

# UCA NEWSLETTER



## UCA UPDATE

*UCA's Executive Director, Dave Edmunds*

Dear Public Safety Partners:

There is an old Spanish saying that goes something like this: It's one thing to talk about the bull in the ring, but it's something entirely different to get into the ring with the bull. We understand that growth is inextricably linked with difficulty, but we don't like difficulty. So many of us desire the laurels of battle, yet, paradoxically, we consistently seek out a pacific station with tranquil waters. Why? Because we're human, that's why. We simply want to have our proverbial cake and eat it, too. The nightmare of 2020, which may only be a precursor to further opportunities for enlightenment, has violently reminded us that life will not allow the illusion of the status quo to remain in perpetuity. And, if excellence is truly our

objective, we should not be base enough to desire it. I have no idea what we will face in 2021; however, I trust our future will be marked by occasions to demonstrate courage and perseverance. If our past has taught us anything, it has certainly taught us that.

UCA recently held its annual stakeholders meeting. We were humbled and gratified by the number of public safety professionals who took the time to participate in what has become a highly-anticipated event for us. Members of UCA's Board of Directors, including Chairman Davenport, attended every session of the aforementioned meeting. UCA staff provided updates regarding both the P25 and NG911 projects. It is important that we continue to seek your input on issues surrounding public safety communications. To that end, we have solicited feedback regarding the proposed fleet map for the so-called P25 upgrade. Numerous public safety chief executives, and their subordinates, have weighed-in on this critical issue. We are finding that consensus, while not always possible, seems to be exactly what we are close to achieving.

The Board has directed UCA staff to expand our training and liaison efforts with Utah's public safety agencies. Although our efforts have been Herculean to this end, we intend to expand those efforts in the coming year. You can expect enhanced radio trainings, field-training exercises, 911 dispatch

trainings and much, much more in the coming year. UCA understands that the provision of 911 and other emergency services is a local responsibility. Nevertheless, we also acknowledge that we have statutory and ethical obligations to support those operations. The Utah Legislature continues to prioritize public safety communications in ways that other states simply do not enjoy. For all of the controversies surrounding public safety nationally, Utah stands as a bastion of professionalism and uprightness. As is the case with so many things, Utah leads the way in establishing second-to-none public safety communications standards and delivery. That is not about to change.

My hope is that each of you will enjoy a happy and fruitful 2021. Let us be mindful of the blessings that seem to come so easily to us in this amazing place we call home. It has been my experience in life that nothing is coincidental. If something is exceptional—and that includes places and people—there is a definitive reason that is true. Mary Tyler Moore said it best: "You can't be brave if you've only had wonderful things happen to you."

**David Edmunds**

Executive Director  
Utah Communications Authority





# DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

*UCA's Interoperability Director, Gordy Coles*

**FEMA is hosting the 2021 Great Salt Shake Earthquake Exercise and UCA is preparing for it. UCA is also facilitating a COML training to be held in January. UCA is planning an Interoperability Exercise per the Utah Communications Authority Act as well as completing its Tactical Interoperability Field Operations Guide. Those desiring a virtual end user radio training should contact UCA.**

Greetings all, here is an update on the items that the Interoperability Division has been engaged during this last quarter.

## **2021 Great Salt Shake Earthquake Exercise – Update**

As mentioned during the UCA Stakeholder meeting in November, FEMA Region VIII will be hosting an exercise series to familiarize responders with the Wasatch Range Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan and to validate Key areas of the plan. The UCA Interoperability Division will be actively involved in the planning and execution of this exercise series.

### Tentative Exercise Schedule

- August 10-11, 2021-Rehearsal of Concept seminar
- August 25, 2021-ESF-15 -External Affairs Tabletop Exercise
- September 28-29, 2021 - Transportation Tabletop Exercise
- October 19-20, 2021-Continuum of Care Tabletop Exercise
- November 8-10, 2021-Command and Control Exercise – Functional Exercise and Communications Drill

## **COML Training Course**

The COML training course that was canceled in May of this year has been rescheduled and will take place virtually January 4-8, 2021. Utah was given 15 seats for

this training course. Thus far we have filled 11 of the 15 seats. The following FEMA courses are required to attend this training. IS-100, IS-200, ICS-300, IS-700 and IS- 800. If there are any who meet these requirements and would like to participate in this training, please contact Gordy Coles at [gcoles@uca911.org](mailto:gcoles@uca911.org) no later than December 24, 2020, first come first served. Any seats not filled by this date will be offered to the other states in FEMA regions 8 and 9.

## **Interoperability Exercise**

UCA is also planning a tabletop interoperability exercise for the PSAP centers in compliance with some of the legislation passed in the last session. The exercise will focus on the use of Utah and non-federal interoperability channels during incidents and planned events. This will be a half day exercise including a cybersecurity webinar that will cover Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) attacks that are happening to many PSAP's across the country. The webinar will talk about how these attacks are being perpetrated and discuss mitigation strategies. The exercise date is pending while we coordinate scheduling with the Cyber Security and Infrastructure Security agency, who will be conducting the webinar. We are planning for mid to end of February 2021. Details will be forthcoming.

## **Utah Tactical Interoperability Field Operations Guide – Update**

The data collection deadline of December 1, 2020 has now passed and we thank you to all who participated by completing the survey forms that were sent out. There were several geographical areas that we did not hear from so we will be reaching out after the holidays to try and gather input from these areas. We are still on target for completion of the field operations guide by the end of March, 2021.

## **Radio Training**

At the request of UDOT, UCA held it's first virtual radio training seminar on October 14th. UCA Programming Manager James Baker conducted the training. The virtual setting worked quite well. The training was more widely attended as it allowed stakeholders to attend from long distance and not have to travel to Salt Lake for the training. If there are other agencies that would like radio training, please reach out to James Baker [jbaker@uca911.org](mailto:jbaker@uca911.org) or Gordy Coles [gcoles@uca911.org](mailto:gcoles@uca911.org) and we will be happy to prepare another training session.

As we are about to close out the uniquely difficult year of 2020, I remain hopeful that, with vaccines now being distributed, we'll soon see an end to the pandemic that's had us in its grips for the last nine months and that we can return to some semblance of normal life soon.

Here's wishing you all a safe, happy and healthy holiday season and a bright new year ahead.

## **Gordy Coles**

Interoperability Division Director

### **COML Training Course**

*Virtual COML Training on January 4-8, 2021. Utah was given 15 Seats for this training course. 11/15 are filled. If you are interested in participating, please contact Gordy Coles at [gcoles@uca911.org](mailto:gcoles@uca911.org) by December 24, 2020.*



# DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

*UCA's 911 Division, Melanie Crittenden*

**A brief synopsis of UCA's 911 Division's duties is provided as are examples of what we are doing to meet these duties. A brief discussion of some of the benefits and risks of NG911 is had as well as the discussion of the 911 Division's reporting duties for 2020.**

It's hard to believe that we are at the end of 2020. This year has proven to all to be a tough one, but I'm always impressed to hear of the new innovative ways that everyone has acclimated to the conditions that we've been faced with. I want to take this time to do a recap of the work that was done at the 911 Division throughout 2020.

Some people may ask, "what exactly are the duties of the UCA 911 Division?" These are spelled out in Utah Code: 63H-7a-302, but let me just highlight a few. One of the duties of the 911 Division, with the assistance of the 911 Advisory Committee, is to develop and recommend Minimum Standards and Best Practices to the Executive Director for public safety answering points in the state, including minimum technical, administrative, fiscal, network, and operation standards for PSAPs and Dispatch Center's; that result in rapid, efficient, and interoperable 911 services throughout the state. As part of this, the 911 Division prepares and publishes a report of how well the PSAPs statewide are complying with these minimum standards and best practices. As we draw towards the end of the year, it is fast approaching the time where I will be sending out questionnaires and compiling information to create this report, so please keep an eye out and return them as quickly as possible.

Two other duties of the 911 Division are: 1) to investigate and report to the Executive Director on emerging technology; and 2) to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the unified statewide 911 emergency services network. As present, these two duties are addressed through the

project that the 911 Division is currently working on and, quite frankly, is the largest project the 911 Division has ever worked on. NG911 is an initiative aimed at updating the 9-1-1 service infrastructure in the United States to improve public emergency communications services in a growingly wireless mobile society. This includes text-to-911, video, pictures, geospatial routing, and much more, all of which will become available subject to carrier restrictions. Every rose has its thorns though, and the same is true with NG911. The job that our telecommunicators do today is difficult and often traumatic, and that is without the added imagery that NG911 provides. This is something that UCA and PSAPs will have to wrestle with in the future, and it is one reason it is critical for PSAPs to adopt the established Minimum Standards and Best Practices in an effort to prepare for NG911.

In the meantime, and even though this upgrade is coming, we cannot be blind to current needs. As such, the 911 Division assisted five PSAPs with the installation of new 911 equipment and continued to process PSAP reimbursement requests for their legacy call handling equipment maintenance.

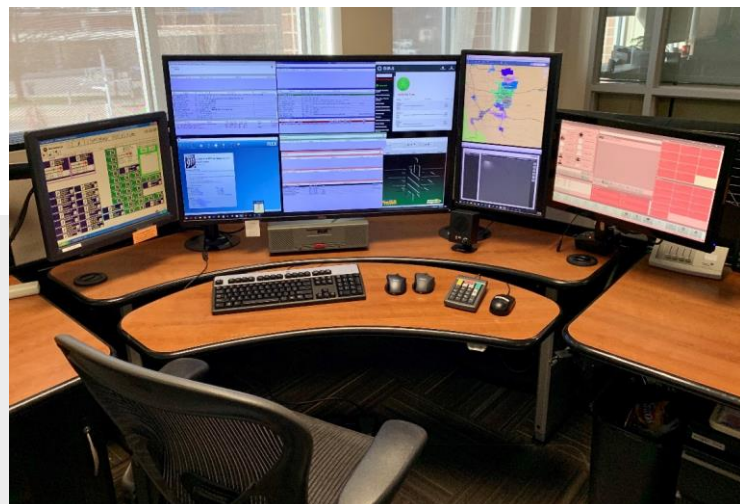
This year has also required some additional monitoring and reporting based on

Covid. In the normal course, the 911 Division reports information related Utah's collection and use of 911 fees to the FCC. With our NG911 project and the associated federal grant, the 911 Division also filed quarterly reports to the Federal 911 Office. And, since the onset of COVID-19, the PSAPs requested that the 911 division report their weekly 911 call volume to the Bureau of EMS.

All said and done, I look back at 2020 and smile. Yes, like all of you, I could have done without the worldwide pandemic, but notwithstanding, much has been accomplished in 2020 to advance Utah's public safety communications, and that's why I am smiling. And 2021 is shaping up to be even more successful, if not busier. I look forward to working closely with all of you and reporting in again next year on a year of success.

I wish everyone a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season.

**Melanie Crittenden**  
911 Division Director







# DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

*UCA's Radio Division Director, Brad Morris*

**UCA has taken steps to protect employees from Covid and has had a successful year. Winter slows down expansion, but new sites are still planning to come online. UCA is also executing fiber contracts to improve backhaul in anticipation of the P25 installations. We are still maintaining the legacy system and if you have issues or concerns, please contact UCA.**

These quarters seem to come and go so fast. It seems like just a blink of an eye and yet the time has come again to talk about the challenges and accomplishments of the radio division. We have been working diligently to maintain a high level of productivity and maintain safety for our employees during the Pandemic. We have been relatively fortunate to have had only a few employees contract Covid-19 and we continue to be cautious to help protect all of our employees and their families.

Winter is upon us, UCA has spent the last month or so preparing for the inevitable, it seems like no matter how prepared we aim to be, we always run out of good weather to

complete all the projects that we wanted to have done before snow fall restricts access. As stated in the annual Symposium, we continue to work on bringing new sites online. The Bookcliffs site in Uintah-Grand county currently has the tower, shelter, and solar installed and we will be working to complete the site toward the middle to the end of January. Beaver Mountain, which we will be calling Eagle Point, is also coming along nicely and it too has the building, tower, and shelter installed. We will be transitioning resources for its completion as soon as the power is operational to the site. We have signed a contract with Emery Telcom for co-location on the Hanksville communication site. This is exciting and one of a few sites that will be coming online in the area. Hanksville was a great opportunity to partner with a local communications provider to capitalize on existing infrastructure in a symbiotic partnership. Emery Telcom will also be providing the backhaul circuit and we are looking forward to that partnership. Speaking of partnerships, UCA is hungry to take a preemptive bite out of the upcoming projects

for the 2021 build cycle. If you have partnered with UCA for site builds in your area, please help us with shoring up contracts and lease agreements so we can begin construction, who knows - maybe we can get a jumpstart this winter weather permitting.

UCA is also working to secure backhaul contracts for its core-to-core connectivity for the upcoming P25 project from various fiber providers. Routers will soon be deployed for testing and we are excited to see the first stages of the next generation of radio system come to fruition in the State of Utah. UCA technicians have worked closely with L3H on site remediation on the first half of communication sites to meet standards established for the P25 project. UCA's technicians will continue to work on other sites to ensure we meet deadlines and are ready for the installation of our new Radio System equipment.

UCA continues to mitigate radio infrastructure issues using our self-maintenance model, optimizing uptime and avoiding outages is where we excel. As always, feel free to contact me with issues or concerns as you may have things come up in the field. I am always receptive to feedback and to be honest, it would be nice to hear how we are doing every once in a while. We strive hard to keep the system running and I hope that is a good representation of our dedication to partnerships with many agencies throughout the State.

Best Wishes,

**Brad Morris**  
Radio Division Director





# DIVISION SPOTLIGHTS

*UCA's P25 Division Director, Harold Clements*

**P25 migration is on schedule thanks to the hard work of L3Harris and UCA. 2021 will bring significant amounts of work as part of this migration and UCA is up to the task. This year's success is in spite of challenges presented by Covid.**

Another year is quickly coming to an end and the radio system upgrade is exactly where we hoped it would be and maybe even a little ahead! I appreciate everyone who participated in UCA's Annual Stakeholders' Meeting and provided feedback to me regarding the implementation of the P25 radio system. I hope my report was informational and beneficial to agencies who are preparing for the migration from our legacy system to the new P25 system. L3Harris has exceeded its goal to complete half of the 119 site upgrades during the 2020 calendar year in preparation for the installation of new radio system next year. As I write this article, I am at the L3Harris factory in Lynchburg, Virginia to witness the factory acceptance tests for the equipment that will be installed in 2021.

We reviewed the second group of detailed design plans with L3Harris last month to enable us to complete site upgrades for the majority of the remainder of our communications sites. This upcoming calendar year will have L3Harris installing P25 equipment at approximately 61 sites that were prepared this past year. Both UCA and L3Harris will also be working diligently to upgrade the infrastructure of an additional 58 sites in preparation for the installation of the new P25 equipment in 2022. The infrastructure upgrades this upcoming year will include air conditioning units, uninterrupted power supplies, generators, electrical components, RF entry ports, towers, buildings, and solar arrays.

I would like to thank the UCA technicians and the L3Harris contractors for their dedication in completing this project during this Covid pandemic. They have had to adapt to working with masks, social distancing, unscheduled leave, limited crews, supply chain issues, and much more and have still managed to execute their assigned tasks effectively. Their quality of work is

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exceptional and their positive outlook about the project is inspiring. The amount of work required during this upcoming year for the P25 radio upgrade is staggering, but the combined team of UCA and L3Harris is up to the challenge.

If anyone has any questions about the P25 Radio System upgrade, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at [hclements@uca911.org](mailto:hclements@uca911.org) or by phone at 801-633-2387. Please be safe and enjoy this holiday season with your family.

Harold Clements  
P25 Division Director



## UCA ANNOUNCEMENTS:

January 19, 2021: PSAP Advisory Meeting (remote) at 1 pm

January 12, 2021: Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting (remote) at 2 pm