

# Memorandum



DATE: March 22, 2013

TO: Members of the Public Safety Committee

SUBJECT: **Communication Operations Center Update**

Attached is briefing material on the "Communication Operations Center Update" to be presented to the Members of the Public Safety Committee on Monday, March 25, 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A.C. Gonzalez'.

A.C. Gonzalez  
First Assistant City Manager

Attachment

CC: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council  
Mary K. Suhm, City Manager  
Rosa Rios, City Secretary  
Thomas P. Perkins, Jr., City Attorney  
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor  
Judge Daniel Solis, Administrative Judge  
Ryan S. Evans, Assistant City Manager  
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager  
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager  
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer  
Frank Libro, Public Information Office  
Stephanie Cooper, Assistant to the City Manager



# Communication Operations Center Update

## Public Safety Committee

March 25, 2013



[www.dallaspolice.net](http://www.dallaspolice.net)

David O. Brown  
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Chief Of Police

# Purpose

- To provide an update on improvements in the Dallas 911 Call Center in the following areas
  - Staffing
  - Service Delivery
  - Management

# Goals

- Answer 90% of all calls within 10 seconds
- Increase accuracy and timeliness of information given to Public Safety Dispatchers

# Past 911 Call Center Issues

- Several 2012 events indicated a need for significant improvements in the 911 Call Center
- Staffing issues
  - Hiring and training time lag
  - High attrition rate
  - 64 Call Takers and 7 trainees while authorized for 92
  - Staffing model out of alignment with call load
  - Overtime fatigue
  - Times when a supervisor was unavailable
- Unexpected spikes in call load (apartment fires, highway accidents, etc.)
  - Callers hang up after several rings and no answer
  - Callers repeated hang up
  - 911 Staff tied up returning 911 hang up calls

# Past 911 Call Center Issues

- Technology issues with cell phones
  - Calls dropped at cell tower but unknown to caller
  - No phone number attached to incoming call
  - Does not show exact location
- Equipment limitations
  - Recorded message not available on all 911 lines
  - Lengthy time before recorded message answered

# Immediate Improvements to 911

- 6XE and 6XEA signals created
  - Priority 1 call with emergency lights and siren
  - Response time goal is under 8 minutes
- Additional supervisors assigned to the 911 Call Center
  - Seven police sergeants placed on special assignment since September
- New management team assigned to provide a fresh perspective

# Immediate Improvements to 911

- Additional personnel assigned to 911 Call Center as call taker vacancies were filled and trained
  - In September, officers began training to take 911 calls
  - An additional 25 officers were placed on special assignment since October 3, 2012
  - Most officers have been returned to their primary assignment
- Swing shift established for peak call load times
  - Work hour adjustments were made to supplement the swing shift on Friday and Saturday nights
  - Resulted in over 20 call takers during peak call load time

# Continuing Improvements to the 911 Call Center

- Hiring and Training
- Service Delivery
- Management

# Hiring and Training

- Hiring process streamlined and enhanced
  - Created a specialized recruiting team
  - Kept the Civil Service list open as vacancies are filled
  - Began twice a day applicant performance testing (Criti-call)
  - Purchased additional equipment so 30 applicants could be tested
  - Dedicated personnel to conduct background investigations
  - Police Personnel assist Civil Service in reviewing applications for minimum qualifications
  - Established a tracking system to alert PD of applicant progress
- Hosted a three day 911 Call Taker Job Fair in October
  - Provided opportunity to complete application, civil service test, and polygraph exam
  - Over 420 applicants took part

# Hiring and Training

- Salaries were adjusted to better reflect area comparisons
- Overnight shift differential increased for civilian staff
- 45 911 Call Takers hired since September 1, 2012
- 911 Call Taker training now includes more observation integrated with classroom training
- Hiring consultant to inform how best to enhance performance

# Service Delivery

- All 911 lines now can play recorded message asking callers not to hang up if they are waiting for call to be answered
  - In July, 48% of the 911 line had this capability (completed 11/6/12)
- Established a two ring standard for a caller to get either a 911 Call Taker or recorded message
- Improved headsets quality
  - Based on employee evaluations, two different types of headsets were ordered and have been received

# Management

- Inter-Department Committee established to identify and implement improvements
  - Includes CIS, Civil Service, Dallas Fire and Rescue, Human Resources, DPD Personnel, DPD Communications, and Dallas 311
- Quality Control Team formed
  - Random performance reviews of 100 individual 911 calls each week
  - Reviews are in addition to the ones performed by 911 Call Center managers and supervisors
- Additional supervisors assigned to the 911 Call Center
  - Four sergeants were permanently assigned to the 911 Call Center on October 3, 2012, in addition to the 7 assigned in September
  - Current staffing allows for 6 supervisors to be assigned to each of the 3 shifts and 3 supervisors to work a power shift of 8pm to 4am

# Management

- Strengthening management reports
  - Purchased new software to create more robust computer generated reports
  - Training for the new software has begun
- New management team assigned
  - Placed one of the new Major positions over the Communications Section
  - Four tenured Lieutenants were also assigned (One over 911)
- Equipment Consultant hired by CIS
  - Analyze the 911 Center's infrastructure and public safety system applications
  - Identify short-term, mid-term and long-term needs of 911 Center

# Improved Performance

Month	Calls Received	Average Time to Answer (in seconds)	Service Level Performance (as a %)*
Aug-2012	173,524	11	75.04
Sept- 2012	166,673	15	70.32
Oct- 2012	166,089	13	71.25
Nov-2012	152,630	4	91.09
Dec- 2012	161,501	3	92.99
Jan- 2013	153,013	3	93.08
Feb - 2013	138,707	2	95.87

\* Service Level Goal is to answer 90% of calls within 10 seconds

# Summary

- The 911 Call Center has made numerous changes related to hiring , training, management, and equipment. These changes have resulted in a significant increase in the percentage of calls answered within 10 seconds:
  - From 75.0% in August 2012
  - To 95.8% in February 2013
- Although significant improvements have been made in the 911 Call Center, the Police Department is committed to offering even higher levels of service to those that work, live and play in the City of Dallas.



Questions?