

# DISPATCH OPERATIONS AND INTEROPERABILITY SURVEY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
NOVEMBER 2009

Produced by:

In Partnership With:

GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY'S  
**EMERGENCY**  
MANAGEMENT

**Sprint** 



## INTRODUCTION

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We are living in an age of perpetual uncertainty that has made dispatch personnel even more important to the safety and security of our communities. Dispatchers navigate first responders through a world of all-hazards threats. To do this critical job, they must have constant communication with the field and instant access to critical information. Dispatchers only get one shot to deploy the right resources at the right time across multiple jurisdictions.

For the second year in a row, *Emergency Management* has conducted a national survey of top decision makers to understand the effectiveness, efficiency, and resilience of dispatch operations. Our goal was to revisit some familiar territory, and to learn what has changed in the past year. What we found may surprise you.

Dispatch capabilities have improved greatly since the previous year, but there is still much more work to be done. Communities are increasingly looking beyond traditional Land Mobile Radio systems to cellular telephones and blackberries as a means of both primary and backup communication. Moreover, this trend has led to a *doubling* of a key metric for interoperability (Question 3). Leaders across the nation have told us loud and clear: advanced mobile capabilities aren't just convenient, they have become an essential tool for interoperability, backup, and better dispatch operations.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY & PARTICIPANTS

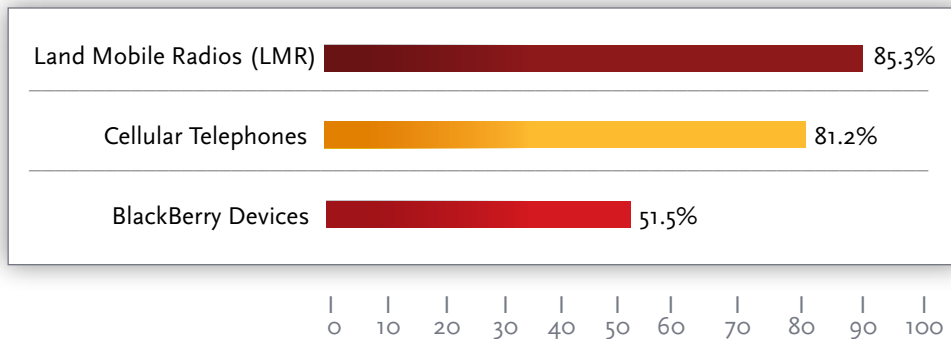
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Total Numbers of Emails Sent .....	11,191
Attempted Surveys .....	411
Surveys Completed .....	353
Survey Completion Rate .....	86%

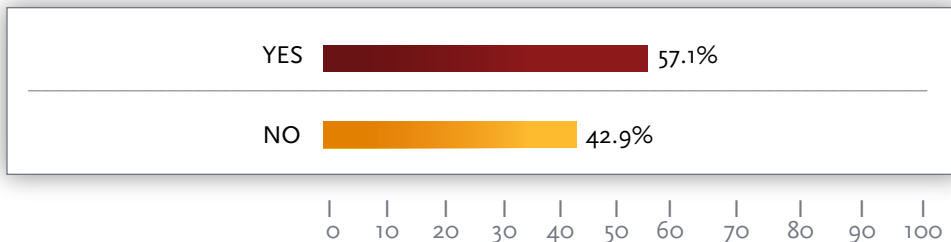


## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

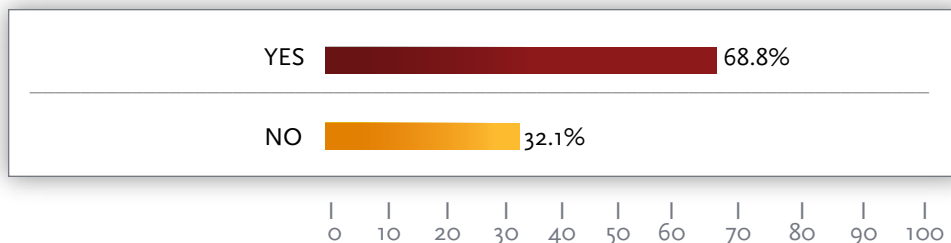
1. What types of devices are supported by your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system? (Please check all that apply.)



2. Does your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch Communications provide redundancy for both LMR and cellular systems?

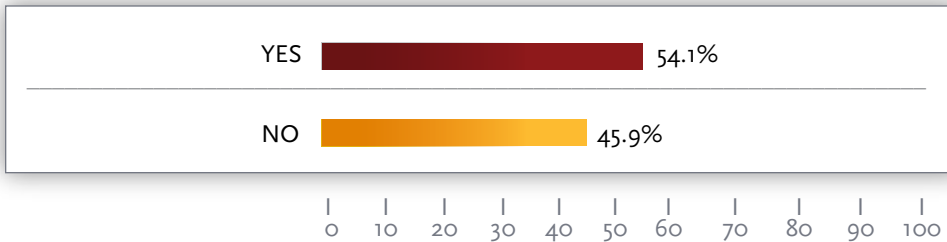


3. Does your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system provide Multi Agency Interoperability — Effective communications between jurisdictions and agencies regardless of the type of radio or assigned frequencies they normally use?

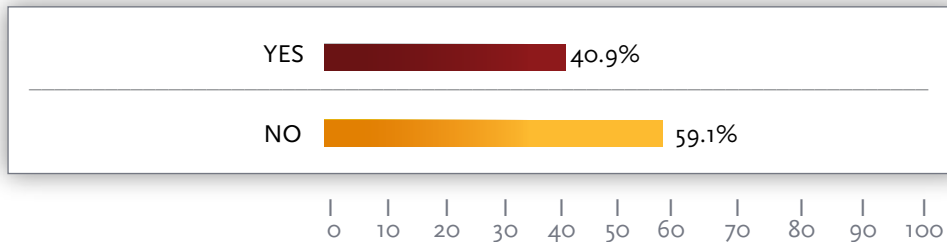




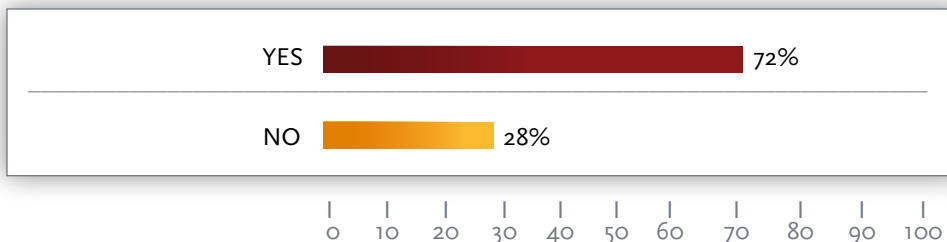
4. Does your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system provide frequency conservation by off-loading less-critical communications, freeing up LMR channels for first responders that need them most?



5. Does your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system allow for state-wide, even nation-wide, dispatch and interoperability so that administrative officers can keep in touch with field operations from anywhere?

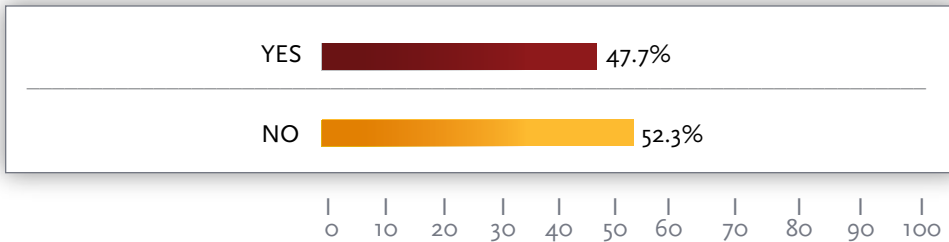


6. Are there areas of your jurisdiction that have poor communications coverage through your Land Mobile Radio (LMR) system?

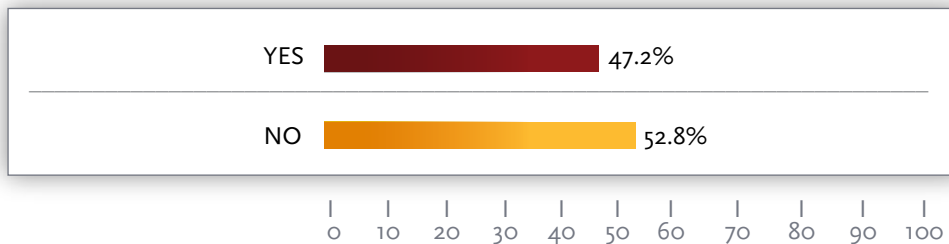




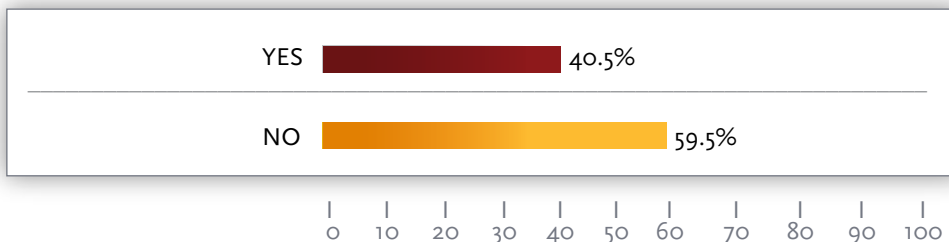
7. Does your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system allow for Dispatch Operations Consolidation by incorporating less-critical operations such as volunteers, maintenance and public works into central dispatch?



8. If your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system fails or becomes overwhelmed during a major incident is there a parallel network such as the national Nextel network configured to ensure continuity?

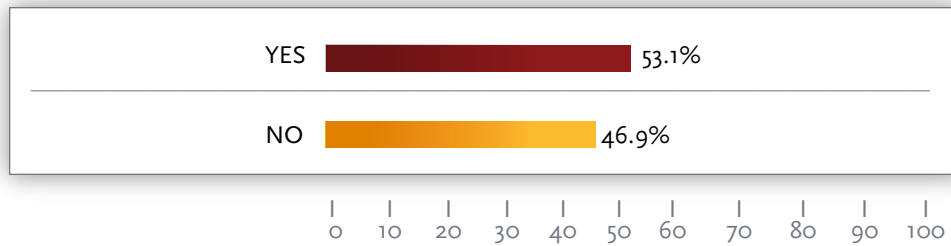


9. Has provision been made in your jurisdiction for rapid, temporary increases in communications and coverage through arrangements with vendors for supplemental cell-sites?





10. Does your jurisdiction's Emergency Dispatch and Communication system provide a scalable network that supports both priority voice services and data applications?



This survey has been conducted in partnership with:

