

July 10, 2017

Mr. Brian Sullivan  
Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Avenue  
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Snohomish County Council Chair Sullivan:

It's not often that we can improve public safety and save money at the same time. The potential consolidation of SNOPAC and SNOCOM, the two public safety answering points (PSAPs) or call centers serving the county, would provide that opportunity.

In 2016, the boards of both PSAPs formed a Joint Task Force (JTF) to look into consolidation with four factors in mind: (1) public safety/service levels; (2) fiscal ramifications; (3) redundancy/resiliency; and (4) governance. All four of these issues have been more than adequately addressed:

A consolidated PSAP would eliminate all transfers and the wait time associated with them. Currently, and for at least the last decade, a significant number of calls have been transferred by each Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) to the other. In 2016, there were 44,000 such transfers, with one in five calls to SNOCOM transferred to SNOPAC and one in 50 calls to SNOPAC transferred to SNOCOM. Each transfer adds 21 seconds to a call; this equates to over 11 days of hold time for the year! This delay in emergency response can and should be eliminated.

After one-time transition costs estimated at \$1.5 million, the JTF estimates annual operational savings of over \$1 million county-wide. Due to economies of scale, consolidation will allow staffing reductions (achieved through attrition) while still meeting or exceeding national call taking standards.

Redundancy/resiliency levels would be unchanged. SNOPAC currently leases space from the City of Everett and would be able to accommodate a consolidated call center operation with some renovation and additional parking. The JTF recommends, if consolidation occurs, that the current SNOCOM facility (leased from the City of Mountlake Terrace) be retained as a "warm-backup" should the SNOPAC facility need to be evacuated.

That, along with some basic workstations located at DEM, would maintain the current redundancy/resiliency level.

A 15-member board has been approved by both PSAP boards. Both PSAPs currently have 11-member boards. The JTF has recommended a 15-member board should consolidation occur – 10 representing police agencies and five representing fire agencies. While SNOPAC is already a representative board, this is a departure for SNOCOM where each member jurisdiction has at least one seat. At the May 30, 2017 joint board meeting, each board separately affirmed support for this structure.

We believe that both boards will approve consolidation, and as early as this October, each member agency's legislative body will be asked to consider and approve the consolidation plan, the new interlocal agreement, and articles of incorporation. We strongly support consolidation and urge the County Council to do so as well.

Sincerely,



Dave Somers  
Snohomish County Executive



Ty Trenary  
Snohomish County Sheriff

cc: Councilmember Stephanie Wright  
Councilmember Sam Low  
Councilmember Nate Nehring  
Councilmember Terry Ryan  
Deputy Executive Marcia Isenberg  
Executive Director Susan Neely  
SNOPAC Boardmembers  
SNOCOM Boardmembers  
Kurt Mills, SNOPAC Executive Director  
Terry Peterson, SNOCOM Executive Director