent
and Reduce the Misuse of the Emergency
Number

Canada's Experience

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Assessment & Current State



Background

- Canada has approximately 250 primary and secondary Public Safety Answering Points or PSAPs
 - 110 Primary (all 9-1-1 calls are directed to a primary PSAP based on location)
 - 140 Secondary (provide dispatch services)
- The reduction in centres is recent due to the current transition to NG9-1-1 process
- Regulator has mandated that ALL PSAPs be NG9-1-1 enabled by Mar 4, 2025

Regulatory Environment

- Canada has no federal oversight for public safety
- This responsibility is delegated to provinces & territories
- Canada does have a national telecommunications regulator (Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission / CRTC)
 - The CRTC regulates telecommunications carriers (9-1-1 service providers) & this is how they are enacting the change
 - 9-1-1 telecom carriers are required to migrate to IP from analog technology

Standards & Protocols

- Canada has 13 provinces and territories
- Each province/territory implements & regulates public safety accordingly
- Some provinces have adopted legislation (9-1-1 Act) which allows collection of a levy or surcharge by the province to help fund PSAPs
- The Act also provides a mechanism to enforce compliance measures for PSAPs such as standards and operational best practices
 - Training, Service Levels, Policy & Procedure, Reporting, etc.

Cycle or Process Management

- Each province/territory defines individual reporting policy, practice and procedures
- No national requirement or consensus on 9-1-1 misuse reporting
- However, many PSAPs maintain some form of reporting
- Canadian PSAPs are increasingly adopting standards for PSAP construction & configuration, operation, call handling and data management (NENA, NFPA & IAED are the primary resources)

Classification & Categories

- Classification & Categories vary, but several common categories are:

Classification
Misdial
Vexatious (Intentional misuse)
Automated Dialers (Ford Sync, Apple Fall & Crash Detection)
Pocket Dial
Test Call
Unintentional
Dropped Call
Hang-up

Technological Tools

- Common data dictionary or terms of reference
- Agencies download stats from 9-1-1 service provider reporting systems, PBX reporting systems or have developed custom reporting tools
- Integrators have also developed interfaces to capture this information and report on it

Quality Controls

- N/A
- Reporting differs between service providers and metrics definitions are not consistent across the board
- Agencies do compare stats and based on some common definitions, the volumes are within a consistent range across the country
- NENA and APCO published a joint Quality Improvement standard for PSAP performance evaluation, not reporting

Information & Reports

- No consistent national reporting system or format
- Formats, metrics definitions and requirements differ by province and territory

Training

- Standards and best practices are increasingly being adopted as agencies look to the future
- NENA has published dozens of technical and operational standards including NENA STA-020.1-2020 for 9-1-1 call Processing
- Canada built the new NG9-1-1 infrastructure based on the NENA i3 standard (mandated by the CRTC)
- NENA & APCO telecommunicator training is also being adopted voluntarily by PSAPs

Costs and Impact

Stats

- Approx 20% - 30% of calls nationally are from the categories mentioned earlier
- Estimates received range from 2 to 2-1/2 minutes per call for follow up activity (call backs, messages and texts) where possible equating to approximately 14 manpower days per month

Institutional Responses to Address the Issue



Strategies, Tools & Actions Taken

- Agencies are beginning to track statistics on misuse
- Public Education regarding the proper use of 9-1-1
 - Targeted at children, adults and seniors
- Local programs locally funded
- No national coordination due to lack of federal oversight body

Penalties

- None at this time
- Public education is the preferred approach
- Deeper understanding of the reasons for misuse is desired to develop better solutions

Lessons Learned / Recommendations

- The transition to IP increased the volume of dropped / hang up calls increasing workload for follow up
- Vendors are developing tools to manage the volume increase (text back instead of calling, etc.)
- Common understanding of metrics and measurement required
- Better reporting tools for agencies
- National data repository for data collection
- Better data sharing and discussion



Thank You

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