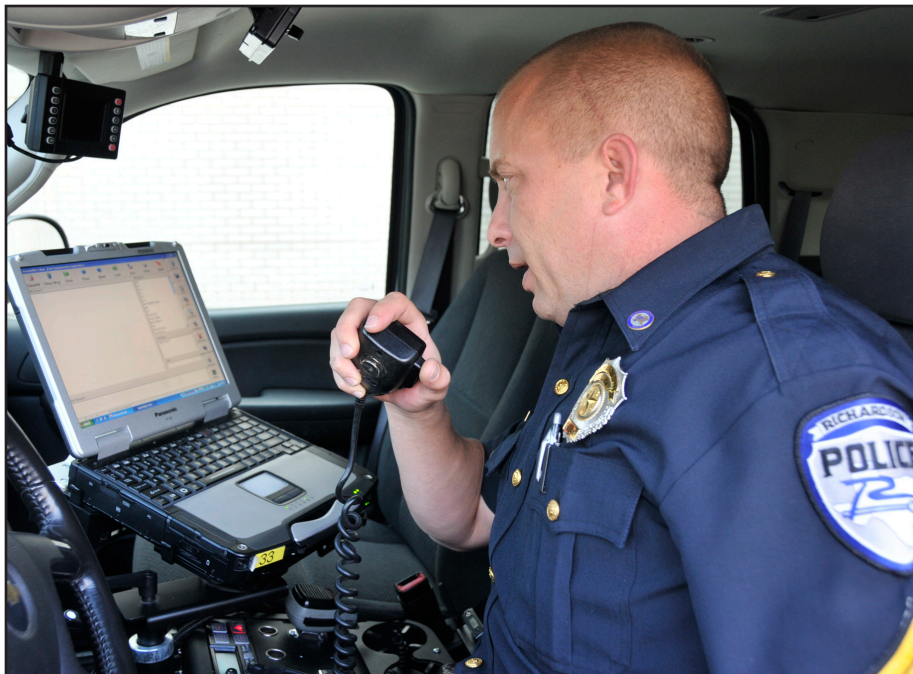

Initiatives in Action

The 2011 Annual Report



iCERT
Industry Council for Emergency
Response Technologies



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2011: A Milestone Year

A Letter From The Board Chairman

Welcome to the 2011 Industry Council for Emergency Response Technologies Annual Report. The 2011 annual report highlights one of the most important years in the history of this organization.

In 2011 the Board developed a strategic plan to guide us through the years to come. And so, we start this report with a look back at the strategic planning process. This strategic plan laid the groundwork for our growth in 2011 and beyond.

While much has changed since iCERT was founded in 2005, we remain committed to the original goals of the organization.

- To serve as the voice of the emergency response industry.
- To provide objective research on emergency response to key stakeholders.
- To bring together innovative industry thinkers to address key issues.
- To advocate for appropriate funding for the emergency response field.

The following pages focus on the examples of how we took steps towards achieving our goals in 2011 and how we will continue to progress in the years to come. I hope you find this report an enlightening look back at a milestone year and see it as a beacon of promise for our future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Kevin Murray'.

Kevin Murray
Board Chairman

2005 - 2010



2011 -



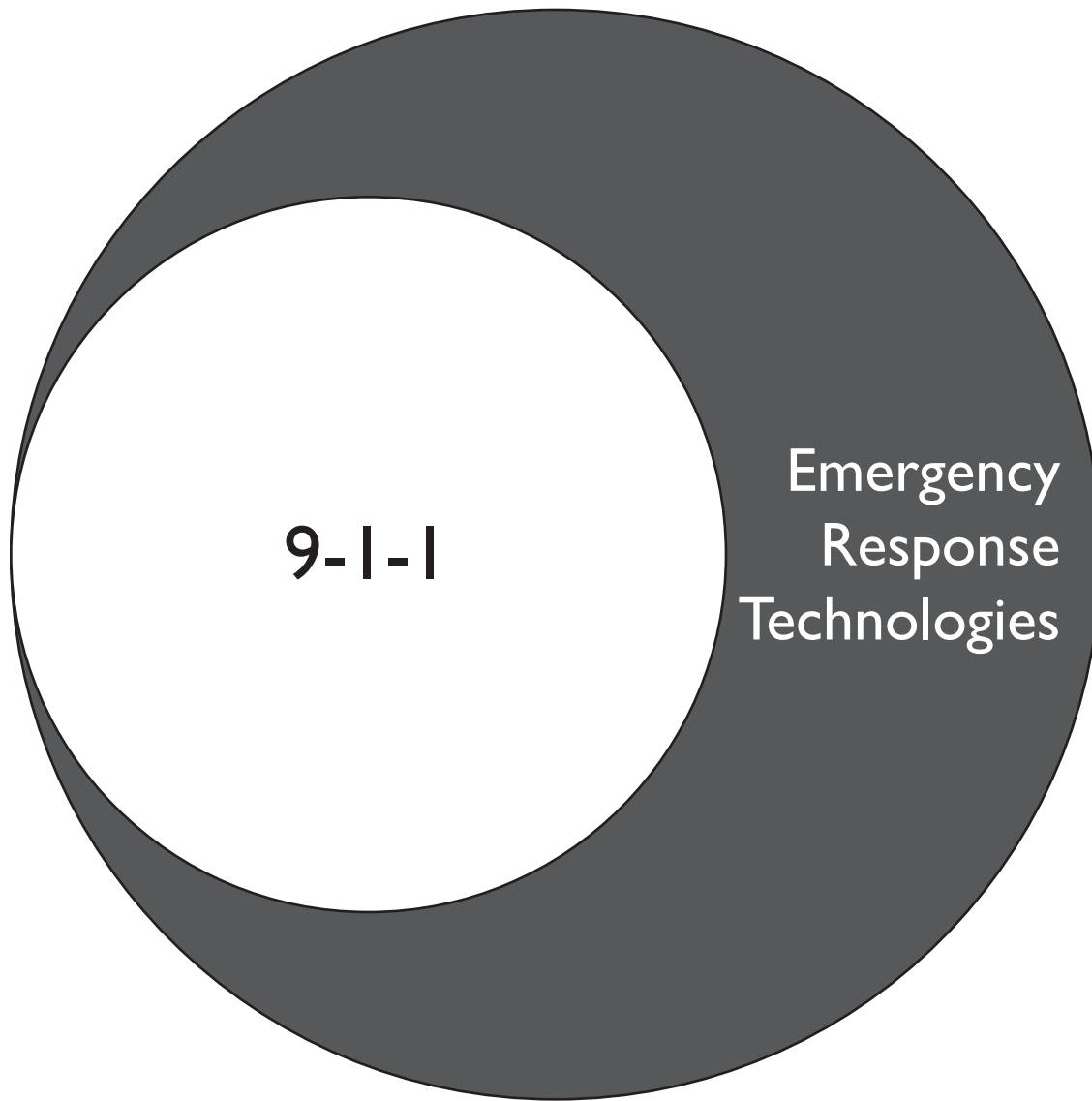
While our name may have changed and our scope may have expanded in 2011, the core initiatives of the organization remain intact.

Expanding Scope, Ensuring The Future of Emergency Communications

A Letter From The Executive Director

This annual report highlights iCERT's efforts in 2011 to sustain and improve emergency communications. This work took many forms but, as I joined the team as Executive Director in July, I worked hard to build on the momentum established earlier in the year and to spearhead two efforts in particular, one inward looking, the other outwardly focused. On the following pages you will see, in greater detail, how these and other initiatives led to significant progress for the emergency communications field in 2011.

When I came to what was then called the 9-1-1 Industry Alliance in 2011, I saw that the organization, and its mission, had surpassed its name. Adopting a new name, was not merely a cosmetic change, it signified an expansion in scope. As we looked to address the full range of emergency communications, public safety and homeland security issues it became clear that, while the 9-1-1 system is at the heart of all of our work, our scope had broadened. It took great vision to establish this organization in 2005. That same vision and leadership continues as the association has now enhanced its perspective.



“As we looked to address the full range of emergency communications, public safety and homeland security issues it became clear that, while the 9-1-1 system is at the heart of all of our work, our scope had broadened.”

To continue to play a vital role in the development and deployment of emergency response technologies, as the 9-1-1 Industry Alliance had since its inception, we needed to tell the nation and the world, in no uncertain terms, that we were devoted to supporting excellence in all forms of emergency response technologies. Thereby, our rebranding also signifies a full recognition of the interdependencies among these technologies. Thus, the Industry Council for Emergency Response Technologies (iCERT) became our new name.

Of course, just as emergency communications operations can't be shut down while upgrades are made, we did not lie dormant while we underwent the name change. Our most pressing effort, the ongoing push to ensure that the public's needs and expectations are met by properly resourcing emergency communications and response, still needed our time and energy.

In 2011 iCERT supported several bills that were introduced in Congress that would improve today's emergency communications and, perhaps more importantly, secure the future of emergency response technology as new needs arise. In a year of tough budgetary decisions and much talk about gridlock in Washington, iCERT was there to ensure that the voice of the emergency response industry rose above the fray.

By focusing on the nearly universal interest of policy makers to support emergency communications and response efforts we worked across party lines and bridged local and regional divides to gain a wide range of supporters. These policy makers, stakeholders and partners came together to collaboratively address issues such as ensuring that funds intended for emergency communications are not diverted to other areas and that greater awareness of problems created by overloads to the 9-1-1 system is advanced. Maintaining this focus and redoubling such efforts will be critical aspects of our 2012 agenda, as we look to bring this work to fruition.

As you'll see on the following pages, in 2011 we built the foundation to face the challenges that lie ahead for the emergency response technologies field. Our efforts not only represent the emergency response industry but the voices of the millions of people who depend on emergency response technology every day to stay safe and secure. It is with great pride that I introduce the 2011 iCERT Annual Report.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. S. Rice'.

George S. Rice
Executive Director

Facing the Future

In 2011 we went through a strategic planning process that drove our efforts for the year. We began by looking at what made the 9-1-1 Industry Alliance vital, unique and important from its inception in 2005. This deep dive into our organizational DNA revealed that our scope was widening, which, in turn, led to changing our name to the Industry Council for Emergency Response Technologies.

The new name reflected an underlying belief that our efforts to enhance funding for emergency response were needed now more than ever to handle rapid technological change. This belief also led to one of the ways we turned our initiatives into action which is featured in this annual report: our efforts to address 9-1-1 overload. The problem of 9-1-1 overload illustrates how technological advances can actually make things harder on the already underfunded public safety sector by placing extraordinary stresses on our emergency communications systems.

In the strategic planning process we realized that problems stemming from a combination of funding lags and technological advances, are what we will face time and time again as the pace of communications technology continues to quicken. Thanks to our strategic plan, we're poised to tackle the challenges today and into the future.

Over the coming years you will see iCERT continue to act on our core initiatives as the voice of the commercial sector in the emergency communications field.

iCERT Initiatives

The Industry Council is:

**A clearinghouse for
emergency response
technology**

Members of the emergency response industry have a vital role to play in contributing to the body of knowledge in the field. Unlike in other industries in which corporations compete on all fronts and guard knowledge, The Industry Council believes that members of the emergency response field have a responsibility to share knowledge so as to better ensure the safety of the public. Therefore it is central to our mission that we gather, analyze and distribute information that may be used to improve emergency communications.

**An advocate for
enhanced funding**

While the people in the field are the drivers, the emergency response engine is, largely, fueled by federal, state and local government funds. The Industry Council not only stands squarely behind the emergency response community when it comes to funding but we make use of the resources of the industry to advocate for appropriate funding for emergency response. The Industry Council helps those in the field sharpen their arguments for adequate support, provides thought leadership among the industry and serves as the voice of the industry to educate policy makers and key stakeholders on the value of enhanced emergency response technology.

**A provider of
industry forums**

The Industry Council is uniquely positioned to bring together all of the different parts that make up the whole of emergency response efforts. Bringing together industry leaders from across the spectrum of products and services that are offered to the emergency response field is woven into the fabric of the organization and part of what we do everyday. Due to our strong ties and staunch advocacy and status as an independent organization we are also able to bring together practitioners, policy makers and the public to improve the industry as a whole.

**A valued asset to the
industry**

Aside from the benefits of the research and analysis that Industry Council members get to take part in, members also get a powerful voice advocating for the field. Separately the organizations that make up the Industry Council can and do work on the initiatives listed above. Still, it is only under the unified banner of the Industry Council that these organizations can highlight the spirit of cooperation and higher purpose necessary to affect positive change on a local, regional, national and even international level.

Initiatives in Action: Research and Analysis

How does iCERT turn its initiatives into action that makes a difference in the world of emergency response technology? The first step is by taking a look at the current environment and beginning to look ahead to spot potential trouble spots. In 2011 we surveyed the research on heavily taxed 9-1-1 systems and uncovered some truly disturbing statistics.

- In May of 2011 15% of 9-1-1 calls in New Orleans went unanswered.
- In the summer of 2005 one in five 9-1-1 callers in Fort Worth Texas were put on hold.
- In California one in four mobile phone 9-1-1 callers hung up in frustration after long waits.

These statistics indicated that overloaded 9-1-1 systems were no passing trend or the result of some unpredictable peaks. To the contrary, the increased load had grown over a long

time. While calls to 9-1-1 increased by 26% in the last decade communications centers have struggled to keep up with the increased demands put on them.

Solving this problem takes a concerted effort by many different people and organizations who care about emergency response. Our analysis of the situation showed that industry leaders needed to speak out with a unified voice on this issue. Without bringing together the different stakeholders, efforts to address the key elements that contribute to this problem - lack of funding and lack of preparedness - would never be fully addressed.

Initiatives in Action: Public Policy Advocacy for Enhanced Funding

The 9-1-1 overload issue is illustrative of many problems that face emergency response today. The problem is not new. It is not unknown. It is not unpredictable. But the solution to the problem requires coordination of resources and people. One of the key problems with 9-1-1 overload is the lack of funding to adequately respond to emergencies during times of crisis and high call volumes. In some cases communications centers need more staff members, in others they need improved technologies to more efficiently handle a high volume of calls.

iCERT set out to draw attention to this problem among the policy makers and government officials who have the power to properly fund 9-1-1. First, we reached out to policy makers on behalf of the entire field to push for enhanced funding. Speaking on behalf of the entire field iCERT provided the unified voice needed to show policy makers how funding can help communications centers meet the crucial public safety challenges we face today. As broader considerations for funding Next Generation 9-1-1 are ongoing and implementation of national plans gets underway, iCERT's leaders anticipate being of assistance to policymakers.

Advocating for enhanced funding for emergency response is absolutely crucial but it's not enough. Making sure that funding actually gets to communications centers is a large part of iCERT's efforts to support 9-1-1 funding. That's why we set up the *Keep the Promise* campaign to push governments to apply the 9-1-1 fees they collect to support 9-1-1. We are standing firm to ensure that, even in these difficult economic times, governments don't either divert funds collected for 9-1-1 to other funding needs in states or hold funds in order to keep cash on the books to balance a state budget.

iCERT's *Keep the Promise* campaign calls attention to the fact that if communications centers can't depend on the funds that are designated to them they can't be expected to match the needs of the public. Even when funding is made available, if communications centers aren't able to foresee the funding sequence and plan appropriately they aren't able to upgrade systems and keep pace with the ever-increasing demand on emergency response technology. When communications centers can't match the needs of the public, all Americans are in jeopardy.

Initiatives in Action: Public Safety Industry Forums

It became clear that funding, while at the core, was only one part of the problem. The public safety community, as a whole, needed to work together to take on the 9-1-1 overload challenge. So in October 2011 we brought together stakeholders from across the industry in a two day forum in Washington, D.C.

To truly be effective we realized that the forum must include key partners from a cross-section of the industry. That is why we partnered with the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), the National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrations (NASNA), the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), and the NG 9-1-1 Institute. Corporate Sponsors included Intrado, Verizon, Mission Critical Partners, CTIA-The Wireless Association, True Position, Motorola and 911 Inc.

Partnering with the largest 9-1-1 associations and corporate leaders we were able to gather an influential group of attendees who were eager to face the challenges. That meant that we had

to bring something more to the table than just a status update but provide a setting for real dialogue and new insights. To deliver perspective and insights we turned to a pair of expert speakers. Lt. General Russel Honoré, U.S. Army (Ret.) Author of *Survival: How a Culture of Preparedness Can Save America and You from Disasters* and leader of the Hurricane Katrina Relief Response gave our opening keynote address. Then James Arden Barnett, Jr., Rear Admiral (Ret.), Chief of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) gave our luncheon keynote address.

Along with speakers the event included panel discussions and workshop sessions to address the overload problem. These panels included representatives from the wireless industry, first responders and policy makers. Further, after the event the presentations of the speeches were made available on the iCERT website for those who could not attend.

Initiatives in Action: Enhanced Member Services

The iCERT effort to address 9-1-1 overload also illustrates the benefits of membership. iCERT members were brought into the process of addressing the issue, and provided research data to better isolate the causes of the problem. The data was made accessible to all of iCERT's members. Also, some were instrumental in getting in front of policy makers and kicking off the Keep the Promise campaign. Others were sponsors of the forum, while still others led panel discussions on solutions to the problem. Taking an active role in an effort like this not only serves public safety as a whole, but raises the profile of the industry as one that is committed to working together to address the key issues that threaten the safety of us all.

Further, iCERT members benefit from the effort as we drive towards solutions. Starting with disseminating an industry "fact sheet" that members can take to their local representatives to push for adequate 9-1-1 funding and better planning to avoid 9-1-1 overload, iCERT is turning the discussions from the 9-1-1 Overload forum into practical tools for our members to use.

This is just one issue out of the many that those in the emergency response technology community face everyday. In every topic area iCERT is gathering and circulating research to its members, galvanizing support for the industry as a whole and providing a means for the people in the industry to talk about and resolve the most vexing problems we face. In short, everything we do at iCERT serves our members and thereby the public at large.

iCERT

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Research Partner: Deltek-GovWin

iCERT General Members

Joining iCERT

There is no better time to become a member of iCERT. As we expand our scope and reach out to partners around the United States and around the world, membership in iCERT makes a powerful statement about your organization. Join iCERT today and play your part in conducting vital research, analyzing important policy issues, and promoting the importance of adequately-funded 9-1-1 services. Make your voice heard. Make your voice count. Make your voice a part of the iCERT chorus.

To join visit www.TheIndustryCouncil.org.

