

‘Outstanding’ is how a North Carolina coastal Enhanced 9-1-1 Center rates Raytheon ACU technology

Pasquotank-Camden Central Communications Center, an Enhanced 9-1-1 center located in the small waterfront community of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, has improved its efficiency in emergency communications by deploying Raytheon’s ACU technology.

When asked how he would rate his satisfaction with the ACU technology, Ed Conran, director of the E9-1-1 Center, remarked “Outstanding!”

The Pasquotank-Camden Central Communications Center provides a central location for the public and all emergency services to report and receive emergency assistance. Averaging 7,000 calls for service per month, the center dispatches assistance to the public from Pasquotank and Camden County’s Sheriff’s Office, Elizabeth City’s police and fire department, emergency medical services and eight volunteer fire departments throughout the region.

“As the emergency dispatch hub for two counties and one city, the need to communicate with multiple agencies on multiple frequencies is paramount,” said Conran.

By deploying Raytheon’s ACU technology, the center is now able to connect conventional UHF, VHF including Low band and 800 MHz. Previously, the center had to internally patch their radio and telephone systems together.

“The patch worked fine for short duration incidents but doing so tied up our normal day-to-day channels, fre-

quencies and telephone lines,” added Conran.

The ACU-1000 allows agencies to communicate irrespective of their current radio systems or frequencies. Responding agencies can take a single portable radio and plug it into the ACU-1000 to allow all units operating on that radio system or frequency to communicate with each other.

The center also handles requests for the Pasquotank-Camden emergency management coordinator, Elizabeth



Elizabeth City, North Carolina waterfront

Photo by Mark Pillsbury

City and Pasquotank County’s utility department and is in constant communication with the North Carolina Highway Patrol and campus police from the local university.

Being an E9-1-1 Center means that the backbone of their communications is the 9-1-1 phone system. The center also has equipment that allows its dispatchers to see the location of the caller, allowing them to provide the responder with a specific location and directions so they

can arrive at the scene as quickly as possible.

The center uses the ACU-1000 to connect VHF, UHF, 800 MHz, cellular, landline, satellite and amateur radio resources on a daily basis.

“The ACU system is user-friendly and gives us the flexibility we need to have one or more talk groups at one time,” said Conran.

The Pasquotank-Camden E9-1-1 Center has their ACU-1000 rack-mounted and has recently added in the

emergency operations center (EOC) to allow operations to be transferred or remotely keyed when necessary.

“This flexibility gives decision makers in the EOC a direct link to the responder without 9-1-1 intervention once the talk group has been established, which is extremely important because it saves valuable time during an incident,” he added.

Eventually, the center would like to add an interface between the 9-1-1 console and the ACU-1000 rack to further their interoperability capabilities.

Raytheon Company
Civil Communications Solutions
5800 Departure Drive
Raleigh, NC 27616

Sales
Raytheon Company
5800 Departure Drive
Raleigh, NC 27616
acu.sales@raytheon.com

<http://www.raytheon.com>
Keyword: ACU-1000

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