

Shreveport Fire Department

Communications Division

Caddo Parish Emergency Communications Center 1144 Texas Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71101 Voice: 318-675-2200 Fax: 675-2206

January 22, 2016

It is with great pride that I submit my final Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division annual report. I am retiring as of December 31, 2015. I am thankful for the dedicated men and women that I have worked with over the past 31 years. The men and women of the communications division are some of the brightest stars of our department.

The 2015 Annual Report provides an overall review of the performance and accomplishments of the Communications Division throughout the year.

The Communications Division is structured much like an agency of its own. We have our own administration, data collection and analysis, information and technology, operations, training, public education, risk management, and public information.

The Communications Division's service area covers the entire parish and is an integral part of every public safety agency in Caddo Parish. We are the primary answering point for all 9-1-1 calls originating in Caddo Parish and we dispatch to all fire and EMS emergencies parish-wide. Our division is also responsible for ensuring that law enforcement emergencies are sent to the appropriate agency.

We are proud of our accomplishments in 2015. Even with a long-time staffing shortage and years of a continuation budget, the service we provide to our citizens and other customers has not been compromised. The men and women of this division are to be commended for their commitment to providing the highest level of service regardless of vacant positions, budget constraints, aging equipment, and an increased workload. This accomplishment is the direct result of hard work, a willingness to volunteer for extra projects, and a commitment to excellence by the people of Shreveport's Fire Communications Division.

Our communications center remains the only CALEA-accredited fire communications center. We received our fifth CALEA re-accreditation in July of 2015. We continue to meet our training and quality assurance requirements as well as participate in community service projects mostly through the effort of those communications personnel who are willing to volunteer their time and effort.

There are many challenges facing us in 2016. I am confident that our department will continue to do well and provide our citizens the best possible service. Our Assistant Chief of Communications/Training position has been vacant since 2008 and had it not been for communications personnel volunteering to perform the tasks of this position, the impact of this vacancy would have been detrimental.

Our information technology needs increase daily. Due to technology requirements, our operating systems must change as well as the hardware and software. In 2015, we completed the process of changing our mobile data computer software to MPS. Many of these changes are driven by either the City of Shreveport or Caddo 9-1-1 but all of these changes require time and hard work from the Communications IT staff.

I am excited about 2016 and as I look forward to my retirement, I know that our department will continue to do what we do best – take care of our citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

Hachy Ruchwarth

Kathy Rushworth, RPL Chief of Communications

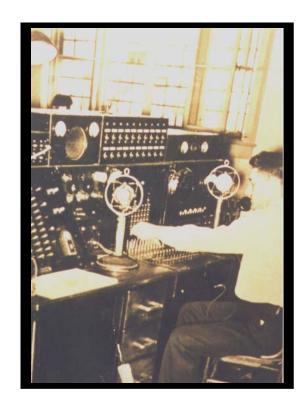


Shreveport Fire Department Mission Statement

The Shreveport Fire
Department will be faithful to
our community...ready to
respond...willing to
educate...and dedicated to
serve.

Communications Division Mission Statement

The Shreveport Fire Communications Division is committed to providing efficient, effective, and dependable professional emergency services to the citizens and visitors of Caddo Parish, by quickly and professionally processing all calls for fire and medical emergencies, reducing the threat of danger to these individuals by ensuring fast, effective, and efficient call receipt, caller interviews, rapid resource deployment, and effective field support....



Shreveport Fire Communications Division

.....Caddo's Gateway to Public Safety



The Shreveport Fire Department Emergency Communications Center serves the citizens and visitors of Caddo Parish. Caddo Parish has a population over 254,887 and covers a 937 square mile area located in the northwest corner of Louisiana. Shreveport Fire Department Emergency Communications Center is part of a joint venture between the City of Shreveport and Caddo Parish Emergency Communications District Number One (Caddo 9-1-1).

Through this agreement, Caddo 9-1-1 provides a state-of-the-art 24,000 square foot facility which houses the Communications Divisions of the Shreveport Fire Department, Shreveport Police Department and the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office. Caddo 9-1-1 provides

all of the various technical equipment and systems that are used to receive emergency reports from citizens, and deploy emergency response personnel.

In return, the City of Shreveport's Fire Communications Center is the primary public safety answering point (PSAP) for 9-1-1 in Caddo Parish. Fire Communications Officers answer over 294,000 9-1-1 calls each year and dispatch to nearly 50,000 fire and medical emergencies in Caddo Parish. In addition to providing direct support to the Shreveport Fire Department, this division also provides direct support to all seven Caddo Fire Districts. As the primary PSAP for Caddo Parish, this division also processes many law enforcement calls for service throughout the parish.

The Shreveport Fire Communications Division is comprised of forty-seven (47) staff members, forty of which are Fire Communications Officers who operate four shifts, supporting eight (8) emergency call-taking and dispatch console positions. Fire Communications Officers are certified in APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator 1 (PST1), APCO Fire Service Communications, and APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch. In addition, many of our members are certified as Fire Fighter 1, a large number of our members are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), and one Fire Communications Officer is certified at the level of EMT- Paramedic. Currently, four of our communications officers have completed the prestigious Registered Public Safety Leader certificate program through APCO and appear on the national registry of RPL.

In addition to providing emergency communications services to all public safety agencies in Caddo Parish, this division is also responsible for all voice and data services for the Shreveport Fire Department. From inventory control and purchasing to software and hardware maintenance and installation, this division ensures that communications takes place.

Page 3 of 22

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Command

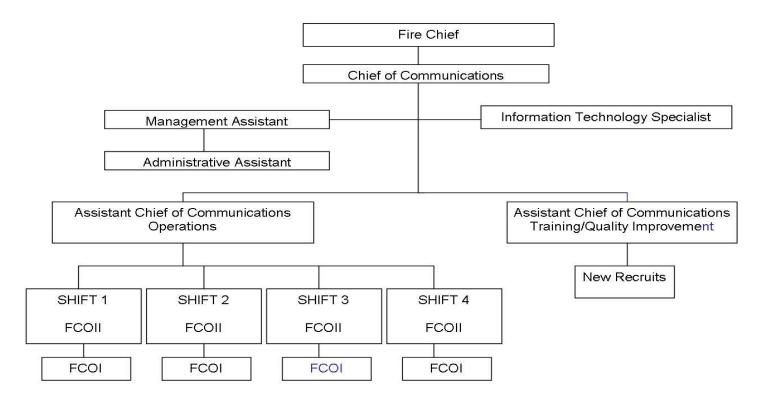


Edwin Scott Wolverton Fire Chief



Kathy O. Rushworth Chief of Communications

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Organizational Chart



Shreveport Fire Department

Communications Division Operations Command

Tina N. Chambers, M.S. Assistant Chief of Communications/Operations



Fire Communications Officers II (Supervisors)







Sharon Clark



Marlo Francis



Dusty Moore



Vacant



Veronica Rambo



Derrick Schafer



Kim Tolliver

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Fire Communications Officers

FCOI Connie Alamond	FCOI Aqueelah McCray
---------------------	----------------------

FCOI LeKeisha Berry FCOI LaTonya McKinney

FCOI Michelle Bradley FCOI Cissy McKinzy

FCOI Terry Carter FCOI Lane Owens

FCOI Vicki Carter FCOI Tammy Pierce

FCOI Connie Coleman FCOI Stephanie Phelan

FCOI Monica Cooper FCOI Karen Pilcher

FCOI Alisalyn Davis FCOI Dawn Ramsey

FCOI John Elliott FCOI Emily Simmons

FCOI Recruit, April Gramm FCOI Dan Smith

FCOI John Green FCOI Denise Wheeler

FCOI Unique LaCoure FCOI Brian Williams

FCOI Ray Mathews FCOI Bruce Willis

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Information and Technology

Although this division is most often recognized as the Emergency Communications Center, a large part of what we do is associated with our Information and Technology Unit. In 2015, this unit processed over 1,600 requests for service. On a day-to-day basis, the members of this unit manage the data issues, hardware and software, within the Shreveport Fire Department.



Danny Alexander



Harrietta Parker

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Administration

In addition to routine administrative support for forty-seven employees, the Administration section of this division is also responsible for radio and telephone support for the Shreveport Fire Department



Rita Cooks



Ashley Wiggins

Page 7 of 22

Caddo Parish Communications District Number One Staff

On April 5, 1986, the voters of Caddo Parish approved the assessment of a telephone surcharge to fund the development, implementation and operation of an enhanced emergency telephone reporting system, 9-1-1. The Caddo Parish Communications District was created by Parish Ordinance and allowed for the creation of an appointed seven member citizen board to establish policies and to provide oversight to the 9-1-1 staff. The proceeds from the telephone surcharge fees are used to fund: the emergency telephone system/network; emergency communications equipment and equipment maintenance; employee training; eight 9-1-1 administrative staff positions; a communications facility to house all of the agencies' communications officers, who answer 9-1-1 calls and dispatch emergency services personnel; and building/grounds maintenance. The District has held firm to its commitment to providing state-of-the-art equipment, systems, and facility in support of emergency response services.



Martha Carter 9-1-1 Administrator



Judy



Richard



Beth Ann







Huck



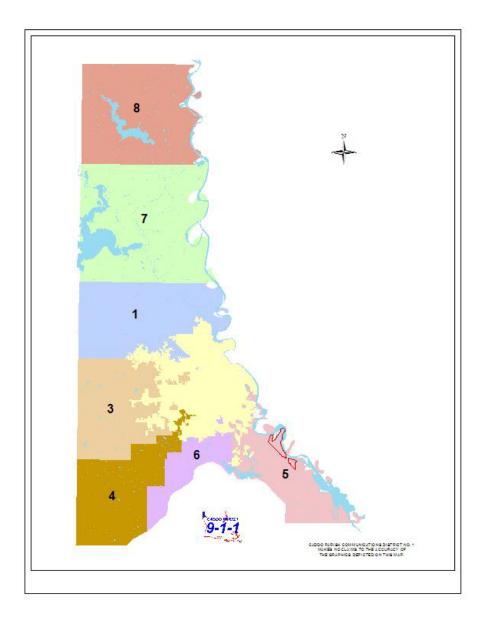
Wes



Mike

Caddo Parish Fire Districts

Since the mid-1990's, the Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division has provided dispatch services for all of the Caddo Parish fire districts. Although each fire district has its own specific challenges, the chief officers have worked with the Communications Division on developing common standards and dispatch protocols to aid in providing the best possible service to our citizens and providing needed services to the fire districts. With the addition of automatic aid agreements and mobile data implementation, there have been many changes to the services Communications provides. Although not necessarily seen by the users, Fire Communications now provides all of the CAD database management for these districts.



Page 9 of 22

Communications Division Committees

The Communications Division is dedicated to providing the best possible service to our customers and providing the best possible environment for our employees. Our members are asked, on a regular basis, to actively participate on committees, work groups, and tasks forces designed to meet long term and short term goals as well as the day-to-day tasks that need to done. The primary functions: call taking, dispatching, and training, will never be compromised but during slow periods or times when staffing allows, our members are encouraged and expected to perform tasks other than the primary functions mentioned above.

Each year, members are asked to serve on one or more of these teams and each are given specific goals and objectives for the year. The types and make-up of these teams are evaluated on a regular basis as well as the established goals.

The 2015 Committees were as follows:

Training Task Force

This task force is necessary as a result of the vacancy in our assistant division chief position. Communications officers have local, federal, and APCO requirements for training and in addition, there are so many low frequency/high risk situations that communications officers may face, it is vital to our citizens that our communications officers are trained and routinely demonstrate their skills.

Task Force Leader: Tina Chambers

Members: Connie Alamond, Lane Owens, Terry Carter, John Elliott, John

Green, LaTonya McKinney, Stephanie Phelan, Derrick Schafer

Quality Assurance

This team was established as a peer-driven program to evaluate the performance of our calltakers and dispatchers. Their goal was to ensure that all members performed to nationally recognized call center standards. This program continues to prove to be very effective.

Co-QA Managers: Veronica Rambo, Terry Carter

Members: Tina Chambers, Brian Williams, Ray Mathews, Derrick Schafer

Page 10 of 22

Policy Committee

This committee is responsible for ensuring all division policies are reviewed annually. Recommendations for changes are discussed by the committee and if the majority approves, they are forwarded to the Chief of Communications for approval and implementation. This committee is also charged with developing new policies.

Committee Chair: Brian Williams

Members: Pat Bradford, Ray Mathews, Terry Carter

Recruiting/Hiring

This committee is responsible for attending job fairs, distributing flyers, and creating media to recruit professional employees. When a selection process begins, this committee is responsible for processing applicants.

Committee Chair: Dusty Moore

Members: Vicki Carter, Unique LaCoure, Ray Mathews, LeKeisha Berry

Public Education

This committee is responsible for developing a public education program that includes facility tours, <u>The Communicator</u> newsletter, a citizen survey and any other program that will enhance the knowledge of the public and other divisions.

Committee Chair: John Elliott

Members: Connie Alamond, Michelle Bradley, John Green, Monica Cooper,

Dusty Moore

Employee Recognition

This committee is responsible for developing criteria and rewards for employee performance.

Committee Chair: Connie Alamond

Members: Vicki Carter, Aqueelah McCray, Veronica Rambo, Monica Cooper,

Brian Williams, Dusty Moore, Dan Smith

Page 11 of 22

CAD/Technology

Members receive training in CAD database management and are involved in updates. This committee also researches new equipment or upgrades.

Committee Chair: Derrick Schafer

Members: Lane Owens, Tammye Pierce, Kim Tolliver, Brian Williams, John

Elliott

Work Groups / Division Representation

Strategic Planning Team Member: Derrick Schafer

EMD Workgroup: Brian Williams

Peer Fitness Coordinator: Aqueelah McCray

Personnel Awards/Special Recognition/Accomplishments

Lifesaver Awards: Connie Alamond, Pat Bradford, Connie Coleman, Monica Graham-Cooper, John Elliott,c Ray Mathews, Dusty Moore, Lane Owens (2), Tammy Pierce, Derrick Schafer, Emily Simmons, and Dan Smith

STEMI Recognition: Tina N. Chambers

Commendation from Fire Chief: Connie Coleman, Tina Chambers, Unique LaCoure, and Emily Simmons

Perfect Attendance (Individual): Danny Alexander, LeKeisha Berry, Michelle Bradley, Terry Carter, John Elliott, April Gramm, John Green, LaTonya McKinney, Harrietta Parker, Karen Pilcher, Derrick Schafer and Brian Williams

Perfect Attendance (Shift): Shift 1 – June

Outside Committees/Work Groups: <u>Kathy Rushworth</u>- Chair of APCO International's Member Chapter Services Committee; Member of NENA; Member of IAFC <u>Danny Alexander</u> – Member USAR Louisiana Task Force 3

Nominee for 2015 Spirit of the City Award: Harrietta Parker

Page 12 of 22

Seminar / Conference Attendees / Classes CALEA Conference – Tina N. Chambers, and Rita Cooks, Communications Training Officer – Connie Alamond, Terry Carter, John Elliott, and Lane Owens, APCO Communications Center Supervisor – John Green and Dusty Moore Ethics – All personnel

Major Accomplishments

- City of Shreveport Council Members confirmed Fire Chief Edwin Scott Wolverton
- Hired two new Fire Communications Officers
- Promoted three Fire Communications Officer I to Fire Communications Officers II
- Promoted one Fire Communications Officer II to the Assistant Chief of Communications/Operations
- Received fifth (5th) Re-Accreditation from the CALEA in July of 2015
- Administration updated and issued current photo identification badges to the entire Shreveport Fire Department Division staff and retirees
- Harrietta Parker completed all departmental training on the Mobile Data Computer early 2015
- Information/Technology and Communications Equipment Ten new desktop computers, eight laptops were purchased for the department, and four new servers
- Completed the installation of Wireless Network Accessibility at the Fire Maintenance Shop
- Continued to upgrade the mobile data computers with the new Mobile Public Safety software
- Assisted Fire Maintenance with implementation of a new vehicle maintenance software called,
 Collective Data
- Danny Alexander assisted with the computer installation for the remodeling of Fire Station #10
- Information/Technology transferred Pre-Plan Responsibility to Fire Station #22

Page 13 of 22

Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year



Fire Communications Officer II Dusty Moore

Fire Communications Officer II Dusty Moore was awarded the Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year for 2015. FCOII Moore was selected for her participation in division activities, numerous commendations, and maintaining an above average quality assurance score. FCOII Moore has served on a number of division committees and was Chair of the Recruiting and Hiring Committee. FCOI Moore received an APCO Scholarship and was also recognized because she is the type of person that you want to work with every day. She is dependable and respected by her colleagues. Congratulations Dusty on a job well done!

Page 14 of 22

Statistical Information-Human Resources

Staffing/Vacancies

<u>Retirees:</u> Chief Kathy O. Rushworth, RPL retired in December 2015. Assistant Chief of Communications Violet S. Anderson, RPL retired early in July 2015.

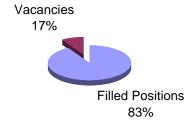
<u>Separations:</u> Two Fire Communications Officers resigned. Two recruits began a working test period but were unable to meet the standards and recruit was released from duty this year.

New Employees: Two new Recruits were hired in October 2014: Ann Doty and April Gramm.

<u>Promotions/Demotions:</u> The Assistant Chief of Communications/Operations was demoted. One Fire Communications Officer II was demoted. Three Fire Communications Officer I were promoted to FCOII: FCOII John Green, Dusty Moore, and Derrick Schafer. One Fire Communications Officer was promoted to the Assistant Chief of Communications/Operations: Tina N. Chambers, M.S.

<u>Vacancies:</u> The division ended the year with eight vacant positions: six Fire Communications Officer I, one Fire Communications Officer II and one Assistant Chief of Communications/Training.

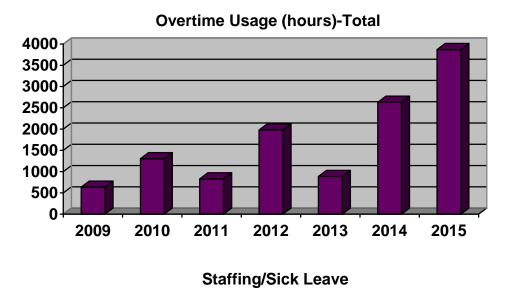
Filled Positions vs. Vacant Positions



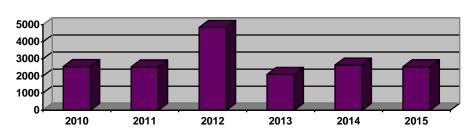
Staffing/Overtime

Communications Division supervisors are supported by clearly defined minimum staffing guides. The staffing plan is not intended to cover every circumstance that may arise, and supervisors are still required to use a certain amount of objective reasoning to ensure that adequate staff will be available to handle call volume activity. The staffing plan also serves to identify specific job functions and prescribes specific console assignments in order to ensure that adequate staff is available at all times. Total overtime worked was **3,869** hours of which **3,412** overtime hours were used to cover minimum staffing. Minimum staffing plans were altered in **2008** and due to budgetary constraints have remained one below optimal staffing.

Page 15 of 22



The division had a total of **2,545** hours of sick leave usage and twelve (12) achieved perfect attendance during 2015. There were no requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.

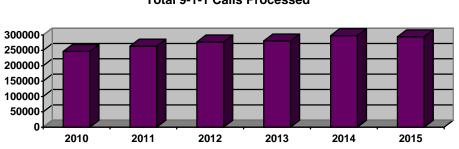


Operations Section - Sick Leave Usage (hours)

Statistical Information-Workload Indicators

9-1-1 Call Volume

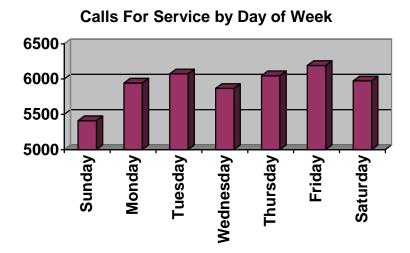
Fire Communications Officers answered **294,511** 9-1-1 calls during 2015.



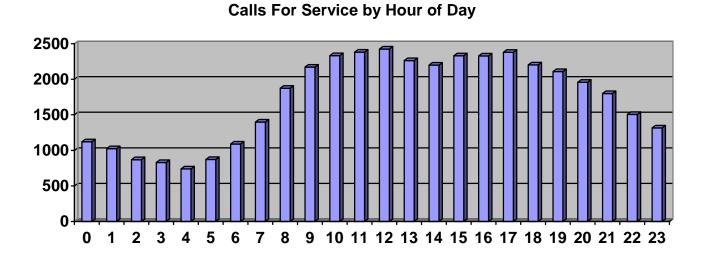
Total 9-1-1 Calls Processed

Calls for Service Volume by Day of Week and Time of Day

Our largest call volumes occurred on Tuesday and Fridays with Sundays being the smallest call volume.



As you can see from the graph below, our call volume decreases in the early morning hours but begins to increase by mid-morning through the early evening hours.



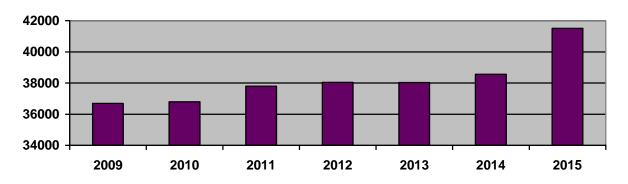
orning through the early evening hours.

Page 17 of 22

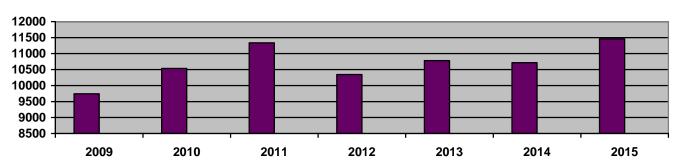
Events Dispatched

Communications officers also dispatched **41,504** events for the Shreveport Fire Department, of which **82**% were EMS. For the Caddo Fire Districts and North Caddo Medical Center **11,463** events were dispatched. Communications Officers also created **8,105** events for Shreveport Police and **1,271** for Caddo Sheriff's Office.

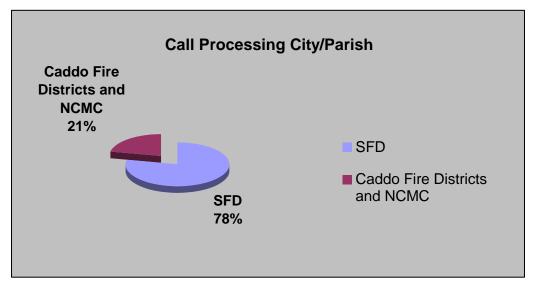
Events Dispatched (City)



Events Dispatched (Parish)



The chart below shows the percentage of calls processed for the Shreveport Fire Department compared to the seven Caddo Fire Districts and one Caddo Ambulance District.



Page 18 of 22

Statistical Information-Performance Standards

For years, the Communications Division has used the standards set in NFPA 1221 to measure our performance. These standards underwent a major revision in 2014 and we are still working on meeting each of these revised standards. The 2015 overall average call processing time from call receipt until dispatch was 57 seconds, an increase of 2 seconds compared to 2014. Our performance is reviewed and analyzed monthly to ensure compliance. The following is a list of the standards and our overall average for the year.

NFPA Standard	Actual Percentages	
A. Ninety-five percent of alarms received on emergency lines shall be answered within 15 seconds , and 99 percent shall be answered within 40 seconds	99% answered within 15 seconds	
B. Eighty percent of emergency alarm processing for Fire type calls shall be completed within 60 seconds and 95 percent of alarm processing shall be completed within 106 seconds .	70% processed in 60 seconds	
	96% processed in 106 seconds	
C. Emergency alarm processing for the following call types shall be completed within 90 seconds 90 percent of the time and within 120 seconds 99 percent of the time: i. Calls requiring emergency medical dispatch questioning and pre-arrival instruction ii. Calls requiring language translation iii. Calls requiring the use of TTY/TDD device or audio/video relay services iv. Calls of criminal activity that require information vital to emergency responder safety prior to dispatching units v. Hazardous material incidents vi. Technical rescue	86% processed in 90 seconds 99% processed in 120 seconds	

Page 19 of 22

Statistical Information-Risk Management Initiatives

Risk Management is a broad and multi-faceted process, which involves among other things, training, quality assurance, employee grievances, complaint reviews, policy reviews and maintaining accreditation.

<u>Policy Reviews</u>: Shreveport Fire Department Administrative Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures, along with Communications Division Directives are reviewed annually. Members of the division reviewed 90 Communications Directives, of which 12 were revised.

<u>Employee Grievances</u>: Fire Communications Officers are encouraged through policy to make management aware of any instance when they feel they have been aggrieved. The Shreveport Fire Department grievance procedure assures that the employee receives resolution to any condition for which they feel they have been treated unfairly. There was one (1) grievance filed in 2015.

<u>Training</u>: The Fire Communications Division puts significant emphasis on training activity. New hires are required to successfully complete the Dispatch Academy receiving over 880 hours of training. All communications officers are mandated to have TDD training every 6 months, and CPR and Emergency Medical Dispatch certifications are renewed every 2 years. Training is conducted every single day in the form of 6 minute training topics and monthly with professional development training. Communications Officers also receive annual training on disaster operations. In 2015, communications officers received over 2,119 hours of training.

<u>Quality Assurance</u>: A good quality assurance program is necessary to improve efficiency and performance skills. A minimum of 5 calls from each call taker are reviewed each quarter and evaluated by members of the Quality Assurance Team. Calls that do not achieve 100% compliance are sent to the call taker for further review. For the year 2015, the average QA score for ALL call takers fell into the above average and the overall average for the division was above average.

Action Event Reviews (AER) / Other Agency Complaints

The Shreveport Fire Department's Action / Event Review System are utilized as a means for the Fire Communications Division to solicit questions and comments on its activity. Any officer may initiate this review which will trigger a full investigation by the Fire Communications management staff. Following a full review, a written report is provided to the individual requesting the review with copies provided to each level of the chain of command.

All requests for reviews are analyzed for potential trends, policy revisions or any corrective actions that may be necessary. Sustained complaints that are determined to be caused by employee performance are handled with the appropriate level of disciplinary action. Any performance that requires further investigation is referred to the Fire Chief who makes the determination if an internal affairs review is necessary. In 2015, eighteen (18) Action/Event Reviews were conducted and are categorized below:

Page 20 of 22

				Findings of Sustained Complaints			ints
Complaint Description	Total	Unfounded	Sustained	Training Issue	Employee Performance	Equip	Other
Dispatched Incorrect Unit/Agency							
Dispatched to Incorrect Address	9		9		9		
Delayed Dispatch	3		3		3		
Improper Notification	2		2		2		
Unprofessional Behavior	2		2		2		
Unsatisfactory Work Performance	2		2		2		
TOTALS	18		18		18		

Citizen Complaints

Complaints or concerns from the citizens or visitors to Caddo Parish are taken very seriously by Communications Center Management Staff. Each complaint received is documented. The citizen is provided with updates throughout the process and a written response to the citizen defines the findings of the investigation. Three (3) citizen complaints were received in 2015. The results of these complaints are listed below:

				Findings of Sustained Complaints			
Complaint Description	Total	Unfounded	Sustained	Training Issue	Employee Performance	Equip	Other
Delayed Dispatch	1		1		1		
Failure to Dispatch							
Rudeness / Unprofessional	2	2					
TOTALS	3	2			1		

Page 21 of 22

The information found in this report is factual and based on a variety of statistical analyses. If you need additional information or detailed reports, please contact:

Kathy Rushworth, RPL Chief of Communications Shreveport Fire Department 1144 Texas Avenue Shreveport, LA 71101

318-675-2200 318-675-2206 (fax)

kathy.rushworth@caddo911.com

Page 22 of 22