Hello NENA colleague;

I know I don’t need to remind you how exciting a time this is for our industry and for NENA. With the Emergency Services Working Group (ESWG) and the NG9-1-1 Coalition working hard on the national plan to transition to NG9-1-1, we have an opportunity to impact public safety on a global scale. What we are doing is unprecedented and the world is watching. As your Director, I take my role seriously as an advocate for standards, best practices, training, legislation, and all other functions critical to the successful operation of 9-1-1 and emergency response across our great country.

During my first term I set two goals:

1. Ensure every person in Canada working in the 9-1-1 sector knows who NENA is and the high standards we set for performance, and
2. Make NENA’S expert knowledge resources widely available throughout Canada.

Those goals have not changed. I will continue advancing NENA as the “GO TO” organization for guidance and support in reaching a successful NG9-1-1 rollout across the country and beyond.

The past four years have been tough but incredibly exciting. The work invested by so many volunteers to move the industry toward NG9-1-1 is nothing short of inspiring. I am proud of and humbled by the talent we have and the level of collaboration as deadlines for transition creep closer. Every Canadian is entitled to the same high level of service and as a collective we are getting it done. The world is watching and yet, even in the face of a global pandemic we haven’t taken our foot off the pedal.

With the recent wrench COVID-19 has thrown into the mix, this is no time to sit back. We are sorting through the technology challenges, but gaps remain. The issues of skills, training, governance and long-term sustainable funding are still front and centre.

I have been working hard on these fronts also. Establishing relationships is crucial to the success of NG9-1-1 and partnerships with industry partners such as Esri are essential. I have collaborated with ESRI and ESWG to develop and deliver an NG9-1-1 educational campaign for municipal and GIS stakeholders across the country on the enhanced role GIS will play. To date we have spread the message to over 1000 individuals nationally.

Additionally, I recently participated on an Ontario Municipal Association panel to discuss the need for NG9-1-1, sustainable long-term funding, and governance. The message is beginning to spread, but much work remains.

My vision has not changed and I continue to work on building the relationships necessary to support these goals. I am asking for your help and support to continue.

Your ideas, enthusiasm and participation are crucial. Let’s continue the conversation, share ideas, and ensure NENA IS the resource for 911 in Canada.

Regards,

Holly Barkwell, ENP
Canada Regional Director