



Public Safety Communications

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Outline

- Discuss Recent Initiatives
- Review Departmental Goals
- Provide Industry Update





EMD Implementation

- Public Safety Communications (PSC) initiated the implementation of Emergency Medical Dispatch based on the recommendation of the Medical Director, coinciding with the Burleson Fire Department providing EMS/ambulance services
- The kickoff for Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) onboarding and implementation began in February 2023
- Weekly meetings with the protocol provider, Priority Dispatch, included education for administrative staff on managing the protocol system, planning training sessions for front-line staff, and collaborating with IT staff to strategize software installation and behind-the-scenes operation
- All Staff attended in-person, instructor-led training to obtain EMD Certification in July of 2023
- There was a heavy focus on training between certification and go-live to ensure staff retained knowledge and skills. Staff were provided with a number of different training opportunities to hone skills, including utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based software that mimicked real-life medical scenarios for staff to practice medical call-taking



EMD Implementation

- PSC began processing medical calls utilizing EMD protocols on September 29, 2023 at 08:00
- PSC went live with EMD call-taking two days ahead of EMS/ambulance go-live, which began just after midnight on October 1st. This allowed staff the opportunity to adjust to the new call-taking process without the additional changes of dispatching ambulances. During this period, all medical calls were still being transferred to MedStar for an ambulance dispatch after medical instruction was completed
- Our protocol provider, Priority Dispatch, had representatives on-site for two days for both the day shift and the night shift to help guide staff through the transition
- The implementation was extremely successful, and we attribute that success to the proactive training approach and the number of hours staff spent on sharpening their skills before go-live
- Since Implementation, we have consistently averaged very close to accreditation standards with our quality reviews

12-hour Shifts

- In an effort to address recurring challenges in PSC, consideration was given to transitioning from an 8-hour shift model to a 12-hour shift model
- Challenges faced with 8-hour shifts:
 - The nature of 9-1-1 communications work, combined with the challenges of an 8-hour work schedule, make recruitment and retention of qualified staff extremely difficult
 - High turnover rates place a strain on operational efficiency and morale in the communications center, leading to employee burnout
 - Less consecutive time off for staff impacts work-life balance and overall job satisfaction
- With CMO approval, 12-hour shifts with fixed days off were implemented on January 1, 2024
- Collaborated with HR and Legal to plan implementation and create appropriate policies and procedures to support both employees and the operational needs of the communications center
- Advantages of 12-hour shifts:
 - Increased minimum staffing requirements to three staff per shift at all times. Previously, the department operated with two staff between the hours of 22:00-10:00
 - Higher candidate pool of experienced dispatchers after marketing for 12-hour shifts
 - More consecutive days off for staff, allowing for better work-life balance. Staff receive three days off one week and four days off the following week, allowing them more time to focus on family and personal commitments as well as mental health and well-being

Nature Code/Priority Revisions for Police

- Background:
 - A nature code is a classification system used to categorize the nature or type of emergency being reported during a 9-1-1 call. These codes assist staff in quickly understanding the nature of the situation and in dispatching appropriate resources
 - Priority response refers to the level of urgency associated to a particular emergency call or nature code
- PSC staff worked with PD staff to revise existing nature codes and priority responses
- This project coincides with the beat realignment project that PD has been working on
- These corrected nature codes and priority responses will help to ensure we are utilizing resources appropriately and will assist in more precise data collection for PD

Calltaking Guidecards for Police

- While working through the nature code project, staff realized a deficit in our existing operations and saw the need to provide staff with a guide to follow for police-specific call-taking
- Created guidecards that align with each police-specific nature code, providing a detailed description of the nature code along with questions for staff to ask callers to ensure we gather the appropriate information to pass along to officers
- As staff work through the questioning, they enter that information into CAD, which is then relayed to officers by the dispatcher. Officers also have the ability to view this information in real-time on their in car computer
- Similar to EMD protocols, but guidecards allow staff to use discretion if warranted, whereas protocol systems require strict adherence
- Worked very closely with PD staff during this project, solicited feedback and guidance throughout the process to ensure it was a good fit for both department operations



Assault (ASSA)

Assault with Injury (ASSAIN) – Priority 1

Assault can be loosely defined as one person making physical contact with another person(s). The contact would or could be considered as offensive, provocative or cause bodily injury to the contacted person. After asking, "Okay, tell me exactly what happened" if the caller does not provide voluntary information about injuries ask a clarifying question. If the victim(s) report anything about strangulation medical must respond to check the person per city strangulation protocol. If time allows after all questions have been asked, attempt to identify any involved person and add it to the call card.

1. Were any weapons involved?
 - a. (Yes) What type?
 - b. (Yes) Where is the weapon now?
2. How many people are involved?
3. Where is the person now?
 - a. (Suspect left) How did they leave?
 - i. (Vehicle) What is the vehicle description?
 - ii. What direction did they go?
 - b. (Suspect on-scene) Do they have a vehicle?
 - i. (Yes) What is the vehicle description?
4. What is the person's description?
5. (3rd party) What is the victim's Name?
 - a. What is the victim's description?
 - b. What is the victim's current location?
6. Have any involved parties been using drugs or alcohol?
7. (Injuries) Transition to EMD Protocol 4 >>>
8. (No Injuries) Callers name, address, and phone number.



Priority Breakdown –

Priority 1 - 2 Patrol officers code 3

- If in progress with Actor on Scene and there is a continued threat of injury.

TCOLE Agency

- Burleson Public Safety Communications Department received final approval and activation as a Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) Telecommunications Agency effective January 11, 2024
- BPD currently maintains all Telecommunicator licenses for PSC staff, including reporting all required continuing education hours to TCOLE
- PSC will begin the process of transferring all Telecommunicator licenses to our agency
- This allows staff to report all information directly to TCOLE rather than reporting through PD staff
- If in the future Burleson opts to participate in regionalization and take on call-taking and dispatching services for other agencies, this would be a necessary first step that we have already accomplished



Goals



- Focus on recruitment, hiring and training. We are seeking experienced Telecommunicators to potentially reduce training time. Typically, it requires a 6-month training period with non-experienced individuals and a 3-6 month training period for experienced ones. Our goal is to become fully staffed by the end of the year
- Create guidecards for FD, similar to those we have for PD. We have already begun revising nature codes and have recurring meetings scheduled with Fire staff to work through this process together
- We are working with IT on CAD implementation and currently developing a timeline
- Initiated the process of rewriting department policies and will be working with HR and Legal on that process.
- Work towards accreditation
 - The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement (CALEA)- Public Safety Communications Accreditation
 - Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO)- Agency Training Program Certification
 - International Academy of Emergency Dispatch (IAED)- Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE)
- Continued focus on Cross-Departmental Collaboration and Relationships

Industry Update

9-1-1 Saves Act of 2023

- A bipartisan bill has been introduced in the House seeking to reclassify 9-1-1 professionals from 'Office and Administrative Support Occupations' to 'Protective Service Occupations'
- Currently, 9-1-1 professionals are identified as Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers and classified as 'Office and Administrative Support Occupations,' the same category as Taxi and Trucking Services Dispatchers
- If passed, this bill will increase federal funding for the industry and address key challenges, including technological advancements, training, mental health support, and overall system improvement

Questions / Comments