

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. 03 02-99-0009

DATE 23 September 1999

TO/DEST. 9-1-1 Management Board

FROM/EXP. Co-ordinator, 9-1-1 Management Board

SUBJECT/OBJET **9-1-1 PHONE FAILURE**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the 9-1-1 Management Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

On 9 June 1999 at 01:28 a.m., the 9-1-1 Bureau experienced a 9-1-1 phone failure. As detailed in the attached transmission 9-1-1 calls were coming in, with no callers on the line and no ANI/ALI provided for any of the calls.

At 2:55 a.m., an investigation revealed that while Bell technicians were in the process of doing an upgrade, a cable was severed, thus causing an influx of "fake" 9-1-1 calls. The 9-1-1 Bureau has requested this item be brought forward to the Board for review.

Lynda Jenkins, Manager, 9-1-1 Service/Ontario, Bell, has provided a response, which immediately follows the attachment.

Approved by
Rosemary Nelson

From: Cayer, Michel B
Sent: Wednesday, June 09, 1999 6:12 AM
To: Couillard, Peter
Cc: Cameron, Tyrus; Juneau, Sylvie
Subject: 9-1-1 Phone failure, 09 Jun 99, call 81931

Peter,

As you are aware, we encountered a 9-1-1 phone failure this date starting at approx. 01:28. Our first indication of a problem was a back up of 9-1-1 calls with nobody on the lines & no ani ali for any of the calls. A call was made to the 9-1-1 repair centre where the technician on duty advised us that they were getting alarms right across the province for the 9-1-1 system & were not sure what was going on.

We did some test calls & found that all the 9-1-1 calls were being answered, however there was no ani ali. Downstream agencies were checked & it was found that we could no longer downstream to OAC or Cumberland Fire. All the others were ok. OAC also advised us that their computer system had crashed.

Alarm co.'s started calling in indicating that their alarm systems were down, leaving all kinds of businesses, banks, embassies & private residences without alarms.

Red Leaf, info level, was initiated. RCMP indicated that they had also suffered a phone failure (extent unknown).

MDT'S also crashed almost simultaneously as the phone problem surfaced. Problem Manager Mike MacDonald was called in.

Regional S/Sgt Halderson was advised. Patrol Sgt's were called via cell phone & requested to meet and inform their officers of the 9-1-1 & alarm system failure.

9-1-1 Repair technician in Toronto was apparently swamped with inquiries about the 9-1-1 alarms going off across the province. Technician still unsure what the problem was & could not offer any guarantee that 9-1-1 wasn't about to shut down completely.

We proceeded to call in extra staff on duty to cover all 9-1-1 positions & to assist in the event of a total failure. ComCentre clerks Nicole & Julie Patoine came in to assist. Andrea Lamothe & Kristine Menard had their shifts extended. S/Sgt

Halderson with the assistance of Sgt. MacDonell & Sgt. M. Callaghan (ident) provided us with 5 cellular phones.

S/Sgt. Couillard was called & advised. He came into the ComCentre to assist.

Phone Tech Gord Turner was contacted. He offered advise. It was determined that there was not much that he could do at this point, therefore he wouldn't come into the station unless required.

9-1-1 Repair tech advised us that the problems were as a result of a cable being severed. It took some time, however eventually at 02:55 they were able to finally advise us that the cable had been accidentally severed in Ottawa while Bell technicians were in the process of doing an upgrade. The original influx of 9-1-1 calls with no caller & no ani ali was caused by the cable being cut & not someone actually calling 9-1-1. We were advised that the system was back up & running and that there should be no further interruptions.

We did our own test & everything was found to back to normal including being able to downstream to all agencies. Alarm co's were contacted & they advised that their alarm systems were back up & running.

An update was done on Red Leaf along with our own officers.

At the time of this email, everything was still back to normal.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the ComCentre staff that were working at the time of this event for a job well done. People on duty & called in, include:

Sylvie Juneau, Monique Garneau, Anne Avon, Carole Lacasse, Jo-Ann Dorey, Katherine Britton, Jim Wiles, Jodi Cheesman, Stephanie Shultz, Jason McDonald, Natasha Lanigan, Carole Thurston, Denise Marlot, Karine Belanger, Andrea Lamothe, Kristine Menard, Nicole Patoine, Julie Patoine & Lorraine Seguin.

Respectfully submitted



Date: September 24, 1999

To: Chief Gordon Kemp
Chairman – 9-1-1 Management Board

From: Lynda Jenkins – Manager – 9-1-1 Service/Ontario

SUBJECT: Reply to June 9/99 Central Office Problem

This response is in reply to an incident that occurred on June 9, 1999 associated with a system upgrade scheduled in the O'Connor central office by an outside contractor.

During the process of implementing the upgrade, fuses that support several communication bays were blown, in addition to a cable structure problem. This inadvertently caused loss of facilities from these bays, i.e. – circuits for voice and data. This was not unique to 9-1-1. Various services are assigned over these bays. Diversity of the 9-1-1 circuits is a priority. However, based on the severity of any given outage, even having circuits assigned over many communication bays can still result in loss of service.

This type of outage, regardless of impact, creates alarms to be activated. This should happen and is normal. Due to the number of alarms that were received, it takes time to process and isolate the problem.

Although this was not a 9-1-1 system failure, it did affect the ability to transfer calls to Ottawa CACC and Cumberland Fire and the lack of ANI/ALI while the investigation was underway.

Due to the high volume of alarms the 9-1-1 Control Centre were processing, the ANIC links were turned down during this timeframe. This was a decision that was taken to ensure that the alarms didn't overload the system and create further system problems for the Provincial ALI system.

The actual incident report times started at approximately 01:20 am and all main services were restored at approximately 02:20 am.

Outages affecting emergency service in particular is difficult for call centre staff and Bell staff as well. We regret the interruption in service this outage caused to the 9-1-1 operation as well as other customer services.