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**Cc:** "Ryan, Christopher M (EPS)" <[christopher.m.ryan@state.ma.us](mailto:christopher.m.ryan@state.ma.us)>

**Subject:** RE: Question from our public forum last night

Good Morning Jeff and Greg,

I am happy to respond to the two items that arose at your public forum last evening. It is interesting that these same two misconceptions were also raised at the public forum in Ipswich when they were debating onboarding and their feasibility study. Please find information on each topic below:

1. The first statement is completely false. Our center never went down. In terms of 911 calls, that is not how the 911 system works. There is redundancy for 911 calls for every PSAP, as everyone has an alternate answering center and calls would be sent there if there were ever a systems issue. So there is no instance when a 911 call would not be answered. In addition, our Center is constructed and maintained to have redundant systems in place for all of our infrastructure including, but not limited to radios, business line phones internet, utility power, etc. As I mentioned to the folks in Ipswich, I think perhaps this misconception derived from information regarding a software issue that occurred for one of our member police departments in August of 2021. I have never seen a "report" as mentioned in your email. I can only assume, due to the timeframe mentioned, that they are referring to a 12-14 hour period after a software upgrade to our IMC CAD that affected one town's police department's ability to access a few reports via their RMS system. There was no public safety concern. It had nothing to do with 911 calls or systems, or radio traffic with officers. It didn't even affect our Center's CAD or ability to dispatch. No disruption occurred to 911 calls or dispatch. No incident is listed in our Annual Reports, because no incident occurred. Also, a point to note, we are one of the only centers in the State that has an executed and tested Continuity of Operations Plan in case of a large scale emergency if and when we should need to evacuate. In fact, our COOP plan is offered for use as a template for all PSAPs across the State via the State 911 Department and through the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association.
1. The second statement regarding an incident where "phone lines were jammed" is also misleading. If it is the same "incident" that they focused on in Ipswich, then they are referring to a PSA that was posted on social media regarding when to properly call 911. In October of 2020 there was a severe storm system across the State and several regionals, PSAPs, and even State 911 were posting reminding people that 911 should be called for emergencies and not to report utility issues (a lot of people were calling 911 to report power loss and needlessly filling up 911 lines). Our post stated that 911 system across the state was "inundated" due to the storm and to only call 911 for emergencies, not to report power loss. We also (as we always do for public education purposes) reminded people when calling 911 to stay on the line as their call will be answered, and not to hang up as it is less efficient in getting their call processed. We did learn that wording choice is imperative for social media posts and can be easily misconstrued. As we are still witnessing, the use of the word "inundated" caused undue

fear and critique that our Center could not/did not handle call volume. This is completely inaccurate. In fact, during that storm, not only did we handle our own calls, but also those of other centers for “rollover” if they were not able to receive all of their calls at once. As one of the State-run PSAPs, we still are alternate routing path for many local PSAPs for when they cannot handle their call load (again as a safety measure of the 911 system so that all 911 calls are always answered). So to reiterate, this was also not listed in an annual report, because it did not occur. It was someone, or a group of people, taking a social media PSA out of context and propagating an inaccuracy.

I appreciate you offering us the chance to clarify and respond to these concerns. Please let me know if you need additional information.

Best, Alyson

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