

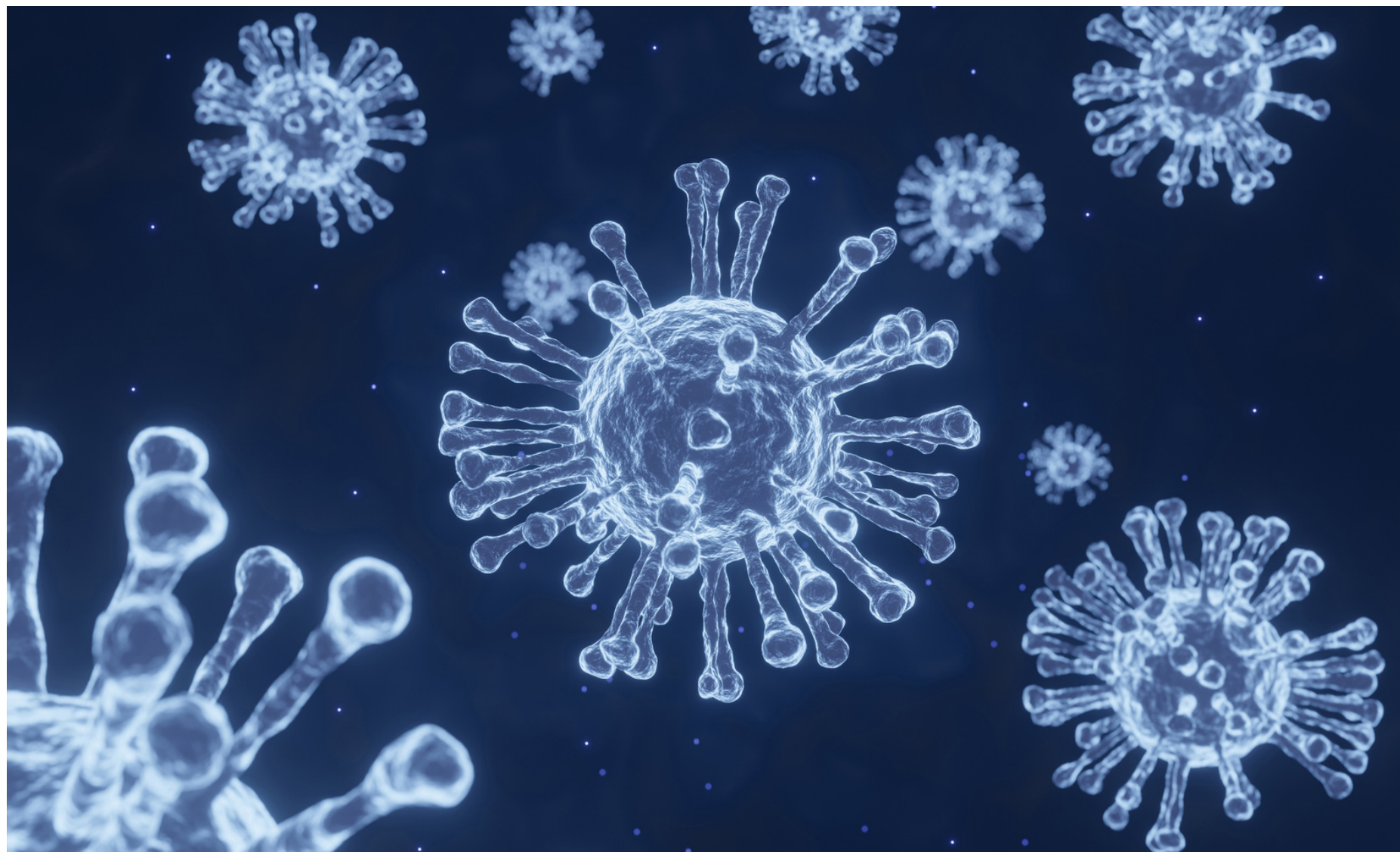
LESSONS LEARNED DURING COVID-19:

NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC IN PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE

ABOUT CC:IPS

The Collaborative Coalition of International Public Safety (CC:IPS) was formed in November 2019 by public safety communications associations around the world.

APCO Canada, British APCO, NENA, EENA, and NECWG-A/NZ joined forces with one mission in mind: to collaborate and share information, research and resources to advance public safety communications across the globe.



COVID COLLABORATION

CC:IPS members have convened on a biweekly basis since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, and continue to do so at present.

During this time we have collected and reported on the critical issues impacting the public safety communications industry in our respective countries in order to share best practice and lessons learned for the benefit of the global public safety community.

Now, as many of our regions and countries are once again going into more stringent measures for restricting the spread of COVID, we want to share what we have experienced, observed, and implemented in our centres since March 2020 via a series of briefing notes on the following:

- Call Handling and Contingency
- Staffing
- Mental Health & Wellness
- Planning and Business Continuity
- Remote Working
- PPE, Safety, and Barriers to Access
- Technology
- Political and Jurisdictional Challenges

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ESTABLISH AND PROMOTE A NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER

Non-emergency numbers, dedicated for providing information to the public during crisis, have proven extremely useful during the pandemic. Jurisdictions where such numbers were already in use and well recognized before COVID-19, were successful in preventing congestion on traditional emergency lines by directing the public appropriately.

Areas where non-emergency numbers were not established or barely known by the public, saw a large volume of additional calls made to traditional emergency numbers. Some control rooms and emergency communication centers around the globe reported at times more than 80% of calls made to their 3-digit emergency number lines were callers seeking COVID-19 related information, and were not emergent in nature. This creates increased risk of saturating the lines and making them inaccessible for other vital emergencies.

Peaks in emergency calls often coincided with the announcement of the first COVID-19 cases in the country or with the introduction of lockdown measures, suggesting that many callers were seeking further information or looking for clarification.

We invite relevant authorities in each country or jurisdiction to establish non-emergency number(s) reachable 24/7 permanently. These numbers should be easy to remember (3 digits is best), and be well publicised before and during major crisis (e.g. natural disaster, pandemic).

