INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE:
Emergency Communications by the Numbers

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OVERVIEW

Effective governance is a critical component of successful emergency communications. Key to that is involving representatives from all organizations with a role in these operations, including those outside the realm of traditional response (e.g., tribes, medical facilities, alerting authorities, non-governmental organizations, public works, utilities, forestry services, military, private sector, non-profit organizations) in governance and decision-making structures. The SAFECOM Nationwide Survey (SNS)[1] found that only a small fraction (4 percent) of emergency communications decision-making groups are proactively seeking new participants beyond first responders. This document uses SNS data to demonstrate the benefits to emergency communications when under-represented organizations or sectors are incorporated into planning and coordination processes. It also highlights recommended actions in the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) that public safety entities can take to make their governing bodies more inclusive.

Percentage of Public Safety Organizations that Recruit Beyond First Responders

4%
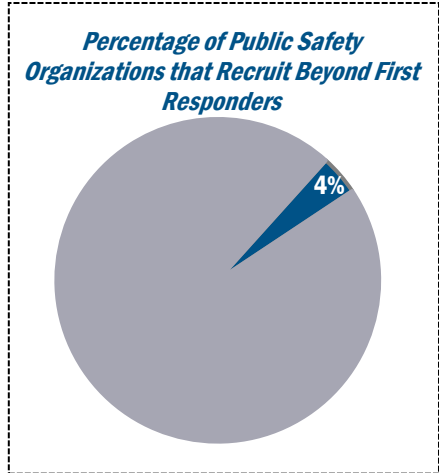
BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

The SNS determined that public safety organizations who include participants beyond first responders in their governance structures had better operability, interoperability, and continuity outcomes. Based on the results of the SNS, public safety organizations that practice inclusive governance are:

3 times more likely to have a strategic planning process in place that is reviewed annually with agencies from other jurisdictions

50 percent more likely to have the infrastructure, systems, equipment, and facilities available to achieve continuity of communications with other jurisdictions

Up to **3 times more likely** to have published and active agreements to promote emergency communications interoperability that are reviewed every 3-5 years

Up to **3 times more likely** to have processes for standard operating procedure development that address the need for consistency across responders

Up to **20 percent more likely** to report that their strategic planning meets their needs for operability, interoperability, and continuity
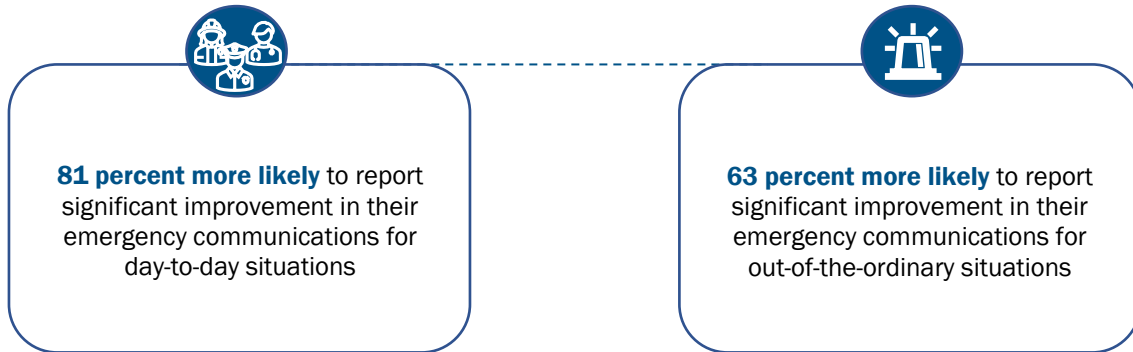
Up to **20 percent more likely** to indicate their training is sufficient for operability, interoperability, and continuity

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[1] The SNS is a nationwide data collection effort to obtain actionable and critical data that drives our nation's emergency communications policies, programs, and funding. The survey is conducted every five years.

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OVERALL IMPACT OF INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE ON EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

When measuring the level of improvement in strengthening emergency communications over a period of five years (2011-2015), the SNS showed that, when compared to the overall response, public safety organizations who have more inclusive governance structures or decision-making bodies indicated a greater level of improvement in their communications capabilities.

Public safety organizations that practice inclusive governance are:

81 percent more likely to report significant improvement in their emergency communications for day-to-day situations

63 percent more likely to report significant improvement in their emergency communications for out-of-the-ordinary situations

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE IN THE NECP

Goal 1 (Governance & Leadership) of the NECP includes the following recommended actions that public safety organizations can take to expand the membership of governance bodies beyond traditional responders:

Goal 1: Governance & Leadership
✓ Identify and include missing or underrepresented stakeholders in formal governance structures
✓ Include information management, network infrastructure, and cybersecurity representatives through membership or formalized coordination
✓ Coordinate with elected officials to champion public safety communications priorities and lifecycle planning among decision makers
✓ Coordinate and consult with tribal points of contact to develop cooperative strategies for achieving interoperability

Refer to the NECP for more details on tools and programs to expand governance bodies.

RESOURCES FOR IMPROVING INCLUSIVE OF GOVERNANCE

- SAFECOM Nationwide Survey
- National Emergency Communications Plan
- Emergency Communications Governance Guide for State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Officials
- Emergency Communications Technical Assistance Planning Guide
- SAFECOM Best Practices for Governance Structure Membership Analysis

For more information on the SNS or NECP, contact necp@cisa.dhs.gov