

Date of Hearing: April 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Rhodesia Ransom, Chair

AB 2370 (Arambula) – As Amended April 6, 2026

SUBJECT: Public Safety Communications Division

SUMMARY: Specifies the existing duties of the Public Safety Communications Division (PSC), within the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) are the exclusive responsibility of the division, as specified, and prohibits any other state public agency from performing the duties, as specified. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Specifies the duties of the Public Safety Communications Division (outlined in the existing law below) are the exclusive responsibility of the division and prohibits any other state public agency from performing the duties.
- 2) Requires the PSC to serve as the primary authority for all statewide and interjurisdictional public safety communications, and shall provide oversight, management, and ongoing coordination of all statewide public safety communications systems.
- 3) Requires a state public agency to use the public safety communications systems established and maintained by the Division.
- 4) Prohibits the PSC or a state public agency from entering into a contract for technical, maintenance, or system support services unless approved by Cal OES.
- 5) Prohibits a state agency participating in the statewide public safety communications system from delegating, assigning, or entering into a contract for essential operations, duties, or functions of public safety communications, including the initial processing or dispatch of emergency response communications, except as specified in paragraph (2) or otherwise authorized by the office.
- 6) Requires any delegation, assignment, or contract for the performance of public safety communications shall be submitted to the office for review and approval.
- 7) Requires, if a state public agency enters into a contract within the scope of work of the division staff, that the agency notifies the division state bargaining representative immediately via email and make their best effort to connect with representative.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the Public Safety Communications Division (PSC) with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). (Government Code (Gov.) § 15277).
- 2) Requires the PSC's duties to include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Assessing the overall long-range public safety communications needs and requirements of the state, as specified.

- b) Developing strategic and tactical policies and plans for public safety communications with consideration for the systems and requirements of the state and all public agencies in this state, and preparing an annual strategic communications plan, as specified
 - c) Recommending industry standards for public safety communications systems to ensure multiuser availability and compatibility.
 - d) Providing advice and assistance in the selection of communications equipment to ensure that the public safety communications needs of state agencies are met and that procurements are compatible throughout state agencies and are consistent with the state's strategic and tactical plans.
 - e) Providing management oversight of statewide public safety communications systems developments.
 - f) Providing for coordination of, and comment on, plans, policies, and operational requirements from departments that utilize public safety communications in support of their principal function, as specified.
 - g) Monitoring and participating on behalf of the state in the proceedings of federal and state regulatory agencies and in congressional and state legislative deliberations that have an impact on state government public safety communications activities.
 - h) Developing plans regarding teleconferencing as an alternative to state travel during emergency situations.
 - i) Ensuring that all radio transmitting devices owned or operated by state agencies and departments are licensed, installed, and maintained in accordance with the requirements of federal law. A request for a federally required license for a state-owned radio transmitting device shall be sought only in the name of the "State of California."
 - j) Acquiring, installing, equipping, maintaining, and operating new or existing public safety communications systems and facilities for public safety agencies. To accomplish that purpose, the division is authorized to enter into contracts, obtain licenses, acquire property, install necessary equipment and facilities, and do other necessary acts to provide adequate and efficient public safety communications systems. Any systems established shall be available to all public agencies in the state on terms that may be agreed upon by the public agency and the division.
 - k) Acquiring, installing, equipping, maintaining, and operating all new or replacement microwave communications systems operated by the state, except microwave equipment used exclusively for traffic signal and signing control, traffic metering, and roadway surveillance systems. To accomplish that purpose, the division is authorized to enter into contracts, obtain licenses, acquire property, install necessary equipment and facilities, and do other necessary acts to provide adequate and efficient microwave communications systems. Any system established shall be available to all public safety agencies in the state on terms that may be agreed upon by the public agency and the division.
- 3) Specifies this section does not apply to Department of Justice communications operated pursuant to Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 15150) of Part 6.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. A fiscal committee has not heard this bill.

COMMENTS:

Author Statement: “California’s interagency emergency communications systems should be consistent and reliable. Unfortunately, state agencies outside of Cal OES have directed their IT staff to perform work on CRIS and the PSC network, creating irregularities in this critical system. Disrupted or otherwise delayed communications during emergencies can create significant risks for first responders and other personnel charged with ensuring public safety. Without necessary oversight over maintenance done on the system, and the ability to easily diagnose an issue, PSC cannot fulfill its mandate to remain operational at all times. AB 2370 addresses this issue by reinforcing Cal OES’s authority over maintenance of statewide public safety communications.”

Equity Statement: “Disrupted or otherwise delayed communications during emergencies can create significant risks for first responders and other personnel charged with ensuring public safety. Without necessary oversight over maintenance done on the system, and the ability to easily diagnose an issue, PSC cannot fulfill its mandate to remain operational at all times.”

Genesis of the Bill: The bill is sponsored by the California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers. According to the author’s office, other state departments are assigning their Information Technology (IT) staff to duties that fall under the responsibility of the PSC. They provided an example of a department’s IT staff interfering with a radio frequency line which left the California Highway Patrol in a major city without radio communications for up to 5.5 hours. The Committee staff were unable to substantiate or verify this claim.

Public Safety Communications Division (PSC): The PSC is tasked with preserving and protecting human life and safety by delivering reliable and dependable communication services, ensuring California’s public safety agencies remain connected during times of crisis. PSC’s mission is to “ensure that quality telecommunications services and commodities are provided to all state agencies in the most cost-effective, efficient, and timely manner. This includes maximizing the use of state resources, and the consolidation and joint use of telecommunications systems and services where operationally, technically, and economically feasible.”

The PSC is responsible for delivering competitive technical services and leveraging technology effectively, including integrating public safety radio communications to achieve statewide interoperability, implementing Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) infrastructure, supporting a unified public safety broadband network, and upgrading California’s public safety microwave network. The division is comprised of three branches: the Radio Communications Branch, the California 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Branch, and the Technical Services Branch.

PSC’s Branches: The Radio Communications Branch is responsible for the design, installation, maintenance, and repair of public safety radio communications systems and networks used by California’s public safety agencies. Each agency is assigned a representative from the branch to provide consultation, assist with project management, and guide agencies to appropriate services. The branch supports and maintains the microwave system, handheld and mobile radios, marine and aviation communications, emergency support systems, and tower and vault infrastructure, which serve as the backbone of public safety communications.

The California 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Branch enables Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) to provide the fastest, most reliable, and cost-effective access to emergency services for any 9-1-1 caller in California, regardless of the communications device used. This branch is responsible for the state's Next Generation 9-1-1 system.

The Technical Services Branch provides a variety of services to PSC and the public safety agencies it supports. This includes oversight of the California Public Safety Microwave Network (CAPSNET), licensing of public safety radio spectrum, and a range of ancillary services that support PSC's overall service delivery. The branch also facilitates an open forum for public safety agencies to help guide the implementation of interoperable communications systems through the Public Safety Radio Strategic Planning Committee.

California Radio Interoperability System: The California Radio Interoperable System (CRIS) is a statewide program established by the PSC to provide a more robust and effective communications platform for public safety agencies. It is built as a Project 25-compliant trunked radio system that interfaces with local systems across California, enabling seamless communication among first responders during both day-to-day operations and large-scale incidents. Designed to enhance interoperability, CRIS aims to deliver reliable, resilient communications capable of withstanding challenging environments while supporting coordination between agencies, dispatch centers, and field personnel. When fully implemented, the system is expected to provide radio coverage to more than 90 percent of the state's population and over 60 percent of its geographic area, while incorporating features such as dedicated talkgroups, encryption, and advanced network technology to improve efficiency and reduce reliance on fragmented local systems.

Committee Notes: Prior opposition was removed by author amends to remove impact to local public agency.

Arguments in Support: The California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers writes in support: "The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Public Safety Communications Division...develop[s], operate[s], and maintain[s] critical telecommunications infrastructure that connects state agencies, local governments, federal partners, tribal entities, and other public safety organizations during emergencies and routine operations. In 2019, this mission expanded with the creation of the California Radio Interoperable System (CRIS), a statewide trunked mobile radio system designed to provide seamless intra-agency and inter-agency communication across the majority of California. CRIS is operated and maintained by State Employee Telecommunications Technicians at Cal OES to ensure rapid, coordinated public safety response in emergency situations statewide"

They continue, "Recently, there have been numerous examples of this critical work being contracted out or delegated to non-PSC [Public Safety Communications Division] technicians who do not have the training or experience to properly maintain the system. As a result, the PSC network has experienced significant disruptions that could have been fatal. In one instance, interference by an inexperienced technician caused the California Highway Patrol to lose a critical line of communication for approximately 5.5 hours. Legislation is needed to ensure that the States' emergency communication systems are maintained in a uniform manner. In an effort to ensure a rapid and efficient statewide public safety communications system, AB 2370 aims to clarify that the public safety communications division is the primary authority for all statewide and interjurisdictional public safety communications across all state agencies, providing

oversight, management and ongoing coordination throughout the state's communications systems."

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California-Nevada Conference of Operating Engineers

Opposition

None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Ryan Fleming / E.M. / (916) 319-3802