



PUBLIC NOTICE



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE/COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICE SERVICES

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO SYSTEM

EASTERN SHORE OF VIRGINIA – ACCOMACK AND NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES, VA

Interested parties are notified the Department of Justice (DOJ) through the Community Oriented Police Services (COPS) Program issued a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), based on an Environmental Assessment (EA) provided by the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Commission (ESVA 9-1-1 Commission). The purpose of the EA is to assess the effects on the human and natural environment on the ESVA 9-1-1 Commission's implementation of a new radio system (serving local public safety and other local governmental communications needs) for which the COPS program is providing funding assistance approved by the United States.

The proposed project, the implementation of a P25, trunked, digital, simulcast regional radio system, will utilize towers/facilities located at the following locations: 1. American Communications Tower (located at/around 6150 Community Drive, Chincoteague, VA), 2. Town of Chincoteague/CPD Tower (located at/around 6150 Community Drive, Chincoteague, VA), 3. Accomack County Tower (located at around 14306 Lankford Highway, Mappsville, VA), 4. Accomack County Tower (located at/around 23323 Wise Court, Accomac, VA), 5. Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Center facility (located at/around 23201 Front Street, Accomac, VA), 6. Commonwealth of Virginia/State Police Tower (located at/around 23201 Front Street, Accomac, VA), 7. County of Accomack Tower (located at/around 32198 A S West Road, Craddockville, VA), 8. Northampton County Water Tower (located at/around 5211, The Hornes, Eastville, VA), and, 9. Commonwealth of Virginia/State Police Tower (located at/around 20371 Seaside Road, Eastville, VA).

Public safety agencies on the Eastern Shore of Virginia (ESVA), including law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, and 9-1-1/dispatch utilize wireless communication networks as a critical aspect of their operations. These uses of the radio systems, with older/antiquated disparate systems used in the ESVA region, include communications to/from dispatch and field personnel, as well as communications between field personnel operating at an emergency incident. The current radio systems in the ESVA region are older and degrading with frequent performance issues, such as coverage gaps and a lack of needed interoperability for different public safety disciplines. Operating on the current, inefficient radio systems not only impacts public safety personnel, but their ability to best serve the public and their critical needs during emergencies. A properly performing radio system provides this increased coverage, efficiency, and effectiveness to operations, thereby promoting the public's safety and their welfare; which is the purpose of this project.

The purpose of the Draft EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the use and needed construction at the identified tower sites/locations. The draft FONSI, from the COPS program, affirms the proposed action will not have a significant impact on the human and natural environment. The draft EA and draft FONSI will be made available for review at the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Commission at 23201 Front Street, Accomac, VA 23301. The draft FONSI also can be viewed at the 9-1-1 Commission's website at www.esva911.org. The public notice is being published in the Eastern Shore Post and at the tower sites/locations identified. The ESVA 9-1-1 Commission invites the public to comment on the proposed action during a thirty (30) day comment period, which will conclude on November 26th, 2023. Written comments may be mailed to: ESVA 9-1-1 Commission, 9-1-1 Director, P.O. Box 337, Accomac, VA 23301. Comments also may be e-mailed to 911esva@co.northampton.va.us or faxed to 757-787-1044. If no substantive comments are received, the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) will become final, leading to a Final Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) being issued.