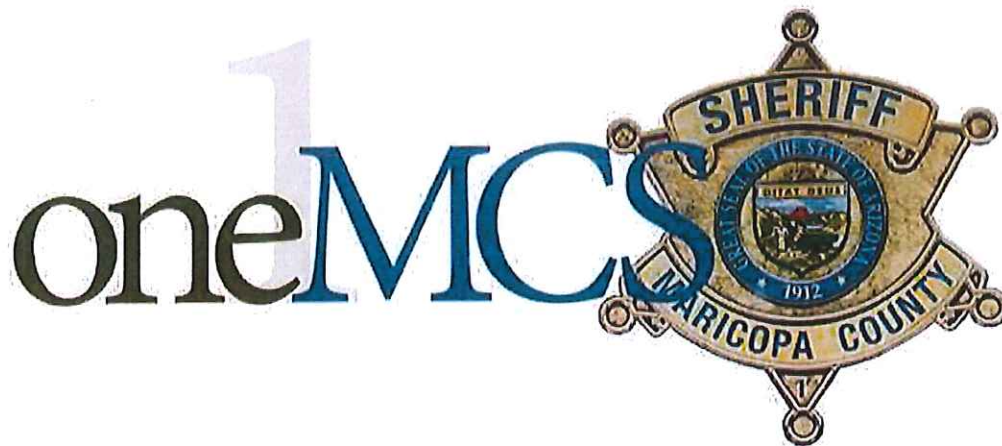


MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Communications Division Audit



Bureau of Internal Oversight

Audit Report # A2017-0004

April 18, 2018

Bureau of Internal Oversight

Executive Summary



To: Lt. Larry Kratzer # S1520
Audit & Inspection Commander
Bureau of Internal Oversight

From: Patty Huling, Staff Auditor # B3184
Bureau of Internal Oversight

Subject: Audit Plan # A2017-0004
Communication Services Review

Date: 04/18/18

The Bureau of Internal Oversight (BIO) completed a scheduled audit of the Communication Services Division. This audit was completed in accordance with the annual Audit Plan for 2017 which was approved by Chief Bill Knight, and selected for review as a result of BIO's 2016 Risk Assessment which was based on interviews and feedback provided by (38) Division Managers, Policies and previous audit findings. The Communications Division was categorized as a "medium-risk" because activities within this Division could result in an event that: (1) exceeds \$1M in liabilities, (2) may cause injury or death, (3) may require mid-level management involvement, (4) may occur several times per year, (5) has moderate impact by the Melendres Court Order.

The purpose of the audit is to review Policies, Procedures and Operating Manuals to determine compliance with best practices and guidelines as defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Standards and any other related authority. This audit also includes a benchmarking study of local salaries and position requirements to provide perspective on our Communications operation relative to other law enforcement communications divisions. This audit focused on the following areas:

- Employee Recruitment
- Employee Retention
- Emergency Preparedness

Weaknesses in recruiting and retaining personnel were identified during the course of this audit and can be improved (pages 9 and 17). The Division's Emergency Preparedness Plan is sufficient but a formal, binding agreement with an alternate service site had not been formalized (page 25). Detailed descriptions of these findings are provided in this report.

Introduction:

The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) provides law enforcement services in the fourth most populated County in the United States, which is also the fifteenth largest County by total area. Within the confines of Maricopa County there are 9,224 square miles of land which include 1,000 square miles of wilderness recreation areas and twenty four square miles of lakes, reservoirs and rivers. Due to the vast urban, rural and recreational areas that comprise Maricopa County, the MCSO relies heavily on the dedication and expertise of the Communications Division to accurately deploy "First Responder" assistance in a timely and effective manner, as needed to protect the lives of both citizens and our officers.

Background:

The Communication Services Division is located on the Second Floor of Sheriff's Headquarters located at 550 West Jackson Street in Phoenix, AZ and is presently comprised of a Division Commander (civilian), six Shift Supervisors, one Training Supervisor, seventeen Emergency Dispatchers, eight Call-Takers, eight Trainees, six Detention Dispatchers, five Detention Call-Takers, a Recording Specialist and an Administrative Assistant. Communications identifies a total of 63 positions on their organizational chart, but as of this writing, in July of 2017, twelve of those positions are vacant.

This Division is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and operates with (3) eight hour shifts per day. "Communications consists of two primary elements; call-taking (including 9-1-1) and dispatch. Communications personnel receive calls from the public for police services or referrals to other law enforcement entities and public service agencies. Service calls are entered into a state-of-the-art computer aided dispatch system (CAD) that tracks the calls from start to finish. All phone calls and radio transmissions are recorded into an audio logger/recorder (i.e., the NICE System). Recordings are retained for a six month period per the Communications Operations Manual (version dated 05/17/17).

Our Communications Division has granted space and access to Computer-Aided Dispatch equipment (via CAD console) to our Detention and Adult Probation Divisions, which enables them to provide dedicated emergency assistance to their staff working in the field. Detention currently has eleven full time employees working in communications (six dispatchers and five call-takers) who report to a Communications Supervisor, but whose sole responsibility is to monitor and support all detention transportation activities and to dispatch assistance, as needed. Previously, if an incident were to occur during inmate transportation, our Detention Officers would have to call for emergency assistance in the same capacity as a citizen (i.e., by dialing "9-1-1" on their telephone and speaking with a patrol dispatcher). Now, Detention Officers in the field have instant radio access to a detention dispatcher, which enables quicker emergency response times and improved law enforcement outcomes.

Adult Probation operates in a similar fashion and is staffed with eighteen employees (three Supervisors and fifteen Dispatchers) whose sole responsibility is to monitor their probation officer's activities in the field and provide assistance as needed. However, the Adult Probation Dispatchers are a "stand alone" unit and report directly to Adult Probation management without any interface with the Communications Division. The Adult Probation Dept. pays \$405,000 in maintenance and technical support fees, per 5 year contract term, for the use of the workstations (reference IGA # C50-16-105-3-00, dated June 2016). Neither the Detention nor the Adult Probation Departments provide any type of emergency assistance to citizens or interact directly with our sworn patrol units.

In accordance with the Federal law known as the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act (or, the 911 Act), our Communications Division serves as one of twenty-three other "first responder" agencies (primarily law enforcement) that has been designated as a primary Public Safety Answering Point (or PSAP) in Maricopa County. This means that when a citizen dials "9-1-1" from any telephone, they will be routed by an external telephone operator (such as a Century Link employee) to the nearest PSAP based on the physical address associated with that number". (reference: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public-safety_answering_point and <https://www.fcc.gov/general/9-1-1-and-e9-1-1-services>).

Scope:

The scope of the audit will focus on administrative and procedural functions of the Communication Services Division. Compliance with MCSO Policies and Procedures will be reviewed and the results documented in the final audit report.

General Objectives:

The primary objectives of this audit are to:

1. Determine current practices
2. Define best practices
3. Improve efficiencies
4. Develop a plan for standardization
5. Adjust Policies (if applicable)

Methodology:

- Conduct Interviews and Site Visits
- Review and Analyze Collected Data
- Conduct Research
- Review Best Practices
- Determine Variance
- Communicate Findings



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Finding and Recommendations

1. The Communications Division has been under-staffed for more than seven years.

In 2011 the Sheriff’s Office procured the services of a consulting agency to conduct a system-wide audit of the Office. The primary objective of the audit was to determine the “most efficient means of establishing a cost effective staffing level for the Sheriff’s Office” and to provide “a cost effective/efficient level of public safety in Maricopa County” (reference Study, page 1-1).

The study completed by MGT of America, Inc. (Reference: The Law Enforcement Staffing Study Draft, dated June, 2012) found that MCSO’s Communications staffing levels were insufficient and cited a former Division Commander who advised that “the unit has not had an increase in permanent staffing level in more than 20 years” (reference page 5-2). The study recommended that 18 positions (i.e., 2 Supervisors, 15 Dispatchers, and 1 Administrative Assistant) be added to the Division to increase the existing staff from 65 to a total of 83 employees, as illustrated here:

Allocated Communications Positions: 2012 to 2017

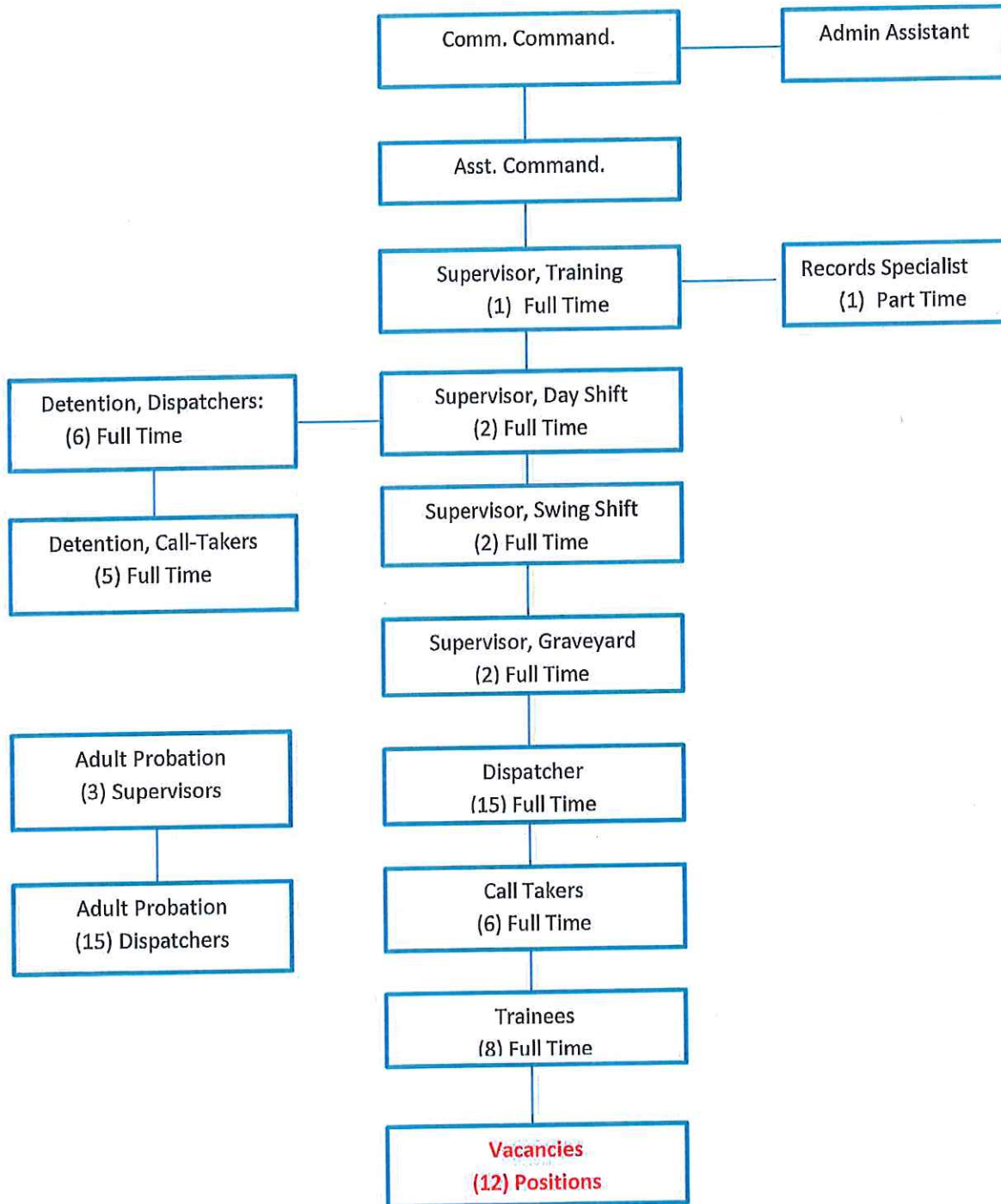
<u>Communications Staffing</u>	<u>Staffing levels (2011)</u>	<u>Current Staffing (July 2017)</u>	<u>MGT Staffing Recommendation (Audit of 2012)</u>	<u>Net Variance from Mgt Rec.</u>
Commander, FT	1	1	1	0
Deputy Commander, FT	1	1	1	0
Administrative Assistant, FT	0	1	1	0
Training Supervisor, FT	0	1	0	1
Dispatch Supervisors, FT	4	6	6	0
Staff Dispatchers, FT & PT	37	39	52	-13
Call Takers / Trainees, FT	6	6	6	0
Detention Dispatchers, FT & PT	12	11	12	-1
Records Specialist, PT	0	1	0	1
Posse Members	4	0	4	-4
Total Full-Time Staff:	65	67	83	-16

In the five-year interim since the study was completed, staffing levels increased primarily through the addition of support personnel, including: (1) Administrative Assistant, (1) Training Supervisor and (1) Records Specialist. However, Communication’s Dispatch positions are still currently under-staffed for two reasons:

- The 13 positions recommended for allocation by MGT in 2012 were never added to the Division, and
- Of the 39 positions presently allocated to the Division, 31% (or 12/39) are currently vacant.

The Communications Division presently consists of 67 allocated positions, as illustrated in the organizational chart on the following page.

The MCSO Communications Division



As of July 2017

Based on the former Commander's statement that the Division had not had "an increase in permanent staffing levels in more than 20 years" (or approximately since 1991), an effort was made document this ongoing personnel shortage. Additional data was requested from both Human Resources and the Communications Division, but neither Division had data going back that far:

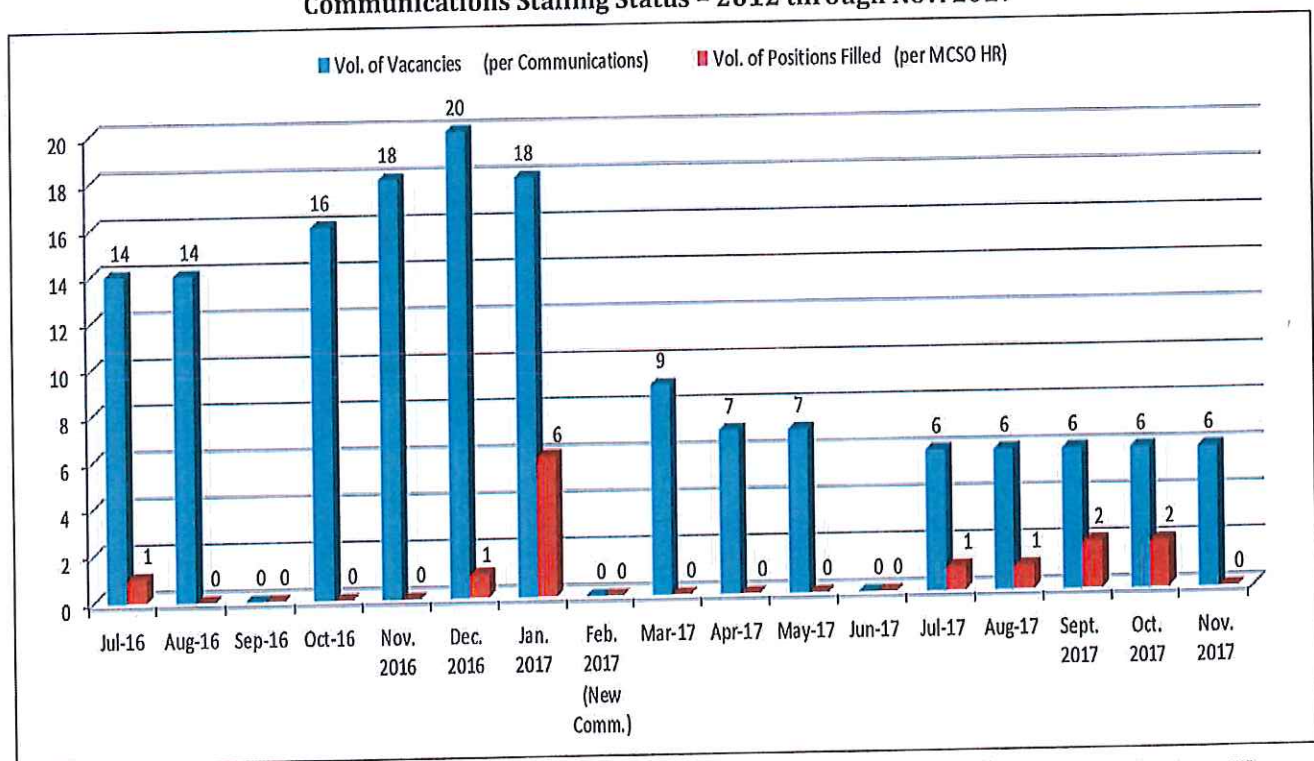
- Human Resources could provide only the number of positions filled since 2012 (a manual process), and
- The new Communications Commander could only provide the number of vacancies posted since July 2016.

Unfortunately the two data sets could not be reconciled for the entire 71 month period due to multiple factors, including:

- no data was captured during certain time periods
- one data set did not control for employees who were simultaneously resigning from employment
- one data set was available by month, while the other included both monthly and annual measurements
- one data set captured both full and part time positions, while the other only included full time.

As a result, only the most recent 17-months out of the nearly six year-period could be reconciled. The graph below provides an illustration of the volume of vacancies to positions filled on a monthly basis:

Communications Staffing Status – 2012 through Nov. 2017



Note: Eight part-time Dispatcher positions were dissolved in 2017 to re-allocate funding towards the Asst. Mgr. position which was added in October of this year.

Our office is not alone in the struggle to keep these positions fully staffed. Historically, the Emergency Dispatch profession has been troubled by staffing recruitment and retention issues and has been documented as such since as early as 1999. In response to what was unanimously agreed upon as a "staffing crisis" the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) formed a Staffing Crisis Task Force to address these concerns through Project RETAINS (Responsive Efforts to Assure Integral Needs in Staffing). The Project included surveys of communications centers across the nation to determine current baseline retention rates, and the variables that may contribute to employee satisfaction and long-term retention (Reference: APCO Project Retains: Staffing & Retention in Public Safety Communications Centers, August 2005, p. x-xi).

Survey results indicated that retention rates varied with the size of the Communication Center, and also by region of the United States. A medium-sized facility (like the MCSO with 67 positions) in the Southwestern region averages an 83% employee retention rate, as illustrated here:

National Retention Rates

<u>Agency Size:</u>	<u>Agency Staffing:</u>	<u>Staff Retention Rate:</u>	<u>Staff Turnover Rate:</u>
Small	1 to 15 employees	83%	17%
Medium	16 to 75 employees	83%	17%
Large	76 or more employees	85%	15%

Note: Project RETAINS utilized Agency size categories defined by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).

An analysis of 2016 termination data obtained from MCSO Human Resources indicates that our Communications Center retains approximately 5% less of its employees than the national average for the S.W. Region (and correspondingly, our turnover rate is approximately 5% more than the regional average), as shown here:

MCSO Communications Benchmark Against S.W. Regional Averages

<u>Agency:</u>	<u>Agency Staffing:</u>	<u>Staff Retention Rate:</u>	<u>Staff Turnover Rate:</u>
Medium- Sized, SW Region	16 to 75 employees	83%	17%
MCSO Communications	67 allocated positions (55 currently filled)	78.20%	21.82%
Total Variance:	n.a.	-4.80%	4.82%

Calculations based on (12) Communications employees terminating from employment in 2016.

Interviews were conducted with Communications staff and Management to determine how service needs were presently being met without sufficient staffing. Staff members explained that needs were being met by Dispatcher's assuming larger workloads (each Dispatcher is responsible for multiple Districts) and the ongoing usage of Overtime Pay. On the day that I visited, the Dispatcher I was observing was responsible for 100 patrol units on the East side, 85 Units on the West Side and 48 Civil Division units in the field. In total, this Dispatcher was responsible for monitoring the activity of 233 patrol cars while simultaneously inputting 911 emergency calls. This is an extremely high workload and excessively stressful for the Dispatcher.

The MGT Study of 2012 states "Best practices indicate Dispatchers should have no more than 20 to 30 law enforcement units to be dispatching" (reference page 5-3); however this standard could not be verified. As a result, an inquiry regarding best practices was directed to Mr. Steve Leese, APCO International's contact for Communications Center and 911 Service questions. Mr. Leese clarified that a national Standard ratio (for identifying an appropriate number of patrol units per dispatcher) does not presently exist. However, a survey of 6,500 Communication Centers was recently conducted and the pending results will provide national benchmarking data in this area.

In discussing Communications Center ratios and volumes, the current thinking on "push to talk" radio transmissions is that radio communications should only occupy approximately 65% of a Dispatchers time on an hourly basis. If the Dispatcher's radio transmissions occupy 85% of his/her time on an hourly basis, then additional staff should be added to reduce the volumes in that area. Mr. Leese also suggested utilizing the APCO Project RETAINS Toolkit as a resource to determine appropriate staffing levels in our Center. By utilizing this software and inputting our own data variables (such as when our busiest call volumes occur and our hourly radio transmission volumes, etc.), a customized staffing recommendation report could be generated in-house.

During the course of this audit a site visit to Phoenix Police Department's Communications Center revealed that they staff their Dispatchers "per precinct". In other words, each precinct has two Dispatchers dedicated to attending to their needs: one Dispatcher handles all initial calls, while the second Dispatcher handles all "tactical calls through Code 4". In discussions with our Communications staff, some consideration has already been given to following a similar model and dedicating one Dispatcher per District.

Recommendation: Communication Dispatch Staffing Levels should be increased to ensure the safety of our patrolmen and the public. Proactive measures should be taken to recruit and fill these positions to guarantee the timely and seamless delivery of the first responder services required of a PSAP. Furthermore, Dispatcher workloads must be reduced to enable our Dispatchers to provide proactive oversight of each patrol unit and Deputy assigned to them. A proactive dispatch environment cannot be provided under the present working conditions when so many calls are coming in from multiple locations - only reactive responses can be provided. Dispatchers must be staffed appropriately to enable them to monitor the safety and whereabouts of all patrolmen assigned to them. For example:

1A). Our Communications Division should purchase the latest version of the APCO Toolkit, known as Project RETAINS Toolkit 2.0 (annual subscription cost is \$55 for members), as needed to conduct their own in-house analysis and staffing study to determine present and future needs, as well as benchmark against Natl. Standards.

1B). When full staffing has been achieved, Dispatcher workloads must be reduced to provide our Deputies with the dedicated support they require to insure their safety. It would be ideal to staff one Dispatcher per District, particularly during the busiest hours, not only to reduce workload stress levels, but also to facilitate a proactive (rather than reactive) call-taking environment.

1C). Communications should explore the most cost-effective means for conducting aptitude testing - either by means of a simulated dispatch program (such as Critcall, or other system) or, by conducting their own pre-employment testing program, in-house. By assuming a more proactive role in these testing processes Communications will be able to select the most suitable candidates for long term retention.

1D). A certification list of applicants who have already passed an aptitude test indicating suitability for this type of work is needed (i.e., the ability to multi-task including the ability to discern information and input data simultaneously, comprehension of laws, geography and map reading, decision-making, and communication skills such as typing, spelling, grammar, etc.) and should be made available to Communications on a continuous basis to enable interviews to be conducted immediately. Presently, the employment process may take up to six months to complete with applicants often taking other jobs before an offer of employment can be made. Our certification lists are prepared by Human Resources, but if the process were to be completed internally by the Communications

Division, perhaps the process could be completed faster (as the City of Phx. Communications Center does, for example).

1E). The Dispatcher position should be maintained as an "open/continuous" position to facilitate filling positions quickly and eliminate "lag time" in filling vacant positions.

2. Overtime Expenses Have Increased and Nearly Doubled since 2011.

Due to the present staffing shortage, our Communications Division must rely on mandatory overtime hours to meet staffing needs. Unfortunately, this has been the case since the MGT audit of 2012, nearly five years ago. At that time, their recommendation was to hire additional staffing and realize the corresponding cost-savings through paying "regular" wages rather than Overtime wages at "time and a half".

A review of the 2011 expenditures (as reported by MGT Consulting) versus the current overtime expenditures indicates that Communication's usage has nearly doubled, as illustrated below:

Overtime Expenditures: 2011 vs. 2017

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Overtime Utilization (hrs):</u>	<u>Overtime expenditures</u>
CY 2011	4,000	\$140,000.00
FY 2016/17	7,632	\$256,161.00
Variance	Increased by 3,632 Hrs.	Increased by \$116,161

Note: Communications provides law enforcement dispatch support to Chase Ballpark, a Maricopa-County owned property by means of over-time pay which is not included in these volumes (i.e., Ball Park activities are funded separately).

The use of temporary overtime to meet service needs is only appropriate until permanent staff can be put in place. Consistently relying on mandatory overtime as a means to staff an organization comes at a high premium, as exhausted staff may be less able to handle the daily stress of the job and may result in:

- faulty decision-making which could endanger the lives of our patrol officers or the public,
- potentially exposing the office to an increase in legal liabilities and/or public scrutiny
- correlates with an increased use of sick leave, to compensate for the lack of personal time
- decreases employee workplace satisfaction, and
- may cause experienced employees to look elsewhere for better working conditions

It has been debated that utilizing overtime in lieu of hiring permanent employees generates a cost-savings by avoiding training costs and the provision of employee benefits, however, this logic fails to address the risks and liabilities listed above. In addition, overtime also "perversely keeps costs low by increasing turnover and assuring a substantial number of employees are earning entry level wages" (APCO Project RETAINS, p. 9).

Recommendation: The routine reliance on overtime is symptomatic of personnel issues beyond "not being able to fill" or retain positions on a long term basis. Communications should be proactive in investigating why so many positions remain vacant and implement processes to reverse this trend, as well as eliminate dependence on overtime as a crutch. For example:

2A). Investigate and resolve any obstacles that might be impacting the application process. Survey applicants to determine if there might be difficulties with the online application system, or other obstacles that might discourage applicants from completing the application process. Complete a "ghost application" to gain firsthand knowledge of any issues that may not be readily apparent.

2B). Implement a multi-purpose Community Outreach Program to educate the public about the emergency dispatch profession and the services we offer, promote the meaningfulness of serving as a First Responder and simultaneously announce and recruit for on-going employment opportunities, write articles and advertise openings in the newspaper, develop educational presentations for vocational schools & community colleges, network with criminal justice professors at the community college level, host Communications "open house" events as part of recruiting process, develop a video clip that can be viewed by the public from the MCSO website or Facebook page, promote the Dispatch profession via an educational booth at the State Fair, participate in career fairs etc.

2C). Benchmark and network with other local law enforcement agencies to identify any other successful methods for recruiting and retaining Dispatchers.

2D). Benchmark other local law enforcement agencies to determine our level of competitiveness in areas of salary and intangible benefits which improve employee's quality of life (such as flexible scheduling, or other employee "perks").

2E). Survey staff for suggestions for input on innovative methods of elevating workplace satisfaction. Consider implementing programs utilized by employers who have been documented by the media as a "best places to work" on a trial basis to test for efficacy in the Dispatch environment.

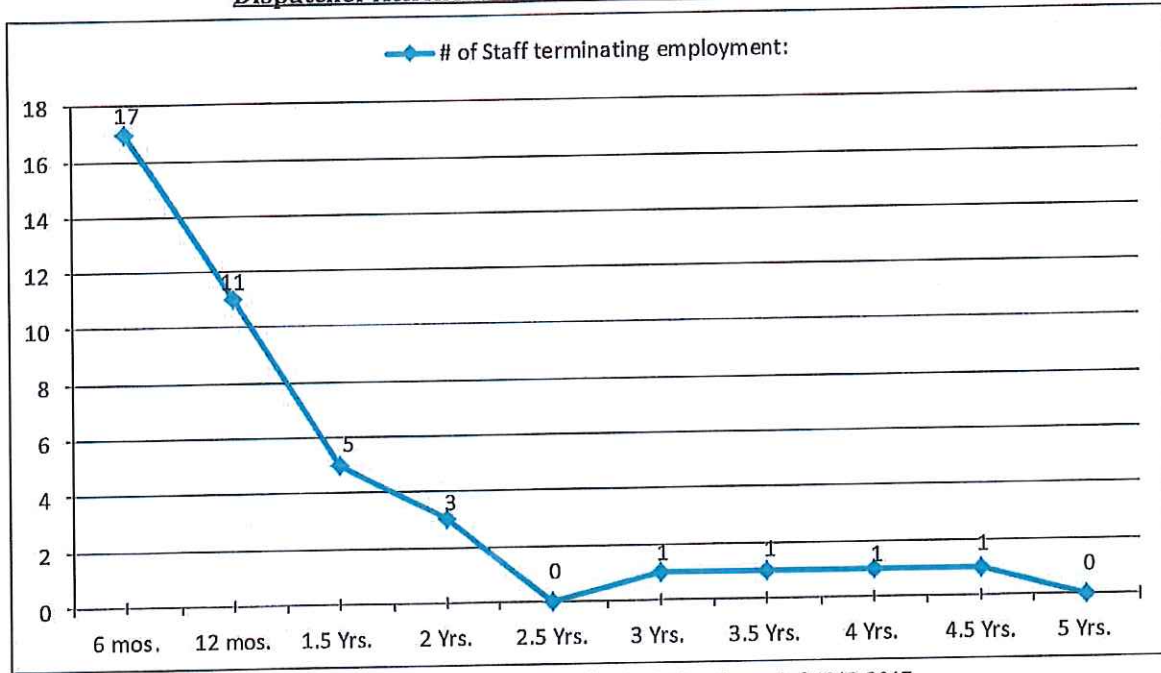
3. Communication's Attrition Rate is Highest During the First Year of Employment

To determine the causality of the staffing deficiency in Communications, it is necessary to review employee data and length of employment to pinpoint where any irregularities may lie. Therefore, MCSO Human Resources was contacted to obtain a data report listing the status of all employees terminating from employment during the last five year period (i.e., 2012 thru 2017). The employee's length of employment was analyzed to determine what factors might be contributing to the staffing shortage or might be causing employees to leave? Accordingly, this data was reviewed incrementally:

1. The first five years of employment in the Communications Division.
2. The probationary period, which includes the first 12 months of employment
3. Immediately after completion of probationary period (13 months and upwards)

The results provide an insight into our current staffing deficiency, as illustrated below and on the following pages:

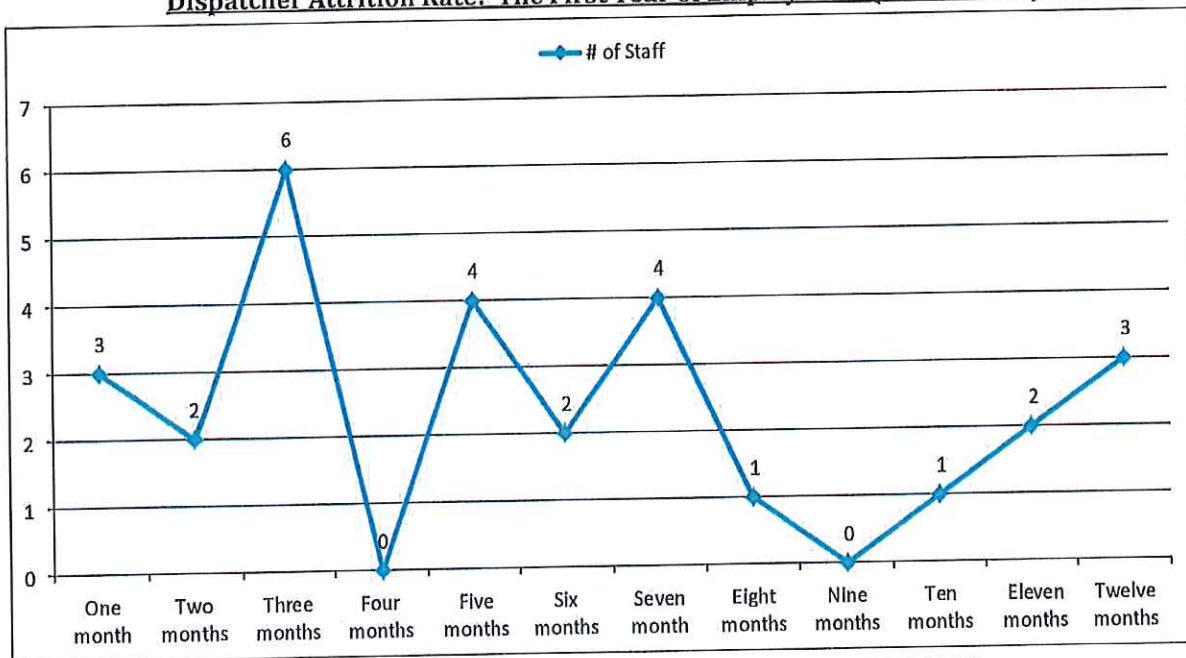
Dispatcher Attrition: The First Five Years of Employment



MCSO Human Resource termination data during the period 2012-2017.

The chart above indicates that during the last five years, 50% (or 28/56) of employees terminating from employment did so during the initial probationary period. The Chart below provides a more detailed look at the 12-month probationary period and the points in which Dispatcher trainees dropped out of our program:

Dispatcher Attrition Rate: The First Year of Employment (Probationary Period)



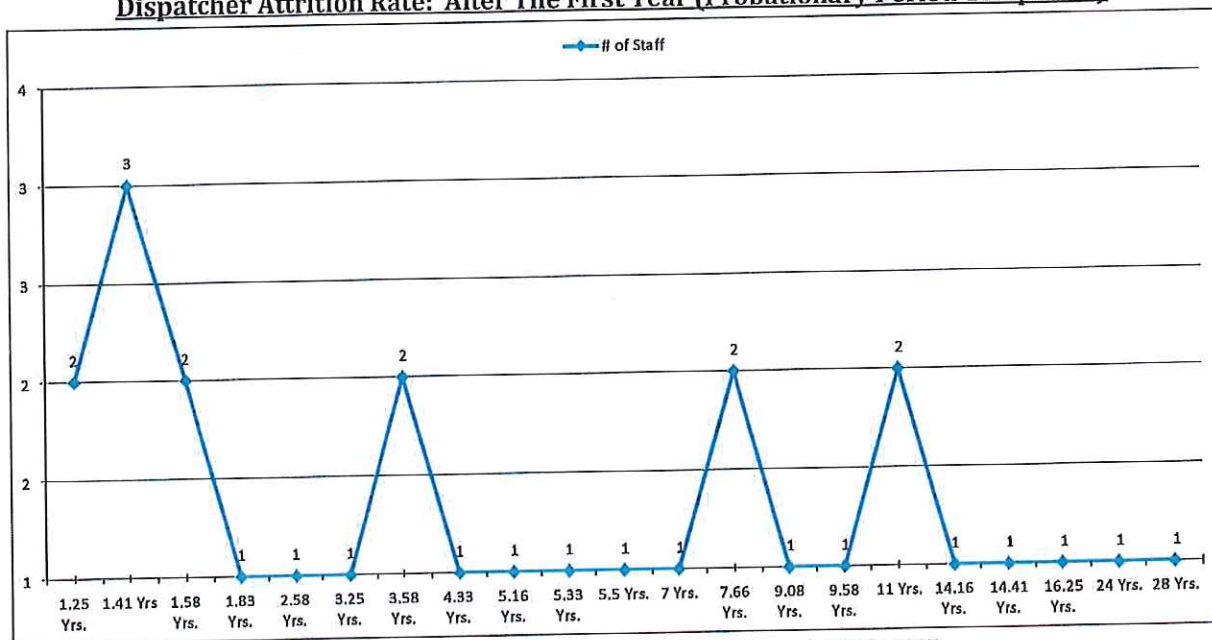
MCSO Human Resource termination data during the period 2012-2017.

Although the reason these employees terminated from employment prior to completing the training phase are not known (i.e., exit interviews were not conducted), this data identifies that the:

- majority of terminations occur at the three month-point, where 21.43% (or 6/28) of our trainees are lost.
- terminations peak again during the 5 to 7 month period, with 36% of trainees lost (or 10/28)
- terminations are also concentrated during the first and final months of the probationary period, losing 10.71% (or 3/7) at each point in time, or 21.43% cumulatively.

The next period reviewed was immediately after the standard 12 month probationary period had been completed. It should be noted that in some special cases, the probationary period may be extended by an additional six months, lengthening the initial probationary period to a total duration of 18 months.

Dispatcher Attrition Rate: After The First Year (Probationary Period Completed)



MCSO Human Resource termination data during the period 2012-2017.

This chart provides additional insight into the period immediately following the standard probationary period of one year and indicates two trends are occurring a) almost 30% are terminating from employment prior to reaching the two year milestone. It is not known what percentage of this group may have been participating in an "extended" probationary period and may have been struggling to meet the requirements of the position, and b) those employees who surpassed the five year milestone tended to continue along this career path towards retirement:

- 25% (or 7/28) retired from their positions, with 11 to 28 years of service.
- 28.57% (or 8/28) transitioned out of their original Dispatcher positions, with 5 going into different positions within the Communications Division, and 3 leaving Communications for different Divisions of the MCSO.

- Of the 5 Dispatchers taking different positions within Communications, one promoted into a Supervisor's position, two demoted to call-taker positions, and one transitioned from part-time Dispatcher to full time status.

APCO's Project RETAINS also studied the reasons why employees leave and have linked turnover rates to many different factors, including: "adequacy of training, methods for managing workload and schedules, opportunities for career advancement, respect from administrators, organizational recognition, workloads and staffing levels, clarity of roles and participation in decision-making."

Our new Communications Commander (as of 02/17) is well aware of the many challenges and variables of this career path. Formerly an Emergency Dispatcher himself, and also credentialed through APCO, he has already looked into the hiring process and discovered that the main criteria for selection included a clerical test and a typing skill test, which does not even begin to test for the aptitudes required to be successful in this career.

The current training regime consists of a seven week long "Communications Academy" which includes classroom activity, on-the job call-taking duty, Deputy ride-alongs, and speaker presentations. The first three weeks of training include attaining the APCO certification and the final week includes an internal test. The Communications Division is aware of some training deficiencies which become apparent when the trainees transition from Call-Taking into the Dispatcher position (which handles 911 calls and radio dispatch) and is presently in the process of revising the training program.

Recommendation: High attrition rates occurring during the probationary period and immediately after indicate that candidates are not being pre-screened sufficiently to provide the most suitable candidates for the training phase and/or the training phase is not extensive enough to prepare the candidates for the reality and stress of the Dispatcher position. Internal controls should be put in place to reverse this high turnover rate in personnel and the resulting ineffective expenditure of resources (i.e., time and money). For example:

- 3A). Conduct more "pre-selection" of candidates with scored aptitude tests to identify which candidates have strength in skill sets beyond the basic reading, writing, grammar and typing. Pre-selective testing must include memory, comprehension, analytical and decision-making skills, map reading, multi-tasking, etc. to provide a true assessment of the skills that an emergency operator must possess to succeed in this career field.
- 3B). Applications should specify "preference given to certified Emergency Dispatchers" and offer additional pay incentive for those applicants who have experience and have already demonstrated a proficiency in this profession.
- 3C). The Training program should be reviewed to determine if the course materials are comprehensive and if sufficient time is provided for the trainees to learn all that will be required of them on the job. Additional testing could be conducted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to ascertain if any areas of training need to be revisited before continuing on to the next lessons.
- 3D). The Training program should be expanded to provide trainees with additional experience and support as needed to master the Dispatchers skill set prior to promoting them into this advanced position.

4. Our Dispatchers Entry Level Pay is Less Than both the Benchmarked Mean and the State's Reported Mean for Maricopa County.

A benchmarking study of Call-Taker and Dispatcher entry level pay was conducted for the purpose of this audit and included an analysis of the recruitment bulletins of (17) local law enforcement agencies and the stated requirements for the position. The local entry level pay ranges are as follows:

Dispatcher Salary Benchmark: Entry Level Wages

Min. Hrly.	Max. Hrly.	Agency:	Dispatchers (Includes Call-Taker duty)
15.32	24.39	City of Tucson	Public Safety Dispatcher
17.68	23.30	AZ State / Dept. of Public Safety	Police Communications Dispatcher
17.74	28.90	City of Buckeye	Public Safety Dispatcher
19.31	28.00	City of Avondale	Public Safety Dispatcher
19.33	28.65	Maricopa County	Emergency Dispatcher
19.39	28.43	City of Phoenix	Police Communications Operator Radio / 911
19.54		<i>Mean Entry-Level Wage</i>	
19.56	29.34	City of Glendale	Police Communicatins Specialist
19.68	26.57	City of Tempe	Communications Dispatcher I+
19.71		<i>Median Entry-Level Wage</i>	
19.71	26.50	City of Peoria	<i>Dispatch/Comm. Specialist</i>
19.71	28.58	City of Scottsdale	Communications Dispatcher
20.08	29.80	City of Goodyear	Telecommunications Operator
20.36	29.91	City of Phoenix	Police Communications Operator Lead Radio / 911
20.42	28.62	City of Mesa	Public Safety Communications Dispatcher
20.68	29.10	City of Surprise	Public Safety Communications Officer
20.77	30.10	City of Gilbert	Police Communications / Dispatcher
21.15	28.58	City of Chandler	Dispatcher
21.20	28.63	City of Tempe	Communications Dispatcher II+

Analysis of the (17) entry level Dispatcher salaries yielded a mean entry level wage of \$19.53, and a median entry level wage of \$19.71 an hour, both of which are more than the hourly entry level pay offered by MCSO Communications (as of this writing):

- MCSO's minimum hourly rate is .20 cents *less than* the average "minimum" benchmark rate
- MCSO's minimum hourly rate is .38 cents *less than* the median "minimum" benchmark rate

A benchmark of the Maximum Hourly Dispatcher rates was also completed, and is shown on the following page:

Dispatcher Salary Benchmark: Maximum Hourly Wage

Max. Hrly.	Agency:	Dispatchers (includes Call-Taker duty)
23.30	AZ State / Dept. of Public Safety	Police Communications Dispatcher
24.39	City of Tucson	Public Safety Dispatcher
26.50	City of Peoria	<i>Dispatch/Comm. Specialist</i>
26.57	City of Tempe	Communications Dispatcher I+
28.00	City of Avondale	Public Safety Dispatcher
28.08	Mean Maximum Wage	
28.43	City of Phoenix	Police Communications Operator Radio / 911
28.58	City of Scottsdale	Communications Dispatcher
28.58	City of Chandler	Dispatcher
28.62	Median Maximum Wage	
28.62	City of Mesa	Public Safety Communications Dispatcher
28.63	City of Tempe	Communications Dispatcher II+
28.65	Maricopa County	Emergency Dispatcher
28.90	City of Buckeye	Public Safety Dispatcher
29.10	City of Surprise	Public Safety Communications Officer
29.34	City of Glendale	Police Communicatins Specialist
29.80	City of Goodyear	Telecommunications Operator
29.91	City of Phoenix	Police Communications Operator Lead Radio / 911
30.10	City of Gilbert	Police Communications / Dispatcher

Here we find that MCSO Communications has reversed the previous trend and provides a maximum hourly wage in excess of both the mean and median Dispatcher's hourly wages:

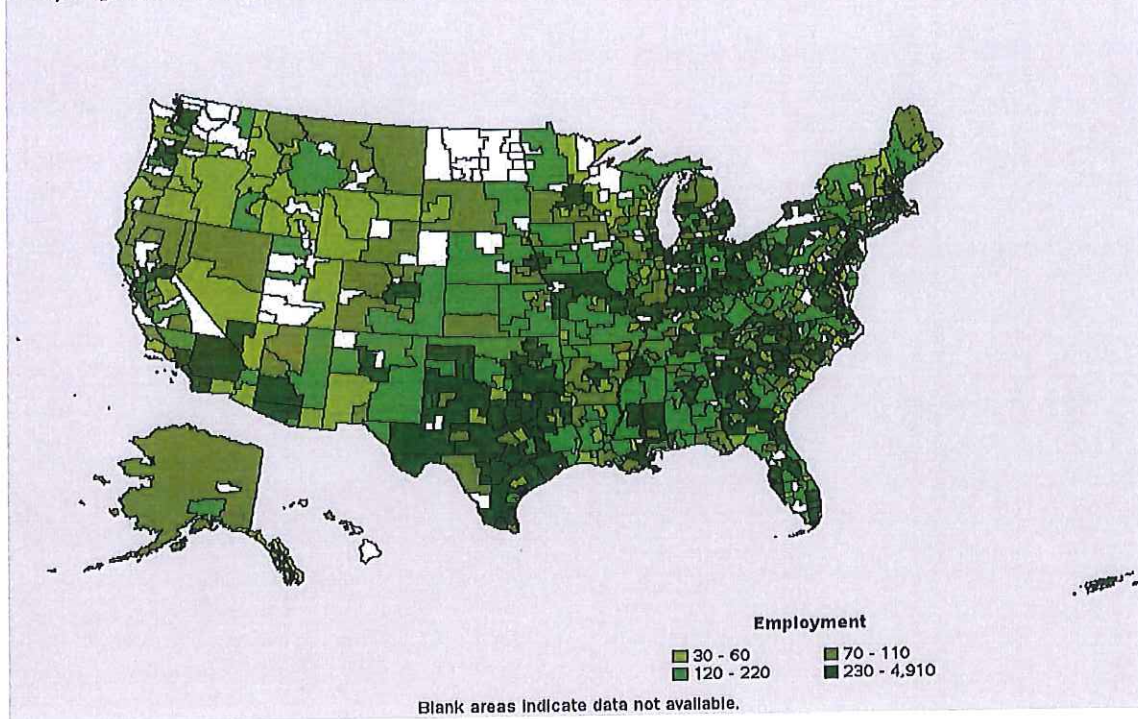
- MCSO's maximum hourly rate is .57 cents *more than* the average "maximum" rate of \$28.08
- MCSO's maximum hourly rate is .03 cents *more than* the median "maximum" rate of \$28.62

In addition to reviewing the pay scales offered by the various AZ law enforcement agencies, public wage data compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics was also considered. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is the Federal Agency responsible for "measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy. Its mission is to collect, analyze, and disseminate essential economic information to support public and private decision-making since 1884" (retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/bls/infhome.htm>).

One of the resources provided by the BLS are the Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, which includes salary estimates derived by a State survey of over 800 different occupations. The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) which are completed every three years "covers all full-time and part-time wage and salary workers in nonfarm industries" (retrieved from: https://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_emp.htm).

The data collected from these surveys are posted online in several different formats, such as by occupational profile, by national or state level, as well as by metropolitan or rural areas. On the following page, is the most current data (May 2016) for the metropolitan areas with the highest employment levels for emergency dispatchers, which includes the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale area, as illustrated on the following page:

Employment of police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers, by area, May 2016



Metropolitan areas with the highest employment level in this occupation:

Metropolitan area	Employment (1)	Employment per thousand jobs	Location quotient (9)	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)
New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ Metropolitan Division	2,720	0.41	0.61	\$21.45	\$44,620
Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights, IL Metropolitan Division	1,760	0.48	0.71	\$27.05	\$56,260
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX	1,290	0.44	0.65	\$18.65	\$38,800
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	1,280	0.50	0.74	\$16.69	\$34,710
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan Division	1,160	0.46	0.69	\$23.72	\$49,350
Nassau County-Suffolk County, NY Metropolitan Division	1,090	0.85	1.25	\$24.50	\$50,960
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	1,090	0.56	0.83	\$22.72	\$47,260
Dallas-Plano-Irving, TX Metropolitan Division	1,030	0.43	0.63	\$20.13	\$41,870
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, CA Metropolitan Division	1,010	0.24	0.35	\$28.15	\$58,540
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA NECTA Division	1,000	0.56	0.82	\$23.57	\$49,020

Retrieved from the Bureau of Labor Statistics at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes435031.htm>

- (1) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
- (9) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
- (2) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a "year-round, full-time" hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

As illustrated in the chart below, our entry level Dispatcher pay of \$19.33 is less than the geographic averages reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and AZ State. In fact, the State's reported average wage for Maricopa County is \$3.69 more than what we pay our entry level staff:

Dispatcher Wage Estimates, by Geographic Areas – Survey of May 2016

<u>Occupational Class/Code:</u>	<u>Statistics provided by:</u>	<u>Geographical Area:</u>	<u>Mean (Average) Wage</u>	<u>Median Wage</u>
Police, Fire and Ambulance Dispatchers (Code # 43-5031).	U.S. Bureau of Labor	National	19.74	18.69
	U.S. Bureau of Labor	AZ State	21.07	20.79
	U.S. Bureau of Labor	Metropolitan Area (Phx./Mesa/Scottsdale)	22.72	23.17
	AZ Office of Economic Opportunity	Maricopa County*	23.02	23.54

*As retrieved from the AZ State Office of Economic Opportunity at: <https://laborstats.az.gov/occupational-employment-statistics>

Based on the wage information presented here, it is apparent that there is a wide variation in hourly wages offered for the Emergency Dispatcher classification and that Maricopa County's entry level pay should be considered for an increase. Furthermore, MCSO's Communication Division has been disadvantaged by the salaries and opportunities provided by other more competitive law enforcement agencies. For example, the City of Peoria has an "open/continuous" recruitment bulletin for the 911 Dispatcher/Communications Specialist position which states:

"This position is for experienced Communications Specialist (911 Call Takers/Dispatchers Only). This position applies only to candidates currently employed by another LE agency within the valley" and

"Temporary streamlined hiring process for this position: Short background check, no polygraph or psychological examination (if previously completed by applicant's agency)" and "effective 02/21/17 and recruiting every two weeks" thereafter.

In previous discussions with the Division Commander, it was noted that Communications lost eight experienced Dispatchers to other local law enforcement agencies in the first quarter of 2017. Gilbert Police Department was one of the Agency's recruiting at that time and offering up to \$30.10 per hour for experienced Dispatchers. Our Commander is well aware of the challenges in retaining our valuable staff members and has been working with a staffing consultant, with a final report due on this topic in June of this year.

Recommendation: Emergency Dispatcher Salaries should become more competitive and need to be adjusted as an incentive to retain experienced staff and also for recruiting personnel with prior experience. For example:

4A). The Communications Division should do an analysis of existing staff wages to determine what the mean and median wages are within the MCSO relative to the statistics provided in this report to determine where salary adjustments need to be made.

4B). The Communications Division should review the Consultant's (pending) 2017 Staffing Report for recruiting personnel with the required knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) and pursue their recommendations with the Human Resources Division and Senior Management, as needed to become a more competitive employer.

4C). Communications may wish to revise current recruitment bulletins to make an appeal to experienced Dispatchers presently employed by another law enforcement agency, as a means to quickly fill vacant positions with experienced personnel.

5. Dispatcher Career Track as Primary Position May be Contributing to Poor Morale

The majority of Communications Centers appear to recruit for the Emergency Dispatcher position as their sole job classification, yet have also consistently divided the workload into two separate job functions: Employees who field all incoming:

1. telephone calls, and whose primary job is to gather information and redirect the caller to the appropriate resource are considered to be operating as Call-Takers,

whereas those who handle all
2. 911 emergency calls, and whose primary job is to dispatch a patrol vehicle to the appropriate locale by means computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and provide direct radio transmissions and oversight over the patrol officers, are commonly known to be operating as Dispatchers.

In reviewing the job class data of the AZ law enforcement agencies used for benchmarking purposes, it was noted that 33% of the agencies (or 6/18) have elected to offer separate positions for both Call-Takers and Emergency Dispatchers, versus recruiting solely for the Dispatch position. They are as follows:

Call Taker Benchmark:

<u>Min. Hrly.</u>	<u>Max. Hrly.</u>	<u>Agency:</u>	<u>Call-Taker Positions (no radio transmissions)</u>
15.53	22.90	Pima County	Sheriff's 911 Call Taker
16.89	27.51	City of Buckeye	911 Operator
17.63	24.89	City of Mesa	Public Safety 911 Operator
18.49	27.14	<i>*City of Phoenix</i>	Police Communications Operator
19.31	28.00	City of Avondale	911 Call Taker
19.68	26.57	<i>*City of Tempe</i>	Communications Dispatcher I

**Note:* The Cities of Phoenix and Tempe presently have separate Call-Taker and Dispatcher positions, but these positions have been "grandfathered" in. As of 2012, all new Phx. recruits must be cross-trained to provide both functions, and as of 2016, the City of Tempe will only recruit for Dispatchers.

With the exception of one agency, all Call-Takers earned less than Dispatchers, as illustrated here:

Pay Ranges, Call-Takers vs. Dispatchers

<u>Description:</u>	<u>Entry Level Pay Range</u>	<u>Maximum Pay Range</u>	<u>Promotional Range:</u>
Call Takers earn:	.85 to \$1.69 Less than a Dispatcher	.39 to \$1.08 Less Than a Dispatcher	\$6.89 to \$ 10.62 more than Base

The one exception was the City of Avondale, which uses the same rate of pay for both the Call-Taker and Dispatcher positions. While the function of the two positions may appear similar, they are distinctly differentiated by the Dispatchers responsibility for direct radio transmission and oversight of patrol officers. Accordingly, the pay scales should also be differentiated by the different levels of responsibility inherent in the two positions.

Although maintaining two separate classifications and pay scales may be more labor-intensive from one perspective, but officially recognizing the different skill sets and job classifications relative to the Call-Taker and Dispatcher positions has value and is well worth consideration. The benefits include:

- Providing a career ladder for those who may prefer more of an information-gathering role versus the more high pressure decision-making role of a Dispatcher and providing a means for the monetary reward of those who excel in either area of specialized expertise.
- Recognition of the Call-Takers interviewing skills as a valuable primary contribution rather than secondary to the Dispatch position (and thereby circumventing the unspoken perception or stigma of perhaps “not being good enough” to perform as a Dispatcher).
- Maintaining separate pay scales for both the positions provides an incentive for a Call-Taker who may wish to aspire to a more demanding and higher paying job at a later date when they have more confidence in their own ability and knowledge base, which may vary greatly from one individual to another.
- Creating a Call-Taker career path may increase retention rates by providing an alternative means of employment versus terminating entirely from the Dispatcher career path.

Recommendation: Implementing a separate classification for a Call-Taker position may contribute to improving morale as well as increase retention rates by legitimizing the value of the position and increase recruitment by providing a less intimidating employment opportunity. For example:

5A). Communications should continue to provide standardized training which overlaps both the call-taking and dispatch functions for efficiency, but should consider separate recruitments for both positions to provide an entry level, “foot in the door” type of position that is free of the stigma of being “less than” a Dispatcher and provides the employee the ability to control the direction of their own career.

5B). Communications should develop two different pay scales, as needed to reward employees for the level of responsibility inherent in their respective positions (i.e., Dispatchers have different requirements and a higher level of responsibility and should therefore receive a higher rate of remuneration). In addition, two different pay scales will provide a career ladder which will provide an incentive to grow into the profession and hopefully strive to assume more responsibility on a long-term basis.

6. Call Response Times have decreased and appear to be improving over time

The MGT Staffing Study of 2012 discusses the national standards developed by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) which defines the criteria which all Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) must strive to comply with:

“90% of 9-1-1 calls arriving at the PSAP shall be answered within 10 seconds during the busy hour” and “95% of all 9-1-1 calls shall be answered within 20 seconds” (reference ANS 1.102.20-2010, 3.2.15.1).

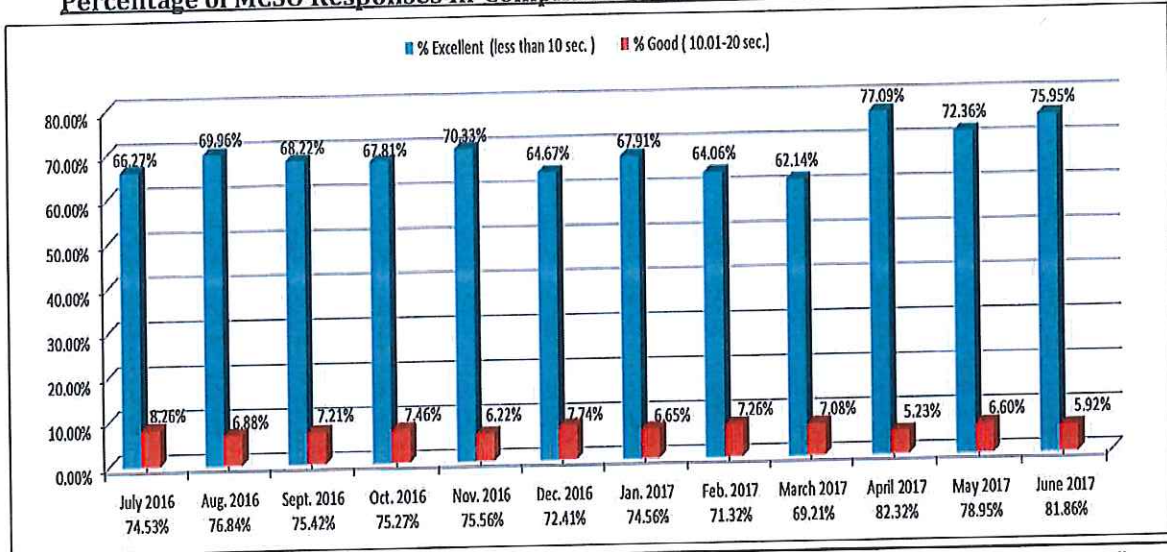
In addition, the Study provides background on the MCSO Communications Division and states: “There is no established standard used by the MCSO Communications Center. When asked why not, the response was that “we know we just can’t meet it” (reference: MGT Staffing Study, page 5-3).

Five years have passed since the MGT Study and many improvements have taken place in the interim, including the construction of the Sheriff’s new Headquarters which also houses the new Communications Center, the installation of 29 new dispatch consoles, an upgrade from the outdated Computer Aided Dispatch system (Version 1) to the new Intergraph Hexagon I/CAD system (Version 19), the new Intrado telephone system, the purchase of new, state of the art P25 radio series and the installation of 47 new radio towers. These upgrades have not only changed the face of the Sheriff’s office but have also provided the means for meaningful data capture and analysis.

The former Commander of the Communications (a sworn officer) also made many improvements to the Division including reducing MCSO's legal liability by compelling his dispatch staff to obtain their professional credentials through APCO and thereby also standardizing procedures and the employee knowledge base. In addition, the Division began to monitor call response times in accordance with the APCO/NENA Standards and striving towards achieving compliance.

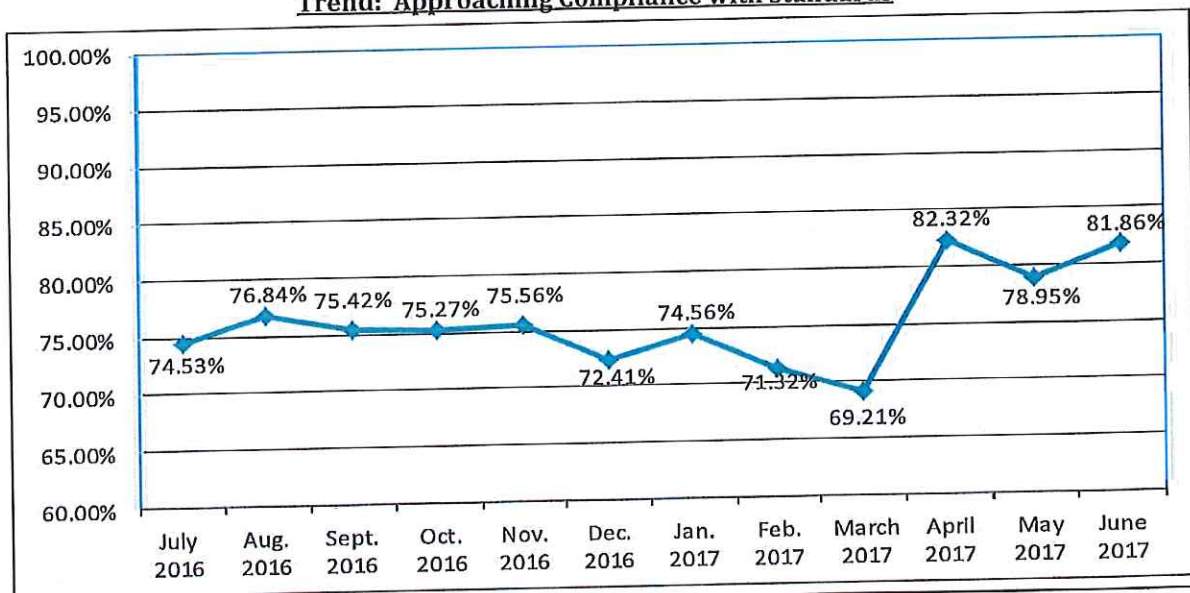
Our current Commander is continuing down the same path and has already made significant improvements within the Division, including a nearly immediate improvement in call response times, as illustrated below:

Percentage of MCSO Responses In-Compliance with National Call Standards, FY 16/17



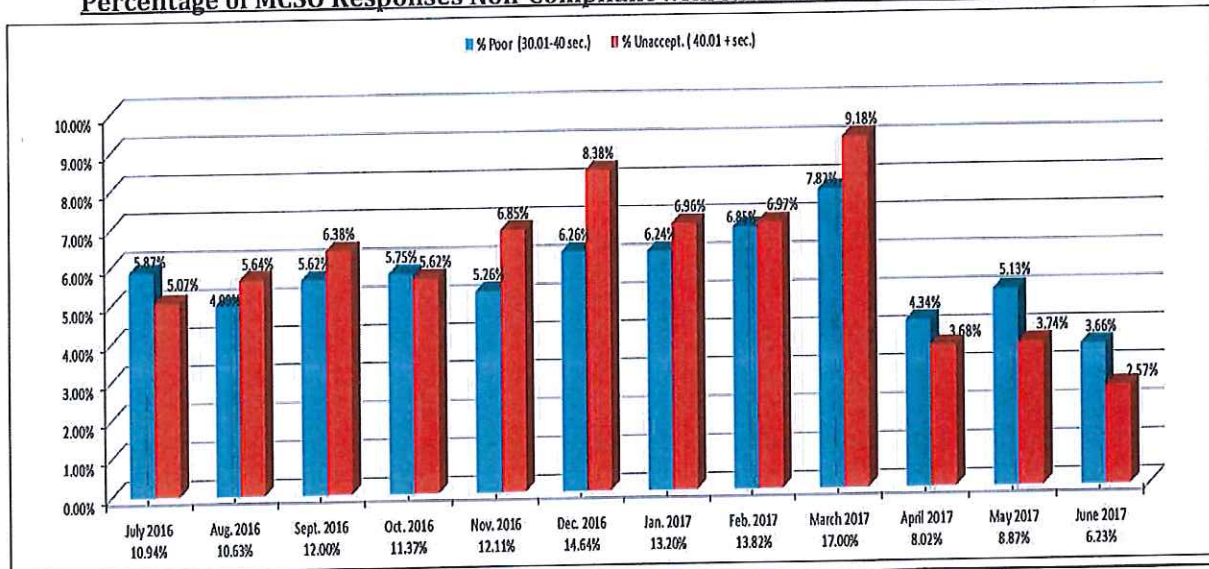
Note: Only scores categorized as "excellent" or "good" are considered in these calculations (i.e., "average" scores are omitted).

Trend: Approaching Compliance with Standards



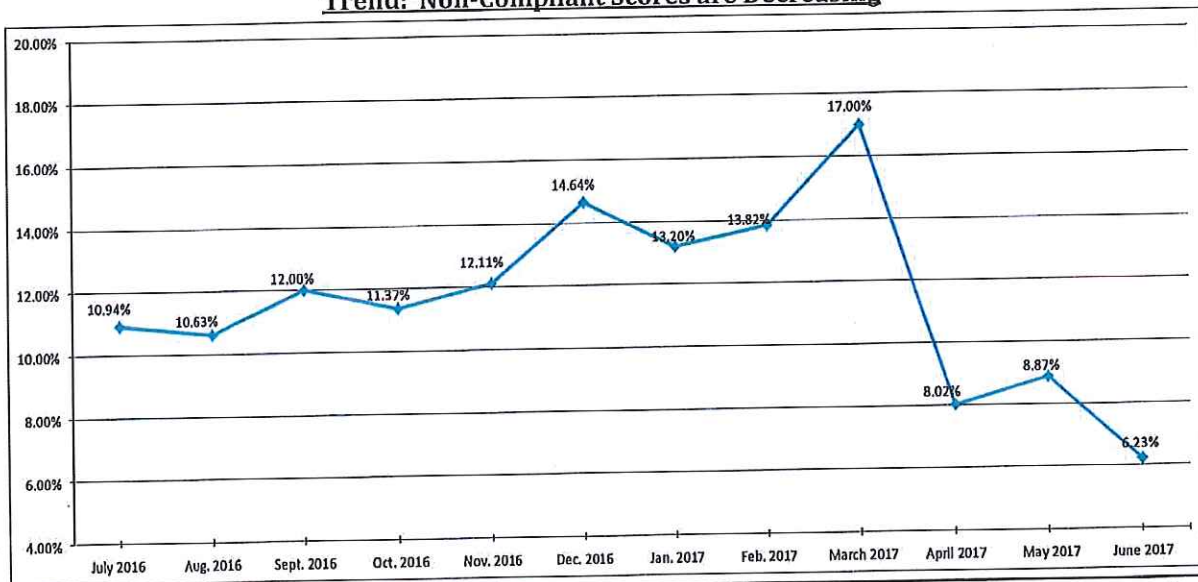
Note: Only scores categorized as "excellent" or "good" are considered in these calculations (i.e., "average" scores are omitted).

Percentage of MCSO Responses Non-Compliant with National Call Standards, FY 16/17



Note: Only scores categorized as "excellent" or "good" are considered in these calculations (i.e., "average" scores are omitted).

Trend: Non-Compliant Scores are Decreasing



Note: Only scores categorized as "excellent" or "good" are considered in these calculations (i.e., "average" scores are omitted).

It should be noted that call response times improved by 13.10 percentile points in April and correspondingly, the volume of calls which failed to meet passing criteria also declined by 8.98 percentile points. This increase in performance correlates with the first 60 days of the new Commander's hire date (i.e., 02/28/17).

The month of May still shows significant improvement over the prior period (i.e., July 2016 through March 2017) although did not quite match April's performance. June's compliance score almost matched April's, and the scores falling in the non-compliant scores range decreased by almost 2 percentile points more than April's score. In the last fiscal year, our Communications Division has surpassed the 80 percentile mark on two occasions and both occurred during the first four months of our new Commander's leadership.

Achieving compliance scores in excess of 80% is commendable, particularly in light of the Division's current staffing shortage and reliance on overtime hours, yet they must continue to strive toward achieving compliance with the Call Response Standard which specifies that "90% all calls occurring during the busiest hour (i.e., the hour each day with the greatest call volume) must be answered within 10 seconds".

APCO's Project RETAINS examines how staffing issues impacts call response times. To illustrate the impact of being even one dispatcher short, the following chart was provided:

The "Power of One" on Average Speed of Answer

<u>Center Size:</u>	<u>Volume of Disapachers on Duty:</u>	<u>Volume of Calls per 30 Min. Interval</u>	<u>Average Speed of Answer (ASA):</u>
Small	10 Disapachers	57 Calls	30 Seconds
Small	9 Disapachers	57 Calls	80 Seconds
Medium	25 Disapachers	163 Calls	30 Seconds
Medium	24 Disapachers	163 Calls	58 Seconds
Large	50 Disapachers	346 Calls	30 Seconds
Large	49 Disapachers	346 Calls	50 Seconds

Reference: APCO Project RETAINS, August 2005 (see page 4).

In summary, a small communications center operating with one less dispatcher will experience response times that are nearly triple the wait time then when fully-staffed. In a medium-sized center the change from fully staffed to one dispatcher less nearly doubles the wait time. Finally, in a large-sized facility having one dispatcher less increases wait time by 20 seconds... "a substantial difference in a true emergency situation".

Recommendation: Communication's call response times have improved and recently reached the 80 percentile point and while they should be commended for this accomplishment, they must continue to strive towards achieving compliance with the APCO/NENA Standard specifying that "90% of all calls occurring in the busiest hour must be answered within 10 seconds." For example:

6A). Communications should conduct calculations to define when the busiest hour of each day occurs and staff those hours to provide sufficient dispatcher coverage during these periods to enable reaching the 90% goal.

6B). Communications should maintain full-staffing to achieve this goal and to sustain this level of performance over time.

7. Detention Radio Call Volumes are Increasing.

Benchmarking our current communications data against data recorded in the MGT study appears to indicate that MCSO's incoming telephone and 911 calls have decreased, while the total volume of radio transmissions have increased by one third since 2011, as shown here:

Current Communications Volumes, by Type of Transmission

<u>Description:</u>	<u>2011 Volumes (per MGT):</u>	<u>FY 2016 / 17 Volumes</u>	<u>Variance:</u>
<u>Incoming Calls</u>	720,000	717,326	-2,674
<u>911 Emergency Calls</u>	224,000	158,654	-65,346
<u>Total Telephone Calls</u>	944,000	875,980	-68,020
<u>Total "Push to Talk" Radio Transmissions</u>	9,000,000	13,291,841	+ 4,291,841

Note: Radio Transmission Volumes are cumulative and "count" all incoming & outgoing contacts as "one each".

However, the MGT data is not precise and the measurements are not useful due to multiple factors:

- The data collected by MGT in 2011 was based on estimates, as MCSO did not have the sophisticated CAD and other data management systems it currently has in place and precise data volumes were not available at that time.
- Annexation has also reduced the area we are responsible for – as cities and towns increase their land mass by annexing property, the County’s responsibility for these areas is relieved and call volumes will decrease accordingly (note: the County Elections Department GIS Division verified that 6.73 square miles were annexed by cities and towns during the period 01/12 to 09/17).
- The majority of the Detention radio volumes are direct “man to man” radio transmissions which are internal and therefore do not interface with the Communications Center in any way. In addition, radio volumes are cumulative, and every incoming or outgoing message is counted as “one” transmission.

The current data used for this comparison is actual data captured through the CAD System, rather than sourced from an estimate, and the “push to talk” radio transmissions have been isolated by radio talk-group to provide an accurate picture of radio volumes being supported by the Communications Division during the latest 10 month period (as of this writing):

Total Radio Transmissions, for the period 07/16 to 05/17:

Radio Transmissions	Incoming/Outgoing Radio Volumes	% of Total Volume	# of Talk-Groups
Communications Supported	4,826,060	36.31%	14
Internal Jail, Non-Supported	8,465,781	63.69%	52
Total Radio Transmissions:	13,291,841	100.00%	66

Reference: “Talk Group at Zone” Summary Report, compiled by MCSO IT for the period July 2016 through May 2017.

As illustrated here, over 13 million radio transmissions occurred during the first ten months of fiscal year 2016/17. Of that total, our Communications Division facilitated over 36% of those calls, which were primarily complex, patrol-related transmissions. In contrast, Detention officers are responsible for almost 64% of all radio transmissions, however, their transmission are of a simple, inmate-related nature and originate from within the jails (i.e., requests for doors to be opened or closed while moving prisoners internally, etc.).

The chart below provides a specific breakdown of Dispatcher-supported radio transmissions. As mentioned previously, Communications facilitates all strategic patrol transmissions plus those few Detention transmissions which would be considered “high-risk,” such as during the external transport of prisoners. External transport includes off-site medical appointment (i.e., specialty clinics or Maricopa Medical Center), and as of 09/11/17 will also include the in-state van transport of prisoners to and from alternate law enforcement facilities (i.e., local extraditions) and jail-wagon transports.

Dispatcher-Assisted Radio Transmissions, for the period 07/16 to 05/17:

Radio Transmissions	Incoming/Outgoing Radio Vol.	% of Radio Volume	Avg. Call Duration (in seconds)	# of Talk Groups
Patrol, Sworn Support	4,542,525	94.12%	9.77	12
Detention, In-State Transport	243,368	5.04%	9.00	1
Detention, Medical Transport	40,167	0.83%	7.00	1
Total Radio Supported by Communications Dispatch:	4,826,060	100.00%	8.59	14

Drilling down further into the radio data identifies that Patrol has (12) individual radio talk groups and that the Patrol's West side (i.e., Districts Two and Three) is the most active with 34.85% of the radio volumes, and almost "ties" with Patrol's East side (Districts One, Four, Six and Seven) with 34.58% of the total volumes. These two talk groups make up nearly 70% of all Patrol radio activity. The Lakes (former District 5) follows with 9% of the volume, as shown here:

Top Five Sworn Radio Talk Groups, by Volume (7/16 to 05/17)

Rank:	Patrol Radio Talk Groups:	In/Out Call Volumes	% of Vol.	Avg. Call Duration (in sec.):
1	WEST (Patrol)	1,682,050	34.85%	11
2	EAST (Patrol)	1,669,039	34.58%	10
3	LAKE 1 (Patrol)	440,803	9.13%	8
4	INFO (Patrol)	355,495	7.37%	12
5	CENTRL (Patrol)	278,809	5.78%	9
6	SEC-MAIN (Detention Transport)	243,368	5.04%	9
7	WARD -41 (Detention/MIHS)	40,167	0.83%	7
8	LAKE 2 (Patrol)	31,143	0.65%	13
9	W-TAC (Patrol)	29,798	0.62%	11
10	E-TAC (Patrol)	29,734	0.62%	11
11	CallBox (Patrol)	9,038	0.19%	6
12	E-E/M (Patrol)	7,360	0.15%	10
13	SHERIFF (Patrol)	5,348	0.11%	7
14	W-EM (Patrol)	3,908	0.08%	10

Note: The two Detention talk groups handled by Communications ranked 6th and 7th in overall call volumes

Recommendation: Detention radio volumes are increasing and should be recalculated in the near future to identify the magnitude of this recent change. Accordingly:

7A). Communications should monitor the workload of the Detention Dispatch staff in accordance with APCO standards which specify that a Dispatcher's "push to talk radio transmissions should only occupy approximately 65% of a Dispatchers time on an hourly basis. If the Dispatcher's radio transmissions occupy 85% of his/her time on an hourly basis, then additional staff should be added to reduce the volumes in that area."

8. Detention Dispatchers Do Not Receive Standardized Training Which Increases Internal Risks.

As noted previously, the Communications Center just began providing oversight and dispatch service for in-state van transport of prisoners (i.e., extradition) and jail wagon transports. With this increase in Detention transport activity comes an increase in internal risks to the Division, as Detention Dispatchers do not currently receive training identical to the Civilian side.

Presently, the Communications Division operates as two separate units. The primary unit is the Civilian Call-Taker/Dispatch team which handles all sworn and patrol communications, and secondarily there is the Detention Officer Call-Taker/Dispatch team, which handles the communications and oversight of all off-site inmate transport activities.

The MGT Staffing Study states that during the period of their review, the Communications Division utilized Posse members, Sworn Deputies and Detention Officers on "light or restricted duty" to supplement their staff and minimize the use of overtime, implying that these are temporary positions. Currently, there are no Posse members assisting in the Communications Division, however as a result of two inmate escape incidents which occurred during transport in 2014 (one with an inmate fatality), a pilot program was developed to install Detention Officers as a supplemental staffing resource for Dispatch and to provide a means of direct support for Detention Officers

out in the field. The pilot program was implemented in 2015 and has been quite successful in filling the needs of both the Communications and Detention Divisions.

The Detention Dispatchers added in 2015 provided much needed relief to the civilian Dispatchers by taking over the responsibility for all inmate transport communications, thereby freeing them to devote their full attention to 911 calls and sworn dispatch, which was already an overwhelming volume of activity. The current breakdown of radio transmission activity per Dispatcher is shown below:

Radio Transmission Workload Distribution (01/16 through 05/17)

Communications Dispatch Staff	Area of Responsibility	Radio Transmissions (10 Mo. Vol.)	# of Dispatchers	Avg. Vol. Per Dispatcher
Civilian Dispatchers	All Sworn & Patrol transmissions	4,542,525	15	302,835
Detention Officer / Dispatchers	All Det. Transport transmissions (Medical, In-State & Jail Wagon)	283,535	6	47,256

NOTE: The volume of Dispatchers used for this calculation was based solely on full time Dispatch positions (i.e., part-time Dispatcher and Dispatch Supervisory positions were excluded.

On average, each civilian Dispatcher handled 255,579 more radio transmissions than their Detention Officer co-workers, and Detention volumes represent only 15.6% of the volumes handled by the civilians. While the Detention Dispatchers have been a valuable asset to the Communications Center, the distribution of work does not seem equitable.

Recommendation: Detention Dispatchers Do Not Receive Standardized Training Which Increases Internal Risks. Additional controls (such as standardized training) must be put in place to reduce organizational risks.

8A). The transport of inmates and street patrol are both high-risk law enforcement activities which can quickly escalate and result in the loss of life. Accordingly, the training of all Dispatch personnel who are tasked with providing oversight of these high-risk activities must be standardized to provide qualified staff and to ensure the public's safety. By training all personnel to the same professional industry standards and certification limits liabilities associated with non-standard emergency responses which may lead up to or include the loss of life.

8B). Communications should strive to standardize the Division by either filling all current Detention Dispatch positions with Civilian Staff, or by absorbing the current Detention personnel permanently as a means to retain qualified, trained personnel on a long term basis (without risk of reassignment). Consolidating personnel will also reduce overhead costs associated with redundancies in maintaining two different employee categories in one Division.

8C). If Detention Officers/Dispatchers are to remain on the staff with the sole responsibility of handling only the oversight of inmate transportation activities, their salaries should be paid out of detention funds (# 255), as they providing a detention function and are on a temporary assignment from Detention and are not part of the Communications Division. Presently, Communications is paying the salary of both Detention Dispatchers and the regular, permanent Dispatch positions out of the Sheriff's general fund (#100). This is a less than transparent arrangement which skews Communications personnel budget. Accordingly, Communications budget will need to be increased to cover all the salaries of the positions which will need to be added to attain full staffing status.

8D). Standardizing the Division would also provide an opportunity for recruiting proven Dispatch staff, as well as offering an additional career path for Detention Officers, as civilian Emergency Dispatcher's pay is currently slightly better than Detention Officers (i.e., entry level pay is .10 cents more and maximum pay is .78 cents more per hour). Going forward, the results of the Consultant's pending salary report may make such a transition even more lucrative for current Detention staff to consider.

8E). By training all staff members to the same industry standards, workload inequities are eliminated and efficiencies are increased by enabling dispatch staff to rotate and serve wherever they are needed the most: on the less- hectic transport side, or the high-volume patrol side of the Communications Division. In addition, the flexibility afforded by the ability to rotate can provide Dispatchers with much needed mental relief and respite from the demands of Patrol.

8F). Standardizing the training and certification of all Call-Taker and Dispatcher positions also adds less tangible but critical value: by demonstrating a commitment to excellence, by strengthening the unity of the Division, by protecting the reputation of the Sheriff's Office and by further reinforcing the professionalism and importance of the Dispatch profession.

9. The Communications Division Operating Manual Is Not Current.

The version of the Operating Manual reviewed for the purpose of this audit was dated 05/17/17. It was noted at that time that this version was already in the process of being revised and would soon be completed.

The first page of the document states "It is the responsibility of the Communications Division Commander to ensure the original and all copies of this manual are kept current. Procedures to be incorporated into this Manual will be reviewed by the Communications Division Commander and approved by the Bureau Commander before inclusion". However, the Manual does not define the frequency of the review process or specify which version may be the most current.

Recommendation: The final version of Operating Manual should include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization, and the effective date. In addition, a copy of the current Organizational Chart should be included and maintained as part of the Operating Manual. Thereafter, the Manual and the Organizational Chart should be reviewed and updated on annual basis.

10. The Communications Division Continuity Of Operations Plan (COOP) Is Not Current.

The Continuity of Operations Plan which was available for review during this audit was noted as being the version implemented by prior command and contained references to staff who are no longer part of the Division (for example, a former Deputy Commander and others whose titles have changed during the interim). Our Commander stated that the old plan is currently in the process of being updated and should be completed on or around December 2017. As a result, the focus of this part of the audit will be on the site to be utilized in the case of an emergency or disaster which would render our site inoperable.

Recommendation: The final version of COOP should include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization, and the effective date. Thereafter, the Manual should be reviewed and updated on annual basis.

1.1. Communications Lacks a Contractually Binding Agreement With Our Alternate Service Site, As Needed for Emergency Preparedness.

The old Plan states that AZ Department of Public Safety is to serve as our back-up dispatch site. Our Commander advised that MCSO's alternate service site has also changed and Phoenix Police Department has agreed to serve as our back-up.

Accordingly, the Phoenix Police Department was contacted regarding a site visit of the emergency location, which was granted and led by one of the Shift Supervisors from Phoenix's Communication Bureau. The City of Phoenix presently has two Communication's Centers – the original one is located downtown in the basement of Phoenix's Headquarters at 620 West Washington, and the newer, stand-alone Center located a few blocks away in South Phoenix, at 100 East Elwood Street. The Center located at 100 East Elwood is our alternate, emergency site.

The Elwood Center, built in 1992, is the larger of Phoenix's two dispatch centers, and houses 58 consoles and services callers from the South side of Phoenix. Phoenix's Center located at Headquarters houses 44 consoles, and services calls from North Side (i.e., Squaw Peak area). In total, the City of Phoenix has 102 Dispatch consoles at their disposal. In addition, the Phoenix Police Department presently:

- Employs a total of 180 Dispatchers, and utilizes 3 shifts
- Utilizes the Positron phone System*
- Utilizes the Versaterm CAD System*
- Utilizes 2 Dispatchers per precinct (with seven precincts)
- Utilizes 2 Supervisors per Shift, at each Center (one dedicated to phone issues, the other to radio issues)
- Retains CAD records for 10 years and Audio records for 6 months

(*Note: Phoenix presently utilizes a different CAD and telephone system than MCSO, which would present a learning curve for our staff if an emergency were to occur today, but will be transitioning to the same systems we utilize in the near future: the Hexagon I/CAD and Intrado telephone system).

The old COOP also states that the alternate dispatch site should have the ability to provide the following requirements to support our needs in case of emergency (reference page 35):

1. To become operational within 12 hours after deployment and the ability to sustain our communications activities for up to 30 days
2. To accommodate the volume of MCSO staff required to enable the provision of continuous services during each shift for a period of 30 days or until the emergency ends.
3. To provide the minimal amount of space needed to accomplish MCSO 911 functions under emergency conditions.

Based on observations of Phoenix's Elwood Center, this site could meet our needs very well. The Shift Supervisor stated that she was not aware that Phoenix is the designated back-up site for MCSO, although they do serve as the back-up site for the Mesa Police Department.

Recommendation: A written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Phoenix Police Department and the MCSO should be put in place to insure that all expectations can be met on both sides without any misunderstandings about the requirements for emergency preparedness. At a minimum, the MOU must document each of the following points:

11A). A Statement binding the two agencies for the purpose of emergency preparedness, signed and dated by both our Sheriff and Phoenix's Chief of Police and approved by Agency personnel authorized to legally bind per the Procurement Code and the Board of Supervisors.

11B). The Agreement must clearly identify the alternate site (by street address) that MCSO may utilize in the case of emergency and specify the number of consoles or other equipment that may be dedicated for our temporary usage. The agreement must provide the contract's term (or period) that we may contractually rely on them for back-up support.

11C). The Agreement must specify what practice drills will be conducted at the alternate site to guarantee that a seamless delivery of service could be delivered if a disaster were to occur. In addition, written specifications defining how frequently the drills will be conducted (i.e., annually, etc.) must be included in the Agreement.

12. Building Access From Parking Garage Is Not Secure And Could Compromise the Safety of 3rd Shift Personnel.

The MGT Study had a similar finding prior to the completion of the Sheriff's new Headquarters. At that time, Communications employees had to walk approximately six blocks to the parking garage and reported that they felt unsafe leaving at the end of their shift (which could be as late as 1 or 2 a.m. on busy nights when staff are held over). As a result, they would utilize co-workers to escort with them to their cars, which would also impact the Center because personnel were not at their consoles.

Steps were taken to resolve these safety issues when the Sheriff's new Headquarters was completed in 2013. Communications is now located on the second floor of the new building and is essentially showcased at the "heart" of the building. Communication Center employees now park in the executive parking area located under Headquarters and access the Dispatch center directly from the garage via an elevator. Although the late night walk to the car has been eliminated, the garage itself could still be easily be accessed by intruders who may lurk in the garage. In addition, there is a large transient population located nearby that roam the surrounding area, that potentially increase safety risks.

Recommendation: While the new building has provided many improvements for the safety and comfort of the Communications Division, unrestricted access to the elevator from the parking garage presents an area of vulnerability for those who work afterhours and may allow an intruder to gain internal access to Headquarters. Additional controls should be put in place to prevent this possibility. One such option might be to install an access control reader to limit elevator entry only to those who are authorized and possess a valid badge.

Conclusion:

MCSO's Communications Division has come a long way in the last five years, gaining a new, state of the art Communications Center and all the latest technology that came along with it. However, the main problems that plague the Division now are the same problems that plagued them for years: recruitment and retention.

National public safety communications organizations such as APCO and NENA, as well as many academics in the law enforcement field have studied recruitment and retention issues and consider them to be of epidemic proportions and a "crisis" in the industry. Research on this topic indicates that recruiting and retention is a complicated issue with many factors contributing the high attrition rate.

However, one major component that contributes to the staffing dilemma is ironically staffing itself: a chronically understaffed center creates workplace dissatisfaction which takes a toll on staff who put in long stressful days, working many overtime hours and handling excessive call volumes. The combination of workplace pressure coupled with quality of life issues such as shift work, etc. provide ample incentive to finding an alternate form of employment, particularly if the pay and benefits are not lucrative.

Based on the findings of this report, it appears that many of the new trainees who either failed to complete the probationary period or terminated from employment shortly thereafter were most likely not a "good match" for this type of work, either due to not having a suitable skill set, or did not have sufficient mental fortitude to withstand the daily stress of handling people in crisis. If an effective aptitude test had been available and used to test the applicants innate ability to perform cognitive tasks similar to what they would encounter on the actual job, fewer may have been passed along through to the trainee stage resulting in a savings of both time and money in attempting to train non-suitable candidates, and the resulting overtime pay which was necessary when the new hires terminated from our employment. In addition, if applicants could have actually seen or participated in simulated call taking/dispatch activities prior to being hired in as trainees, some may have elected to drop from further consideration of their own accord. Those candidates who successfully negotiated the prescreening process would have been advanced through for hiring and would most likely have been able to handle the rigors of the position and would have remained in the position for a longer term.

As can be evidenced by the severance data documented in this report, 50% (or 28/56) of our trainees failed to complete the probationary period of one year, and another 18% (or 8/56) failed to make it beyond the second year. In total, 64% of the new recruits failed to achieve two years employment in this position. An industry benchmark in the emergency dispatch profession states that the "break even" point in the cost of training new employees is five years. The inability to retain new hires for a longer term represents a significant expenditure and may indicate a problem somewhere in the recruiting process. It is not likely that the training program itself was a significant factor in the length of employment, however the training program is presently being revised to ensure the on-going success of new candidates.

Now, 25 years later and with a new civilian Commander on board, who previously served as an Emergency Dispatcher for over 20 years and has literally "walked in the shoes of a Dispatcher" the needs of the Communications Center can be clearly articulated and a more proactive stance taken towards effective recruiting and retention of personnel.

Summary of Recommendations

1. The Communications Division has been under-staffed for more than seven years. Dispatch staffing levels must be assessed and proactive steps must be taken to increase staff:

1A). Our Communications Division should purchase the latest version of the APCO Toolkit, known as Project RETAINS Toolkit 2.0 (annual subscription cost is \$55 for members), as needed to conduct their own in-house analysis and staffing study to determine present and future needs.

1B). When full staffing has been achieved, Dispatcher workloads must be reduced to provide our Deputies with the dedicated support they require to insure their safety. It would be ideal to staff one Dispatcher per District, particularly during the busiest hours, not only to reduce workload stress levels, but also to facilitate a proactive (rather than reactive) call-taking environment.

1C). Communications should explore the most cost-effective means for conducting aptitude testing – either by means of a simulated dispatch program (such as Criticall, or other system) or, by conducting their own pre-employment testing program, in-house. By assuming a more proactive role in these testing processes Communications will be able to select the most suitable candidates for long term retention.

1D). A certification list of applicants who have already passed an aptitude test indicating suitability for this type of work is needed (i.e., the ability to multi-task including the ability to discern information and input data simultaneously, comprehension of laws, geography and map reading, decision-making, and communication skills such as typing, spelling, grammar, etc.) and should be made available to Communications on a continuous basis to enable interviews to be conducted immediately. Presently, the employment process may take up to six months to complete with applicants often taking other jobs before an offer of employment can be made. Our certification lists are prepared by Human Resources, but if the process were to be completed internally by the Communications Division, perhaps the process could be completed faster (as the City of Phx. Communications Center does, for example).

1E). The Dispatcher position should be maintained as an “open/continuous” position to facilitate filling positions quickly and eliminate “lag time” in filling vacant positions.

2. Overtime expenses have increased and nearly doubled since 2011. Action must be taken to eliminate the reliance on overtime by promoting the importance of the profession through community outreach, facilitating a quicker/easier application process and investigating what additional intangible perks (beyond salary) could be provided to make this stressful work more desirable.

2A) Investigate and resolve any obstacles that might be impacting the application process. Survey applicants to determine if there might be difficulties with the online application system, or other obstacles that might discourage applicants from completing the application process. Complete a “ghost application” to gain firsthand knowledge of any issues that may not be readily apparent.

2B). Implement a multi-purpose Community Outreach Program to educate the public about the emergency dispatch profession and the services we offer, promote the meaningfulness of serving as a First Responder and simultaneously announce and recruit for on-going employment opportunities, write articles and advertise openings in the newspaper, develop educational presentations for vocational schools & community colleges, network with criminal justice professors at the community college level, host Communications “open house” events as part of recruiting process, develop a video clip that can be viewed by the public from the MCSO website or Facebook page, promote the Dispatch profession via an educational booth at the State Fair, participate in career fairs etc.

2C). Benchmark and network with other local law enforcement agencies to identify any other successful methods for recruiting and retaining Dispatchers.

2D). Benchmark other local law enforcement agencies to determine our level of competitiveness in areas of salary and intangible benefits which improve employee's quality of life (such as flexible scheduling, or other employee "perks").

2E). Survey staff for suggestions and seek innovative ways to elevate workplace satisfaction. Consider implementing programs utilized by other employers who have been noted as a "best places to work" on a trial basis.

3. Communication's attrition rates are the highest during the first year of employment. Accordingly, Communication's should focus on making changes during this critical time period to reverse this trend.

3A). Conduct more "pre-selection" of candidates with scored aptitude tests to identify which candidates have strength in skill sets beyond the basic reading, writing, grammar and typing. Pre-selective testing must include memory, comprehension, analytical and decision-making skills, map reading, multi-tasking, etc. to provide a true assessment of the skills that an emergency operator must possess to succeed in this career field.

3B). Applications could specify "preference given to certified Emergency Dispatchers" and offer additional pay incentive for those applicants who have experience and have already demonstrated a proficiency in this profession and may be more likely to stay for the long term.

3C). The Training program should be reviewed to determine if the course materials are comprehensive and if sufficient time is provided for the trainees to learn all that will be required of them on the job. Additional testing could be conducted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to ascertain if any areas of training need to be revisited before continuing on to the next lessons.

3D). The Training program should be expanded to provide trainees with additional experience and support as needed to master the Dispatchers skill set prior to promoting them into this advanced position.

4. Our Dispatchers entry level pay is less than both the benchmarked mean and the State's reported mean for Maricopa County and requires adjustment to become more competitive in the market. Adjust salary ranges are needed to provide an incentive in recruiting experienced personnel and retaining existing staff on a long term basis:

4A). The Communications Division must do an internal analysis of existing staff wages to determine what the mean and median wages are within the MCSO relative to the statistics provided in this report to assist in determining where salary adjustments need to be made.

4B). The Communications Division must review and analyze the Consultant's pending 2017 Report and pursue any required changes with Human Resources and Senior Management.

4C). Recruitment bulletins should be revised as an appeal to experienced Dispatchers presently employed by other law enforcement agencies, as a means to quickly fill vacant positions with experienced personnel.

5. Establishing the Dispatcher career track as the primary position may be contributing to poor morale by diminishing the value and skill-set of the Call-Taker's position.

5A). Continue to provide standardized training which overlaps both the call-taking and dispatch functions for efficiency, but consider separate recruitments for both positions to provide an entry level, "foot in the door" type of position that is free of the stigma of being "less than" a Dispatcher and provides the employee the ability to control the direction of their own career.

5B). Develop two different pay scales, as needed to reward employees for the level of responsibility inherent in their respective positions (i.e., Dispatchers have different requirements and a higher level of responsibility and should therefore receive a higher rate of remuneration). In addition, two different pay scales will provide a career ladder which will provide an incentive to grow into the profession and hopefully strive to assume more responsibility over time.

6. Call response times have decreased and appear to improving over time but additional staffing is required to sustain these improvements and achieve compliance with the National Call Response Standard.

6A). Communications must conduct calculations to define when the busiest hour of each day occurs and staff those hours to provide sufficient dispatcher coverage during these periods to enable reaching the 90% requirement.

6B). Communications must maintain full-staffing to achieve this goal and to sustain this level of performance over time.

7. Detention radio volumes are increasing and should be recalculated in the near future to identify the magnitude of this change. Accordingly:

7A). Communications must monitor the workload of the Detention Dispatch staff in accordance with APCO standards which specify that a Dispatcher's "push to talk radio transmissions should only occupy approximately 65% of a Dispatchers time on an hourly basis. If the Dispatcher's radio transmissions occupy 85% of his/her time on an hourly basis, then additional staff should be added to reduce the volumes in that area."

8. Detention Dispatchers do not receive standardized training which increases internal risks. Additional controls (such as standardized training) must be put in place to reduce organizational risks.

8A). The transport of inmates and street patrol are both high-risk law enforcement activities which can quickly escalate and result in the loss of life. Accordingly, the training of all Dispatch personnel who are tasked with providing oversight of these high-risk activities must be standardized to provide qualified staff and to ensure the public's safety. By training all personnel to the same professional industry standards and certification limits liabilities associated with non-standard emergency responses which may lead up to or include the loss of life.

8B). Standardize the Division by either by filling all current Detention Dispatch positions with Civilian Staff, or by absorbing the current Detention personnel permanently as a means to retain qualified, trained personnel on a long term basis (without risk of reassignment). Consolidating personnel will also reduce overhead costs associated with redundancies in maintaining two different employee classifications in one Division.

8C). If Detention Officers/Dispatchers are to remain on the staff with the sole responsibility of handling only the oversight of inmate transportation activities, their salaries should be paid out of detention funds (# 255), as they provide a detention function and are on a temporary assignment from Detention and are not Communications employees. Presently, Communications is paying the salary of both the Detention Dispatchers and the regular, permanent Dispatch positions out of the Sheriff's general fund (#100). This is a less than transparent arrangement which skews Communications personnel budget. Accordingly, Communications budget will need to be increased to cover the salaries of the positions which will need to be added to attain full staffing status.

8D). Standardizing all employee positions under the Communications Division would likely present a career opportunity for recruiting proven Dispatch staff, as well as offering an additional career path for Detention Officers, as the current pay scales are quite similar (civilian Dispatcher's earn .10 cents more per hour at entry level and .78 cents more per hour at the maximum). Communications could gain experienced personnel and former Detention personnel could gain more lucrative employment, pending the results of the Consultant's 2017 staffing study.

8E). Standardizing all positions will eliminate any perceived workload inequities and increase efficiencies by enabling employee performance - any employees wherever can perform wherever they are needed the most - either on the detention transportation side, or the patrol side of Communications.

8F). Standardizing the training and certification of all Call-Taker and Dispatcher positions also adds less tangible but critical value: by demonstrating a commitment to excellence, by strengthening the unity of the Division, by protecting the reputation of the Sheriff's Office and further reinforcing Dispatch as a profession.

9. The Communication's Division Operating Manual is not current.

9A). The final version of Operating Manual should include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization, and the effective date. Thereafter, the Manual should be reviewed and updated on annual basis.

9B). A copy of the current Organizational Chart should be included as part of the Operating Manual.

10. The Communication's Division Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is not current.

10A). The final version of COOP should include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization, and the effective date. Thereafter, the Manual should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

11. Communications lacks a contractually binding Agreement with Our alternate service site, as needed for emergency preparedness. A written agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Phoenix Police Department and the MCSO must be put in place to insure that all expectations can be met on both sides without any misunderstandings about the requirements for emergency preparedness. At a minimum, the MOU must document the following points:

11A). A Statement binding the two agencies for the purpose of emergency preparedness, signed and dated by both our Sheriff and Phoenix's Chief of Police and approved by Agency personnel authorized to legally bind per the Procurement Code and the Board of Supervisors.

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12. Building access from the parking garage is not secure and could compromise the safety of 3rd Shift personnel.

12A). While the new building has provided many improvements for the safety and comfort of the Communications Division, unrestricted access to the elevator from the parking garage presents an area of vulnerability for those who work afterhours and may allow an intruder to gain internal access to Headquarters. Additional controls should be put in place to prevent this possibility. One such option might be to install an access control reader to limit elevator entry only to those who are authorized and possess a valid badge.

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MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BIO Tracking Sheet

Audit Number: A2017-0004 COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION AUDIT Date: 5/22/18

Final Review Conducted:

LT. Larry Kutz 81520 5/22/18
AIU Section Commander's Signature Serial # Date

Comments: I HAVE REVIEWED AND APPROVED THE CONTENT OF THIS AUDIT. FORWARD FOR CHAIN OF COMMAND REVIEW.

W.C. Morrison 51509 5/22/18
BIO Commander's Signature Serial # Date

Comments: REVIEWED AND APPROVED

M. B. Young 641 5/22/18
Deputy Chief's Signature Serial # Date

Comments: APPROVED FOR PUBLISHING. Forward to Chief Molina for Review.

SEM#1021 6/6/18
Executive Chief's Signature Serial # Date

Comments: APPROVED

[Signature] 33812 6/12/18
Chief Deputy/Chief of Staff/CFO's Signature Serial # Date

Comments: Approved. Request follow-up meeting w/ Cmdr. & BIO to discuss progress on recommendations.



MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Communications Division Audit # A2017-0004
CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)



NOTE: A written response is required within 10 working days of the receipt of this document. This CAP was submitted for review on: updated on 6/28/18.

Finding/Recommendation:	Responsible Staff	MCSO Response & Corrective Action:	Target Date
<p>1. Communications has historically been understaffed. Current staffing levels must be assessed and proactive steps taken to increase staff immediately.</p> <p>a) The APCO Project Retains Toolkit should be purchased and utilized to conduct an in-house analysis and staffing study.</p> <p>b) After full staffing is achieved, workloads should be reduced by scheduling one Dispatcher per District.</p> <p>c) The Dispatch position should be recruited as an "Open/Continuous" position to maintain full staffing levels and prevent time lags in filling positions.</p> <p>d) Certification lists of Dispatcher candidates who have already completed aptitude testing should be provided on a continuous basis to enable interviews to be scheduled immediately, as-needed and at the discretion of Communications Command.</p> <p>e) Explore the most cost-effective means of conducting aptitude testing in-house and assume a more proactive role in the screening and selecting the most suitable candidates for long term retention.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. The Retains toolkit has been purchased and is currently being used for analytical review of staffing needs.</p> <p>Concur. Awaiting on OET completion of radio system.</p> <p>Concur, partially. I feel that a 'regular re-occurring' recruitment similar to the Tempe model would be more efficient. This would also require the need to either 'over-hire' or create a pre-qualified waiting list.</p> <p>Concur. See reply to 1c above.</p> <p>Concur. CritiCall has been purchased and is currently being used to conduct aptitude testing of applicants.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Prior to FY2020</p> <p>1/1/2019</p> <p>1/1/2019</p> <p>1/1/2019</p> <p>Completed</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>3. Because the employee attrition rate is highest during the first year of employment/probationary period a focused effort must be made to reverse this trend.</p> <p>a) Utilize aptitude testing to “pre-screen” for applicants with strength in the required skill sets, as needed for a successful career as a Dispatcher.</p> <p>b) Dispatcher applications should state “preference give to certified emergency dispatchers” and “pay depending on experience” in effort to solicit personnel who are already aware of the requirements of this career path and able to make it through the probationary period and hopefully stay long term.</p> <p>c) Review the training program, learning materials and program duration to determine if it is sufficient to prepare trainees for the demands of the job. Consider weekly testing to ascertain if more time is needed in certain areas of subject matter before proceeding with new material, etc.</p> <p>d) Expand the duration of the training program to ensure the success of new trainees prior to promoting them into the advanced position.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. See 1e above.</p> <p>Concur. This information is now listed on application.</p> <p>Concur. Training program has been updated and modified to allow for more classroom and simulation training before the new hire can work live calls.</p> <p>Concur. This has been completed. Classroom training has been extended to five weeks (from three). On-the-job training is now 45 working days per phase, with regular quizzes and completion exams.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>6. Call Response times have improved, but additional staffing is needed to sustain improvements and to achieve compliance with the Natl. Call Response Standard.</p> <p>a) Calculate when the highest call volumes occur during each day and provide sufficient staffing coverage to meet the "90% of all calls occurring in the busiest hours are responded to within 10 seconds" requirement.</p> <p>b) Maintain full staffing to achieve and sustain this level of performance over time.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Datasets are being studied and future shift bids will be more aligned with call volume to provide coverage based upon needs of the Office.</p> <p>Concur. Wage increases and job satisfaction increases will result in greater retention of current employees.</p>	<p>7/1/2019</p> <p>FY2020</p>
<p>7. Communications radio transmission volumes documented in this report provide an accurate snapshot for the 10-month period under review, but will increase pending changes in responsibility, effective 09/11/17.</p> <p>a) As a result of this change, Dispatcher workloads must be monitored for efficiency (i.e., approximately 65% of a Dispatchers time should be expended on radio transmissions on an hourly basis). If workloads exceed this amount, then additional staff must be added to reduce the workload</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. This dataset is being monitored. Bringing on additional staff will help lower the workload of current personnel.</p>	<p>1/1/2020</p>
<p>8. Assuming responsibility for high-risk detention transports increases internal risks and controls must be put in place to reduce organizational liability.</p> <p>a) Train all staff to the same professional standards and certifications to limit liabilities associated with non-standard emergency responses which may lead up to or include the loss of life.</p> <p>b) Standardize the Division by consolidating all existing personnel – either by absorbing all temporary detention personnel into permanent positions or by filling all current positions with permanent civilian staff.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Detention staff are now provided with APCO PST course and are put through OJT similar to that of call takers/dispatchers.</p> <p>Concur. It has been agreed upon that as staffing increases, these positions will be converted into civilian positions, and will become a step in the career track.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>FY2020</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>9. Communication's Operating Manual is not current.</p> <p>a) A new version is pending, but must include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization and the effective date. Thereafter, the Manual should be reviewed and updated annually.</p> <p>b) A copy of the current Organizational Chart must be included in the new Operations Manual.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Updated version has been supplied to the Policy Division, and the document has been designated a 'living document' with updates made on a regular basis.</p> <p>Concur. See 9a above.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>10. Communication's Continuity of Operations Plan is not current.</p> <p>a) The final version is pending, but must include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization and the effective date. Thereafter, the Manual should be reviewed and updated annually.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. See 9a above.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>11. Communications lacks a written, binding agreement with our alternate service site, as needed to document our emergency preparedness needs. At a minimum, the Agreement:</p> <p>a) Must legally bind the two agencies. Therefore, it must be signed and dated by both our Sheriff and Phoenix's Chief of Police, and approved by Agency personnel authorized to legally bind per the Procurement Code and the Board of Supervisors.</p> <p>b) The Agreement must clearly identify the alternate site (by Street address), the number of consoles or other equipment required for temporary usage, and state the term (or valid period) of the Agreement.</p> <p>c) The Agreement must specify what practice drills will be conducted to insure a seamless delivery of emergency services and must state the frequency that the drills will be conducted (i.e, annually, etc.).</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Document has been completed and signed by each agency. Currently awaiting approval by BOS.</p> <p>Do not concur. At the request of Phoenix PD, the document does not specify which of their two locations, and allows that to be decided at time of need.</p> <p>Concur. See 11a above.</p>	<p>9/1/2018</p> <p>9/1/2018</p> <p>9/1/2018</p>



MARICOPA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
Communications Division Audit # A2017-0004
CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)



NOTE: A written response is required within 10 working days of the receipt of this document. This CAP was submitted for review on: updated on 6/28/18.

Finding/Recommendation:	Responsible Staff	MCSO Response & Corrective Action:	Target Date
<p>1. Communications has historically been understaffed. Current staffing levels must be assessed and proactive steps taken to increase staff immediately.</p> <p>a) The APCO Project Retains Toolkit should be purchased and utilized to conduct an in-house analysis and staffing study.</p> <p>b) After full staffing is achieved, workloads should be reduced by scheduling one Dispatcher per District.</p> <p>c) The Dispatch position should be recruited as an "Open/Continuous" position to maintain full staffing levels and prevent time lags in filling positions.</p> <p>d) Certification lists of Dispatcher candidates who have already completed aptitude testing should be provided on a continuous basis to enable interviews to be scheduled immediately, as-needed and at the discretion of Communications Command.</p> <p>e) Explore the most cost-effective means of conducting aptitude testing in-house and assume a more proactive role in the screening and selecting the most suitable candidates for long term retention.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>Human Resources</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. The Retains toolkit has been purchased and is currently being used for analytical review of staffing needs.</p> <p>Concur. Awaiting on OET completion of radio system.</p> <p>Concur, partially. I feel that a 'regular re-occurring' recruitment similar to the Tempe model would be more efficient. This would also require the need to either 'over-hire' or create a pre-qualified waiting list.</p> <p>Concur. See reply to 1c above.</p> <p>Concur. CritiCall has been purchased and is currently being used to conduct aptitude testing of applicants.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Prior to FY2020</p> <p>1/1/2019</p> <p>1/1/2019</p> <p>1/1/2019</p> <p>Completed</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>2. Overtime expenditures are excessive and actions must be taken to eliminate reliance on this temporary staffing solution.</p> <p>a) Investigate and resolve any obstacles that might be impacting the application process. Survey applicants to determine if there might be difficulties with the online application system, or other obstacles that might discourage applicants from completing the application process. Complete a “ghost application” to gain firsthand knowledge of any issues that may not be readily apparent.</p> <p>b) Implement a multi-purpose Community Outreach program to educate the public about our services, promote the meaningfulness of serving as a first-responder, and recruit interested parties to the application process.</p> <p>c) Benchmark other local law enforcement agencies to identify successful methods for recruiting/retaining personnel.</p> <p>d) Benchmark other local law enforcement agencies to determine our level of competitiveness in areas of salary and intangible benefits which improve employee’s quality of life (such as flexible scheduling, or other employee “perks”).</p> <p>e) Survey staff for suggestions for input on innovative methods of elevating workplace satisfaction. Consider implementing programs utilized by employers who have been documented by the media as a “best place to work” on a trial basis to test for efficacy in the Dispatch environment.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur or I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. ‘Clerk’ test has been removed and certification of typing ability has been approved by County HR. Ongoing monitoring of postings now occurring.</p> <p>Concur. Working in conjunction with HR and Community relations to provide, and attend when possible, information for job and career fairs.</p> <p>Concur. Division leadership continues to meet with representatives of other agencies to discuss what is working well/not so well for them.</p> <p>Concur. Market adjustment has been completed, which will allow us to be more competitive with surrounding agencies.</p> <p>Concur. Satisfaction surveys are being used, and we continue to look for new and innovative ways to engage staff.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>3. Because the employee attrition rate is highest during the first year of employment/probationary period a focused effort must be made to reverse this trend.</p> <p>a) Utilize aptitude testing to “pre-screen” for applicants with strength in the required skill sets, as needed for a successful career as a Dispatcher.</p> <p>b) Dispatcher applications should state “preference give to certified emergency dispatchers” and “pay depending on experience” in effort to solicit personnel who are already aware of the requirements of this career path and able to make it through the probationary period and hopefully stay long term.</p> <p>c) Review the training program, learning materials and program duration to determine if it is sufficient to prepare trainees for the demands of the job. Consider weekly testing to ascertain if more time is needed in certain areas of subject matter before proceeding with new material, etc.</p> <p>d) Expand the duration of the training program to ensure the success of new trainees prior to promoting them into the advanced position.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. See 1e above.</p> <p>Concur. This information is now listed on application.</p> <p>Concur. Training program has been updated and modified to allow for more classroom and simulation training before the new hire can work live calls.</p> <p>Concur. This has been completed. Classroom training has been extended to five weeks (from three). On-the-job training is now 45 working days per phase, with regular quizzes and completion exams.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>4. Dispatcher entry level pay is less than the average and requires adjustment.</p> <p>a) An internal analysis of existing staff wages should be conducted to determine where our internal mean and median is for benchmarking purposes and to assist in determining where adjustments need to be made.</p> <p>b) Pending receipt of the Consultant's 2017 report, pay recommendations should be pursued with Management and Human Resources.</p> <p>c) Recruiting bulletins should be revised as an appeal to Dispatchers presently employed by other local law enforcement agencies, as a means to quickly filling our vacancies with experienced staff.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur or I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. See 2d above.</p> <p>Concur. See 4a above.</p> <p>Concur. See 3b above.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>5. Establishing the Dispatcher career track as the primary position may be contributing to poor morale by diminishing the value and skill set of the Call-Taker's position.</p> <p>a) Continue to provide standardized training that overlaps call-taking and dispatchers skill sets, but consider recruiting for the two positions separately, to provide two career tracks and to provide the employee control over their career choice.</p> <p>b) Develop two different pay scales according to the level of responsibility inherent in each position, which also provides an opportunity for growth within the Division.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur or I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Planning has begun for a multi-step career track. However, additional staff need to be hired prior to implementation.</p> <p>Concur. Separate pay scales currently exist, but the level of parity in wages needs to be changed.</p>	<p>FY2020</p> <p>FY2020</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>6. Call Response times have improved, but additional staffing is needed to sustain improvements and to achieve compliance with the Natl. Call Response Standard.</p> <p>a) Calculate when the highest call volumes occur during each day and provide sufficient staffing coverage to meet the "90% of all calls occurring in the busiest hours are responded to within 10 seconds" requirement.</p> <p>b) Maintain full staffing to achieve and sustain this level of performance over time.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Datasets are being studied and future shift bids will be more aligned with call volume to provide coverage based upon needs of the Office.</p> <p>Concur. Wage increases and job satisfaction increases will result in greater retention of current employees.</p>	<p>7/1/2019</p> <p>FY2020</p>
<p>7. Communications radio transmission volumes documented in this report provide an accurate snapshot for the 10-month period under review, but will increase pending changes in responsibility, effective 09/11/17.</p> <p>a) As a result of this change, Dispatcher workloads must be monitored for efficiency (i.e., approximately 65% of a Dispatchers time should be expended on radio transmissions on an hourly basis). If workloads exceed this amount, then additional staff must be added to reduce the workload</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. This dataset is being monitored. Bringing on additional staff will help lower the workload of current personnel.</p>	<p>1/1/2020</p>
<p>8. Assuming responsibility for high-risk detention transports increases internal risks and controls must be put in place to reduce organizational liability.</p> <p>a) Train all staff to the same professional standards and certifications to limit liabilities associated with non-standard emergency responses which may lead up to or include the loss of life.</p> <p>b) Standardize the Division by consolidating all existing personnel – either by absorbing all temporary detention personnel into permanent positions or by filling all current positions with permanent civilian staff.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Detention staff are now provided with APCCO PST course and are put through OJT similar to that of call takers/dispatchers.</p> <p>Concur. It has been agreed upon that as staffing increases, these positions will be converted into civilian positions, and will become a step in the career track.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>FY2020</p>

Finding/Recommendation	Responsible Staff	MCSO Corrective Action	Target Date
<p>c) Detention personnel handling only detention call-taking or dispatch activities should be paid out of Detention funding as they are on a temporary assignment. Only permanent employees should be paid out of the Divisions fund. Accordingly, Communications budget will need to be increased to cover the salaries of positions which will need to be added to attain full staffing status.</p>	Comm. Div.	<p>I Concur or I Do Not Concur (state reason): Concur. Allocations of jail funds have been determined by an outside party and are supplied to the division for this purpose.</p>	Completed
<p>d) Standardizing all employee positions under the Communications Division would likely present a career opportunity for Detention personnel currently participating in the pilot study, as the current pay scales are quite similar (civilian Dispatchers make .10 cents more at entry level and .78 more at maximum pay). Communications could gain experienced personnel and former Detention personnel could gain more lucrative employment, pending the results of the Consultant's 2017 staffing study.</p>	Comm. Div.	Concur. See 8b above.	FY2020
<p>e) Standardizing the Division eliminates workload inequities and increases efficiencies by enabling all dispatch staff to rotate and perform wherever they are needed the most – either on the less-hectic detention transportation side, or on the high volume patrol side of Communications.</p>	Comm. Div.	Concur. See 8b above.	FY2020
<p>f) Standardizing the training and certification of all staff adds less tangible, but critical value by: demonstrating a commitment to excellence, strengthening the unity of the Division, protecting the reputation of the Sheriff's office and by further reinforcing Dispatch as a profession.</p>	Comm. Div.	Concur. See 8a above.	Completed

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<p>9. Communication's Operating Manual is not current.</p> <p>a) A new version is pending, but must include a signatory page with the Commander's signature, Management's authorization and the effective date. Thereafter, the Manual should be reviewed and updated annually.</p> <p>b) A copy of the current Organizational Chart must be included in the new Operations Manual.</p>	<p>Comm. Div.</p> <p>Comm. Div.</p>	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Updated version has been supplied to the Policy Division, and the document has been designated a 'living document' with updates made on a regular basis.</p> <p>Concur. See 9a above.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>
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<p>12. Building access from the parking garage is not secure and could compromise the safety of third shift personnel.</p> <p>a) Additional controls should be put in place to prevent the possibility of an intruder gaining internal access to Headquarters. Installing an access control (card) reader to limit elevator entry to only those personnel who are authorized and possess a valid identification badge, or other solution, is needed.</p>	Mgmt.	<p>I Concur <u>or</u> I Do Not Concur (state reason):</p> <p>Concur. Addressing this issue with building construction and facility lieutenant.</p>	FY2020

Completed by: James Stilwell, Division Commander # B3858

Date: 7/2/18