

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division



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Kathy O. Rushworth
Division Chief

A CALEA Accredited Public Safety Communications Center



Shreveport Fire Department

Communications Division

Caddo Parish Emergency Communications Center

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Voice: 318-675-2200 Fax: 675-2206

January 28, 2013

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 2012. 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. 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 earned its third reaccreditation in 2012 and remains the only CALEA-accredited fire communications center. 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 2013. Our senior staff may be retiring in less than twelve months and there is no serious plan to fill our current vacancies in an effort to prepare for the future leadership of this division. 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 are great and growing daily. We are facing upgrades to our records management system and our mobile data system in 2013. Due to technology requirements, our operating systems must change as well as the hardware and software. A new Firemail system will also go into effect early this year. 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 thankful for the dedicated men and women of the Communications Division. I could not ask for a more professional and competent staff. I also thank Fire Chief Ronald C. Mulford for his support and leadership.

I am excited about 2013 and look forward to another successful year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Rushworth, RPL
Chief of Communications



Shreveport Fire Department Mission Statement

The Shreveport Fire Department will deliver the highest level of emergency and non-emergency services to our community by protecting and preserving life, property, and the environment while providing support, encouragement, and motivation through professional development of the individuals within our organization...

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 of over 252,000 and covers a 937 square mile area located in the northwest corner of Louisiana. The 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 20,000 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 270,000 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 I (PSTI), APCO Fire Service Communications, and APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch. In addition, almost 50% of the members are certified as Firefighter I, a large number of our members are also certified Emergency Medical Technicians, and one Fire Communications Officer is certified at the level of 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.

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Command

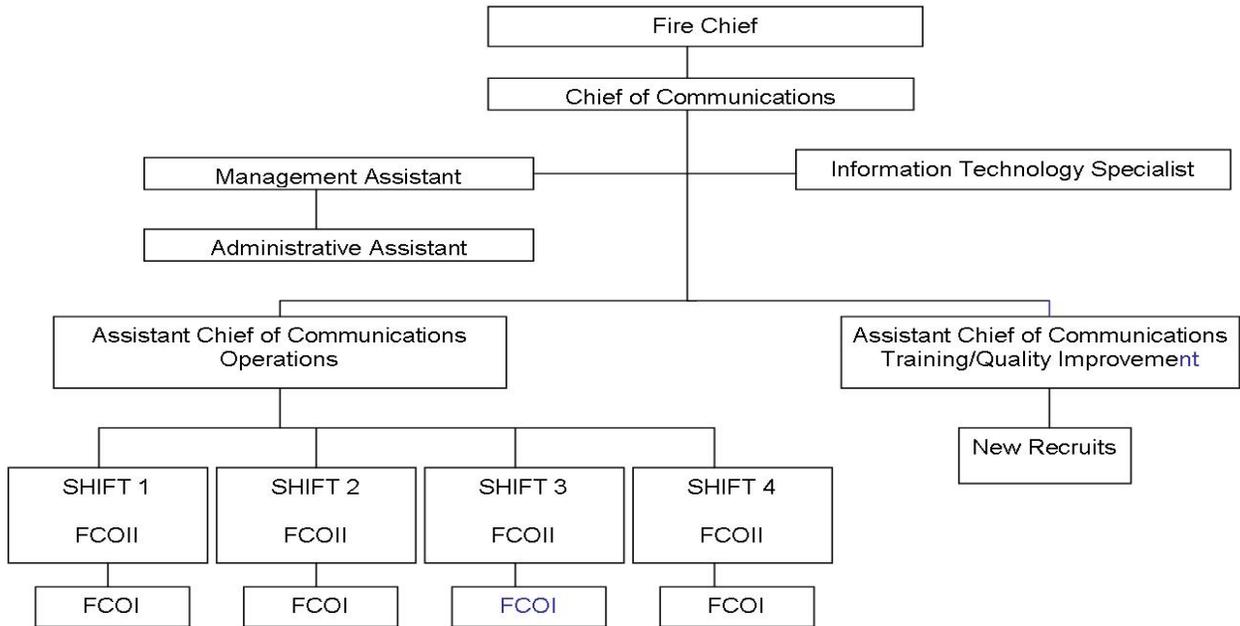


Ronald C. Mulford
Fire Chief



Kathy Rushworth
Chief of Communications

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Organizational Chart



**Shreveport Fire Department
Communications Division Operations Command**

Violet Anderson
Assistant Chief of
Communications/Operations



Fire Communications Officers II (Supervisors)



Pat Bradford



Marlo Francis



Toni Johns



Ray Mathews



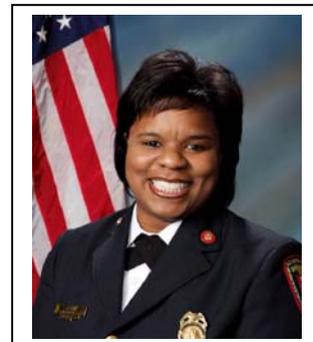
Sharon O'Neal Clark



Veronica Rambo



Roxanna Taylor



Kim Tolliver

**Shreveport Fire Department
Communications Division Fire Communications Officers**

FCOI Connie Alamond	FCOI LaTonya McKinney
FCOI LeKeisha Berry	FCOI Cissy McKinzy
FCOI Angela Boyter	FCOI Dusty Moore
FCOI Michelle Bradley	FCOI Lane Owens
FCOI Terry Carter	FCOI Sabrina Parker
FCOI Vicki Carter	FCOI Tammy Pierce
FCOI Tina Chambers	FCOI Stephanie Phelan
FCOI Connie Coleman	FCOI Karen Pilcher
FCOI Alisalyn Davis	FCOI Dawn Ramsey
FCOI John Elliott	FCOI Derrick Schafer
FCOI Monica Graham	FCOI Emily Simmons
FCOI John Green	FCOI Dan Smith
FCOI Kathy Hudson	FCOI Stephen St. John
FCOI Unique LaCoure	FCOI Denise Wheeler
FCOI Aqueelah McCray	FCOI Brian Williams
	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 2012, this unit processed over 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 and accreditation.



Valerie deVries



Ashley Wiggins

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



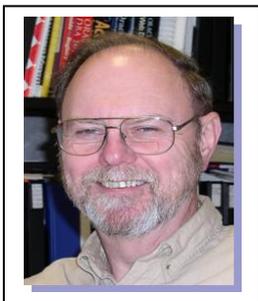
Judy



Richard



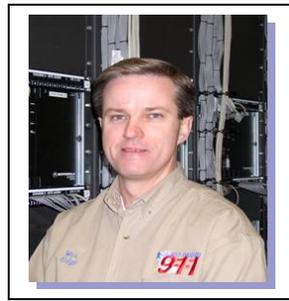
Beth Ann



Arthur



Huck



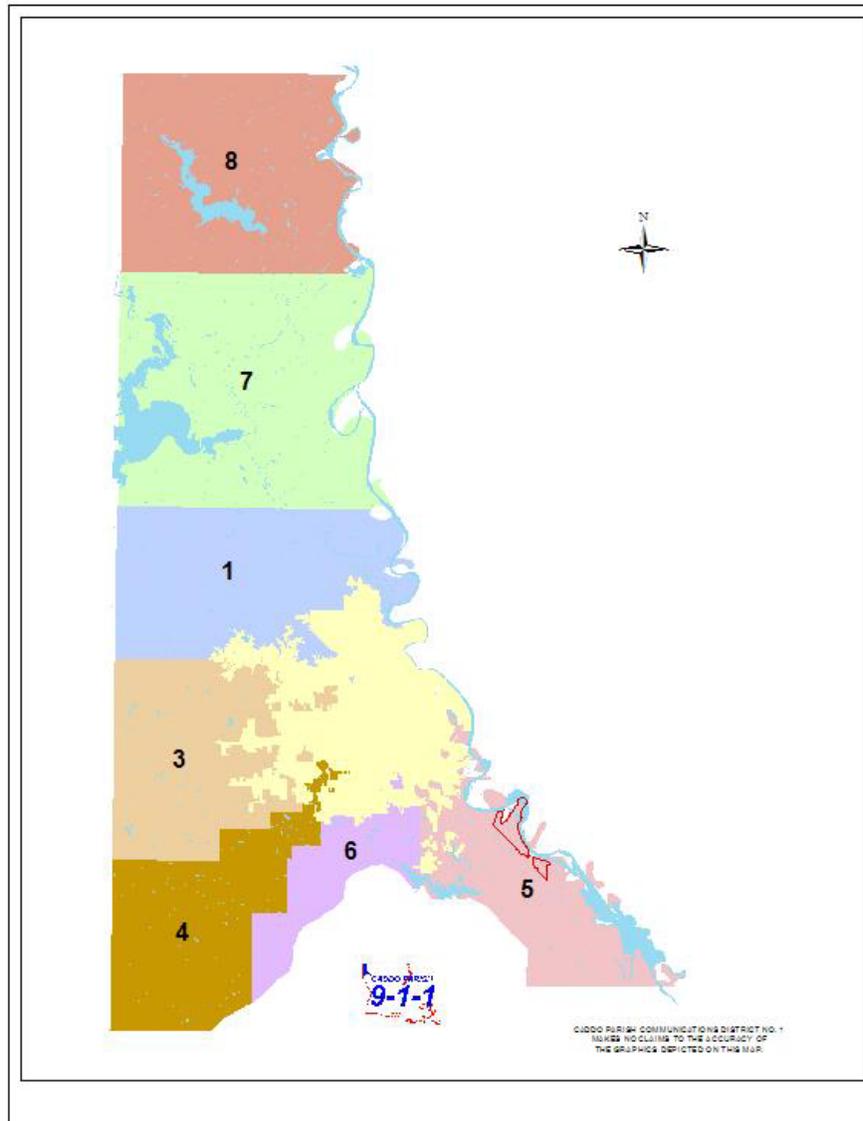
Wes



Nathan

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.



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 be 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 2012 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, Dusty Moore, Veronica Rambo, Monica Cooper, Terry Carter, Toni Johns

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 proved quite effective.

Co-QA Managers: Tina Chambers, Veronica Rambo

Members: Sharon Clark, Kim Tolliver, Terry Carter, Cissy McKinzy

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: Connie Alamond

Members: Lane Owens, Veronica Rambo, Terry Carter, John Elliott

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: Patricia Bradford

Members: Vicki Carter, Unique LaCoure, Ray Mathews, Alisalyn Davis

Public Education

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

Committee Chair: Aqueelah McCray

Members: Vicki Carter, Sharon Clark, John Green, Dusty Moore, Kathy Hudson, Marlo Francis

Employee Recognition

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

Committee Chair: Sharon Clark

Members: Aqueelah McCray, LeKeisha Berry, Brian Williams, Bruce Willis

Accreditation

Members receive training on the CALEA accreditation process and help to ensure compliance and provide proofs of various CALEA standards.

Committee Chair: Valerie deVries

Members: Connie Alamond, Sharon Clark, Lane Owens, Veronica Rambo, Tina Chambers, Kim Tolliver, Toni Johns, Kathy Hudson, Roxanna Taylor, Patricia Bradford, Violet Anderson, Ashley Wiggins

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: Dusty Moore, Lane Owens, John Elliott, LaTonya McKinney, Stephen St. John, Danny Alexander, Harrietta Parker, Violet Anderson, Ashley Wiggins

Work Groups / Division Representation

Strategic Planning Team Member: Lane Owens

Peer Fitness Coordinator: Aqueelah McCray

EMD Work Group: Connie Alamond, Roxanna Taylor, Aqueelah McCray

Personnel Awards/Special Recognition/Accomplishments

Special Recognition: Connie Coleman, Aqueelah McCray (2), Ray Mathews and Tammy Pierce – Cardiac Life Saver Award; Kathy Hudson and LaTonya McKinney – Citizen Appreciation

Perfect Attendance (Individual): Danny Alexander, LeKeisha Berry, Sharon Clark, Valerie deVries, Aqueelah McCray, LaTonya McKinney, Cissy McKinzy, Dusty Moore, Lane Owens, Stephanie Phelan, Karen Pilcher, Veronica Rambo and Derrick Schafer

Perfect Attendance (Shift): Shift 3 – January, May and June

Commendations: John Elliott – Commended for achieving 100% on his quality assurance scores for every month of the year during 2011. Veronica Rambo – Commended for attaining Registered Public Safety Leader Certification.

QA 100%: Stephanie Phelan (8), John Elliott (7), Derrick Schafer (7), Terry Carter (6), Kathy Hudson (6), Karen Pilcher (6), Vicki Carter (5), Monica Cooper (5), LaTonya McKinney (5), Emily Simmons (5), Kim Tolliver (5), Brian Williams (5), Connie Coleman (4), Unique LaCoure (4), Aqueelah McCray (4), Dawn Ramsey (4), Dan Smith (4), Patricia Bradford (3), Tina Chambers (3), Dusty Moore (3), Lane Owens (3), Denise Wheeler (3), Connie Alamond (2), LeKeisha Berry (2), Sharon Clark (2), Alisalyn Davis (2), Ray Mathews (2), Cissy McKinzy (2), Tammy Pierce (2), Angela Boyter (1), Michelle Bradley (1), John Green (1), Toni Johns (1), Stephen St. John (1), Veronica Rambo (1), Bruce Willis (1)

Service: FCOI Sabrina Parker has served our country through active duty in the National Guard since 2010.

National Fire Academy Attendees: Marlo Francis

Outside Committees/Work Groups: Kathy Rushworth- Member of APCO International's Member Chapter Services Committee; Member of FEMA Region VI Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group); Member of NENA; Violet Anderson - 1st Vice President Louisiana APCO; Member of APCO International's Standards Review Subcommittee; LA State TERT Coordinator; Member USAR Louisiana Task Force 3; Member SFD/IAFF Human Relations Committee; Member Shreveport Fire Department Policy Committee; Member of NENA; Danny Alexander – Member USAR Louisiana Task Force 3

Seminar / Conference Attendees: APCO International Annual Conference – Violet Anderson, LeKeisha Berry; Louisiana APCO meetings – Violet Anderson; CALEA Conference: Kathy Rushworth, Valerie deVries, Ashley Wiggins; Customer Service Training – All personnel; Ethics Training – All personnel

Major Accomplishments

CALEA Reaccreditation - The division successfully underwent an on-site assessment and achieved CALEA reaccreditation. Our agency was initially accredited in 2003 and has been reaccredited every three years. The Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division was the first and remains the ONLY fire service agency accredited by CALEA.

CAD Upgrade – The Caddo Parish Communications District upgraded the CAD system used by our division to process 9-1-1 calls. This was a major upgrade that included new equipment and training.

Facility Renovations – The Caddo Parish Communications District began major renovations to the communications center and included added space for both the IT Section and Administration. The renovation will continue through 2013 and will result in new consoles for the communications officers.

Training – All members of the division completed mandatory customer service training and ethics training. One member of the division attended the National Fire Academy. Three members attended the CALEA conference and two members attended the APCO conference.

Information/Technology and Communications Equipment – Twenty-five new desktop computers and monitors were purchased for the department. The EMS patient care reporting software was updated for the medic units. New desktops for the administrative offices were installed including upgrades to the operating system and software. Completed the FCC mandated narrow banding project which included pager replacement for all SFD personnel. Began an upgrade to the mobile data system which is scheduled to be completed in 2013.

Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year**Fire Communications Officer I Aqueelah McCray**

Fire Communications Officer Aqueelah McCray was awarded the Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year for 2012. FCOI McCray was selected for her outstanding contributions to the division throughout the year. She maintained an above average Quality Assurance score, served on three division committees, chaired one committee and had perfect attendance for the year. FCOI McCray participated in the Paint Your Heart Out program and received numerous commendations. Congratulations Aqueelah on a job well done!

Statistical Information-Human Resources

Staffing/Vacancies

During 2012, there were no employee separation and no new hires. The division ended the year with two vacant positions, one Fire Communications Officer I, and one Assistant Chief of Communications / Training. One Fire Communications Officer served active duty military throughout 2012.

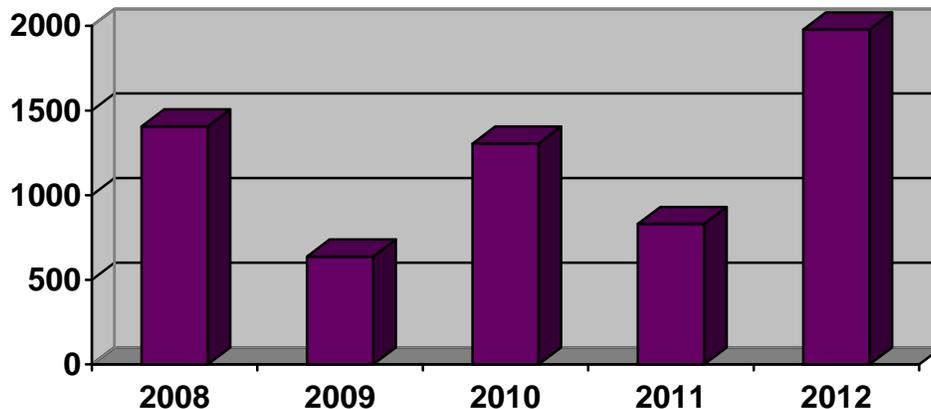
Filled Positions vs. Vacant Positions



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 1978 hours of which 1570 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.

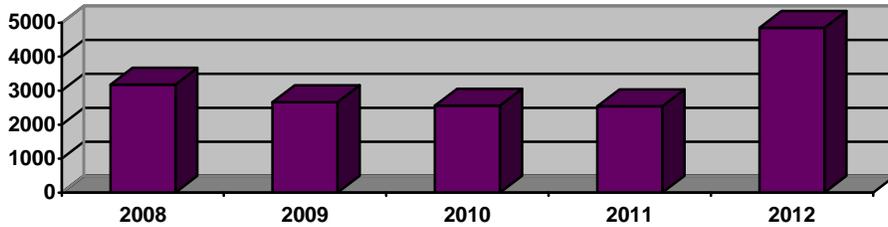
Overtime Usage (hours)-Total



Staffing/Sick Leave

The division had a total of 4848 hours of sick leave usage and thirteen (13) employees achieved perfect attendance during 2012. There were no requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.

Operations Section - Sick Leave Usage (hours)

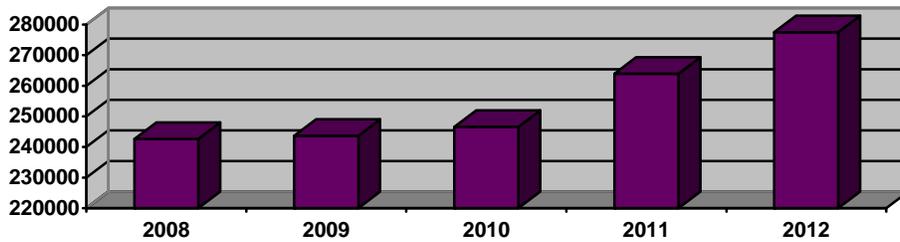


Statistical Information-Workload Indicators

9-1-1 Call Volume

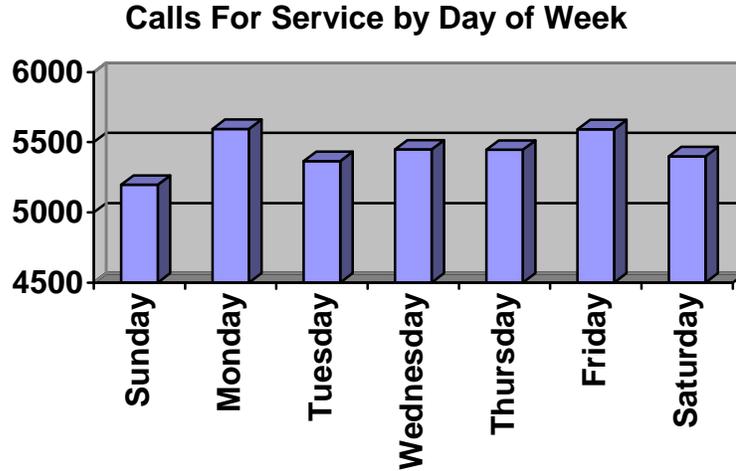
Fire Communications Officers answered 277,500 9-1-1 calls during 2012.

Total 9-1-1 Calls Processed

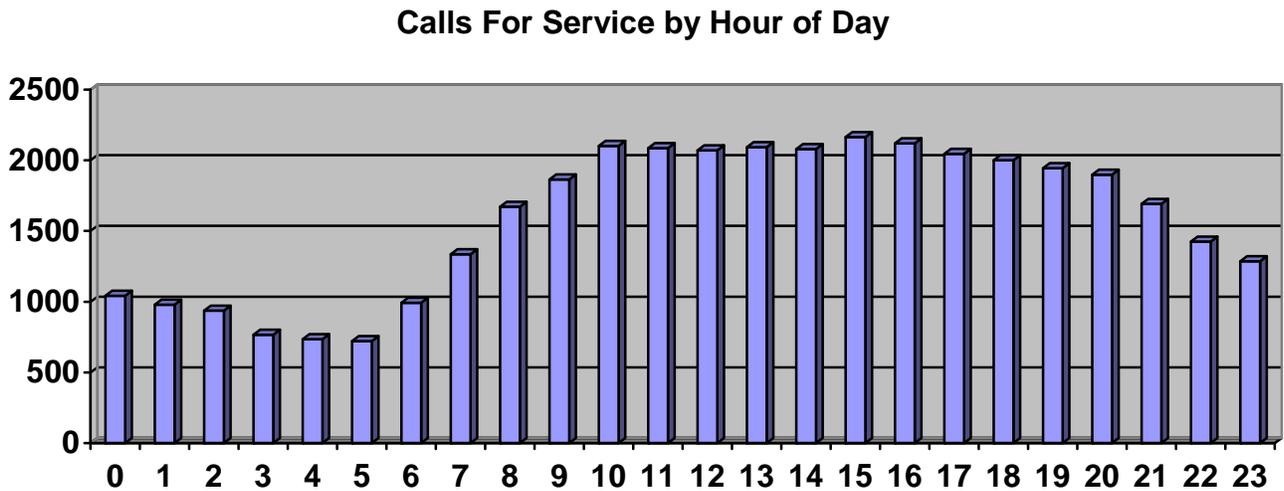


Calls for Service Volume by Day of Week and Time of Day

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



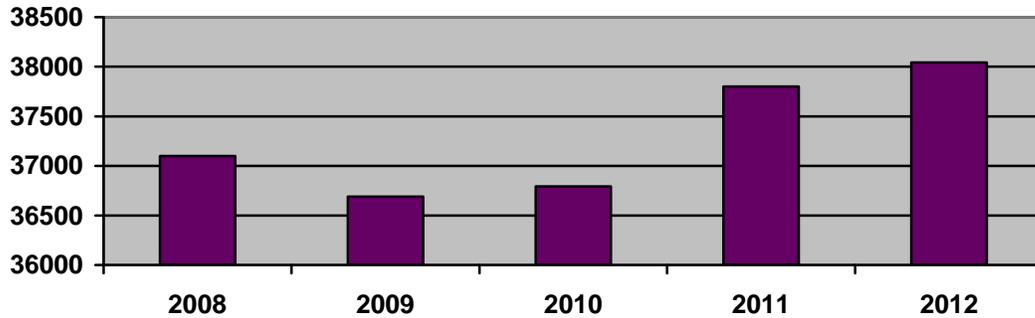
As you can see from the graph below, our call volume decreases in the early morning hours but begins to increase by mid-morning through the early evening hours.



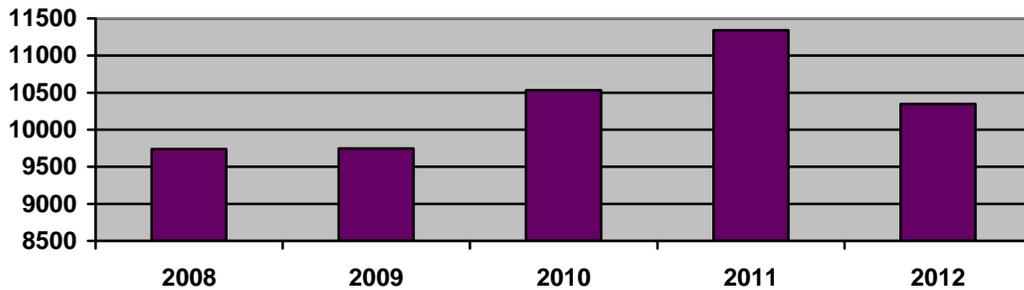
Events Dispatched

Communications officers also dispatched **38,043** events for the Shreveport Fire Department, of which **81%** were EMS. For the Caddo Fire Districts and North Caddo Medical Center, **10,347** events were dispatched. Communications Officers also created **10,033** events for Shreveport Police and **1,625** for Caddo Sheriff's Office.

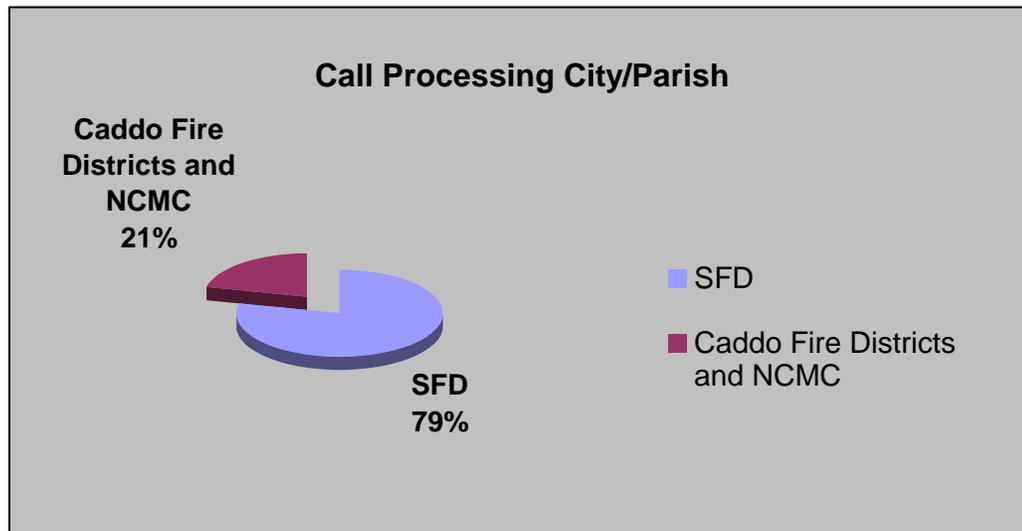
Events Dispatched (City)



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.



Statistical Information-Performance Standards

The division has adopted NFPA Standard 1221 as performance standards. This standard requires 95% of fire calls be answered within 15 seconds and 95% of emergency dispatching be completed within 60 seconds. These performance standards are reviewed and analyzed monthly to ensure compliance. For 2012, the average call processing time from call receipt until dispatch was 1 minute and 07 seconds.

	FIRE	EMS
CAT (Call Answer Time) Elapsed time before call answered	99% 15 seconds or less	99% 15 seconds or less
CRT (Call-Taker Processing) Elapsed time from transfer of E - 9-1-1 data to the computer aided dispatch system to the creation of the CAD event by the Call-Taker.	80% 60 seconds or less	70% 60 seconds or less
CPT (Dispatcher Processing) Elapsed time from CAD event creation by Call-Taker, to field unit dispatch by Dispatcher.	98% 60 seconds or less	99% 60 seconds or less
TPT (Total Processing Time by Dispatch) Elapsed time from transfer of E9-1-1 data to field unit dispatch.	94% 120 seconds or less	94% 120 seconds or less
TRT (Total Response Time) Elapsed time from call answer by Dispatch, to arrival of the first unit.	84% 7 minutes or less	86% 7 minutes or less

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.

Policy Reviews: 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 13 were revised.

Employee Grievances: 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 were no grievances filed in 2012.

Training: The Fire Communications Division puts significant emphasis on training activity. New hires are required to successfully complete the Dispatch Academy receiving over 840 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 2012, communications officers received over 1,400 hours of training.

Quality Assurance: 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 2012 the average QA score for ALL call takers fell into the above average category for the first time since we started the current program. 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 is 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 2012, four internal affairs investigations were conducted. Action/Event Reviews for 2012 are listed below:

Complaint Description	Total	Unfounded	Sustained	Findings of Sustained Complaints			
				Training Issue	Employee Performance	Equip	Other
Dispatched Incorrect Unit	2	1	1		1		
Dispatched Incorrect Agency							
Delayed Dispatch	1	1					
Incorrect / Not Enough Info							
Improper Notification							
Rudeness / Unprofessional	1		1		1		
TOTALS	4	2	2		2		

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. One (1) citizen complaint was received in 2012. The result of this complaint is listed below:

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