

Report on the Consolidated 911 / Dispatch Feasibility Study

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. PROFILE OF DISPATCH OPERATIONS	6
2. ANALYSIS OF CONSOLIDATION ALTERNATIVES	58
APPENDIX A SUMMARIES OF DISPATCHER AND FIELD PERSONNEL SURVEYS	95

1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Matrix Consulting Group was retained by the Albany County Sheriff's Office to conduct an analysis of the feasibility of consolidated dispatch operations. There are eleven (11) separate PSAPs in the County responsible for handling incoming 911 and other phone calls related to fire, EMS and law enforcement emergencies and incidents.

These include the following:

- Albany County Sheriff's Office
- City of Albany
- Town of Colonie
- Town of Bethlehem
- Town of Guilderland
- New York State Police Troop X
- Town of Coeymans
- City of Cohoes
- Village of Green Island
- Village of Menands
- City of Watervliet

A summary of the agencies providing services is provided in the first chapter of this report.

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted our work using the following approaches:

- Collected data from each of the current providers to develop profile information and data on the 11 PSAPS providing dispatch operations within the service area.

- Collected and analyzed detailed data describing the staffing, deployment and workloads of the agencies.
- Developed a detailed descriptive profile of operations in each agency.
- We developed two surveys, and provided these to each of the communities' field and dispatch personnel to complete on line. One was to gain input from employees providing dispatch services directly to field staff in the communities. Another was an opinion survey distributed to field services staff (primarily officers and fire/EMS personnel) who rely upon dispatchers.

The following section provides a summary of key findings in the project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report focused on developing alternatives for consideration in the analysis of the feasibility of creating a county-wide emergency communications center in Albany County. The potential of creating a county-wide dispatch center that included all of the agencies currently providing emergency communications services was considered, however the facilities construction costs associated with this center, related to accommodating a larger number of communications staff and equipment, was cost-prohibitive. The project team, therefore, modeled four primary alternatives. These alternatives, or scenarios, consisted of the following:

1. Albany County Sheriff, Green Island, Cohoes and Watervliet combine into a single communications center, with all emergency and 10-digit calls coming to a single PSAP, and with all dispatch operations being provided by this central communications center. This scenario resulted in a total cost savings of \$458,169.
2. All communities and agencies in Scenario 1, above, as well as the Town of Coeymans combine into a single communications center. This scenario resulted in a cost savings of \$561,434.
3. All communities and agencies in Scenario 2, above, as well as Guilderland, combine their call taking and dispatch operations at a single PSAP. This scenario resulted in a cost savings of \$727,057.

4. The City of Colonie and the Village of Menands combine their call taking and dispatch operations. This scenario resulted in a cost savings of \$864,868.

The project team has provided details of the analyses in the body of this report. The following chapter provides a Descriptive Profile of current operations, staffing, deployment and workload of the communities in Albany County.

1. PROFILE OF DISPATCH OPERATIONS IN THE COMMUNITIES PROVIDING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN ALBANY COUNTY

The pages, which follow, provide a Descriptive Profile of the communities providing emergency communications services in Albany County. The purpose of the Descriptive Profile is to document the project team's understanding of these Public Safety Answering Points' (PSAP), organization, allocation of staff by unit and function, and financial and budgetary information.

1. INTRODUCTION

The pages, which follow, provide a Descriptive Profile of the public safety answering points (PSAPs) in Albany County, including those in the City of Albany, the towns of Bethlehem, Coeymans, Cohoes, Colonie, Green Island, Guilderland, Menands, Watervliet, the New York State Police, and in the PSAP located in Voorheesville operated by the Albany County Sheriff. The purpose of the Descriptive Profile is to document the project team's understanding of these PSAPs', organization, allocation of staff by unit and function, financial and budgetary information, as well as equipment and technology. Data contained in this profile were developed based on the work conducted by the project team over the past weeks, including:

- Interviews with Chiefs and supervisory staff positions on location at the PSAPs.
- Collection of various data describing organization and staffing, workload and service levels as well as costs. These efforts will continue, as necessary, until development of the draft report.

The descriptive profile does not attempt to recapitulate all organizational and operational facets of the PSAPs – our work continues to document these characteristics. In this draft document, the structure of this descriptive profile is as follows:

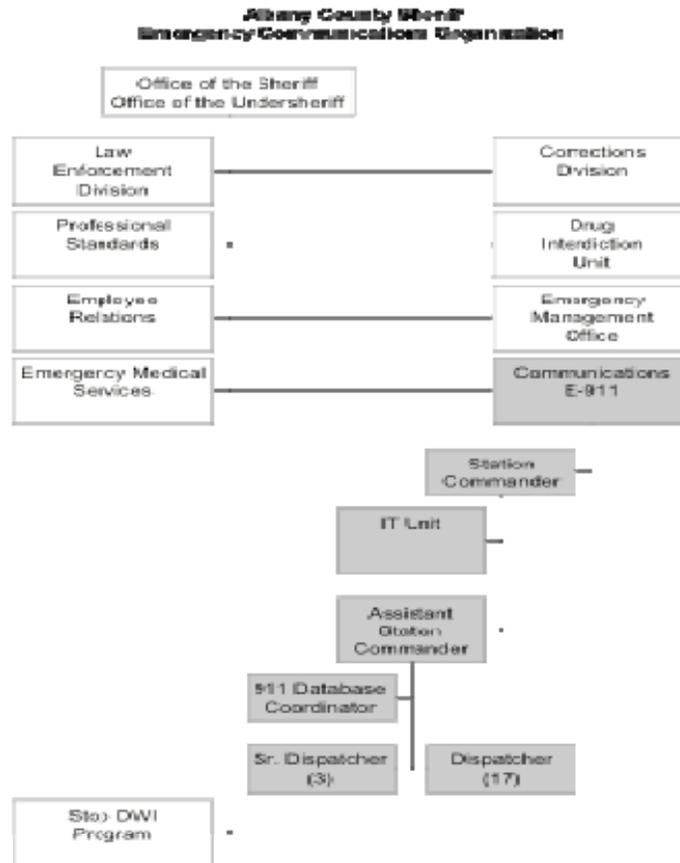
- Description of organizational structure, and description of appropriate reporting relationships.
- Summary descriptions of key roles and responsibilities of staff. It should be clearly noted that responsibility descriptions are not intended to be at the “job description” level of detail. Rather, the descriptions are intended to provide the basic nature of the job and including deployment and work schedules, major duties and responsibilities, and the like.
- Primary operational data describing work characteristics currently collected and associated with each PSAP. These are not yet all inclusive, but represent many important data elements.

These data are to be reviewed for accuracy and completeness by relevant staff at each PSAP and members of the Steering Committee. Comments and corrections generated from staff reviews will be incorporated into information presented in the draft report. Corrected information contained in the descriptive profile will be used in the analysis of issues during subsequent stages of the project.

2. ALBANY COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Albany County’s emergency communications function.

(1) Albany County Organizational Structure



(2) Albany County Sheriff Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Albany County Sheriff's Communications Center in Voorheesville.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Sr. Telecommunicator	3.0	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The position of Sr. Telecommunicator effectively functions as a Telecommunicator. See duties below.
Telecommunicator	14.0	14.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handles headquarters service desk. Receives complaints and 911 emergency calls and dispatches for the unincorporated areas of the County, as well as for the Hill Towns (Knox, Berne, Rensselaersville, Westerlo and New Scotland). Serves as primary PSAP for Watervliet, Cohoes, Green Island and Coeymans. Documents complaints in CAD or other means, and follows up on assignments and complaints. Dispatches ambulances and Paramedics, as well as fire apparatus and Police personnel. Operates radio communications. Receives, logs and takes appropriate actions on telephone calls. Reports unsecured buildings or enclosures to

			<p>owners/managers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports any serious injuries to the Sergeant on duty, or to others as directed. • Reports major crimes, or similar disturbance, or any procedural or operational defect to the Sergeant. • Reports any incident occurring outside the jurisdiction to the Sergeant. • Enter arrests, perform statistical works, make NYSPIN entries, enter warrants, etc. • Position works a 12 hour shift on a 3 on 2 off/ 2 on 3 off/ 2 on 2 off rotation.
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(3) Albany County Sheriff Budgetary Data

The Albany County Sheriff Emergency Communications FY 2011 budgetary information is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
Salaries	\$978,143
Sick Leave	\$16,000
Overtime Regular	\$122,000
Personal Leave	\$5,400
Shift Differential	\$10,000
Longevity	\$14,050
Health Insurance Buyout	\$3,000
Comp Time Buyout	\$1,000
Clothing Allowance	\$4,550
State Retirement	\$114,750
Social Security	\$88,300
Hospital and Medicare	\$159,520
TOTAL	\$1,516,813

Per the Agreement between Albany County and Albany County Non-Security Personnel Civil Service Employees Association, effective January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009 (the latest date for which the project team was provided an agreement), the following rates of pay apply to Communicator and Sr. Communicator.

Position	Base	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Telecommunicator	\$31,463	\$32,464	\$33,441	\$34,477	\$35,483	\$38,909	\$40,068
Sr. Telecommunicator	\$32,993	\$33,996	\$34,972	\$36,011	\$37,017	\$40,440	\$41,599

(4) Calls for Service

The Albany County Sheriff's Office answered 62,844 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been redistributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	1,640
0100	1,175
0200	1,006
0300	1,006
0400	742
0500	861
0600	1,149
0700	2,080
0800	2,344
0900	2,525
1000	2,734
1100	3,067
1200	3,293
1300	3,437
1400	3,840
1500	4,085
1600	4,154
1700	4,417
1800	4,286
1900	3,639
2000	3,675
2100	3,287
2200	2,382
2300	2,023
Total	62,844

In reviewing the call types included in the 62,844 calls in the table, it was determined that certain of these call types would be reduced, or even eliminated, in a consolidated communications center. These are as follows:

Call Type	Calls	Reduction through Consolidation
911 Transfer	15,513	7,757
Cancel/Duplicate	19	19
Notification	651	651
Property Check	19,145	19,145
Total	35,328	27,572

Note that the numbers of 911 transfers have been reduced only by half, whereas the other categories have been assumed to be eliminated entirely. This assumption is made because even under consolidation, certain 911 calls would be transferred, although a precise estimate is not possible. Note also that the 19,145 property checks have been assumed to be eliminated in a consolidated center. This is not strictly due to the consolidation, but we have assumed, in concert with the ACSO, that these could be conducted via mobile data terminals by field personnel with a change in policy and procedure. The resulting call distribution, less the noted call types, is as follows:

Hour	Calls
0000	1,437
0100	1,030
0200	881
0300	881
0400	648
0500	755
0600	1,007
0700	1,823
0800	2,055
0900	2,214
1000	2,396
1100	2,688
1200	2,887
1300	3,012
1400	3,366
1500	3,581
1600	3,641
1700	3,872
1800	3,757
1900	3,190
2000	3,223
2100	2,881
2200	2,088
2300	1,774
Total	55,087

The ACSO received a total of 5,869 fire/rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls is provided in the table below by hour of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	164
0100	147
0200	86
0300	82
0400	107
0500	72
0600	136
0700	243
0800	311
0900	322
1000	336
1100	340
1200	401
1300	343
1400	297
1500	347
1600	397
1700	322
1800	318
1900	315
2000	265
2100	218
2200	153
2300	147
Total	5,869

(5) Equipment and Technology

The Albany County Sheriff's Office has the following equipment and technology.

CAD System	Hi-Tech
Other Systems Utilized	NYSPIN
CAD Computers	Dell, Precision Work Station 390 – X86 based PC with x86 Family 6 Model 15 Stepping 6 Genuine Intel 2660 Mhz
Other Computers	NYSPIN Terminal – Dell Optiplex GX110, x86 based PC, x86 family 6 model 8 Stepping 10 Genuine Intel 931 Mhz
Radio Equipment	Zetron Model 4217B Audio Panel w/ Zetron IntegratorRD (20-1) software application on Touch Screen Monitor. Zetron Integrator Instant recorder software. Approximately 3 years old.

Transmitters and Repeaters	End of Tower Ln , off CR 303 AE Smith building, Off Washington Ave Pond Hill Rd 449 New Salem Rd 390 New Salem Rd Coeymans repeater Knox repeater Bald Mtn Crawford Hill Airport
Frequency Capabilities	KNBP858 – 159.36000, 151.32500, 155.37000, 155.47500, 155.62500 – Sheriffs Frequency WNAA609 – 153.89000 – Fire Frequency KNFA338 - 39.58000, 39.90000 - Highway WYA651 - 465.40000 – CDERN Airport ACU-1000 – Interoperability System

10. CITY OF ALBANY COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Albany’s emergency communications function.

(1) Albany Organizational Structure

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of the City of Albany’s emergency communications function. This chart reflects the organization and staffing only of the Communications function, and not its placement within the City’s Police Department structure.

City of Albany Fire-Alarm Communications Organizational Structure



(2) Albany Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of Albany's Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Dispatch Supervisor	3.0	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct activities of subordinate members for the purpose of achieving objectives of the Police and Fire Departments and Communications. • Perform those duties of the members of the force that are applicable to him/her. • When in uniform, maintain a professional bearing and render professional courtesy to superior officers; • Ensure the proper, efficient, and timely processing and dispatching of all calls for service to include police and fire departments and other agencies as required. • Ensure that all incoming and outgoing teletypes are handled in a timely and professional manner; • Review the schedule for his/her tour of duty and the following tour to ensure there is sufficient staffing to cover days off, sickness, vacation, etc., and posting of position assignments. • Make decisions regarding teletypes, dispatch, etc., and be responsible for those decisions should the occasion arise. In a field situation requiring a street supervisor, that supervisor will have the final

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK
Report on the Consolidated 911 Dispatch Feasibility Study

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision making authority; • Monitor and supervise the training of all personnel to ensure that all trainees are receiving accurate and timely information and professional training. Assist with training and assure trainers have and complete the appropriate training records; • Be the liaison between Communications personnel, department heads, field personnel, and the public at large in the absence of the Director. Field any complaints from field personnel, address same, and refer if necessary • Notify the Director as the need arises during any emergency. • Ensure all equipment is functioning properly • Instruct members under his/her supervision in their duties, current directives, and orders. Ensure accurate preparation, forwarding and maintenance of reports and records.
Senior Dispatcher	3.0	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior dispatchers are subordinate supervisors who are normally assigned a workstation. • Senior dispatchers are supervisory personnel and are responsible to act as such when working. They will assist the shift supervisor in the proper and efficient operation of Communications. In the absence of the supervisor, the senior dispatcher assumes responsibility for the shift and has the same duties and responsibilities of the supervisor. • When both a senior dispatcher and a supervisor are working the supervisor is responsible for the operation of said shift.
Dispatcher	34.0	34.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives incoming calls from public for emergency assistance • Identifies type and scope of assistance needed • Enters necessary information into CAD • Applies medical dispatching priority system when necessary • Reviews status of available vehicles, personnel and equipment through use of computer • Operates radio system to dispatch call to appropriate unit • Advises assigned personnel of changes in status of dispatched call and enters data in computer • Provides information to field personnel as situations dictate • Position works an 8-hour shift on a 5 on 2 off/ 5 on 2 off/ 4 on 2 off rotation. • Shifts are as follows: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm (minimum staffing = 8); 4:00 pm – 12:00 midnight (minimum staffing = 9); 12:00 midnight – 8:00 am (minimum staffing = 8)

The Supervisor makes daily assignments of dispatch personnel to four positions.

These positions are:

- E-Justice
- Switchboard
- Police Radio
- Fire Radio

The minimum staffing of the communications room includes two (2) Call Takers, two (2) Dispatchers on Police Radio and two (2) on Fire/EMS, for a total of six (6) personnel.

(3) Albany Budgetary Data

The Albany Emergency Communications FY 2010 adopted budgetary information is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
Personal Services	\$1,905,246
Equipment	\$5,000
Contractual Expenditures	\$700,000
Employee Benefits	\$662,266
TOTAL	\$3,272,512

According to the 2005 contract with the Albany Police Officers Union Local 2841, Law Enforcement Offices Union Council 82, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, the following wage scales apply to the telecommunications personnel in the City of Albany. (Note that the salaries shown below reflect those **in effect on January 1, 2005**, which the latest date is provided to the project team. These are assumed to be effective as of the current date).

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK
Report on the Consolidated 911 Dispatch Feasibility Study

Classification	Annual Salary
Senior Dispatcher	\$37,578
Dispatcher	
Hire Rate	\$30,287
After 1 Year of Service	\$31,559
After 2 Years of Service	\$32,898
After 3 Years of Service	\$34,304
After 4 Years of Service	\$35,789

(4) Calls for Service

The City of Albany answered 101,428 administrative calls in FY 2010. The following table provides Albany's reported emergency calls for service for FY 2010, by time of day and day of week.

Hour	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
0000	436	284	263	219	238	304	435	2,179
0100	457	143	175	178	180	252	374	1,759
0200	348	110	144	131	115	206	332	1,386
0300	316	94	114	115	116	137	304	1,196
0400	299	61	85	93	84	124	292	1,038
0500	141	70	92	81	93	94	173	744
0600	124	142	156	144	125	125	158	974
0700	136	214	233	303	258	231	143	1,518
0800	219	330	346	348	311	311	197	2,062
0900	300	382	382	418	369	395	279	2,525
1000	297	439	445	484	428	482	373	2,948
1100	373	490	490	456	467	433	448	3,157
1200	417	507	512	476	434	557	424	3,327
1300	503	512	532	529	426	514	467	3,483
1400	463	464	576	496	536	510	503	3,548
1500	412	620	608	613	516	605	471	3,845
1600	432	599	577	554	564	530	522	3,778
1700	478	622	610	613	587	511	491	3,912
1800	411	480	484	509	446	447	493	3,270
1900	439	520	467	469	464	505	469	3,333
2000	462	499	440	513	488	487	512	3,401
2100	410	436	413	452	441	494	513	3,159
2200	359	362	349	379	448	453	475	2,825
2300	301	270	320	313	370	457	459	2,490
Total	8,533	8,650	8,813	8,886	8,504	9,164	9,307	61,857

(5) Equipment and Technology

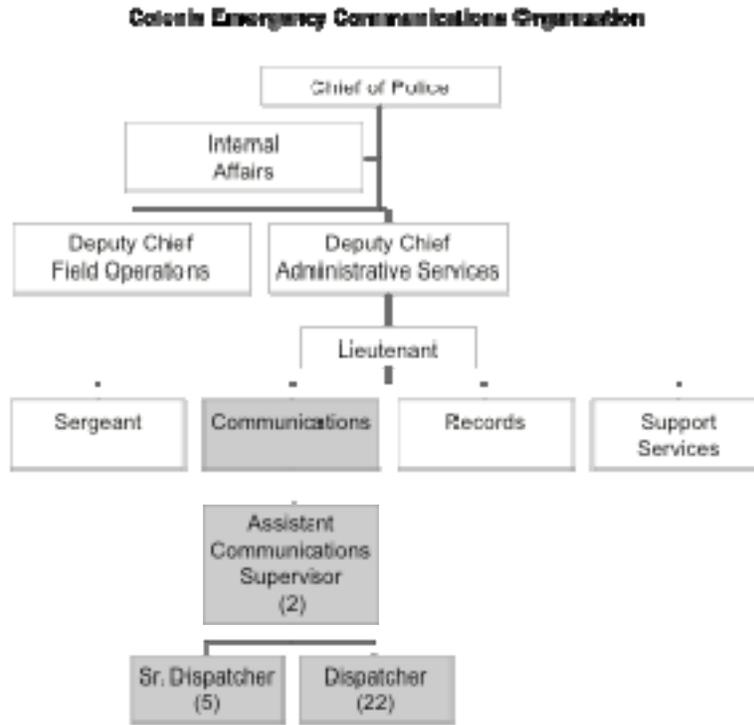
The City of Albany has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	Hi-Tech
Records Management System	
Other Systems Utilized	NYSPIN
CAD Computers	Dell, Precision Work Station 390 – X86 based PC with x86 Family 6 Model 15 Stepping 6 Genuine Intel 2660 Mhz
Radio Equipment	Zetron Model 4217B Audio Panel w/ Zetron IntegratorRD (20-1) software application on Touch Screen Monitor. Zetron Integrator Instant recorder software. Approximately 3 years old.
Transmitters and Repeaters	
Number of 911 Lines	
Number of 7-digit Lines	

4. COLONIE COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Colonie’s emergency communications function.

(1) Colonie Organizational Structure



(2) Colonie Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of Colonie's Communications Center:

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Assistant Communications Supervisor	2.0	2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops, prepares and maintains staffing schedules • Supervises division's payroll • Assists in interviewing and selecting dispatchers • Supervises orientation and training of new employees • Assists in the development and presentation of new hire training and in-service training • Conducts performance appraisals of dispatch staff • Represents town on professional and/or user committees • Oversees quality assurance standards • Prepares audio tape requests of radio and telephone communications as requested • Conducts analytical studies of the division • Participates in collective bargaining issues • May assume duties as a Sr. Dispatcher as needs arise

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK
Report on the Consolidated 911 Dispatch Feasibility Study

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Sr. Dispatcher	5.0	5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervises dispatchers on assigned shift • Assures that adequate staffing exists on assigned shift • Supports dispatchers on complex calls and situations • Monitors consoles of dispatchers • Acts as dispatcher as call volumes require • Monitors computer system for malfunctions • Initiates repair of computer systems as needs exist • Responds to requests for information of taped duplicates of radio transmissions or phone conversations • Monitors dispatchers to ensure compliance with standard operating procedures • Creates reports as required • Maintains records • Alleviates conflicts with field personnel or agencies • May respond to requests from various media
Dispatcher	22.0	22.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives incoming calls from public for emergency assistance • Identifies type and scope of assistance needed • Enters necessary information into CAD • Applies medical dispatching priority system when necessary • Reviews status of available vehicles, personnel and equipment through use of computer • Operates radio system to dispatch call to appropriate unit • Advises assigned personnel of changes in status of dispatched call and enters data in computer • Provides information to field personnel as situations dictate • When assigned to REMAC, monitors regional EMS radio communication system and acts to allow field personnel to communicate with physician • Advises ambulances of any known travel problems • When assigned to ENCON spill hotline, receives statewide calls for hazardous materials spills, requests information and conveys this to designated person or location • When assigned to information desk, greets persons, responds to questions, operates NYSPIN teletype and other assigned tasks.

(3) Colonie Budgetary Data

The Colonie Emergency Communications Proposed FY 2011 budgetary information is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
Salaries	\$1,679,302
Overtime	\$216,000
Annual Radio System Maintenance	\$254,000
Service Technician	\$40,000
Radio Repair	\$8,000
Equipment Replacement	\$10,000
Teletype, Phone	\$68,270
Tower Site Electricity	\$18,500
Radio System Upgrade	\$23,742
Consultant Fee	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$2,322,814

Wage scales for 2011 for Dispatchers are provided below:

Time in Class	Annual Pay
Entry	\$39,603
6 months – 3 years	\$48,513
3 Years	\$53,461
5 Years	\$55,767

Note that Senior Dispatchers in 2011 receive \$60,718 annually.

(4) Calls for Service

The Colonie Communications Center answered 85,935 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	1,916
0100	1,531
0200	1,298
0300	1,153
0400	911
0500	1,058
0600	1,478
0700	2,759
0800	3,361
0900	4,142
1000	4,701
1100	5,208
1200	5,578
1300	5,559
1400	5,569
1500	5,647
1600	5,620
1700	5,741
1800	5,311
1900	4,504
2000	3,858
2100	3,695
2200	2,974
2300	2,363
Total	85,935

Colonie answered 11,647 fire and rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls by hour of day is as follows:

Hour	Calls
0000	326
0100	291
0200	171
0300	163
0400	214
0500	142
0600	270
0700	482
0800	617
0900	638
1000	668
1100	674
1200	795
1300	681
1400	589
1500	688
1600	788
1700	639
1800	632
1900	625
2000	525
2100	433
2200	305
2300	291
Total	11,647

(5) Equipment and Technology

The Town of Colonie has the following equipment and technology:

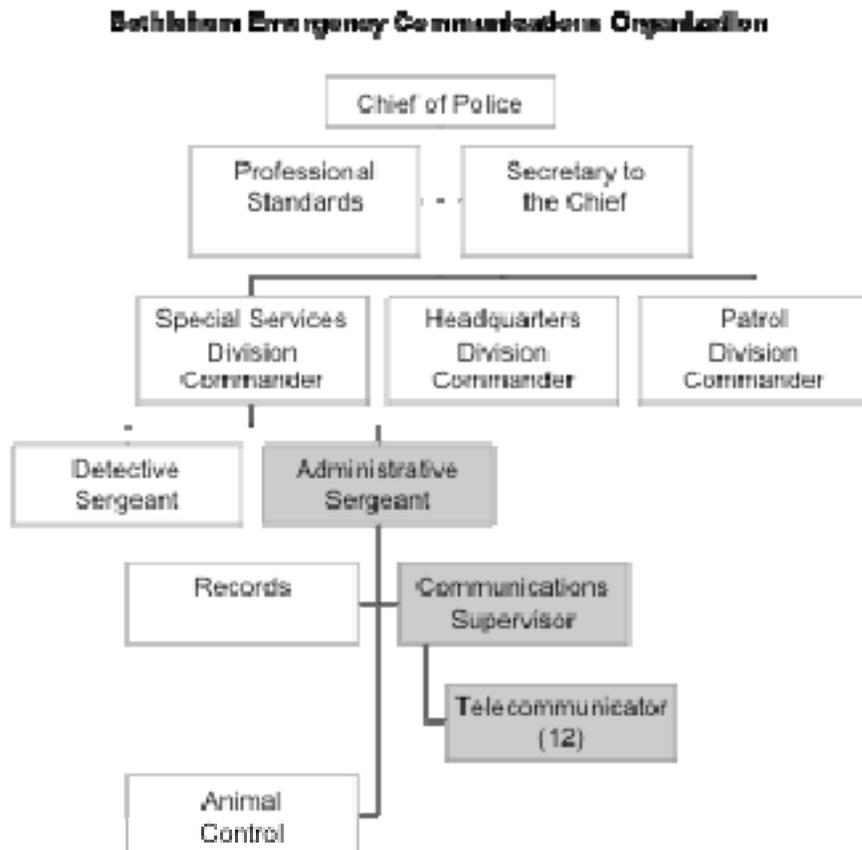
CAD System	Hi Tech
Records Management System	Hi Tech
Other Systems Utilized	AK Associates – phone system Siemens – Phone system to front desk and in-building use, which includes Octel voicemail (old)
CAD Computers	County supplied Dell computers
Radio Equipment	Motorola MCC7500 (installed Feb., 2008) 800 MHz Digital
Transmitters and Repeaters	4 radio sites
Number of 911 Lines	6 landline / 6 wireless
Number of 7-digit Lines	11 in radio room 5 at front desk

5. BETHLEHEM COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of the Town of Bethlehem's emergency communications function.

(1) Bethlehem Organizational Structure

The following reflects the authorized staffing levels and organizational structure for Bethlehem:



(2) Bethlehem Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Bethlehem Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Communications Supervisor	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts daily review including correction(s) and reviews with operators. • Develops and implements training criteria for new hires. • Develops dispatcher OT report bi-weekly and monthly. • Reports PT dispatcher hours worked monthly and bi-weekly. • Reports dispatcher time sheets for payroll.
Telecommunicator	12.0	12.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives, prioritizes, and dispatches all calls for Police, Fire and EMS. • Tracks and records all Police actions and radio transmissions. • Runs records for information from DMV, NCIC, DCJS, E-Justice and all other related agencies as directed. • Performs all duties related to Police calls for service as directed by patrol officers.

(3) Bethlehem Budgetary Data

The Bethlehem Emergency Communications FY 2009 budget (the latest year for which data were provided) was \$1,163,300. The table below shows the details of this budget.

Item	Amount
Personal Services	\$830,777
Fringe Benefits	\$276,573
Equipment	\$15,000
Contractual Expenses	\$40,950
Total	\$1,163,300

Dispatch personnel are compensated at the following levels (Note that rates below are reflective of the agreement dated 2006, which is the latest version provided to the project team).

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK
Report on the Consolidated 911 Dispatch Feasibility Study

Position	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Telecommunicator	\$34,862	\$36,582	\$38,708	\$40,397	\$42,397	\$44,743

Supervisors are compensated at the following 2006 rates.

Position	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Supervisor	\$46,795	\$49,352	\$51,816

(4) Calls for Service

Bethlehem answered 54,874 administrative calls in FY 2010. The following table provides Bethlehem's reported emergency calls for service for FY 2010, by time of day and day of week.

Hour	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
0000	30	11	19	14	14	7	20	115
0100	16	10	13	9	12	10	15	85
0200	16	14	11	9	10	17	14	91
0300	8	4	11	10	10	9	13	65
0400	18	9	7	8	10	3	9	64
0500	4	11	14	10	9	9	12	69
0600	21	17	21	21	22	15	13	130
0700	24	34	29	32	26	37	19	201
0800	23	27	38	31	32	42	27	220
0900	35	45	33	40	46	33	25	257
1000	38	41	40	58	31	50	35	293
1100	34	43	42	41	42	45	45	292
1200	22	42	40	51	44	41	40	280
1300	33	50	39	38	51	47	50	308
1400	48	41	44	48	47	45	42	315
1500	34	43	45	36	49	44	38	289
1600	39	52	43	45	46	51	42	318
1700	38	46	42	50	46	45	36	303
1800	25	40	51	57	41	55	36	305
1900	31	39	62	33	41	56	42	304
2000	45	39	37	42	43	40	39	285
2100	20	28	31	35	37	33	29	213
2200	15	23	15	30	26	21	30	160
2300	16	15	25	19	19	20	37	151
Total	633	724	752	767	754	775	708	5,113

(5) Equipment and Technology

Bethlehem has the following equipment and technology:

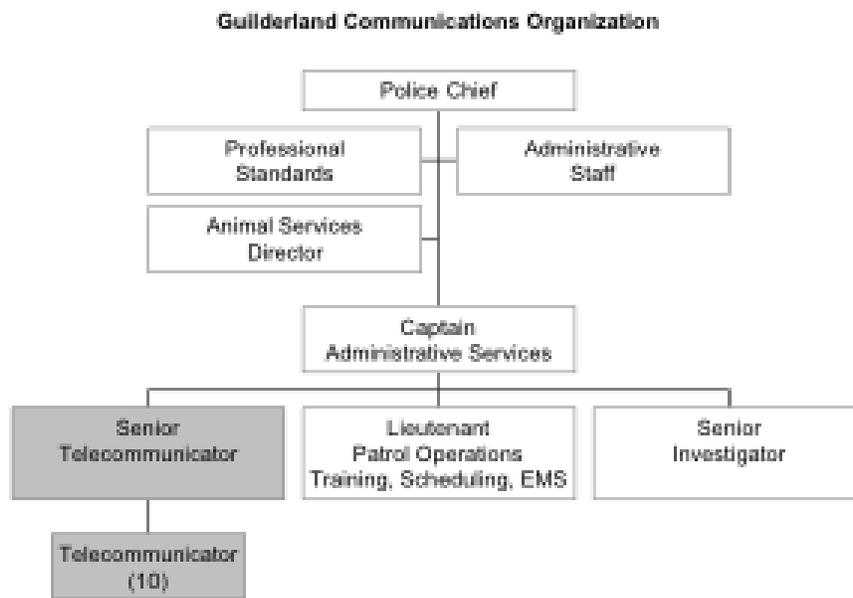
CAD System	New World – runs on town-wide shared IBM iSeries Sentinel software
Records Management System	New World – runs on town-wide shared IBM iSeries
Other Computers	8 PCs run Windows XP Pro SP3 Each position has 4 LCD monitors (total of 12) plus 2 more monitors at Supervisor’s seat
Transmitters and Repeaters	445 Delaware Avenue 504 Elm Avenue Clapper Road (Water Plant)
Number of 911 Lines	3
Number of 7-digit Lines	5
Frequency Capabilities	Police dispatch: 156.0900 Police Tactical: 154.1675 Fire Control-EMS: 155.9700 Fire 1 (assigned as needed): 154.2725 Fire 2 (assigned as needed): 154.3625 EMS 1 (assigned as needed): 154.3475 Town Gov’t/DPW, Highway: 155.8350 Local schools/Police intracomunications: 155.7525 Albany Co Fire Control/Countywide Interagency Fire: 155.890 Statewide Police frequency/Interagency Police comms.: 155.370 Capital District Emerg. Radio Network (b/t dispatch ctrs): 460.400

6. GUILDERLAND COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Guilderland’s Communications services.

(1) Guilderland Organizational Structure

The following reflects the authorized staffing levels and organizational structure for Guilderland.



(2) Guilderland Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Guilderland Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Senior Telecommunicator	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervises all Telecommunicators in the receiving and transmitting of calls. Verifies time records, scheduling and overtime requests from Telecommunicators. Verifies that reports are assembled and information is transmitted efficiently between shifts. Instructs new personnel and/or assigns new personnel for instruction on equipment, rules, regulations and job functions. Recommends remedial or disciplinary actions for inefficient, incompetent or unsuitable subordinates. Reviews the work of subordinates for accuracy, completeness, timeliness and conformance to policies and procedures. Prepares annual performance evaluations of subordinates. Acts as liaison to Guilderland Fire Chief's Association and Guilderland Emergency Medical Services for communications issues. Position works a 5 & 2 shift rotation.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Dispatcher	10.0	10.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handles headquarters service desk. • Receives complaints and 911 emergency calls. • Documents complaints in CAD or other means, and follows up on assignments and complaints. • Dispatches ambulances and Paramedics, as well as fire apparatus and Police personnel. • Operates radio communications. • Receives, logs and takes appropriate actions on telephone calls. • Reports unsecured buildings or enclosures to owners/managers. • Reports any serious injuries to the Sergeant on duty, or to others as directed. • Reports major crimes, or similar disturbance, or any procedural or operational defect to the Sr. Telecommunicator. • Reports any Police incident involving the GPD occurring outside the jurisdiction to the Sergeant on duty. • Enter arrests, perform statistical works, make NYSPIN entries, enter warrants, etc. • Position works a 5 & 2 shift rotation.

Other notable facets of work for Guilderland Telecommunications personnel include:

- There are no holding cells to monitor in the Guilderland PD.
- Although minimum staffing is two (2), there are typically three (3) Telecommunicators on duty. One answers Fire/EMS lines, one answers phones, and one answers Police lines. These assignments rotate the next day. Sundays from 3:00 pm till 11:00 pm are the only scheduled times during which two (2) Telecommunicators are on duty.
- Telecommunicators monitor nine (9) cameras positioned at various points on the Town Hall facility.
- Telecommunicators dispatch for the neighboring village of Altamont

(3) Guilderland Budget Data

The following table provides budgetary data for the Emergency Dispatch Center (Department 3020) for 2010:

Item	Amount
Salaries	\$473,490
Retirement	\$36,886
Insurance	\$60,284
Medicare/FICA	\$36,824
Overtime	\$49,173
Sick Incentive	\$2,000
Holiday Pay	\$13,768
Shift Differential	\$3,605
Tuition Reimbursement	\$2,000
Subtotal Personal Services	\$678,030
Equipment	\$12,000
Uniforms	\$2,900
Equipment Maintenance	\$6,500
Supplies	\$5,000
Uniform Cleaning	\$3,600
Radio Repairs	\$5,000
Radio/Consultant	\$10,000
TOTAL	\$723,030

The following table provides the salary schedules for the Telecommunicators and Senior Telecommunicator, effective in 2010:

Position	Hire	After 1 Year	After 2 Years	After 3 Years	After 4 Years	After 5 Years
Telecommunicator	\$34,677	\$35,909	\$37,134	\$38,363	\$39,597	\$42,854
Sr. Telecommunicator	\$51,003	\$53,464	\$54,826	\$58,381	\$60,838	\$63,365

(4) Calls for Service

The Guilderland Communications Center answered 26,777 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	552
0100	461
0200	426
0300	351
0400	340
0500	447
0600	519
0700	999
0800	1,191
0900	1,264
1000	1,521
1100	1,595
1200	1,564
1300	1,548
1400	1,711
1500	1,676
1600	1,687
1700	1,952
1800	1,490
1900	1,513
2000	1,234
2100	1,057
2200	1,020
2300	659
Total	26,777

Guilderland answered 5,897 fire and rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls by hour of day is as follows.

Hour	Calls
0000	165
0100	147
0200	87
0300	83
0400	108
0500	72
0600	137
0700	244
0800	313
0900	323
1000	338
1100	341
1200	403
1300	345
1400	298
1500	349
1600	399
1700	323
1800	320
1900	316
2000	266
2100	219
2200	155
2300	147
Total	5,897

(5) Equipment and Technology

Guilderland has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	HiTech
CAD Computers	Dell (3 consoles)
Other Computers	NYSPIN
Phone System	Sentinel (maintained by ACSO)
Radio Equipment	Motorola Centracom Series 2 – 24 years old Verient radio and phone recording (vendor: Carousel)
Transmitters and Repeaters	Tower located at Lasellette Seminary on Rte. 146 Another tower at Guilderland PD
Number of 911 Lines	4

Number of 7-digit Lines	3 – 7 digit 9 cell lines Extension line NYS power pool line
Frequency Capabilities	155.790 – Police frequency 154.220 – Fire frequency 154.250 – Fire frequency 158.295 – Channel 7 155.370 - MRD

6. NEW YORK STATE POLICE TROOP X COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of the New York State Police (NYSP) Troop X emergency communications function.

(1) NYSP Troop X Organizational Structure

The organizational structure for the NYSP Troop X communications function was not provided to the project team.

(2) NYSP Troop X Staff Positions

The New York State Police Troop X did not provide data related to roles and responsibilities of its telecommunications staff, however it reports that there are eight (8.0) such positions, and all positions are filled currently.

(3) NYSP Troop X Budgetary Data

The New York State Police Troop X did not provide budgetary data to the project team.

(4) Calls for Service

The New York State Police Troop X answered 225 administrative calls in FY 2010. The following table provides the New York State Police Troop X reported emergency calls for service for FY 2010, by time of day and day of week.

Hour	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
0000	4	0	1	0	1	3	6	15
0100	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	8
0200	1	0	0	1	0	0	5	7
0300	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
0400	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
0500	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
0600	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	5
0700	0	2	5	1	4	4	1	17
0800	0	13	12	4	8	12	1	50
0900	3	13	22	19	11	12	1	81
1000	0	15	15	13	21	15	10	89
1100	4	16	23	16	15	16	2	92
1200	4	15	9	24	22	18	2	94
1300	0	23	24	10	15	30	6	108
1400	5	11	16	10	15	17	8	82
1500	5	14	17	26	9	18	13	102
1600	3	18	12	18	22	12	6	91
1700	2	4	2	6	1	7	4	26
1800	0	9	3	8	17	3	6	46
1900	4	6	9	3	2	5	2	31
2000	2	0	1	5	2	5	2	17
2100	0	7	0	1	1	7	0	16
2200	0	0	2	0	3	7	3	15
2300	0	0	2	0	2	1	1	6
Total	41	168	178	168	172	196	80	1,003

(5) Equipment and Technology

The New York State Police Troop X has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	Safety Net
Records Management System	
Other Systems Utilized	State Police 911; Simplex Fire; EBI Fire; EBI Access; TPMS; Loronix Review
CAD Computers	2
Radio Equipment	2 Elite Dispatch
Transmitters and Repeaters	"N/A"
Number of 911 Lines	4
Number of 7-digit Lines	13
Station Licenses	"N/A"

7. TOWN OF COEYMANS COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Coeymans' emergency communications function.

(1) Coeymans Organizational Structure

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of the Town of Coeymans' emergency communications function. This chart reflects the organization and staffing only of the Communications function, and not its placement within the Town's Police Department structure.

Town of Coeymans Communications Organizational Structure



(2) Coeymans Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Town of Coeymans' Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Dispatcher	3.0 FT 10.0 PT	3.0 FT 10.0 PT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives 911 calls from primary PSAPs and dispatches Police, Fire and/or EMS personnel and equipment. Handles all information disseminated to Police through NYSPIN/E-Justice terminals Answers administrative lines for Police and Fire. Enters and cancels any teletypes for Police through NYSPIN terminal. Dispatchers also handle a variety of non-dispatch duties such as court paper work processing, filing incident reports, entering and canceling warrants, assisting the public at the front desk, and monitoring the booking area and hydro plant. Dispatchers work the following shifts, 7:00 am to 3:00 pm; from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm.; and from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am, Monday through Friday. On Saturdays and Sundays, Dispatchers work the following shifts: 7:00 am to 1:00 pm; from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm, and from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am. There is one Dispatcher per shift.

(3) Coeymans Budgetary Data

The Coeymans Police Department reports a total budget of \$230,218. The breakdown of the budget is presented in the table below.

Item	Amount
Salaries	\$183,430
Retirement	\$21,211
Health Insurance	\$11,438
Social Security	\$1,835
Medicare	\$12,304
Total	\$230,218

(4) Calls for Service

The Coeymans Communications Center answered 7,796 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the

percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	281
0100	105
0200	161
0300	126
0400	112
0500	154
0600	133
0700	309
0800	288
0900	344
1000	365
1100	442
1200	358
1300	393
1400	456
1500	435
1600	498
1700	519
1800	435
1900	428
2000	379
2100	351
2200	394
2300	330
Total	7796

Coeymans answered 1,264 fire and rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls by hour of day is as follows.

Hour	Calls
0000	35
0100	32
0200	18
0300	18
0400	23
0500	15
0600	29
0700	52
0800	67
0900	69
1000	72
1100	73
1200	86
1300	74
1400	64
1500	75
1600	85
1700	69
1800	69
1900	68
2000	57
2100	47
2200	33
2300	32
Total	1,264

(5) Equipment and Technology

The Town of Coeymans has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	Hi-Tech
Other Systems Utilized	NYSPIN
Number of 911 Lines	2
Number of 7-digit Lines	13

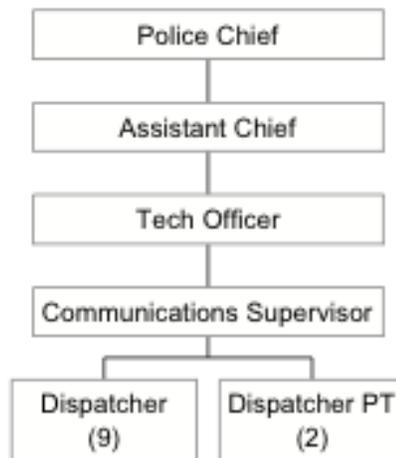
8. COHOES COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Cohoes' emergency communications function.

(1) Cohoes Organizational Structure

The following reflects the authorized staffing levels and organizational structure for Cohoes.

Cohoes Emergency Communications Organization



(2) Cohoes Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Cohoes Communications Center:

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Communications Supervisor	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervises the activities of Dispatchers on all shifts • Supervises the operation of two-way radio equipment, telephones, teletype, data entry and other means of electronic recording. • Performs clerical duties such as records filing, activity reports, statistical reports and other reports. • Attends training and trains other Dispatchers. • Responsible for deploying manpower and developing work schedules, approving time off requests, posting overtime, etc. • Works with Police and Fire Departments to assist in implementing policies and procedures that govern the activities of dispatch personnel. • Assists in recruiting new Dispatchers. • Performs daily inspections of the communications center and personnel and makes recommendations for repairs, changes and/or improvements. • Performs the duties of a Dispatcher when necessary. • Ensures that Dispatchers are performing their work professionally and competently. • Interacts with outside agencies for the purpose of researching and developing policies and procedures and to gain insight into new technologies and equipment. • Works a 5 & 2 shift rotation.
Dispatcher	9.0 2.0 pt	9.0 2.0 pt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers incoming calls from the public for information and/or Police, Fire, emergency medical, or other public safety agency assistance. • Operates two-way radio and communications equipment, transmitting to and receiving from Police, Fire field units, medical response units, and other public safety agencies. • Dispatches Police, Fire, medical and other public safety units to emergency and non-emergency situations. • Operates State Police computer system and receives and reviews incoming NYSPIN messages notifying Police, Fire, emergency medical personnel as appropriate. • Monitors emergency fire, burglary, robbery and medical alarms. • Monitors closed circuit TV equipment to ensure security of City Hall and prisoners in lockup. • Works a 5 & 2 shift rotation.

(3) Cohoes Budgetary Data

The Cohoes Emergency Communications FY 2010 budget is \$657,969. The table below shows the details of this budget.

Item	Amount
Dispatcher Salaries - FT	\$350,710
Dispatcher Salaries - PT	\$20,000
Health Insurance	\$76,659
Retirement	\$71,700
Social Security	\$35,000
Holiday Pay	\$40,500
Longevity	\$6,400
Sick Incentive	\$7,500
Overtime	\$40,000
Subtotal – Personal Services	\$648,469
Uniforms	\$5,000
Training, Travel	\$500
Communications Expenses	\$4,000
TOTAL	\$657,969

The following table provides hourly rate schedules for Dispatchers in Cohoes, effective January 1, 2010, and in effect until December 31, 2011, when a 3% increase goes into effect.

Hire	After 12 Months	After 24 Months	After 36 Months
\$12.17	\$15.43	\$16.95	\$18.47

(4) Calls for Service

The Cohoes Communications Center answered 15,672 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	503
0100	442
0200	351
0300	348
0400	201
0500	295
0600	291
0700	448
0800	580
0900	636
1000	633
1100	701
1200	878
1300	860
1400	848
1500	856
1600	965
1700	951
1800	1,022
1900	851
2000	868
2100	840
2200	630
2300	674
Total	15,672

Cohoes answered 3,142 fire and rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls by hour of day is as follows.

Hour	Calls
0000	88
0100	79
0200	46
0300	44
0400	57
0500	38
0600	73
0700	130
0800	167
0900	172
1000	180
1100	182
1200	215
1300	184
1400	159
1500	186
1600	212
1700	172
1800	170
1900	168
2000	142
2100	117
2200	82
2300	79
Total	3,142

(5) Equipment and Technology

Cohoes has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	HiTech
Records Management System	SJS
Other Computers	NYSPIN DVRs for video system
Radio Equipment	Three consoles are Zetron 4010 with expansion consoles that were replaced 4 years ago. Connected to 4 UHF radios with own antennae and 8 VHF transceivers connected to combiner for master antenna system.
Transmitters and Repeaters	Police, DPW and Citywide repeaters located at the water department on water towers. Fire repeater is located on Bald Mountain.
Number of 911 Lines	4 land line

	6 cell lines
Number of 7-digit Lines	7
Frequency Capabilities	Police – 155.610/ 158.910 KEB495 (Exp. 6/21/11) wide band Fire – 453.775/ 458.775 WPWM348 (Exp. 12/18/12) narrow band DPW – 155.955/ 158.955 KNDY301 (Exp. 10/2/12) wide band Citywide – 154.325/ 150.755 KGX504 (Exp. 2/26/12) wide band

9. GREEN ISLAND COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Green Island’s emergency communications function.

(1) Green Island Organizational Structure

Green Island Emergency Communications Organization



(2) Green Island Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of Green Island's Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Dispatcher – Part Time	11.0	11.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives 911 calls from primary PSAPs (landline transfer from Albany County Sheriff's Office, and cell calls from either the Sheriff's office or from Rensselaer County or State Police), and dispatches Police, Fire and/or EMS personnel and equipment. Handles all information disseminated to Police through NYSPIN/E-Justice terminals Answers administrative lines for Police and Fire. Enters and cancels any teletypes for Police through NYSPIN terminal. Dispatchers also handle a variety of non-dispatch duties such as court paper work processing, filing incident reports, entering and canceling warrants, assisting the public at the front desk, and monitoring the booking area and hydro plant. Dispatchers work the following shifts, 7:00 am to 3:00 pm; from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm.; and from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am, Monday through Friday. On Saturdays and Sundays, Dispatchers work the following shifts: 7:00 am to 1:00 pm; from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm, and from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am. There is one Dispatcher per shift. Although no direct data were provided to the project team regarding hourly rates, it is known that the direct salaries budgeted for Dispatchers in the current fiscal year are \$117,391. With 8,760 hours of coverage throughout the year, this equates to an hourly rate of \$13.40. All part time Dispatchers are non-union, and do not receive benefits.

(3) Green Island Budgetary Data

The Green Island Emergency Communications FY 2011 budgetary information is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
PT Salaries - LE	\$117,391
PT Dispatcher- Clerical LE	\$11,564
PT Dispatcher Overtime - LE	\$5,000
Clothing Allowance	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$134,955

(4) Calls for Service

The Green Island Communications Center answered 7,774 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	356
0100	178
0200	196
0300	248
0400	71
0500	125
0600	196
0700	214
0800	178
0900	462
1000	392
1100	588
1200	356
1300	356
1400	552
1500	499
1600	338
1700	356
1800	232
1900	321
2000	551
2100	392
2200	249
2300	338
Total	7,744

Green Island answered 581 fire and rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls by hour of day is as follows.

Hour	Calls
0000	16
0100	15
0200	8
0300	8
0400	11
0500	7
0600	13
0700	24
0800	31
0900	32
1000	33
1100	34
1200	40
1300	34
1400	29
1500	34
1600	39
1700	32
1800	31
1900	31
2000	26
2100	22
2200	15
2300	15
Total	581

(5) Equipment and Technology

The Village of Green Island has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	HITERM CAD and Sentinel 911 system with ALI map tracker. WEB RICI Colonie web CAD CAPS net with printer
Other Systems Utilized	NYSPIN E-Justice
Radio Equipment	ZETRON with multi channels

10. MENANDS COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of Menands' emergency communications function.

(1) Menands Organizational Structure

The following reflects the authorized staffing levels and organizational structure for Menands.

Memands Emergency Communications Organization



(2) Menands Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Menands Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Communications Supervisor	1.0	1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts daily call review including correction(s) and reviews with operators. • Develops and implements training criteria for new hires. • Develops dispatcher OT report bi-weekly and monthly. • Reports PT dispatcher hours worked monthly and bi-weekly. • Reports dispatcher time sheets for payroll. • Runs GPS reports as requested by administration. • Maintains phone listing of emergency numbers for all village employees and frequently-used vendors. • Develops property check monthly report. • Records audio/videos of arrests. • Backs up NYSPIN and archives daily. • Orders inventory and supplies. • Enters warrants. • Performs minor equipment repair.
Telecommunicator	3.0 FT 9.0 PT	3.0 9.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives, prioritizes, and dispatches all calls for Police, Fire and EMS. • Tracks and records all Police actions and radio transmissions. • Runs records for information from DMV, NCIC, DCJS, E-Justice and all other related agencies as directed. • Performs all duties related to Police calls for service as directed by patrol officers.

(3) Menands Budgetary Data

The Menands Emergency Communications FY 2010 budget is \$256,796. The table below shows the details of this budget.

Item	Amount
Salaries (FT Personnel)	\$125,146
Salaries (PT Personnel)	\$37,000
Overtime	\$10,500
Uniforms	\$2,500
Insurance	\$41,500
Social Security	\$12,900
Retirement	\$25,750
Equipment and Supplies	\$1,500
Total	\$256,796

Dispatchers receive the following hourly rates of pay:

Training	Part Time	Full Time	
\$12.50	\$13.92	\$19.11	\$22.00

(4) Calls for Service

The Menands Communications Center answered 8,202 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	229
0100	287
0200	115
0300	229
0400	86
0500	86
0600	171
0700	171
0800	316
0900	516
1000	287
1100	459
1200	288
1300	402
1400	344
1500	459
1600	516
1700	602
1800	516
1900	287
2000	602
2100	516
2200	287
2300	431
Total	8,202

Menands' fire and rescue calls are answered by the Guilderland Communications Center. These calls for service have been included in Colonie's table of calls.

(5) Equipment and Technology

Menands has the following equipment and technology.

CAD System	Hiterm/Albany PD
CAD Computers	1 PC = CAD, Sentinel 911, Mapping and Ali Trakker
Other Computers	1 PC = Audiolog recorder 1 PC = NYSPIN and E-Justice 1 PC = Sentinel 911 1 PC = Holding cell monitor
Radio Equipment	Motorola Command Star radio console (12-15 years old) 1 mobile radio – Motorola (3 years old)
Transmitters and Repeaters	Transmitter is Colonie microwave

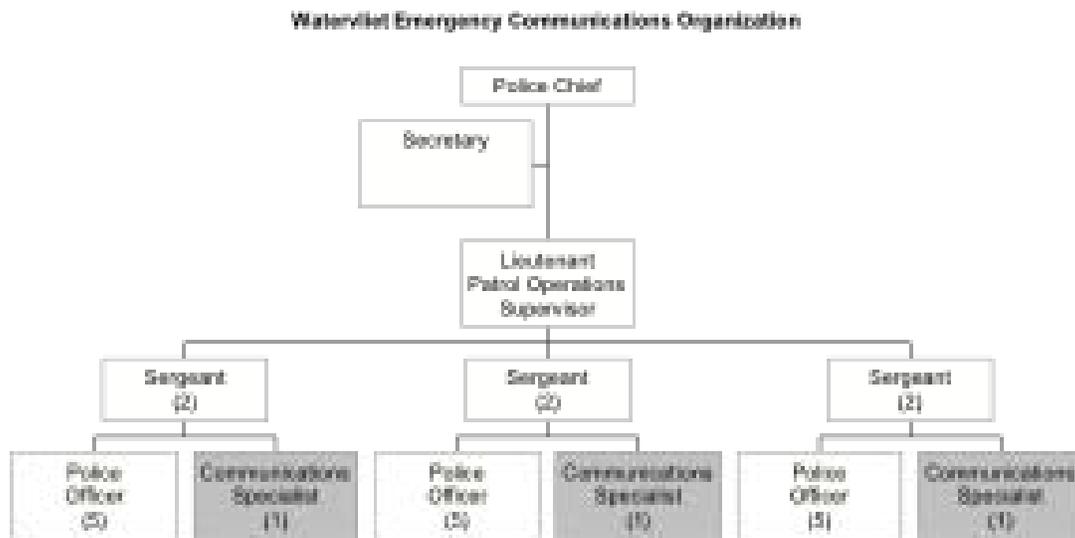
Number of 911 Lines	2 landline 2 cell
Number of 7-digit Lines	5
Frequency Capabilities	Menands operated under Colonie’s 800 system – used for Police, Fire, Colonie PD and Menands DPW Department. CEDERN County-wide communications with all CEDERN users.
Station Licenses	None – operated under Colonie PD license

11. WATERVLIET COMMUNICATIONS

The following provides an overview of the organization, staffing and responsibilities of the City of Watervliet’s emergency communications function.

(1) Watervliet Organizational Structure

The following reflects the authorized staffing levels and organizational structure for Watervliet:



(2) Watervliet Staff Positions

The following provides an overview of staffing and responsibilities of the Watervliet Communications Center.

Unit / Position	No. of Positions		Responsibilities
	Auth.	Current	
Telecommunications Specialist	3.0	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives police and emergency calls • Obtains, records and disseminates information • Dispatches police or fire emergency equipment and personnel needed via multi-frequency radio system • Operates two-way radio equipment and related communications equipment • Routes interdepartmental calls to the proper extension or line • Maintains radio contact with department employees, as well as with other departments and agencies as necessary • Composes and transmits messages for entry into information networks and systems via teletype keyboard terminal • Establishes and maintains appropriate records as required relating to all facets of the communications operation • Maintains a log of calls and messages received • Performs clerical work as assigned • Employees work one of three shifts on a 5 & 2 schedule. Shifts are: 12:00 am to 8:00 am; 8:00 am to 4:00 pm; and 4:00 pm to 12:00 pm.

It should be noted that currently, Police Officers fill weekend shifts, however the most recent collective bargaining agreement gives the Police Department the authority to fill these positions with civilian part-time staff. These part-time positions have not been filled as of the time of this study, however.

(3) Watervliet Budgetary Data

The Watervliet Emergency Communications FY 2010 budget information is provided in the table below:

Item	Amount
Dispatcher Regular Pay	\$128,669
Dispatcher Overtime Pay	\$4,000
Insurance (Health, Life)	\$14,585
Retirement	\$20,364
Social Security (at 7.65% of sals.)	\$10,149
Uniforms	\$1,920
Total	\$179,687

Per the Agreement between the City of Watervliet and the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc., Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, the following hourly rates of pay apply to Telecommunications Specialists for 2010.

Position	Hire	18 – 36 Months	Over 36 Months
Telecommunications Specialist	\$15.31	\$16.65	\$18.31

(4) Calls for Service

The Watervliet Communications Center answered 11,793 law enforcement calls for service in 2010. The project team did not obtain the distribution of these calls by hour of day and day of week, however we were provided a data set that included this distribution, and the data below have been distributed in accordance with the percentages of hourly calls for service in that data set. The following table provides the breakdown of these calls by hours of day.

Hour	Calls
0000	366
0100	268
0200	328
0300	320
0400	289
0500	190
0600	320
0700	320
0800	388
0900	388
1000	427
1100	663
1200	670
1300	564
1400	617
1500	777
1600	701
1700	586
1800	731
1900	685
2000	701
2100	724
2200	374
2300	396
Total	11,793

Watervliet answered 1,250 fire and rescue calls for service in 2010. The distribution of these calls by hour of day is as follows.

Hour	Calls
0000	35
0100	31
0200	18
0300	18
0400	23
0500	15
0600	29
0700	52
0800	66
0900	69
1000	72
1100	72
1200	85
1300	73
1400	63
1500	74
1600	85
1700	69
1800	68
1900	67
2000	56
2100	47
2200	33
2300	31
Total	1,250

(5) Equipment and Technology

Watervliet has the following equipment and technology:

CAD System	3 Dell (20" monitors) Precision 390 Hitech software
Other Systems Utilized	NYSPIN, Sentinel
Other Computers	Dell Dimensions 3100, 20" monitor for records and E-Justice
Radio Equipment	Consoles: Motorola MCC 5500 HP workstation XW 4200
Number of 911 Lines	2 landline 2 cell
Number of 7-digit Lines	3

13. SUMMARY

In summary, the agencies in this study handled 370,874 administrative calls, and 131,979 emergency calls for services in the time period covered, as the table below shows:

Agency	Administrative Calls	E-911 CFS	Total Calls
ACSO	41,245	21,187	62,432
Albany	101,428	61,857	163,285
Bethlehem	54,874	5,113	59,987
Coeymans	2,000 *	1,111	3,111
Cohoes	7,797 *	4,679	12,476
Colonie	92,199	28,406	120,605
Green Island	1,342	435	1,777
Guilderland	66,264	6,354	72,618
Menands	500 *	286	786
Watervliet	3,000 *	1,548	4,548
NYSP	225	1,003	1,228
Total	370,874	131,979	502,853

* - Estimated figures.

2. ANALYSIS OF CONSOLIDATION ALTERNATIVES

This chapter provides an analysis of workload and staffing requirements for consolidated dispatch centers under various scenarios. The staffing analyses are based on a methodology developed by the Association of Public-Safety Communication Officers (APCO) and take into consideration the unique services provided by the Communications Section in the PSAPs operating in Albany County. The APCO methodology contains formulas that are used in this report to estimate staffing needs and to compare current staffing with estimated levels by evaluating the available hours employees actually work, employee turnover rates, functions and hours that need to be covered and emergency calls and dispatch incidents. The formulas enabled the study team to address the following functions performed by the Center:

- Supervisory requirements.
- Specialized requirements including hardware and software maintenance, training and quality assurance.
- Call-taking from the E-911 telephone system and from the law enforcement departments' 10-digit telephone lines.
- Emergency Medical Dispatching instructions.
- Emergency dispatching of EMS, Fire and Police responders.

The project team believes the staffing analysis in this report can be used not only to estimate current staffing needs in the scenarios analyzed, but also to estimate future needs as emergency communications centers grow and their public safety needs change. This chapter is organized as follows:

- Call Taker and Dispatcher availability.

- Scenario analysis
- Staffing for “call volume” positions.
- Total staff requirements.
- Communications staff turnover.
- Staff workload and staffing.

The following section details the net availability of staff assigned in the center based on their actual use of sick, vacation and other forms of leave.

1. CALL TAKER AND DISPATCHER AVAILABILITY

This section of the chapter calculates the extent to which Communications personnel are available for work annually. Availability is a function of the number of hours personnel are scheduled to work minus scheduled and unscheduled leave (Vacation, holiday and sick time), training time and daily lunch and work breaks. The table, on the next page, categorizes the amount of time Communications personnel are actually available for duty in the Center.

Call Taker and Dispatcher Availability

Net Available Hours	Hours	% Of Hours	Notes
A. Total Scheduled Hours	2,080	100.0%	40 hour week
B. Average Vacation/Holiday Leave	232	11.2%	
C. Average Sick Leave/FMLA	80	3.8%	10 days per year
D. Average Personal Leave	0	0.0%	
E. Average Training Leave	40	1.9%	
F. Average Military Leave	0	0.0%	
G. Average Lunch/Breaks	193	9.3%	1 hour per day - days off
H. Average Meetings	46	2.2%	Meetings, admin work
I. Total Unavailable Hours	591	28.4%	
J. Net Available Hours	1,489	71.6%	Scheduled – unavailable hours
K. Personnel needed to cover one, 24 hour position daily	5.9		8,760 hours per year ÷ by net available hours

The following points summarize information about Dispatcher availability:

- Communications personnel are scheduled to work 2,080 hours annually composed of 40 hours per week. Personnel in the ACSO Communications Center work 12-hour shifts. The shift rotation consists of a 3 on-2 off, 2 on-3 off, 2 on-2 off schedule that results in an individual Telecommunicator working seven (7) days of every 14. Therefore, in the first week of a two-week schedule, a Telecommunicator works 60 hours, but gets paid for 40. In the second week, the same Telecommunicator works 24 hours, and also gets paid for 40. This Telecommunicator, then, has worked 84 hours and gotten paid for 80, with four (4) hours going into a Kelly Day “bank”. After the accumulation of 16 such hours, the Telecommunicator must take these hours as time off. This rotation effectively results in the Telecommunicator working an average of 40 hours per week over the course of a year, or 2,080 hours. This shift rotation is assumed to prevail in the first three scenarios in the study, as will be presented in a later chapter. For Scenario 4, involving Colonie and Menands, the standard 5 and 2 shift rotation is assumed, which also results in dispatch personnel working 2,080 hours per year.
- Communications personnel are not available for duty for 591 of the 2,080 hours they are scheduled to work annually because of time off for vacation, holiday, sick, training and daily breaks. This amounts to 28.4% of their scheduled annual hours.
- Communications personnel are available for work for 1489 hours annually – 71.6% of their scheduled time. It takes 5.9 Communications personnel to fill one duty slot daily around the clock annually.

These factors will be used in determining staffing needs in the following section describing the scenarios analyzed.

2. THE PROJECT TEAM ANALYZED SEVERAL SCENARIOS FOR CONSOLIDATION OF COMMUNICATIONS IN THE COUNTY.

The project team performed analyses of four different options for consolidating emergency communications in the County. (It should be noted that the Town of Bethlehem was not included in these scenarios due to the different CAD system in use in that agency). These included the following:

- **Scenario 1:** Consolidation of the law enforcement and fire/rescue dispatch operations of Albany County with Green Island, Cohoes and Watervliet.
- **Scenario 2:** Consolidation of law enforcement and fire/rescue dispatch operations for Albany County with Green Island, Cohoes, Watervliet, and Coeymans.
- **Scenario 3:** Consolidation of law enforcement and fire/rescue dispatch operations for Albany County with Green Island, Cohoes, Watervliet, Guilderland and Coeymans.
- **Scenario 4:** Consolidation of law enforcement and fire/rescue dispatch operations for the City of Colonie and the Village of Menands.

These options are intended to be illustrative. There are many other alternative arrangements that could be considered. The following subsections provide the project team's analysis of each alternative.

3. THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER HAS STAFFING NEEDS FOR VARIOUS FULL-TIME COVERAGE POSITIONS THAT ARE NOT 911 WORKLOAD DEPENDENT.

The APCO model identifies two types of communication staffing needs: coverage positions that must be filled regardless of the workload in an organization, and staff needs based on the volume of calls and dispatches processed by the Communications Center. This section of the chapter discusses the staffing needs for the following coverage positions.

- **Administrative and support personnel** – The project team has, in all four scenarios presented in this study, assumed that existing management, supervision and information technology support staff would be utilized. Therefore, there has been no additional cost assumed under any scenario for these positions.
- **Dispatch floor personnel who are directly involved in processing calls**, to include a supervisor who would be responsible for supervising Call Takers and Dispatchers and for supporting overload needs in the center. In each of the four scenarios presented in this study, it is assumed that existing supervisors would be utilized, and therefore no additional supervisors would be required.

The next section discusses the positions whose numbers depend upon workload volumes.

4. THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER ALSO HAS STAFFING NEEDS FOR CALL TAKER AND DISPATCH POSITIONS THAT ARE DEPENDENT ON THE LEVEL OF WORKLOAD HANDLED BY THE CENTER

This section of the chapter discusses Call Taker and Dispatcher staffing needs separately because the functions are significantly different and the amount of work and time needed to perform each function varies.

(1) The First Scenario Analyzes Call Taker and Dispatcher Requirements in a Consolidated Communications Center That Combines the Operations of Albany County, Cohoes, Green Island and Watervliet.

The first scenario assumes that the ACSO and the communities of Cohoes, Green Island and Watervliet would consolidate all communications under the ACSO. The following exhibit uses information about the workload of the Call Takers in the four agencies to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Call Taker Staffing Calculation
Scenario 1 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		Call workload (101,138) for Law Enforcement and Fire/Rescue
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	63,372	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	37,766	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.5 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	24.0	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	2,641	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	1,574	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	3.5 (4 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2.1 (3 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	7 FTEs	$D \div G$

As the table shows, there are an estimated seven (7) Call Takers required to process incoming emergency calls for the agencies included in this scenario.

. The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Law Enforcement Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Law Enforcement Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 1 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		Law Enforcement Answers Calls + Radio transmissions, estimated at 50% of emergency CFS (105,722)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	64,995	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	40,727	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	$60 \div B$
D. Number Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	2,925	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	1,833	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	3.9 (4 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2.5 (3 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	7 FTEs	$D \div G$

The calculation results in an estimate that the Communications Center would need a total of seven (7) Law Enforcement Dispatchers. However, although this number is sufficient to process the actual workload, as a practical matter, there is a need for greater number of Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. This requires a further calculation that accounts for the availability of Dispatcher positions seven (7) days of every 14, which is 50.0% of the time. Dividing the calculated figure of eight (8) Call Takers and Dispatchers on the first shift (i.e., 0700 – 1900) by this shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 16 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers ($8 / 0.5$). On the second shift (i.e., 1900 – 0700), there was a calculated total of six (6) required Call Takers and Dispatchers. Dividing the calculated figure of six (6) Call Takers and Dispatchers on this shift by the shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 12 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers ($6 / 0.5$).

The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 1 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Fire/Rescue Calls for Service (10,842)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	7,347	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	3,495	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	331	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	157	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	0.4 (1 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	0.2 (1 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	2 FTEs	$D \div G$

The calculation in the table results in a requirement for two (2) FTEs to cover the workload generated by the four agencies' Fire/Rescue calls for service. However, as was the case, above, for Law Enforcement Call Takers and Dispatchers, there is a need for greater number of Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. Dividing the calculated number of a single Dispatcher on each shift by the shift availability factor yields a requirement for two (2) Dispatchers to cover the 7-day schedule per week, or four (4) total Fire/Rescue Dispatchers.

The resulting costs of the resources required in Scenario 1 are presented in the table below, with a comparison to current costs.

**Summary of Financial Requirements
Consolidated Communications Center
ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet**

Element	Number	Cost
Total Current Positions:		\$2,489,424
Full Time	30	
Part Time	13	
Total Scenario Law Enforcement Dispatcher and Call Taker Positions	28	\$1,601,215
Total Scenario Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Positions	4	\$228,745
Variance	18	(\$458,169)

Note that in calculating the costs for Call Takers and Dispatchers, the project team has assumed that the salaries paid by the Albany County Sheriff's Office prevail. This assumption is made because it is also assumed that the assumption of emergency communications service by the ACSO of those services currently provided by Cohoes, Green Island and Watervliet would result in a transfer of service, thereby effectively making any additional staff hired by the ACSO from the incoming agencies ACSO employees. The current salary for an ACSO Telecommunicator is \$40,068. With benefits calculated at 43% of salaries, this results in a total annual cost of one dispatch staff member of \$57,186.

As the above table shows, the consolidation of the four agencies' communications functions would result in a cost savings of \$458,169 compared to the current costs of the separate agencies. Assuming the incremental costs and cost savings would be shared by the three agencies merging into the ACSO Emergency Communications Center on the basis of their relative shares of the all volumes, these cost savings are presented in the table below for each of the three agencies.

Cost Comparison
Scenario 1 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet

Agency	CFS	CFS Share	Cost Savings
Cohoes	18,814	46.8%	\$214,423
Green Island	8,325	20.7%	\$94,841
Watervliet	13,043	32.5%	\$148,905
Total	40,182	100.0%	\$458,169

As the table shows, each of the three towns show cost savings under the assumptions of this scenario, with Cohoes experiencing the greatest proportion of these, due to its share of the total call volume.

The next scenario the project team examined involved the addition of Coeymans to the Communications Center at the Albany County Sheriff’s Office in Voorheesville.

(2) The Second Scenario Builds upon the First by Adding Coeymans.

Scenario 2 assumes that the communities of Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet and Coeymans would transfer all emergency communications functions to the ACSO. This scenario builds upon Scenario 1 by adding the Town of Coeymans. All assumptions made under Scenario 1 (in which the communities of Cohoes, Green Island and Watervliet transfer communications operations to the ACSO) are valid for this scenario regarding Call Taker and Dispatcher availability, compensation levels, and the APCO assumptions related to fixed and variable staffing needs, including the requirement for a minimum of one Fire/EMS Dispatcher at all times.

The following exhibit uses information about the workload of the Call Takers in the four agencies to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Call Taker Staffing Calculation
Scenario 2 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Coeymans

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		Call workload (110,198) for Law Enforcement and Fire/Rescue
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	69,069	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	41,129	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.5 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	24.0	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	2,878	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	1,714	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	3.9 (4 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2.3 (3 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	7 FTEs	$D \div G$

As the table shows, there are an estimated seven (7) Call Takers required to process incoming emergency calls for the agencies included in this scenario.

. The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Law Enforcement Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Law Enforcement Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 2 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Coeymans

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Law Enforcement + Radio transmissions, estimated at 50% of emergency CFS (117,416)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	72,258	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	45,158	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	3,252	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2,032	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	4.4 (5 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2.7 (3 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	8 FTEs	$D \div G$

The calculation results in an estimate that the Communications Center would need a total of eight (8) Law Enforcement Dispatchers. However, as was the case in Scenario 1, there is a need for greater number of Call Takers and Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. This requires a further calculation that accounts for the availability of Call Taker and Dispatcher positions seven (7) days of every 14, which is 50.0% of the time. Dividing the calculated figure of nine (9) Call Takers and Dispatchers on the first shift (i.e., 0700 – 1900) by this shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 18 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers ($9 / 0.5$). On the second shift (i.e., 1900 – 0700), there was a calculated total of six (6) required Call Takers and Dispatchers. Dividing the calculated figure of six (6) Call Takers and Dispatchers on this shift by the shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 12 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers ($6 / 0.5$).

. The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 2 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Coeymans

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Fire/Rescue Calls for Service (12,106)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	8,202	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	3,904	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	369	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	176	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	0.5 (1 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	0.2 (1 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	2 FTEs	$D \div G$

The calculation in the table results in a requirement for two (2) FTEs to cover the workload generated by the four agencies' Fire/Rescue calls for service. However, as was the case, above, for Law Enforcement Call Takers and Dispatchers, there is a need for greater number of Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. Dividing the calculated number of a single Dispatcher on each shift by the shift availability factor yields a requirement for two (2) Dispatchers to cover the 7-day schedule per week, or four (4) total Fire/Rescue Dispatchers.

The resulting costs of the resources required in Scenario 2 are presented in the table below, with a comparison to current costs.

Summary of Financial Requirements
Consolidated Communications Center
ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Coeymans

Element	Number	Cost
Total Current Positions:		\$2,719,642
Full Time	33	
Part Time	23	
Total Scenario Law Enforcement Dispatcher and Call Taker Positions	30	\$1,715,587
Total Scenario Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Positions	4	\$228,745
Variance	22	(\$561,434)

As the table shows, the consolidation of the four agencies' communications functions would result in a cost savings of \$561,434 compared to the current costs of the separate agencies. Assuming the incremental costs and cost savings would be shared by the four agencies merging into the ACSO Emergency Communications Center on the basis of their relative shares of the all volumes, these cost savings are presented in the table below for each of the three agencies.

Cost Comparison
Scenario 2 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Coeymans

Agency	CFS	CFS Share	Cost Savings
Coeymans	9,060	18.4%	\$103,304
Cohoes	18,814	38.2%	\$214,468
Green Island	8,325	16.9%	\$94,882
Watervliet	13,043	26.5%	\$148,780
Total		100.0%	\$561,434

As the table shows, each of the four agencies show cost savings under the assumptions of this scenario, with Cohoes experiencing the greatest proportion of these, due to its share of the total call volume.

The next scenario the project team examined involved the addition of Guilderland to the consolidated Communications Center.

(3) The Third Scenario Builds upon the Second Scenario by Adding Guilderland.

Scenario 3 assumes that the communities of Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Guilderland and Coeymans would transfer all communications to the ACSO. This scenario builds upon Scenario 2 by adding Guilderland. All assumptions made under Scenarios 1 and 2 are valid for this scenario regarding Call Taker and Dispatcher availability, compensation levels, and the APCO assumptions related to fixed and variable staffing needs, including the requirement for a minimum of one Fire/EMS Dispatcher at all times.

The following exhibit uses information about the workload of the Call Takers in the four agencies to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Call Taker Staffing Calculation
Scenario 3 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Guilderland and Coeymans

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		Call workload (142,872) for Law Enforcement and Fire/Rescue
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	91,263	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	51,609	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.5 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	24.0	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	3,803	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2,150	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	5.1 (6 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2.9 (3 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	9 FTEs	$D \div G$

As the table shows, there are an estimated nine (9) Call Takers required to process incoming emergency calls for the agencies included in this scenario.

. The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Law Enforcement Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Law Enforcement Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 3 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Guilderland and Coeymans

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Law Enforcement + Radio transmissions, estimated at 50% of emergency CFS (153,644)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	96,879	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	56,765	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	4,360	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2,554	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	5.9 (6 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	3.4 (4 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	10 FTEs	$D \div G$

The calculation results in an estimate that the Communications Center would need a total of ten (10) Law Enforcement Dispatchers. However, as was the case in Scenario 1, there is a need for greater number of Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. This requires a further calculation that accounts for the availability of Dispatcher positions seven (7) days of every 14, which is 50.0% of the time. Dividing the calculated figure of 12 Call Takers and Dispatchers on the first shift (i.e., 0700 – 1900) by this shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 24 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers ($12 / 0.5$). On the second shift (i.e., 1900 – 0700), there was a calculated total of seven (7) required Call Takers and Dispatchers.

Dividing the calculated figure of seven (7) Call Takers and Dispatchers on this shift by the shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 14 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers (7 / 0.5).

The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 3 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Guilderland and Coeymans

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Fire/Rescue Calls for Service (18,003)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	12,198	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	5,805	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	60 ÷ B
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		A ÷ C
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	549	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	261	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	E x F
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	0.7 (1 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	0.4 (1 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	2 FTEs	D ÷ G

The calculation in the table results in a requirement for two (2) FTEs to cover the workload generated by the four agencies' Fire/Rescue calls for service. However, as was the case, above, for Law Enforcement Call Takers and Dispatchers, there is a need for greater number of Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. Dividing the calculated number of a single Dispatcher on each shift by the shift availability factor yields a requirement for two (2) Dispatchers to cover the 7-day schedule per week, or four (4) total Fire/Rescue Dispatchers.

The resulting costs of the resources required in Scenario 3 are presented in the table below, with a comparison to current costs.

Summary of Financial Requirements
Consolidated Communications Center
ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Guilderland, Coeymans

Element	Number	Cost
Total Current Positions:		\$3,442,672
Full Time	44	
Part Time	23	
Total Scenario Law Enforcement Dispatcher and Call Taker Positions	36	\$2,201,850
Total Scenario Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Positions	4	\$244,650
Operational Cost at Scenario Staff Level		\$2,715,615
Variance	27	(\$727,057)

As the table shows, the consolidation of the four agencies' communications functions would result in a cost savings of \$727,057 compared to the current costs of the separate agencies.

Assuming the incremental costs and cost savings would be shared by the four agencies merging into the ACSO Emergency Communications Center on the basis of their relative shares of the all volumes, these cost savings are presented in the table below for each of the three agencies.

Cost Comparison
Scenario 3 – ACSO, Cohoes, Green Island, Watervliet, Guilderland, Coeymans

Agency	CFS	CFS Share	Cost Savings
Coeymans	9,060	11.1%	\$80,704
Cohoes	18,814	23.0%	\$167,224
Green Island	8,325	10.2%	\$74,160
Guilderland	32,674	39.9%	\$290,097
Watervliet	13,043	15.9%	\$115,602
Total	81,916	100.0%	\$727,057

As the table shows, each of the four agencies show cost savings under the assumptions of this scenario, with Guilderland experiencing the greatest proportion of these, due to its share of the total call volume.

The next scenario the project team examined involved the addition of Guilderland to the consolidated Communications Center.

(4) The Fourth Scenario Combines the Communications Centers at Colonie and Menands.

Scenario 4 assumes that Colonie and the Village of Menands would consolidate their communications services. All assumptions made under Scenarios 1, 2 and 3 are valid for this scenario regarding Call Taker and Dispatcher availability, compensation levels, and the APCO assumptions related to fixed and variable staffing needs, including the requirement for a minimum of one Fire/EMS Dispatcher at all times. Further, it is also assumed that should the two agencies consolidate, the consolidated center would utilize existing management and information technology support staff.

The following exhibit uses information about the workload of the Call Takers in the four agencies to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Call Taker Staffing Calculation
Scenario 4 – Colonie and Menands

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		Call workload (105,784) for Law Enforcement and Fire/Rescue
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	71,963	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	33,821	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.5 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	24.0	$60 \div B$
D. Number Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	2,998	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	1,409	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	4.1 (5 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	1.9 (2 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	7 FTEs	$D \div G$

As the table shows, there are an estimated seven (7) Call Takers required to process incoming emergency calls for the agencies included in this scenario.

The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Law Enforcement Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Law Enforcement Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 4 – Colonie and Menands

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Law Enforcement + Radio transmissions, estimated at 50% of emergency CFS (141,206)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	96,108	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	45,098	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	60 ÷ B
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		A ÷ C
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	4,325	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2,029	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	E x F
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	5.8 (6 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	2.7 (3 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	9 FTEs	D ÷ G

The calculation results in an estimate that the Communications Center would need a total of nine (9) Law Enforcement Dispatchers. However, as was the case in Scenarios 1, 2 and 3, there is a need for greater number of Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations on a 7-day per week basis. This requires a further calculation that accounts for the availability of Dispatcher positions five (5) days of every seven (7), which is 71.4% of the time. (Note that, unlike the ACSO Communications Center, Colonie Dispatchers work a 5 & 2 rotation). Dividing the calculated figure of 11 Call

Takers and Dispatchers on the first shift (i.e., 0700 – 1900) by this shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 15.4, or 16 FTE, Call Takers and Dispatchers (11 / 0.714). On the second shift (i.e., 1900 – 0700), there was a calculated total of five (5) required Call Takers and Dispatchers. Dividing the calculated figure of five (5) Call Takers and Dispatchers on this shift by the shift availability factor yields a calculated need for 7.0 Call Takers and Dispatchers (5 / 0.714).

. The analysis, below, incorporates information about the workload of the Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to estimate the number of personnel needed to fulfill this function:

Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Staffing Calculation
Scenario 4 – Colonie and Menands

Workload Factor	Number	Notes
A. Number Of Calls		911 Dispatched Fire/Rescue Calls for Service (11,647)
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	7,891	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	3,756	
B. Minutes Per Call	2.7 minutes	Average call taking, abandoned call back and EMD processing time.
C. Calls Per Hour	22.2	$60 \div B$
D. Humber Of Hours Processing Calls		$A \div C$
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	355	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	169	
Employee Availability		
E. Net Employee Availability	1,489 Hours	Available Hours
F. Call Taker Availability Rate	0.5	Call Takers need 50% of their time free to answer calls
G. Actual Availability	745 Hours	$E \times F$
Staff Needed		
Shift 1 (0700-1900)	0.5 (1 FTE)	
Shift 2 (1900-0700)	0.2 (1 FTE)	
H. Full Time Equivalent Positions	2 FTEs	$D \div G$

The calculation in the table results in a requirement for two (2) FTEs to cover the workload generated by the four agencies' Fire/Rescue calls for service. However, as was the case, above, for Law Enforcement Call Takers and Dispatchers, there is a need for greater number of Fire/Rescue Dispatchers to cover the 12-hour schedule rotations

on a 7-day per week basis. Dividing the calculated number of a single Dispatcher on each shift by the shift availability factor yields a requirement for two (2) Dispatchers to cover the 7-day schedule per week, or four (4) total Fire/Rescue Dispatchers.

The resulting costs of the resources required in Scenario 4 are presented in the table below, with a comparison to current costs.

**Summary of Financial Requirements
 Consolidated Communications Center
 Colonie and Menands**

Element	Number	Cost
Total Current Positions:		\$3,250,249
Full Time	33	
Part Time	9	
Total Scenario Law Enforcement Dispatcher and Call Taker Positions	23	\$1,830,623
Total Scenario Fire/Rescue Dispatcher Positions	4	\$318,369
Operational Cost at Scenario Staff Level		\$3,002,927
Variance	15	(\$864,868)

As the table shows, the consolidation of the two agencies' communications functions would result in a cost savings of \$864,868 compared to the current costs of the two separate agencies. The table below shows the breakout of costs and cost savings for each of the two agencies.

<u>Agency</u>	<u>CFS</u>	<u>CFS Share</u>	<u>Proportional Cost of RECC</u>	<u>Current Cost</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Colonie	97,582	92.2%	\$2,200,430	\$2,993,453	(\$793,023)
Menands	8,202	7.8%	\$184,951	\$256,796	(\$71,845)
TOTAL in Scenario	105,784		\$2,385,381	\$3,250,249	(\$864,868)

AS the table shows, the merger of emergency communications operations in Colonie and Menands would result in a costs savings of approximately \$864,886.

The next section presents some of the benefits and challenges in consolidating emergency communications services.

(5) There Are Benefits and Challenges in Consolidating Emergency Communications.

The question must arise, from any consolidation effort, regarding the impact that such a change might have on the delivery of services to the community and to the public safety providers that are supported by the combined emergency communications center. The exhibit, that follows, provides our analysis regarding a number of issues:

Issue	Benefits	Challenges
Customer (Citizen) Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-seat center will allow for delivery of emergency medical dispatch at primary answering point. • Coordination of regional response becomes much more practical for large-scale events – particularly if communities are contiguous. • 911 / dispatch only center will promote professionalism even beyond current levels as staff is able to focus on these key services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of local presence in some member communities. • A need to standardize call taking / handling may change the way in which local calls are handled.
Public Safety Agency Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated, focused service delivery for services. For example, dedicated call takers, fire / rescue radio channel, law enforcement channels, etc. • Emergency medical dispatch providing improved service in EMS. • Improved coordination of services (intra-community as well as between communities). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing radio and other resources in a larger environment. • Adopting policies and procedures to deal with standardized call taking and radio traffic. • Challenges to the communities regarding: booking / holding of prisoners; records functions and other tasks currently handled by dispatchers.
Emergency Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved management of emergency response. Multi-dispatcher centers are able to better handle major events – handling multiple issues / needs at once. • Use of dedicated call takers and dedicated radio channel operators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Emergency Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages regional thinking with regard to emergency preparedness. • Provides for a focal point for regional responses to emergencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Issue	Benefits	Challenges
Staff in the Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved career opportunities, training, and advancement. • Dedicated center will allow for creation of supervisory positions, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in unions, salary plans and other issues will result in a number of issues to be resolved.

The project team recognizes that any changes made to the service delivery model will, by necessity, provide for challenges as well. However, it is our belief based on the analysis above, that the creation of a regional emergency communications center (RECC) will result in positive benefits to the community and to public safety provider agencies that outweigh those challenges.

The creation of an RECC should enable the center to offer a wider variety of services related to 911 calls taking and to providing for emergency dispatch for calls for services. These are summarized, below:

- Opportunities:
 - Emergency medical dispatch
 - Dedicated fire / law enforcement radio channels
 - Dispatchers focused only on providing call taking / dispatch services
- Challenges:
 - Communities will need to find alternatives to the services currently provided by the staff in the centers (holding cells, records, front counter support, etc.).
 - Potential loss of local control and local presence in the law enforcement station.

While the services offered by an RECC would be impacted by the merger, it should not be taken that those impacts are only “challenges” to the community.

(6) Consolidation Offers Opportunities to Enhance the Interoperability and Connectivity of Radio Systems.

Consolidation or transfer of emergency communications can have a significant impact on the telephone or radio systems supported by the consolidated center. Consolidation does, however, offer some opportunities to local governments that are interested in enhancing the interoperability and / or connectivity of their radio systems.

These impacts include the following:

- Regional groups find it easier to secure grant funding for making radio system enhancements and for making interoperability improvements. Unfortunately, in New York State, this would require the center to have agencies from more than one county.
- There will be opportunities to reduce connectivity fees and maintenance costs for telephones and the CAD systems. It is not possible to estimate the potential impact of these cost reductions without working with the impacted vendors directly.
- There may opportunities to reduce the cost of radio systems in the impacted agencies as well – as agencies merge onto radio channels and reserve others for new uses.
- Groups that are working together to deliver emergency communications have an incentive to do so using some common radio channels. For example:
 - Dedicated radio channel for dispatching fire / rescue events.
 - Primary channel for dispatching law enforcement (or several such channels depending on the volume of units).
 - Tactical channels for major incidents.
- Regional or county-wide centers also need to change the way in which they think of themselves – through merger or transfer of services they become a much larger participant in regional public safety service delivery. This enhances their potential impact on the region as they consider radio system upgrades and changes.
- Similarly, as a regional or county-wide emergency communications provider, the Center would have the ability to link multiple communities together in times of major events.

While the consolidation of dispatch could be accomplished with no changes to local radio systems, it would ultimately provide for better coordination of resources. Current technology would allow for a center to patch together multiple radio systems so as to make them function as a single system. However, such consolidation offers communities the opportunity to enhance their regional impact and to improve the way in which services are coordinated regionally.

(7) Any Consolidation Effort Should Be Accompanied by a Consideration of How to Merge Records Management Systems.

One major concern for communities is how to merge their various records management systems if they want to maintain current (legacy) systems locally. The project team takes the following approach to considering these issues:

- It will be necessary for the agencies to agree on a single computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. This is the system that is used within the center for purposes of documenting incoming calls, assigning units, etc. to the active calls themselves.
- It is not necessary for agencies to agree on a single records management system (though ultimately this would provide for a more seamless approach).
- If the decision is made to maintain numerous records systems, an approach must be developed to enable these systems to capture the necessary data from the CAD system.
- Previously, systems of “bridges” were created by which non-native RMS systems actively queried the CAD system on a regular basis (every 10 seconds, every 10 minutes, etc.). A new approach works more smoothly, as follows:
 - Participants develop a list of common data elements that every RMS needs. This is developed with a “metadata” standard so as to allow each RMS to capture the data it needs.
 - A secure website is established by the RECC. Data from the CAD is posted to this website continuously.

- Participant RMS systems query this secure site – taking what data they require depending on the host RMS.

This approach is much less expensive as it does not require open lines to be maintained between the CAD and numerous host RMS systems. The secure internet sight allows for rapid posting and rapid retrieval of information – at independent cycles. For example, the CAD may post information “live” while one community may choose to query that sight only once every few minutes.

(8) Call Surge Capacity Will Be Strengthened through Consolidation.

By consolidating into a single RECC, and by establishing that there will be multiple staff people on duty in the center, an RECC provides for significantly enhanced “surge” capacity for the communities. The following points should be understood:

- Many of the current centers have only a single communicator on duty for most, if not all, operational hours. A single person involved in an event does not have much capacity for handling multiple concurrent calls or for handling multiple events. Recall that our calculation of staffing has built into it time for dispatchers to be available to handle the next event.
- All of the scenarios envisioned by the Matrix Consulting Group involve staffing the center with multiple dispatchers. Some of the scenarios would allow for dedicated call taking and dedicated dispatching positions (using cross trained staff). By its very nature, this allows for additional capacity.
- By allowing staff to concentrate on one aspect of the job at a time (call taking or dispatching) dispatchers can become more effective and efficient in processing their calls. This also enables them to handle additional workload.
- The staffing models utilized by the Matrix Consulting Group are designed to allow the center to handle 95% of probable workload before having major impacts on service levels.

The creation of a regional center allows for additional workload to be handled through the presence of multiple dispatchers who can back one another up and to handle surges in workload.

(9) Coordination of Police, Fire and EMS Resources Are Maximized through Regional Consolidation.

The development of regional communications centers allows for and encourages the development of regional responses to routine events, emergencies and large-scale disasters. This cooperation can take shape in several ways. These include the following:

- The RECC can be used as a vehicle by which mutual aid is encouraged and coordinated.
- The RECC can become a vehicle through which a more comprehensive boundary-less automatic aid service model could be instituted. Under this approach, the emergency responders are dispatched to emergency calls because they are the closest appropriate unit – regardless of their jurisdiction.

The RECC should not be seen as requiring or even promoting these approaches – but rather, as a convenient model under which these approaches could be instituted.

(10) Highly Effective Emergency Communications Operations Conform to Several Key Best Practices.

Defining “quality” when assessing the performance of E911 / Emergency Communications Centers (911/ECC) is challenging. Some elements of the definition are clear (i.e., that there are few errors in identifying and triaging incoming calls for assistance from the public, and that few errors are transmitted to the emergency responders). However, a high-performance agency can also be identified through the steps that it is taking to mitigate the possibility that errors will occur – and that when they do occur that they are identified, addressed and that steps are taken to avoid reoccurrence in the future.

Key Elements for Providing Quality in a 911/ECC



The chart, above, depicts the six key components that every high performance E911 / ECC should have in place to assure the delivery of high-quality service to its client agencies and to the public. The paragraphs, that following, provide some additional information regarding these criteria:

- **Recruitment and Selection of Staff** – Proper recruitment and selection of staff provides many benefits to a high service 911/ECC.
 - High performing agencies will aggressively seek recruits from both traditional (lateral transfers) and non-traditional sources.
 - Formalized evaluation methodologies are employed and are assessed for their predictive capability. Tests that do not accurately predict high-performing staff (or worse – that falsely predict high-performing staff) will be eliminated as tools for assessing talent in the future.
 - Staff members are selected using a broad spectrum of methods including: interviews, background checks, skills assessments, psychological (where allowed), medical (for basic health), etc.

- High-performance agencies will also aggressively cull recruits from their process (both during selection and during training) to ensure that only the best candidates make it through to working in the center.
- **Training of Staff** – High-performance agencies focus a great deal of attention on the initial and on-going training of staff in their 911/ECC. The key elements include the following:
 - Development of a formal training program for new recruits. This will include a detailed identification of the key requirements of the job and its various components (call taking, emergency medical call taking, law enforcement radio, fire / rescue radio, etc.).
 - Training will be offered in increments so that the new staff member can be quickly integrated into providing service, while still functioning under probation. Examples of this approach include initial training as a call-taker (4 weeks) followed by shadowed call taking experience in the 911/ECC (under the guidance and supervision of an experienced staff member; following successful completion of call-taking, the recruit will return to the class room for more instruction on basic radio skills, and so-on until all necessary skills have been provided for.
 - Recruits will undergo their training in a process very similar to that use in law enforcement for a “field training” process. Daily and weekly assessments are made of the new employee’s progress. Counseling is employed in those circumstances where new staff is failing to exhibit progress.
 - This in-house training may be augmented, particularly in smaller centers, with training provided by external agencies. Examples of this may include providing training in CPR, first aid, “verbal judo” to deal with distraught callers, emergency medical dispatch procedures, etc.
 - The agency will also aggressively cull new staff when they cannot demonstrate excellent proficiency in all required elements.
 - Staff will be cross-trained in all functions of the 911/ECC.
 - Once staff is fully trained and operational, the agency will provide for continuing education. This training will focus on a variety of topics including those identified by state agencies, those identified by supervisors, and issues identified through the agency’s own quality assurance / control processes.

- **Interaction with Client Agencies** – A key element of ensuring high quality of service is to work closely with the agencies supported by the 911/ECC. This may include the following:
 - Identification of a liaison for each service type within the 911/ECC. This will provide for an individual for each agency or service type to contact regarding any issues that arise. This may include issues that have occurred only once or issues that are more chronic in nature.
 - Development of user groups that can provide the 911/EC with guidance regarding the development of policies, procedures and protocols. While call taking protocols must be the same for all agencies (see below) the 911/ECC should be able to be highly flexible in supporting various response plans on the part of its client agencies.
 - The user groups should meet on a regular basis to discuss issues and to assist the 911/ECC in planning to address upcoming challenges.

- **Policies, Procedures and Protocols** – It is critical that all participants have a clear and documented understanding of how the 911/ECC will handle calls and the dispatching of emergency and non-emergency events. These should include the following:
 - Formal protocols for handling incoming calls (both 911 and 10-digit). These protocols should include structured questions designed to elicit key information from callers – information that will best prepare emergency responders as they react to the call for assistance. These protocols can be obtained commercially (companies such as Priority Dispatch) or can be developed in-house in conjunction with the user communities.
 - Protocols should be developed in consultation with user agencies. While the 911/ECC has the responsibility for driving the best possible service delivery to its clients, it is also critical that they be aware of the needs of their client agencies in terms of service demands.
 - Call taking must be handled the same regardless of the agency that will ultimately be dispatched on the call. The acceptable variance in this (though not necessarily a desirable variance for other reasons) is a differentiation on how calls are handled when they are to be transferred to another call-taking location from the initial PSAP.
 - Calls should also be dispatched the same within a service type. Variance will of course be required to handle responses based on agency type (e.g., volunteer vs. career), agency response plans (sending x units to a certain call type), etc. However, the flow of information from the center

should follow a scripted pattern that is understood to all participants. An example of this might be:

“Medical Call. Difficulty Breathing. Engine 1. Rescue 1. 123 Alphabet Street. Cross Street is Main Street. Map Page 18, Grid 8-Alpha. Additional information will be sent to you on your screen.”

- Or -

“Domestic Dispute in Progress. 2D12 and 2D14. No weapons. No description available at this time. 123 Alphabet Street. Cross Street is Main Street. Map Page 18, Grid 8-Alpha. Additional information will be sent to you on your screen.”

It is important that the pattern be the same so that responders know how to listen for key information as it is broadcast.

- Every effort should be made to ensure that call taking and dispatching are handled “on-CAD.” Call taking and dispatching errors are more likely to increase when the communicator is required to operate without reference to the automated systems. Functioning “off-CAD” requires communicators to make judgment calls and to remember decisions under potentially high-workload and high-stress circumstances.
- **Supervision of the Center** – Supervisors (preferably on-duty but sometimes not on-duty) provide a critical link to assuring quality service delivery and high performance.
 - On-duty supervisors should, where possible, minimize their role in covering breaks for meals. They should concentrate on supervising the 911/ECC.
 - Supervisors should be listening to incoming calls and to radio dispatches – spot-checking performance of their staff.
 - Supervisors should be available to provide support to call takers during major events – either high-stress events (active shooter, missing child, structure fire with occupants inside, etc.) or for events that are placing atypical demands on the center in terms of call volume.
 - Supervisors should also, while on the floor (in smaller centers – it will be done by dedicated supervisors in larger centers), conduct quality control / assurance reviews of calls in the past.
- **Quality Assurance / Quality Control (QA/QC)** – The final element

- Compliance with pre-determined protocols and call scripts.
- Accuracy of call notes compared to what the caller indicated in response to the questions.
- Customer service provided to the callers (tone of voice, level of assistance, etc.).
- Customer service provided to the units in the field on the radio transmissions.
- The agency, working with its protocol provider is one has been obtained commercially, should develop formal targets regarding error rates. Typically, agencies target error rates of less than 1% for each major area.

Each of these elements, alone, will provide for some level of assurance regarding the quality of service delivery. In the absence of detailed data regarding performance quality, some assurance can be taken from the presence of the elements described above.

(11) Implementation of a Consolidated Communications Center Would Take 18 Months from the Initial Decision to Proceed.

The table below represents an illustrative time line for implementing a regional dispatch center. The time is counted from the point at which a decision is made to proceed with the development of a regional center:

Time from Start	Activity / Element
Months 1 - 2	Obtain initial commitment from current dispatch providers. Initial contacts also begun with other key stakeholders (other dispatched communities, state and county political bodies, etc.). This should include public meetings, etc.
Month 2	Designate membership for a group of sub-committees to address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of interlocal agreement. • Information systems (CAD / others). • Technology (radios, computers, phones, etc.). • Location for center (build, lease, other). • Policies and procedures. • Financing mechanisms -- work with interlocal sub-committee closely. • Staffing issues -- pay, benefits, hiring, severance, etc.

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK
Report on the Consolidated 911 Dispatch Feasibility Study

Time from Start	Activity / Element
Month 3	Make decision regarding the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of regional (form, participants, etc.). • Basic interlocal agreement. • Financing mechanism. • Technology, building location, etc...
Month 4	Develop assumptions regarding staffing, pay scale, benefits, etc. for the regional center. Obtain firm commitments from participating communities -- signatures on an agreement. Finalize process of site-identification for regional center. If necessary begin process of building new site or designing renovations for lease space.
Month 5	Finalize the specification process for technology and computer systems. Begin process of drafting RFP's for technology and computer systems.
Month 6	Issue RFP's for technology and software.
Month 7 - 8	Continue process of site design and begin implementation of changes to site. Begin process of developing policies and procedures for all service areas. Review responses to RFP's and begin process of vendor identification.
Month 9	Take delivery of technology and software. Finalize process of policy and procedure development.
Months 9 - 15	System installation and implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of CAD files, geo-files, etc. • Integrate addressing for E-911 into system. • Complete connections from new regional center into existing infrastructure (radio and phone).
Months 15 - 17	System testing and finalization of center operations.
Month 18	Center start-up.

The next section examines capital requirements for the consolidated center.

5. THE PROJECT TEAM EXAMINED THE CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE REGIONAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER.

The project team recognizes that the creation of a consolidated communications center involving all communications agencies in the County would require significant expenditures on infrastructure. However, under the scenarios presented in this report, physical consolidation could be accommodated at the current ACSO facility in Voorheesville, and would not require any physical expansion of that facility. Certainly, this is the case under Scenario 4, which incorporates Cohoes, Green Island and Watervliet with the ACSO. If new or additional construction is deemed necessary for incorporation of more participants under assumptions of greater numbers of participants, the assumptions used here should be used as guidelines to develop the minimal structural and capital needs for the PSAP:

- The communications area would require 150 square feet per dispatch position, plus 200 square feet for the Supervisor's position, single story on grade, exposed mechanical, all painted with rack supporting the required infrastructure. The dispatcher work stations are to be eight (8) foot positions (may be folding tables or fastened to the wall). The single supervisory position in the model is placed at the center of the room, with power supplied via a power pole directly to the work surface from above. Typical costs for expansion of existing facilities are approximately \$250 per square foot.
- It is assumed that the current restrooms, training room, locker facilities and kitchen at the Sheriff's facility are sufficient to accommodate the additional communications staff, and no modifications will be required to expand these particular facilities, to create additional space for them.
- The current Sheriff's facility has an uninterrupted power supply (UPS), and addition of any additional communications workspace would not require any additional expenditure. Should the RECC participants determine that this is, in fact, necessary, UPS can be added either centrally or individually. Individual work stations would cost approximately \$250 each.

The site must be equipped with the following items:

- Furniture requirements include the following:
 - Folding tables or built-in counters or work stations. These can be placed along the perimeter of the room, allowing for wall space to provide support for hanging maps and/or other supporting materials. Adjustable-height work tables (72" X 24") cost approximately \$975 each. Ergonomic corner work stations cost approximately \$2,000 each.
 - Breathable mesh office chairs at \$700 each.
- The systems required for the facility include the following:
 - Two to three administrative lines per jurisdiction.
 - One 911 line per 10,000 residents. Must be capable of processing latitude/longitude for cellular and next generation callers; listen-join feature. Cama must be separated from administrative lines. Typical cost structures are based on the number of phone lines in the jurisdiction or consortium. If as many as twelve average sized communities are in the consortium, assume approximately \$20,000
 - P25 narrow band radio system. Demographics and jurisdiction will determine any additional requirements that may result from these recommendations.
 - Mobile data terminals (MDT). It is assumed that each participating jurisdiction will talk to the host CAD through MDTs. Software to connect to the host will cost \$10,000. These costs should be born locally – not by the host agency – to account for the variance in platforms, etc. There may be grants available to pay for these connections.
 - Audio recorder to capture all phone and radio communications will have the capability to archive. This is assumed to be an additional 24-channel unit with 3,780 gb of storage, at a cost of \$21,000 – this is an expansion on existing capacity.
 - It is assumed that each dispatcher work station will have radio, phone and CAD, and the site is to be single-stage dispatch. Each work station will require a personal computer for internet access.

APPENDIX A

**SUMMARIES OF DISPATCHER AND FIELD
PERSONNEL SURVEYS**

Employee Survey of Dispatchers and Field Personnel

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted a survey of employees engaged in providing, as well as receiving, dispatch services in each of the Albany County communities and agencies providing emergency communications. This survey was conducted as part of the 9-1-1 Regional Communications Feasibility Study. Surveys were made available online, and were summarized for purposes of this analysis. Although it is not possible to determine how many employees actually viewed the survey, the Matrix Consulting Group received 165 completed surveys from field personnel and 97 from Dispatchers, for a total of 262. The table, which follows, presents the number of responses received by each jurisdiction's Dispatchers:

**Summary of Surveys Received
Dispatch Personnel**

Jurisdiction	Surveys Received
Albany County Sheriff	15
City of Albany	9
Bethlehem	13
Coeymans	0
Cohoes	7
Colonie	22
Green Island	10
Guilderland	8
Menands	2
NY State Police	0
Watervliet	11
TOTAL	97

The table below summarizes the responses received by each agency's field personnel:

**Summary of Surveys Received
Field Personnel**

Jurisdiction	Surveys Received
Albany County Sheriff	18
City of Albany	1
Bethlehem	31
Coeymans	11
Cohoes	12
Colonie	11
Green Island	17
Guilderland	37
Menands	5
NY State Police	1
Watervliet	18
TOTAL	162

Note that although 165 field personnel actually completed the survey, three (3) respondents failed to identify their agency. Therefore, there are only 162 respondents identified in the table above.

As two separate surveys were administered, we have provided in the following pages two separate summaries of the results of these surveys. Summaries of responses from Dispatchers are presented in the first section, with summaries of field personnel responses following in the next section.

A. SUMMARY OF DISPATCH PERSONNEL RESPONSES

Dispatchers were provided an opportunity to provide anonymous input to the project team in two categories – views on their current job assignments, and their views toward change. Respondents were asked to respond to a series of questions by marking their level of agreement with statements on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the strongest level of agreement, and 5 representing the strongest level of disagreement with the specific statement in the survey. In

addition, these personnel were asked three open-ended questions related to strengths of the current method of service provision, their views toward alternative ways of providing communications services, and finally, the duties they perform which are ancillary in nature.

The sections, which follow, present a summary of the results of the employee surveys.

CURRENT JOB ASSIGNMENT

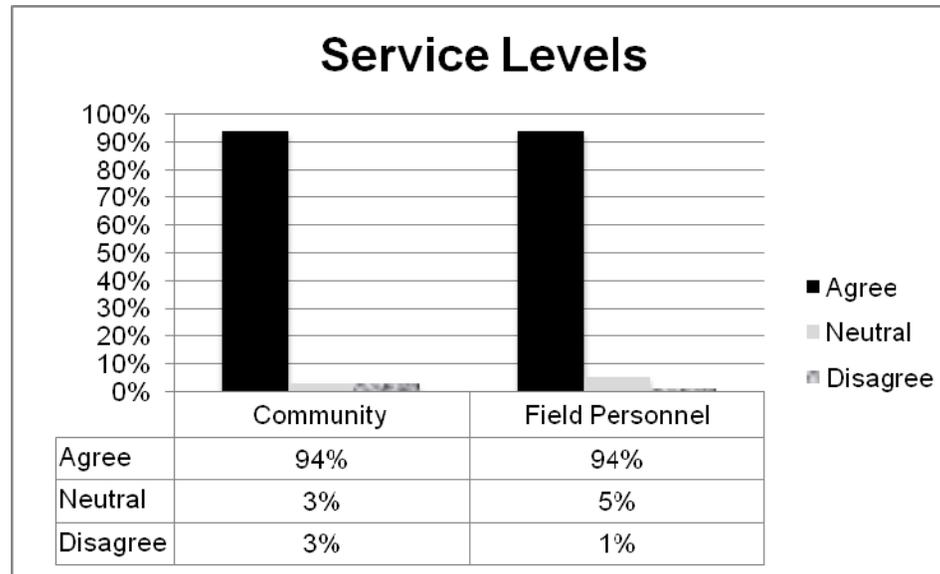
All dispatch employees were provided an opportunity in this section to express their views regarding various operational indicators about the communications functions in their communities. The subsections, which follow, summarizes in statistical form, the responses that were collected.

(1) Dispatchers Have Very Positive Views about the Overall Service Levels They Provide to Their Communities and Customers.

The dispatch employee survey contained statements relating to the overall service levels they provide to their respective communities. Specifically, the survey asked respondents their levels of agreement with the following statements:

- We provide a high level of service to the community.
- We provide a high level of service to the public safety employees we support.

The chart, which follows, provides a comparison of the results for statements relating to their service level provision.



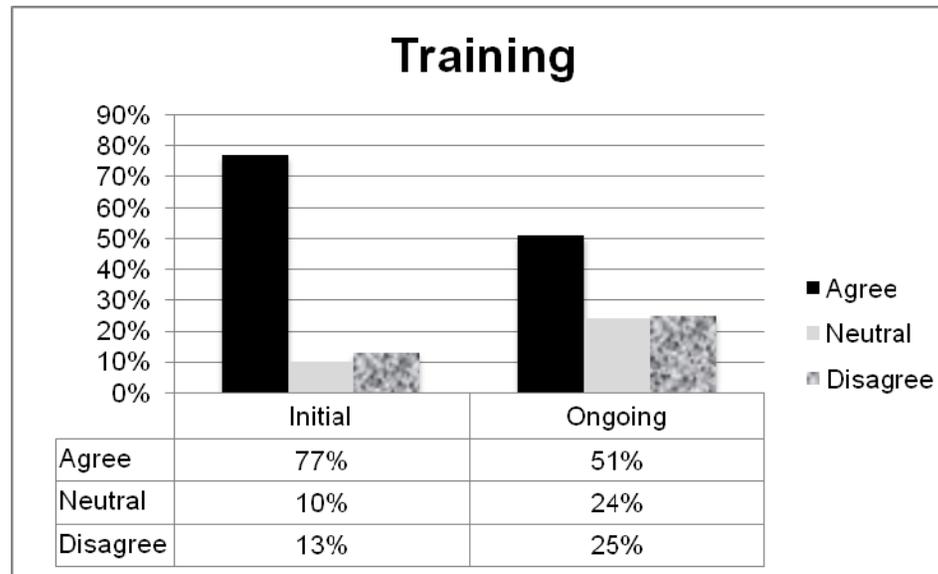
As the chart shows, dispatchers in the represented communities showed high levels of agreement with both statements, with 94% agreement with both statements related to service to the community and to service to the employees they support.

(2) Dispatchers Believe They Received Adequate Training Initially, but Are Not as Positive about Their Levels of Ongoing Training

Dispatch employees were asked about their levels of agreement with two statements related to the training they receive to perform their jobs. These statements were as follows:

- When I began my current job, I received the training needed to perform at a satisfactory level.
- I receive an adequate amount of ongoing training to enhance my skills.

The following chart summarizes the responses to the two statements.



As can be seen from the chart, 77% of respondents agreed with the first statement related to initial training, with 13% disagreeing with the statement. Conversely, only 51% agreed with the statement related to the adequacy of ongoing training.

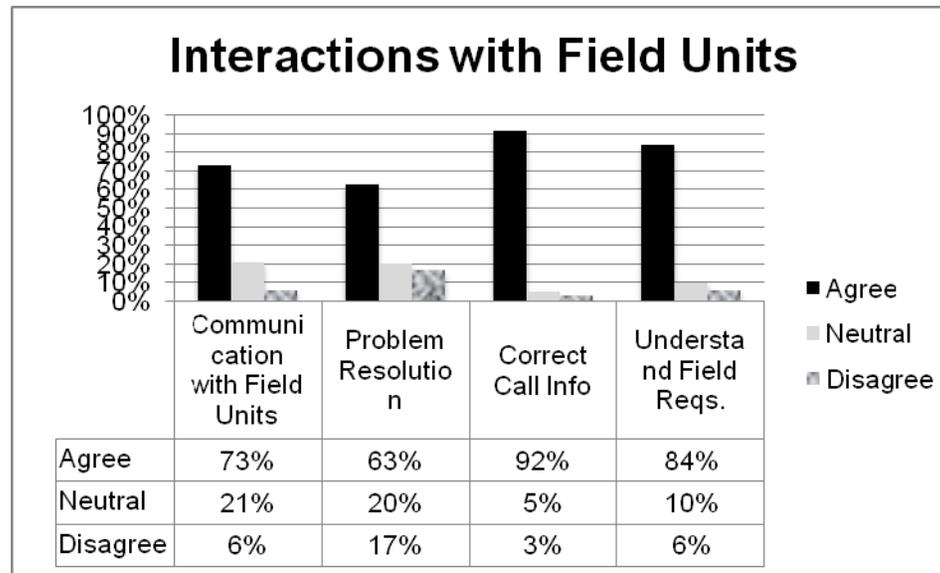
(3) Dispatchers Have Very Strongly Positive Views of Their Interactions with Field Personnel

Dispatchers were asked about their levels of agreement with four statements that related to their views of their interactions with field units. These statements were as follows:

- There is good communication between dispatchers and field units.
- When problems arise between dispatchers and field units, they are resolved quickly.

- We generally are efficient in getting information about calls correct.
- We have a good understanding of field requirements.

The following chart summarizes the responses to these four statements.



As can be seen from the chart, 73% of respondents indicated agreement with the statement related to good communication between dispatchers and field units. Dispatchers were only somewhat less positive about the speed with which problems with field units are resolved, with 63% believing these are resolved quickly, but with 17% of respondents disagreeing with the statement. Only three (3) of the 86 respondents completing the question disagreed with the

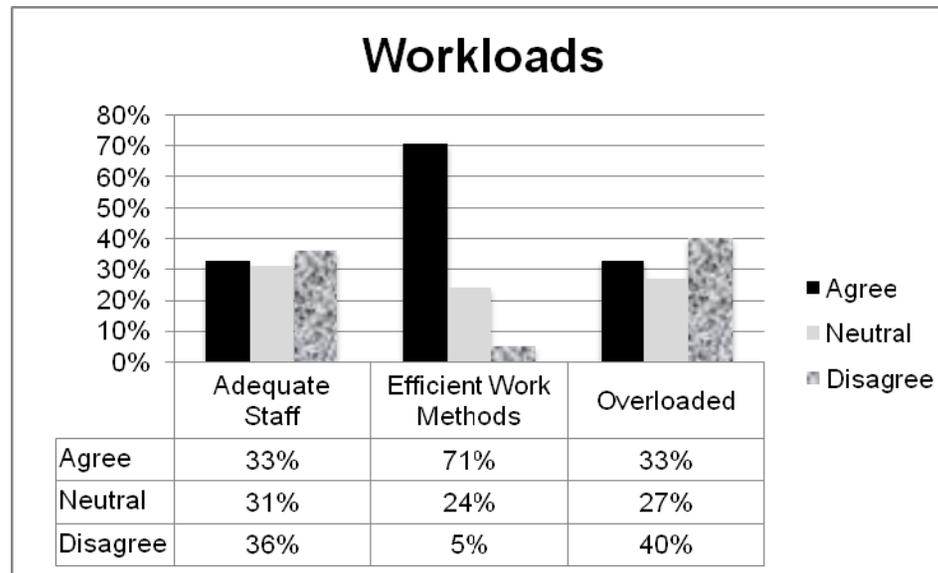
statement about getting information on calls correct, and 84% of Dispatchers believe they have a good understanding of field requirements.

(4) Dispatch Employees Are Somewhat Less Positive about the Workloads They Handle

The survey asked Dispatchers about their level of agreement with three statements related to the workloads and work methods they employ to accomplish their jobs. These statements were as follows:

- We have adequate staff to handle existing workloads.
- The work methods we utilize make us efficient in our work.
- We are generally overloaded with non-dispatching duties.

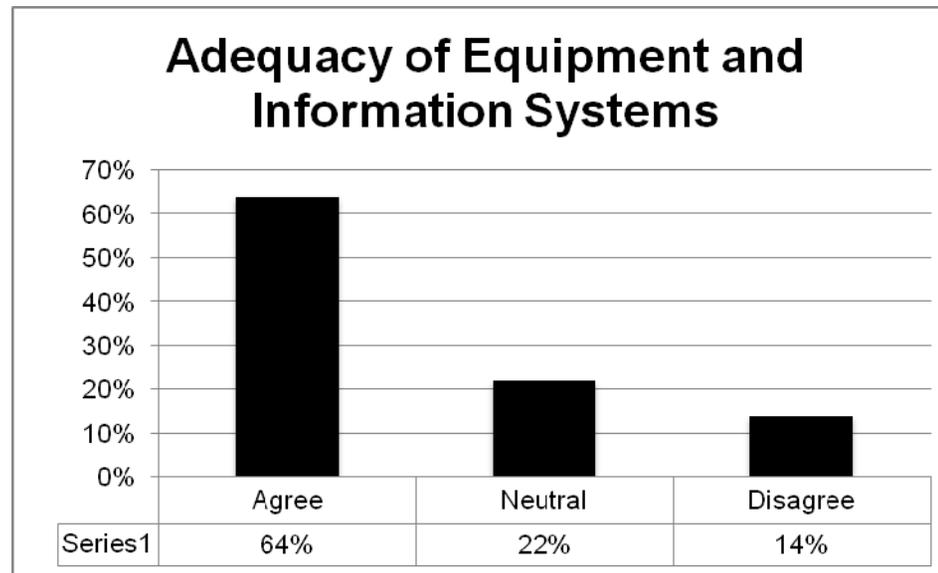
The responses received on these three statements are summarized in the following chart.



As can be seen from the chart, only 33% of dispatch employees believe the dispatch staff are adequate to handle existing workloads. This finding, if taken alone, would seem to indicate that several of the responding dispatchers believe there is too few staff to handle the workloads. However, 71% of Dispatchers believe the work methods they employ make them more efficient. Interestingly, a plurality of respondents (40%) disagree with the statement that they are generally overloaded with non-dispatching duties, such as public reception, paperwork handling and processing, etc.

(5) Most Dispatchers Agree That the Equipment and Information Systems They Utilize Increase Their Efficiency.

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement, “We have the equipment and information systems to increase our efficiency”, 60% of dispatchers agreed with the statement, as can be seen in the chart below.



As can be seen, 64% agree with the statement that equipment and information systems increase their efficiency, with many (22%) neutral.

The next section provides dispatcher responses to a series of statements related to their views toward change.

VIEWS TOWARD CHANGE

Dispatchers were provided an opportunity to express their levels of agreement with five statements related to their views toward change. The following subsections summarize these views.

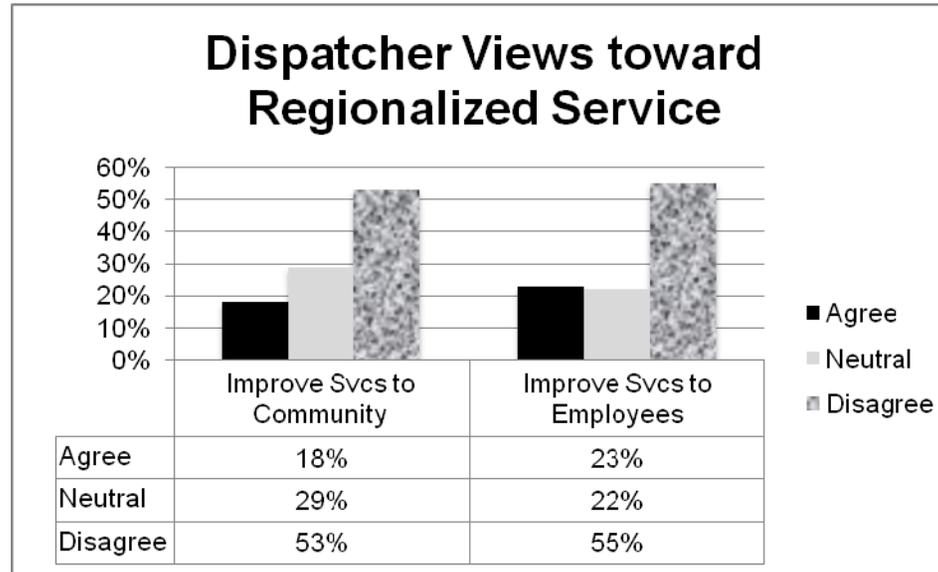
(1) Dispatch Employees Generally Do Not Believe Regionalization Would Improve Services.

Dispatchers were asked to provide their levels of agreement with the following two statements:

- Regionalization of communications systems would improve the level of service to the community.

- Regionalization would improve service to the public safety employees we support.

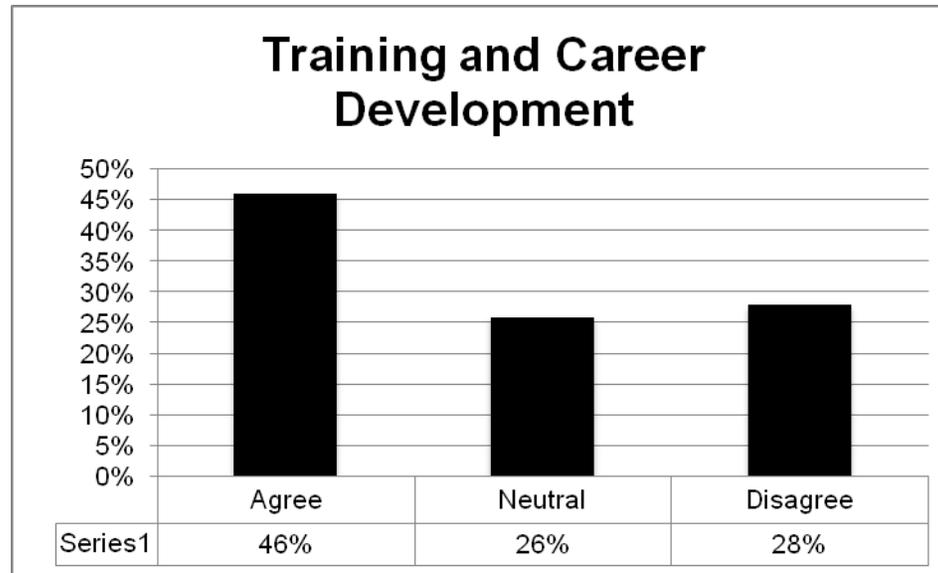
The following chart summarizes the responses received from dispatchers on these two statements.



Although not specifically detailed in the chart, only 34 of 164 responses (21%) indicated that services to either the community or to public safety employees would be improved through regionalization, with 54% of respondents disagreeing with these statements. Notably, of the 88 responses which disagreed with both statements (of 164 total responses), 38 of these expressed strong disagreement (“5” on the scale).

(2) Dispatchers Expressed Mixed Levels of Agreement on Whether Regionalization Would Provide Them with Better Opportunities for Training and Career Development.

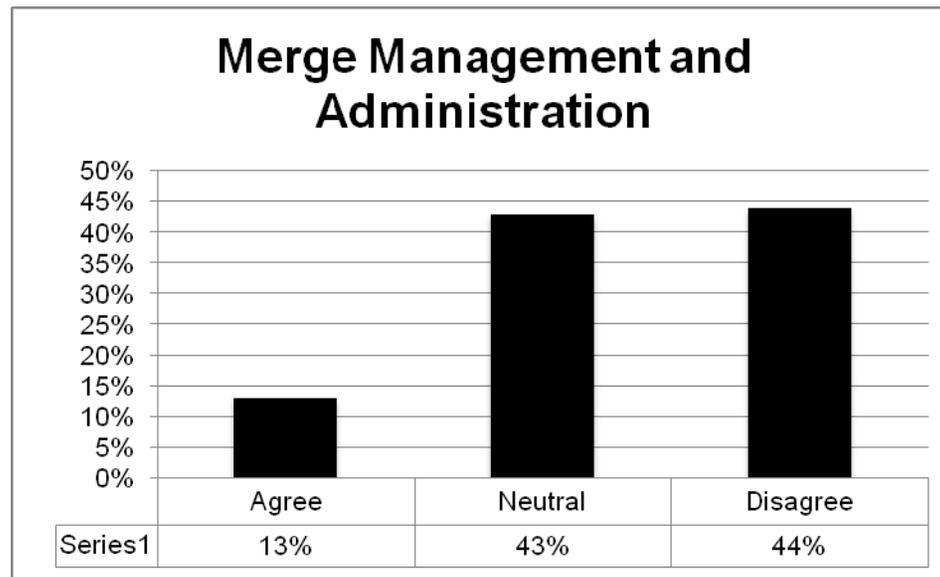
When asked to express their level of agreement with the statement, “Regionalization would provide staff with better training and career development opportunities”, dispatchers had negative to neutral feelings, as the chart below indicates.



As can be seen, dispatchers expressed some general agreement with the prospects of greater levels of training and career development opportunities that regionalization would offer.

(3) Respondents Also Have Mixed Views on Whether the Management and Administration of the Communications Function Could Be Merged without Merging Operations.

When asked whether they believed the management and administration of the communications function could be merged without merging operations, dispatch employees expressed mixed views, but these views generally tended to be much more negative than positive as the chart below indicates.



OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

We asked Dispatchers certain questions that required open-ended responses. These related to their opinions about alternative ways to provide services, as well as concerns they had about regionalization. Typical responses to the question related to alternative ways of provide communications services included the following:

- I think that leaving it the way it is, possibly consolidating less-busy jurisdictions would be an idea. There are some agencies that aren't as well trained (EMD, etc...)
- As stated, I believe they are fine just as they are. There is no need to consolidate.
- Leave Albany alone.
- Combine Menands, Green island, and Watervliet as one communications center.
- Unified CAD and Records Management to allow for better and faster sharing of information between agencies.
- Removal of all secondary PSAPs should be the first step in consolidation. After the secondary PSAPs have been consolidated the further consolidation of the PSAPs should proceed.

Representative responses related to the question regarding concerns that Dispatchers have as they relate to regionalization include the following:

- Communications staff know the area that they work in and provide a service. That in it self is second to none. and not to throw stones but if one was to look at the staffing at the ACSO communications center they would note a list of people who left our center. The actual cost of communications as far as a budget line is quite low compared to most other departments in the town not to mention if one was to look closely at the communications budget they would see lines used for things outside of the communications staff. I strongly believe that this consolidation would ultimately be a life safety issue and is a bad idea for the town.
- How would the services be blended together fairly with all the employees with shift pick, vacation, etc... Can't see it working out fairly.
- When there are problems it seems that unless you are the lead agency your concerns are disregarded.
- Regionalization takes the dispatcher who is very familiar with a community and replaces them with someone who is not familiar which could lead to costly errors.

- Loss of jobs. Decreases in salary and benefits. Longer commute to work.
- My main concerns would be how this would affect our salaries, benefits, accrued time, as well as the loss of seniority to those whom have been working at other agencies longer. Also, how large of an area regionalization covers. Would this be areas of the county, the whole county itself, or an even greater area?
- Too many big departments in this county for it to work.
- The lack of uniformity amongst agencies would make it hard to regionalize (ex. codes, procedures, etc.) A lack of familiarity with the coverage area could cause delays in service, especially with the introduction of cellular 911 service. The communicator given a phase one cellular call could have no idea where the person is resulting in a potentially life threatening delay.
- Smaller agencies would lose the personal touch with residents and reassuring them when they hear a familiar voice.

The next section provides a summary of the responses received from field personnel.

B. SUMMARY OF FIELD PERSONNEL RESPONSES

Field personnel in each participating agency were provided an opportunity to complete a survey that asked them to express their levels of agreement with 15 statements corresponding to current communications systems and their views toward change. The following subsections provide summaries of these responses.

CURRENT COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

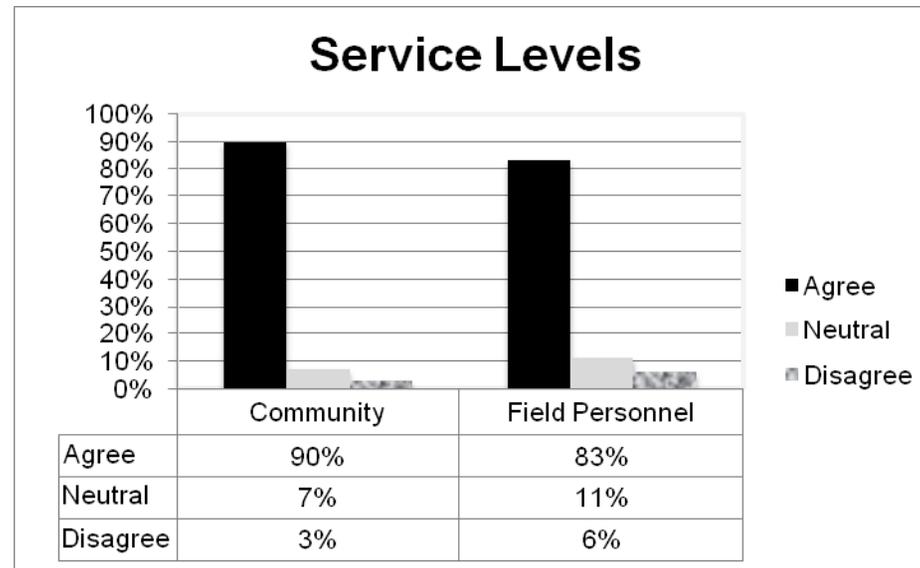
All field personnel were given the opportunity to express their levels of agreement with a series of statements related to the service levels, training and workloads of dispatch personnel, as well as their interactions with their dispatchers. They were also asked for their input on the adequacy of communications equipment and systems. The following subsections provide a summary of the responses.

(1) Field Personnel Have Generally Positive Views of the Service Levels Dispatchers Provide to Both the Community and to the Public Safety Employees They Support.

Field personnel were asked to express their levels of agreement with the following two statements:

- Dispatchers provide a high level of service to the community when they call for service.
- Dispatchers provide a high level of service to the field personnel supported.

The responses received are summarized in the chart below.



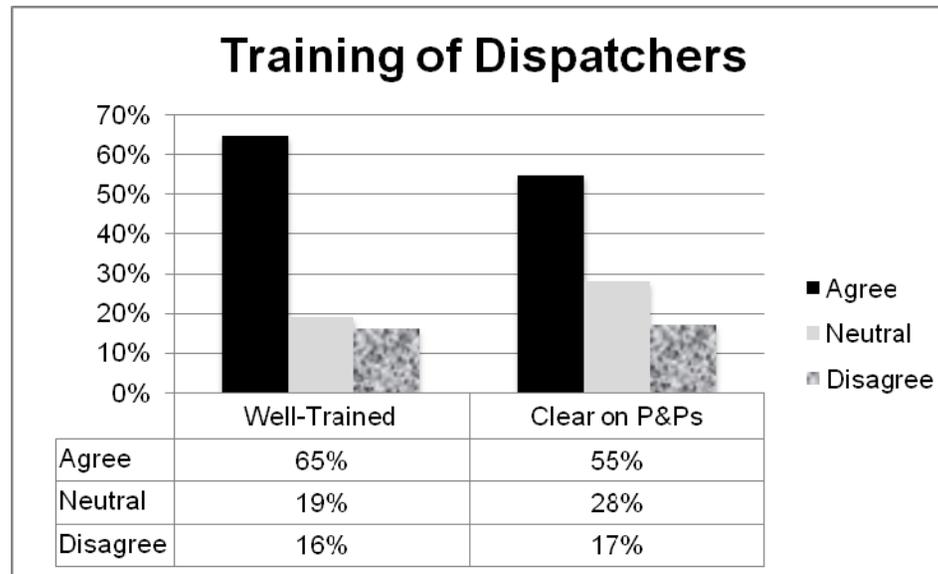
The chart clearly shows that the majority of field personnel supported by the Dispatchers believe both they and the community are well-served, with only slightly fewer field personnel believing that the service they receive from Dispatchers is less than that provided to their respective communities.

(2) Field Personnel Also Believe That Dispatchers Are Well-Trained and Are Generally Clear on Communications Policies and Procedures.

Field personnel were asked to express their levels of agreement with the following two statements:

- Dispatchers are generally well trained.
- Communications policies and procedures are clear to dispatchers as well as to field personnel.

The chart below summarizes the responses to the two statements.



The chart shows that field personnel generally agree with both statements, with 65% agreeing that dispatchers are well-trained, and 55% believe that dispatchers and field personnel are clear on policies and procedures. More respondents were neutral on these questions than on the typical question in the survey, however, with about one-quarter of all respondents expressing no strong feeling of agreement or disagreement with both statements.

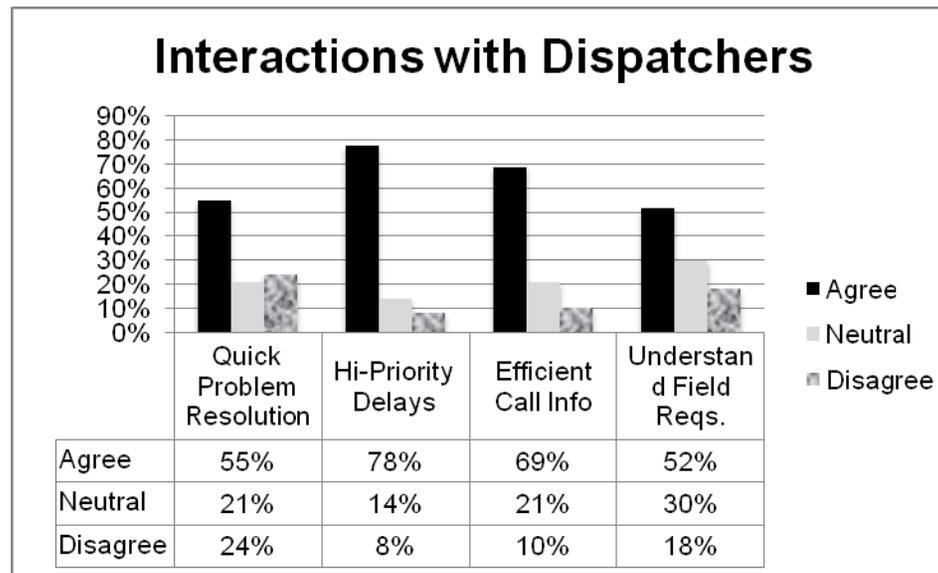
(3) Field Personnel Also Have Positive Views on Their Interactions with Dispatchers.

Field personnel were asked to provide their levels of agreement with the following four statements:

- When problems between dispatching and field personnel occur, they are generally handled quickly.

- There are rarely excessive delays in getting calls to field units on higher priority calls for service.
- Dispatchers are generally efficient in getting information about calls right.
- The dispatchers have a good understanding of field requirements.

The chart below summarizes the responses received on these four statements.



As can be seen from the chart, field personnel appear to be generally pleased with the dispatchers’ abilities to get high priority calls to them in a timely manner, with 78% expressing some level of agreement with the second statement.

Although a majority (55%) of field personnel also agree that problems between dispatchers and themselves are handled quickly, they clearly do not have the strong level of feeling about this as they have about the dispatchers’ abilities to get them high priority calls in a timely manner.

In response to the question related to dispatchers' efficiency in getting call information right, again, most field personnel agreed to some degree with this statement (69%), although there was a relatively high degree of neutrality (21%). Recall from the previous section, however, that the dispatchers themselves expressed 92% agreement with the statement that they get call information correct.

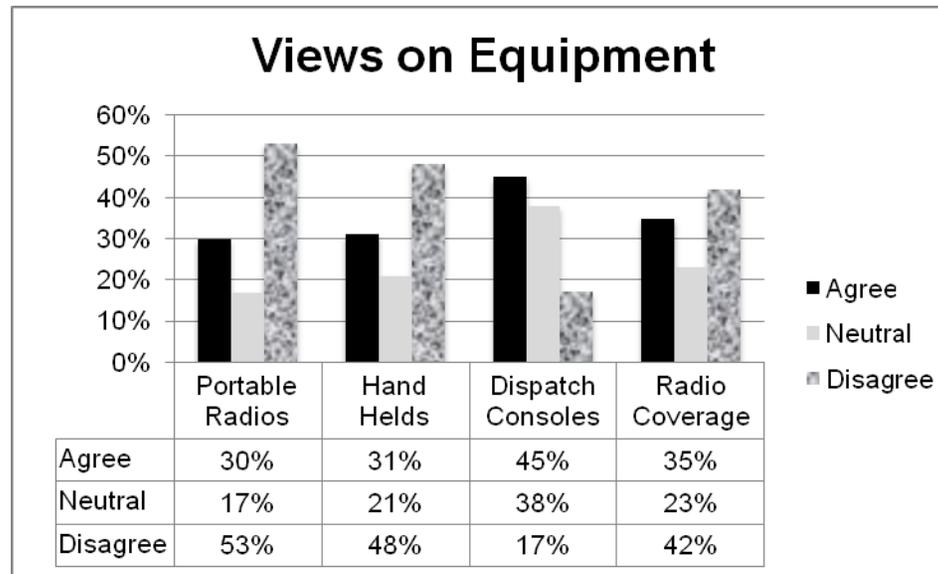
In response to the question related to dispatchers' understanding of field requirements, field personnel gave the lowest scores of any in this grouping, with only 52% indicating that they agreed with the statement. It should be noted, however, that many (30%) were simply neutral on the statement. It is interesting here to note, from the previous section, that the dispatchers themselves believe (84% agreement) that they have a good understanding of these field requirements.

(4) Field Personnel Generally Believe That Their Communications Equipment and Radio Coverage Are Adequate

In Statement #8, respondents were asked to provide their levels of agreement with the following four elements regarding the adequacy of their equipment and radio coverage:

- Our communications equipment is adequate in terms of portable radios.
- Our communications equipment is adequate in terms of hand-held radios.
- Our communications equipment is adequate in terms of dispatching consoles.
- Our communications equipment is adequate in terms of radio coverage.

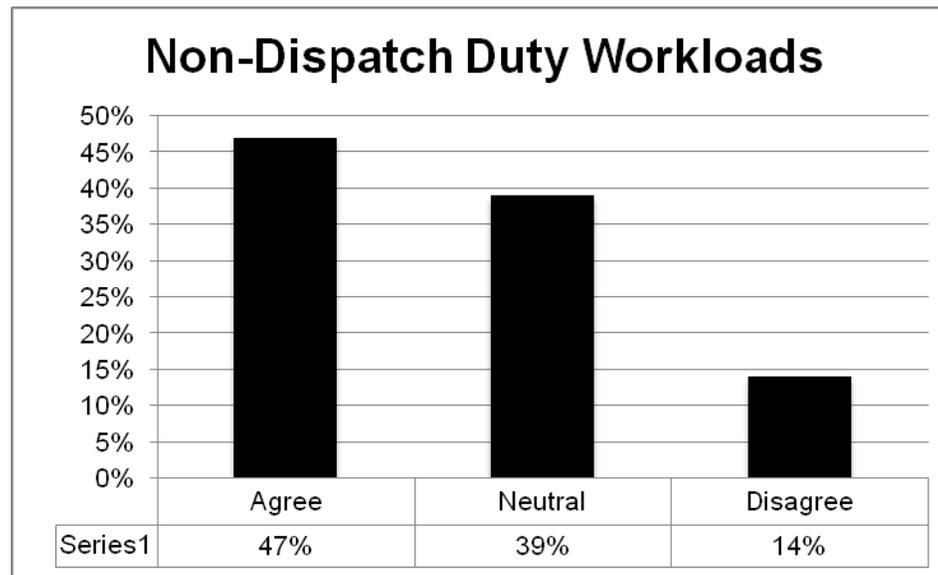
The chart below summarizes the responses received to these statements.



As can be seen from the chart, the views expressed by field personnel regarding their equipment were, as a group, the least positive of any questions asked in the survey. Field personnel expressed the greatest degree of satisfaction with dispatch consoles, with 45% expressing agreement that this equipment was adequate. Field personnel expressed the lowest levels of satisfaction with the adequacy of hand-held radios, with 30% agreeing to any degree with the statement, and 53% expressing disagreement. The adequacy of hand-held's was also ranked relatively low in the grouping, with only 31% expressing agreement that this was adequate. The level of disagreement with the statement that radio coverage was adequate (fourth element, above), was relatively high with almost half of the 159 respondents answering the question expressing dissatisfaction with the coverage.

(5) Field Personnel Tend to Believe That Non-Dispatching Duties Consume a Smaller Proportion of Dispatchers’ Time Than Do the Dispatchers Themselves.

In the next section of the survey, field personnel were asked to express their level of agreement with the statement, “The dispatchers are generally not overloaded with non-dispatching duties.” The chart below summarizes the responses received.



The chart above indicates that a plurality (47%) of field personnel do not believe that dispatchers are overloaded with non-dispatching duties such as paperwork processing and handling, public reception, camera monitoring, etc. However it is interesting to note that, when dispatchers were asked to express their levels of agreement with the same statement, 40% believe that these non-dispatch duties do not overload them.

VIEWS TOWARD CHANGE

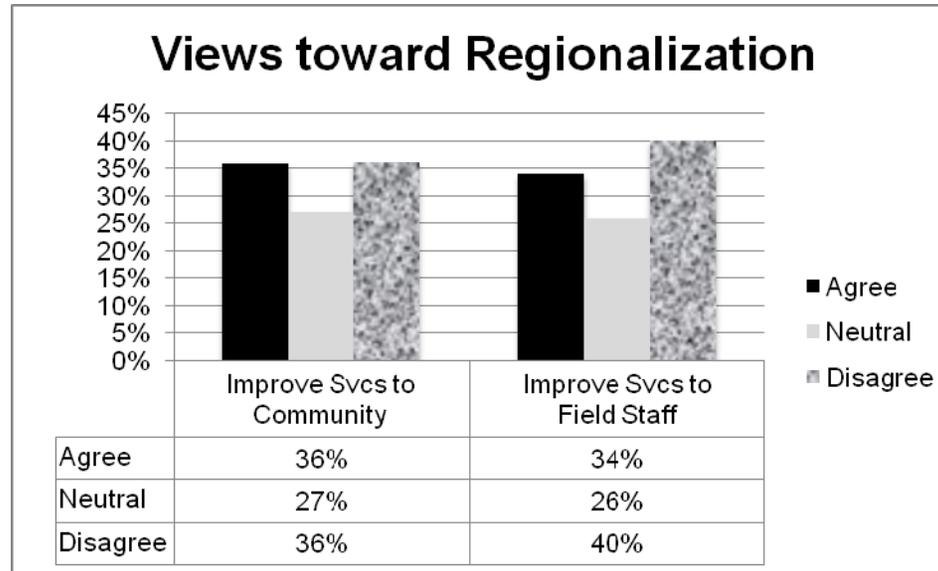
Field personnel were provided an opportunity to express their levels of agreement with four statements related to their views toward change. The following subsections summarize these views.

(1) Like Dispatch Employees, Field Personnel Generally Do Not Believe Regionalization Would Improve Services, Although These Opinions Are Not as Strong.

Field personnel were asked to provide their levels of agreement with the following two statements:

- Regionalization of communications systems would improve the level of service to the community.
- Regionalization would improve service to field personnel.

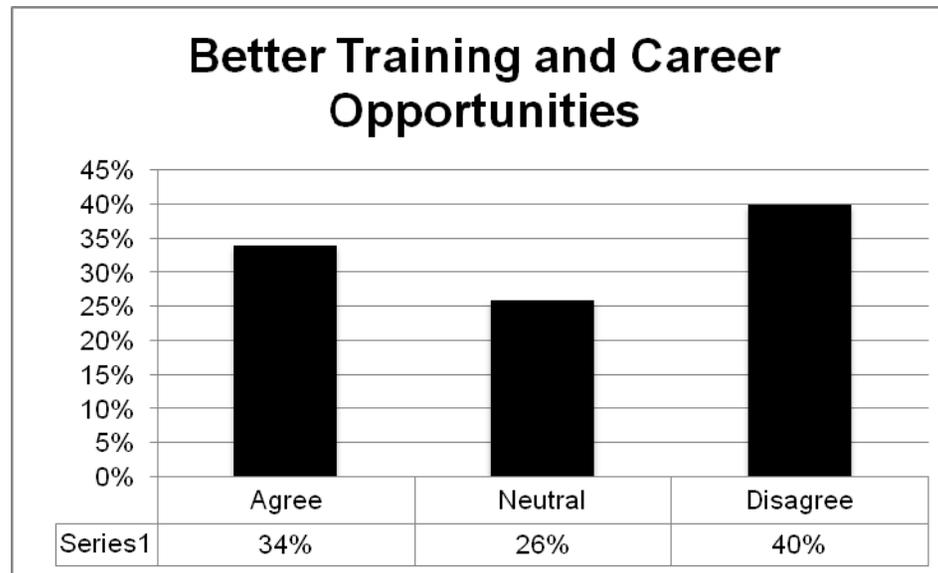
The following chart summarizes the responses received from field personnel on these two statements.



The chart shows that there were similar responses to both statements, with both indicating only slight feelings that regionalization would not improve the service levels to the community or to field personnel supported by the dispatchers. The percentage of responses that agreed with these statements, however, was far greater than was reflected in the dispatchers' surveys. Recall from above that only about 18% of dispatchers felt that services would improve to the community and only 23% felt that services to field personnel would be improved.

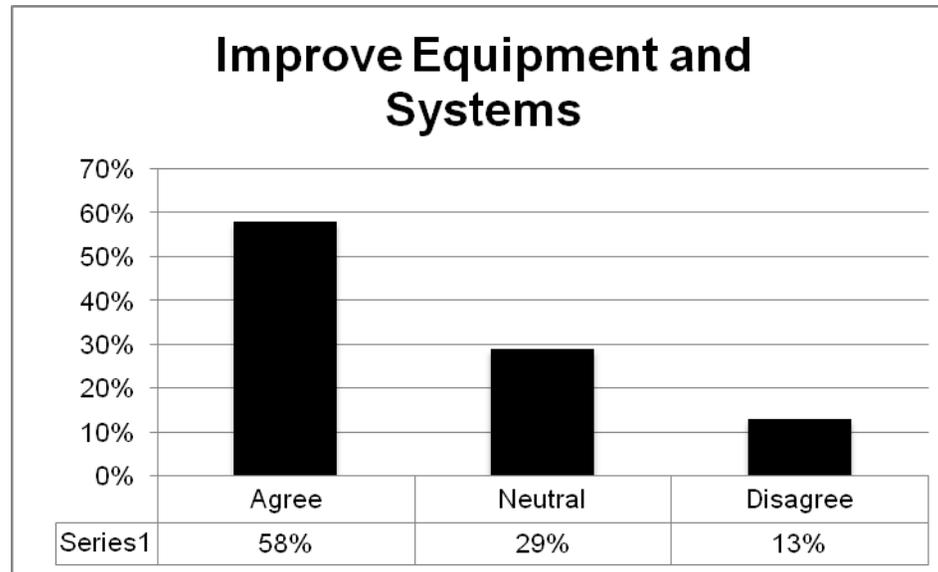
(2) Field Personnel Have Mixed Views Regarding Whether Regionalization Would Provide Staff with Better Training and Career Development Opportunities.

Field personnel had very mixed views as to whether regionalization would provide staff with better training and career development opportunities, as 34% agreed with this statement, and 40% disagreed. About one in four, however, was neutral on the statement, as the chart below shows.



(3) Field Personnel Have Very Mixed Opinions as to Whether Regionalization of Communications Would Improve Communications Equipment and Systems.

On whether regionalization would help improve communications equipment and systems, field personnel feel relatively strongly that this would be the case, with almost six in ten believing that these systems and equipment would be improved through regionalization. Conversely, only about one in twelve does not believe this would occur, with the remainder being neutral.



OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

We asked users certain questions that required open-ended responses. These related to their opinions about alternative ways to provide services, as well as concerns they had about regionalization. Typical responses to the question related to alternative ways of provide communications services included the following:

- Continue as is, and devote massive funding to force the system to work as you want it. By far the simpler, more professional and cost effective means would be through consolidation, particularly with such a small population and service area as Albany County is in relation to other large systems throughout the country.
- All dispatch persons should be trained to a high standard instead of hit and miss We have some excellent dispatchers and some very poor ones all should be EMD trained. Also there is now no avenue for complaints or no accountability for mistakes or not following procedures.

- Regionalization is NEEDED (emphasis original) to cut down response time and the transferring of calls from one PSAP to another. These delays often mean minutes.
- If cost is the predominate issue, investigate a plan to go to 10 or 12 hour shifts. Find other ways of saving money. I feel regionalization would be a huge disservice to (my) Community.
- Looking at consolidation is a good idea, as long as it done properly. I have a concern that the fire service will not be part of this discussion.
- If for example Watervliet, Colonie, Green Island and Cohoes pulled their dispatching resources together it would allow people in the field to have more access to information that is being released in other agencies more quickly. Working in Watervliet, I only have access to what is occurring in Watervliet. The other two ways I would be able to gain access is through my MDT and my dispatcher. Currently Watervliet dispatchers handle police and fire radio transmissions, but also handle walk in complaints and phone complaints. This is not effective and is dangerous to people who are operating in the field. When something major occurs in the city, (fire, serious crime, active calls, etc.) It is impossible for one person to be able to effectively communicate all information needed to handle the call and then to accomplish all other tasks that are required for the dispatcher on duty. Watervliet has 1 dispatcher per shift to handle all responsibilities.
- If you really want a centralized communications system. It should be an independent division or department so it serves all of its users equally. It shouldn't be controlled by any one public safety agency.
- I'm personally open to the idea but, I also recognize many of the entrenched beliefs that are present.

Representative responses related to the question regarding concerns that field personnel have as they relate to regionalization include the following:

- The smaller agencies being "lost" and given a lower priority when requesting information.
- I am very concerned about having people who are unfamiliar with the jurisdiction they are dispatching for and the people they are communicating with.

- Having previously worked for 3 different police agencies as a dispatcher, I found each agency has different policies, procedures, and methods of dispatching. Getting the multiple agencies (not just police) to get on the same page is probably going to be the biggest obstacle.
- Dispatchers not being familiar with an area they are dispatching. I believe that a very strong part of our dispatchers is that they understand our coverage area and assist in locating problems and areas that we are responding too.
- If the regional system is put in place, right now Albany county Dispatch radio system is very weak. We have had multiple times where their radios do not work. While the radios in Guilderland are old but do seem to work.
- None it's a good idea!
- You will lose the personal touch, a lot of calls are fielded by dispatchers who are familiar with complainants.
- Training would need to be coordinated, and some type of system that establishes who works where on any given day. For example if a dispatcher is dispatching Guilderland cars one day and Cohoes the next this does not seem practical. Regionalization is expensive at the onset but will eventually save money and is the best way to go. Teaching people to accept change is difficult. Solving the issue of each separate union contract and pay scales will also be an issue. Likewise, every agency uses different EMD procedures and response levels, everything needs to be uniform. Also, depending on a zone or post for a given day a unit may be required to notify three different dispatch centers of their activity, which is completely impractical.
- Loss of on-site contact person for walk-in type complaints/service
- In its current state our dispatching center is easily overwhelmed during any serious police or fire call. The safety of the public and officers are at risk and I'm surprised that someone hasn't been hurt. It's in everyone's best interest to work together in a more efficient manner. I look forward to seeing happen.