When nine counties set out to upgrade their separate 9-1-1 communications systems, they quickly realized that combining resources and establishing a regional network would present significant benefits over individual systems. The regional 9-1-1 system launched in 2013, and shortly after, another county joined the network. Today, ten counties in Pennsylvania’s Northern Tier – Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean and Warren – make up the state’s first regional network for public safety communications. The benefits the Northern Tier counties’ 9-1-1 system offers have attracted the attention of others, including the state of Pennsylvania, as a model for regional systems.

**SOLUTION**

Airbus DS Communications’ VESTA® 9-1-1 solution, the industry’s most trusted Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) call processing, is the foundation for the greatly improved public safety capabilities in the Northern Tier.

“We researched and considered all options for a regional network with due diligence,” said Michael McGrady, president of MCM Consulting Group, Inc., which spearheaded the regional project. “The decision to go with Airbus DS Communications was easy, as the company’s technology best met the needs of the counties.”

“We’ve had a great track record with Airbus DS Communications,” added Mike McAllister, Elk County Office of Emergency Services director. “Everyone has had success with Airbus DS Communications’ call taking systems and service, so this was a natural move for us.”

By forming the regional network, the counties saved $2.3 million upfront and more than $250,000 in annual maintenance costs. The open Internet Protocol (IP) architecture of VESTA 9-1-1 increases the survivability of 9-1-1 services by supporting two host sites, each capable of running the entire network on its own. The diverse and redundant fiber paths connect the counties to each site and allow the Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) to manage each other’s calls, should a center become overloaded or incapacitated.

With cost savings and operational benefits like these, it’s understandable why public safety organizations are considering regional collaboration. For the Northern Tier counties, they now have a network scalable for NG9-1-1. And as they explore sharing
other critical systems, like computer-aided dispatch and land mobile radio, it’s clear
their success with VESTA® 9-1-1 is the cornerstone for a fully integrated regional
public safety network.

COMMUNICATE AND COLLABORATE
While regionalization delivers a host of benefits, it’s important to acknowledge the
process to get there.

According to McAllister, “The technology came together cleanly – the hardest thing
was coordination. We had nine counties that previously acted as independent silos
and we had to become one system.” McGrady added, “A comprehensive team was
formed day one and included each county’s 9-1-1 director and coordinator, as well
as representatives from solution and service providers.” The combined expertise and
perspective of the group shaped the successful path to regionalization.

An important topic of communication among the team was the development of policies.
Moving to a regional system required each county to think outside its own borders and
establish procedures for the VESTA 9-1-1 system that benefit all 10 counties.

Generating support among government officials and the public also was vital to the
project’s success. This was accomplished by sharing information, early and frequently,
on operations and cost savings so all parties fully understood the benefits of the new
system.

“One critical communication to reinforce,” recalled McGrady, “is that regionalization
does not mean consolidation. Staffing levels at each PSAP have remained consistent.
No functionality, capacity or position has suffered. The benefits far outweigh any fears
the counties had upfront.”

In the end, effective communication, collaboration and sound technology led to a
regional network capable of enhancing public safety in Northern Tier counties for years
to come.

YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER
Your community trusts you to protect them, and that means more than just using the right equipment. It means having a trusted
partner in public safety communications. That partner is Airbus DS Communications, where your CRITICAL MATTERS™.

As the world’s largest and most reliable source for Next Generation 9-1-1, Land Mobile Radio and Emergency Notification, we keep
people connected when it matters most. For over four decades, Airbus DS Communications has designed solutions with an open
mind, creating smarter ways to keep all our communities safe. Today we support more than 60% of all U.S. Public Safety Answering
Points, serving over 200 million people, along with hundreds of private sector businesses in 20+ different industries, including
transportation, utilities and healthcare, and Federal and DoD operations globally.

To learn more, call 951.719.2100 or visit us online at www.Airbus-DSComm.com.