

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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February 23, 2011

It is with pleasure that I submit the 2010 Communications Division Annual Report. This report details our performance and accomplishments throughout the year and also provides a glimpse of what is to come in 2011.

The vacancy in the Assistant Chief of Communications position has been a serious issue since 2008 and this year, no one could deny the criticality of the position. This position was temporarily filled when we hired a new FCOI that had to be trained. Although the assignment was temporary, it proved how important it is to permanently fill this position. It also proved that we have talented people within our organization that can fill this position.

Information and Technology issues continue to increase as more and more of our operation is moved to electronic data collection and reporting. Additional apparatus was added to our fleet which increased the number of front-line mobile data computers. In 2010, new EMS reporting and billing software was purchased along with new hardware for the medic units and EMS Supervisors.

I/T Specialists work hard to provide the best possible service to our members however, they are not chief officers. Their role is to be technical expertise for projects. They provide the organization and reporting of data but should not be expected to manage or oversee the data collection. Project management and oversight is lacking in most RMS issues and therefore consumes an enormous amount of the IT Section's time. One goal is to move oversight and management of the RMS projects to the divisions responsible for data collection and allow I/T Specialists to better support the projects from a technical perspective.

Communications Division personnel continue to perform at high levels and have adapted to increased workloads and staffing deficits. I am very proud of each person who serves in this division. They are professionals who demonstrate a true concern for our citizens and our department.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Rushworth

Chief of Communications

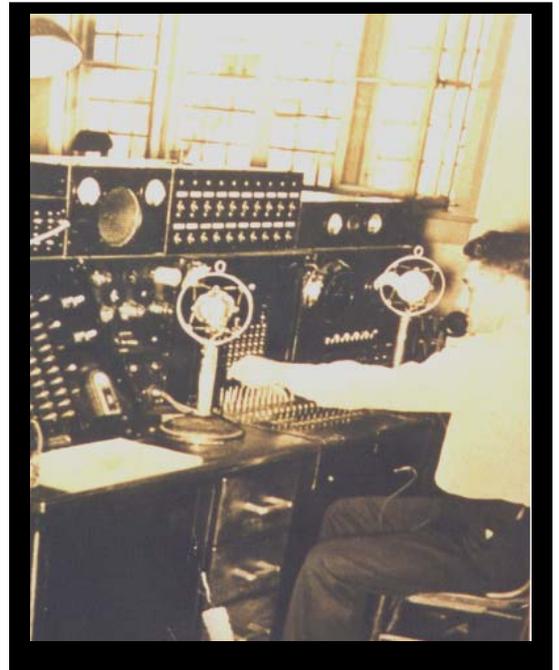


Shreveport Fire Department Mission Statement

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 250,000 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 eight 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, three of our communications officers have completed the prestigious Registered Public Safety Leader certificate program through APCO and appear on the national registry of RPL. One other is currently enrolled in the program.

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

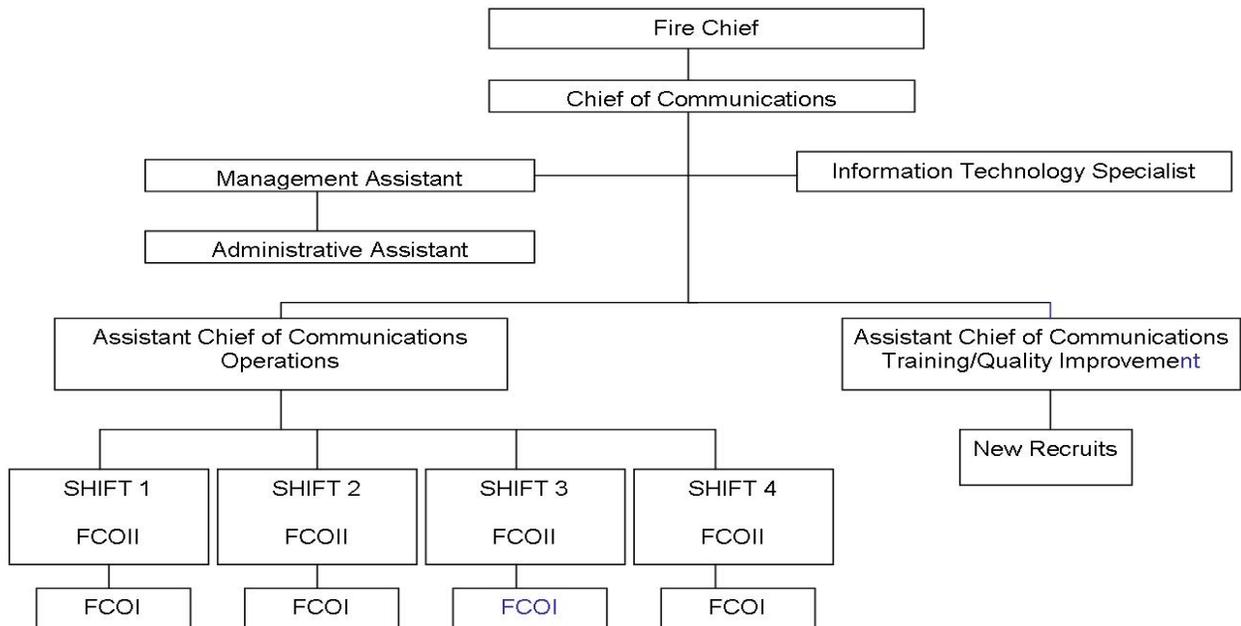


Brian Crawford
Fire Chief



Kathy Rushworth
Chief of Communications

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Organizational Chart

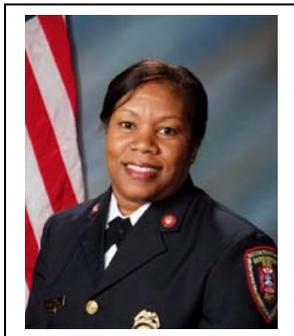


**Shreveport Fire Department
Communications Division Operations Command**

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 Aqueelah McCray
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 LaTonya Falcon	FCOI Emily Simmons
FCOI Monica Graham	FCOI Dan Smith
FCOI John Green, Jr.	FCOI Stephen St. John
FCOI Kathy Hudson	FCOI Denise Wheeler
FCOI Unique LaCoure	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 2010, this unit processed over 1,000 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



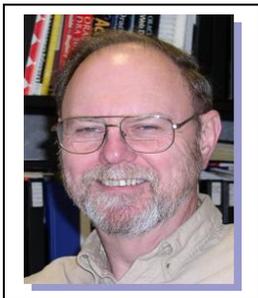
Judy



Richard



Beth Ann



Arthur



Huck



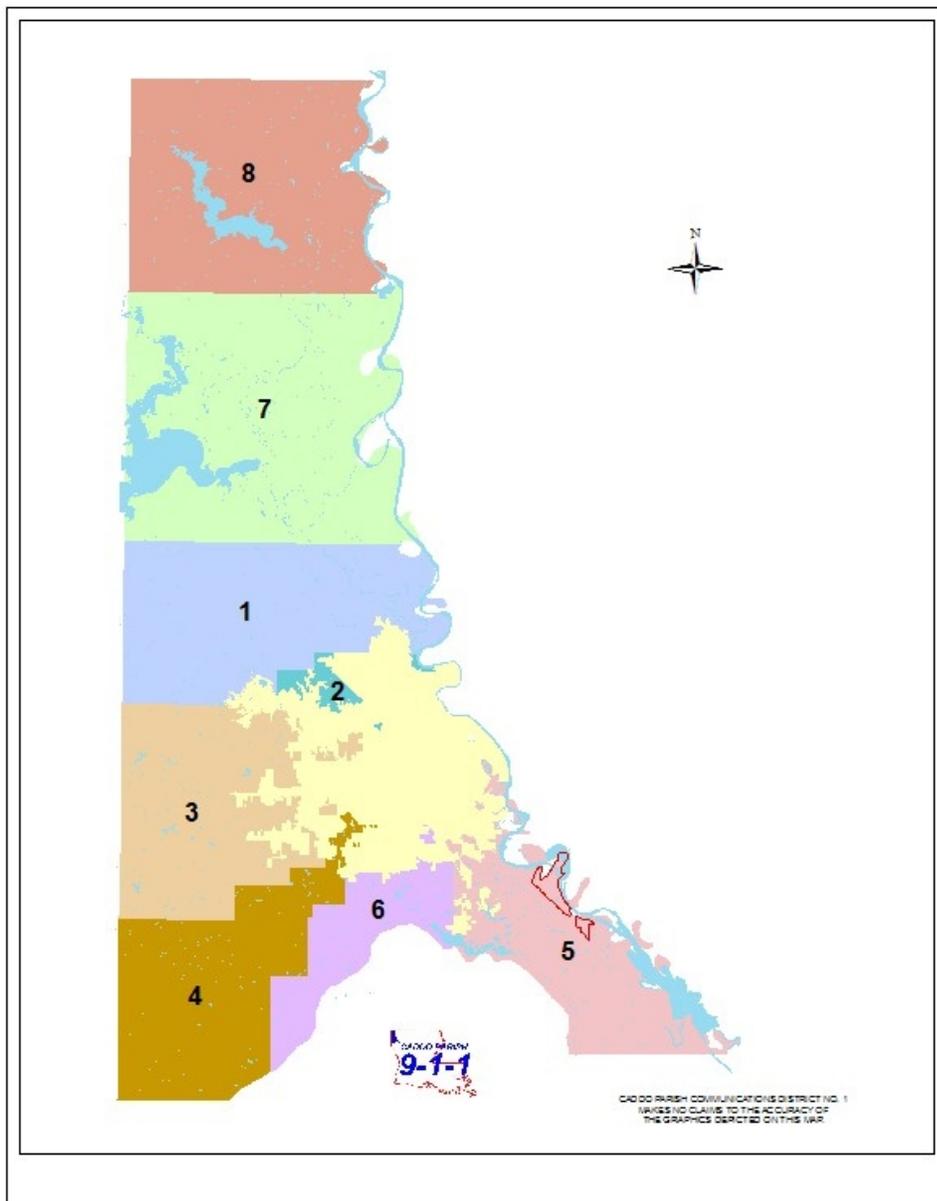
Wes



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.





Harry Lowery
Fire Chief-CFD 2

Ernest Mitchell
Fire Chief-CFD 3

Dan Cotten
Fire Chief-CFD 1

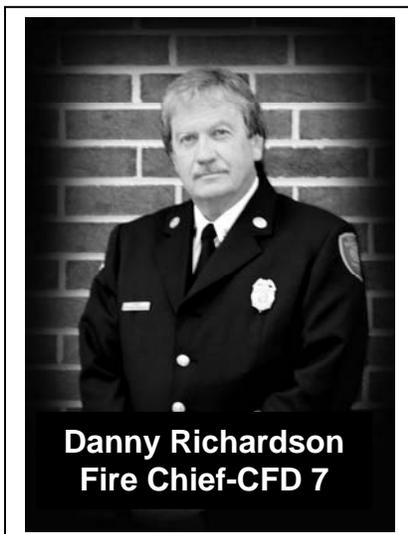


Bryant Williams
Fire Chief-CFD 4



Grayson Boucher
Fire Chief-CFD 5

Damon Johnson
Fire Chief-CFD 6



Danny Richardson
Fire Chief-CFD 7

Jay Paulette
Fire Chief-CFD 8

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 2010 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. FCOI Tina Chambers conducted new hire training as Acting Assistant Chief of Communications / Training October – December, 2010.

Task Force Leader: Kim Tolliver

Members: Tina Chambers and Marlo Francis

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: Dusty Moore, Unique LaCoure, Emily Simmons, Terry Carter

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: Derrick Schafer

Members: Connie Alamond, Brian Williams, Ray Mathews, Angela Boyter

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: Toni Johns

Members: Sharon Clark, Dusty Moore, Veronica Rambo, Karen Pilcher, Emily Simmons, Angela Boyter, Kathy Hudson, Connie Alamond

Employee Recognition

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

Committee Chair: John Elliott

Members: Sharon Clark, Pat Bradford, Monica Cooper, Tammy Pierce, LeKeisha Berry, Toni Johns, Dusty Moore

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: Kathy Rushworth

Members: Roxanna Taylor, Lane Owens, Kim Tolliver, LaTonya Falcon, Derrick Schafer, Angela Boyter

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

“Cardiac Saves” Recognition from EMS: LeKeisha Berry, Angela Boyter, Tina Chambers, Kathy Hudson, Lane Owens, Dawn Ramsey, Denise Wheeler

Perfect Attendance (Individual): Connie Alamond, Danny Alexander, LeKeisha Berry, Michelle Bradley, Tina Chambers, Sharon O’Neal Clark, Valerie deVries, LaTonya Falcon, Unique LaCoure, Aqueelah McCray, Lane Owens, Kathy Rushworth, Dan Smith, Bruce Willis

Perfect Attendance (Shift): Shift 1 – March, Shift 3 – February, Shift 4 – August

Commendations: Tina Chambers – Commended for her dedication and leadership throughout the development and implementation of the Communications Division Quality Assurance Program; Emily Simmons – Commended for the professional way she handled a call providing pre-arrival instructions to a bystander who performed CPR. The manner in which the call was handled left the caller very impressed by our services.

QA 100%: John Elliott (12), Denise Wheeler (9), Derrick Schafer (8), Monica Cooper (6), Kathy Hudson (6), Aqueelah McCray, (6), Karen Pilcher (6), Kim Tolliver (6), Sharon Clark (5), LaTonya Falcon (5), John Green (5), Terry Carter (4), Connie Coleman (4), Toni Johns (4), Unique Lacoure (4), Emily Simmons (4), Lane Owens (3), Stephen St. John (3), Brian Williams (3), Connie Alamond (2), LeKeisha Berry (2), Cissy McKinzy (2), Veronica Rambo (2), Dawn Ramsey (2), Bruce Willis (2), Patricia Bradford (1), Angela Boyter (1), Vicki Carter (1), Tina Chambers (1), Raymond Mathews (1), Tammy Pierce (1)

Emergency Medical Technician: Angela Boyter

Service: FCOI Sabrina Parker served our country through active duty in the National Guard for the majority of 2010.

National Fire Academy Attendees: Marlo Francis, Toni Johns

Outside Committees/Work Groups: Kathy Rushworth- President Louisiana APCO; Member of APCO International’s Member Chapter Services Committee; Member of APCO International’s Call Center Standards Committee; Member of APCO International’s Institute Advisory Committee; Member of FEMA Region VI Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECCWG); Member of APCO International’s Social Media Research Workgroup; Violet Anderson - LA State TERT Coordinator; Member USAR Louisiana Task Force 3; Member SFD/IAFF Human Relations Committee; Member Shreveport Fire Department Policy Committee; Danny Alexander – Member USAR Louisiana Task Force 3;

Seminar / Conference Attendees: CALEA Conference – Ashley Wiggins; APCO International Annual Conference – Violet Anderson, Patricia Bradford, Tina Chambers, John Elliott, Kim Tolliver; Louisiana APCO Symposium – Violet Anderson, Kathy Rushworth; Fire Rescue International – Kathy Rushworth; Anger Management Class – Terry Carter, Tina Chambers, Denise Wheeler, Ashley Wiggins; APCO Instructor Class – Tina Chambers, Kim Tolliver; COOP Training - Violet Anderson, Tina Chambers, Kathy Rushworth; APCO Accreditation Manager Beta Course – Valerie deVries, Ashley Wiggins; Diversity Training – All members; APCO Registered Public Safety Leadership Program – Veronica Rambo

Major Accomplishments

Conducted a Selection Process – The Recruiting and Hiring Committee processed 44 applicants and filled one vacant position. Two positions remain unfilled in the division.

Dispatch Academy - A Dispatch Academy was conducted for one new hire from October – December. This included over 500 hours of classroom training conducted by Acting Assistant Chief of Communications Tina Chambers.

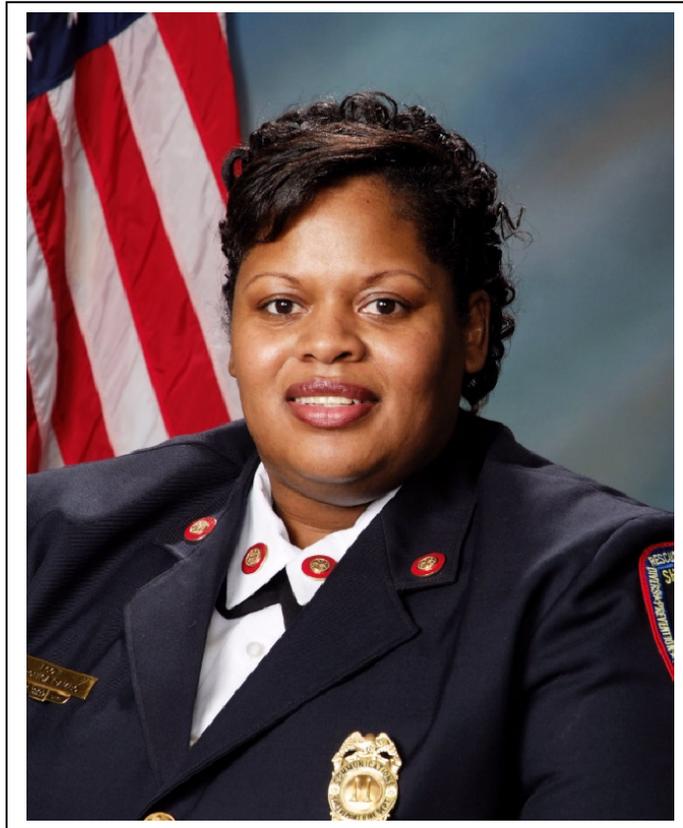
Replaced the ID Card System - The Fire Communications Division purchased a replacement for the department's ID Card system. After thorough research, the system was installed and training conducted in January, 2011.

Implemented a Public Education Committee – Although the division has participated in numerous public education functions over the years, a formal program was not implemented until 2010. Under the leadership of FCOII Johns, the Public Education Committee developed a program that included reinstating *The Communicator* newsletter and a process for tracking tours and other forms of education.

Developed an Accreditation Committee – The division takes pride in its accredited status. In an effort to foster ownership and for succession planning, an Accreditation Committee was implemented to get more communications officers involved.

Implemented an Employee Recognition Committee - Recognizing that our employees are our greatest asset, a committee was implemented to develop rewards for outstanding performance. Under the leadership of FCOI Elliott, the committee developed the criteria that will be used to select the Willis T. Carter Communications Officer of the Year.

Upgraded Information Technology Programs – During 2010, the FireRMS software was upgraded on all SFD computers to enhance performance. The EMS patient care reporting system was upgraded.

Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year**Fire Communications Officer II Veronica Rambo**

Fire Communications Officer Veronica Rambo was awarded the Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year for 2010. FCOII Rambo was selected for her exemplary attitude and great customer service skills, along with her growth as a leader over the last year. During 2010, she served as co-chair of the Quality Assurance Committee and as a member of both the Accreditation Committee and Public Education Committee. Congratulations Veronica on a job well done!

Statistical Information-Human Resources

Staffing/Vacancies

During 2010, there were no employee separations and there was one new hire. 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 2010.

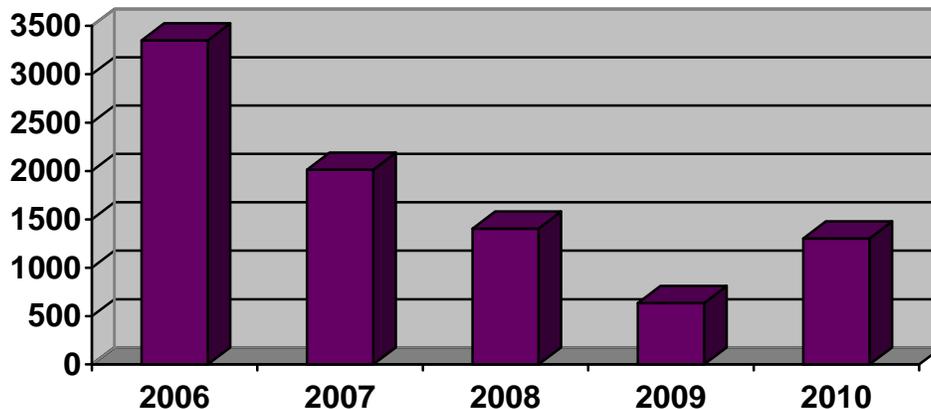
Filled Positions vs. Vacant Positions



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 1,304 hours of which 1,203 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.

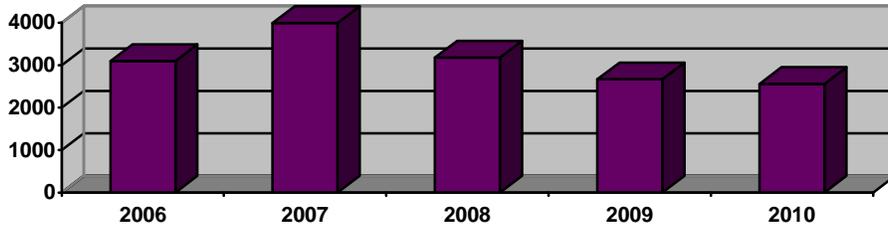
Overtime Usage (hours)-Total



Staffing/Sick Leave

The division had a total of 2,559 hours of sick leave usage and fourteen (14) employees achieved perfect attendance during 2010. There were no requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.

Operations Section - Sick Leave Usage (hours)

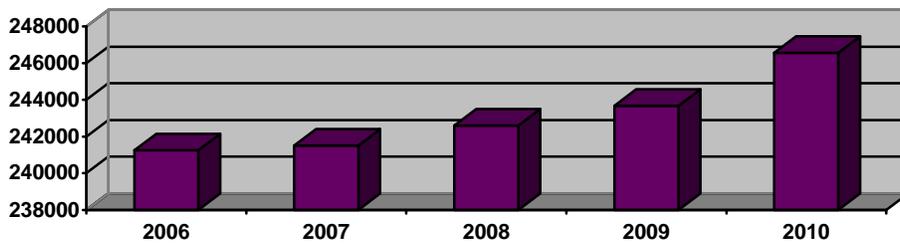


Statistical Information-Workload Indicators

9-1-1 Call Volume

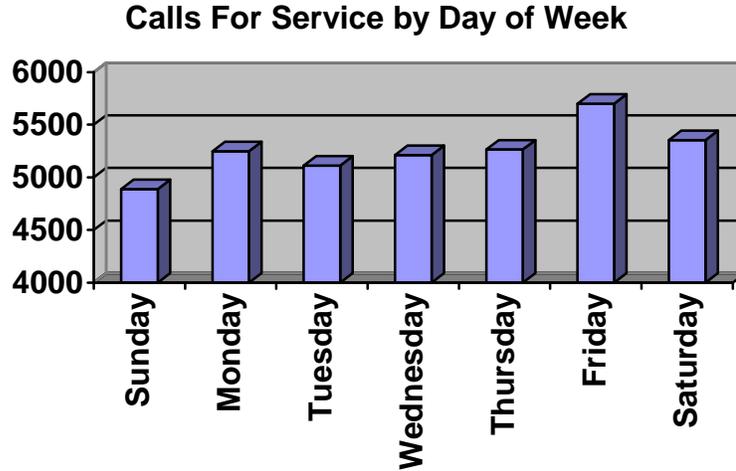
Fire Communications Officers answered 246,567 9-1-1 calls during 2010.

Total 9-1-1 Calls Processed

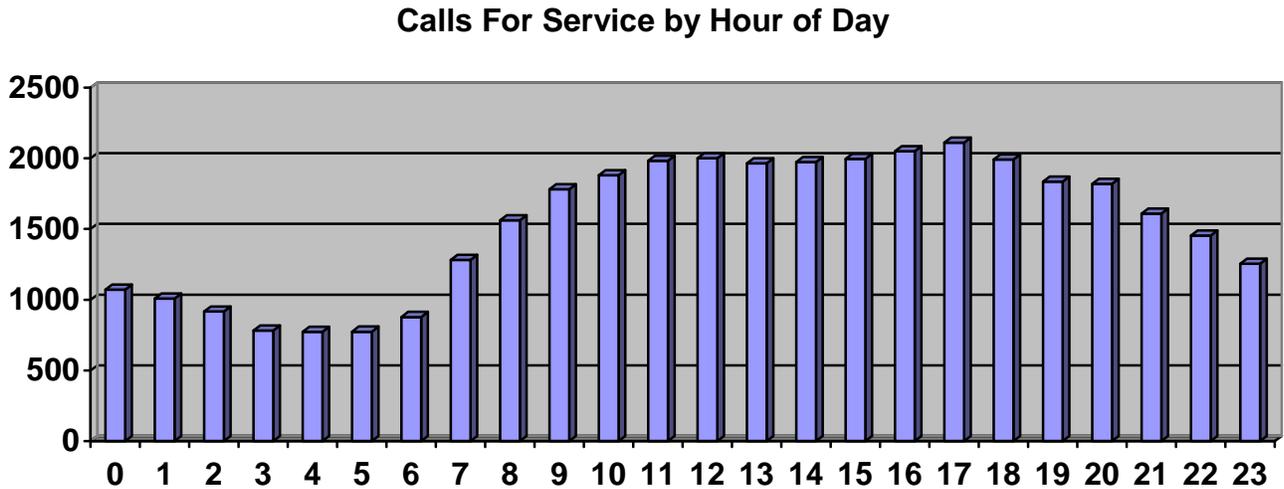


Calls for Service Volume by Day of Week and Time of Day

Our largest call volume occurred on Friday with Sundays being the smallest call volume.



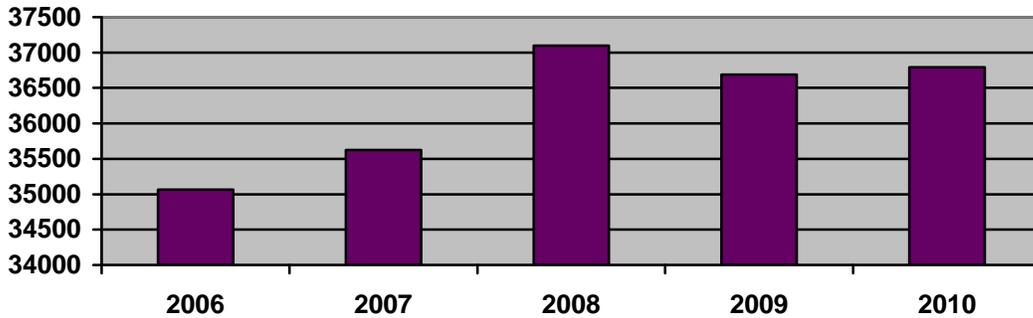
As you can see from the graph below, our call volume decreases in the early morning hours but begins to increase by mid-morning through the early evening hours.



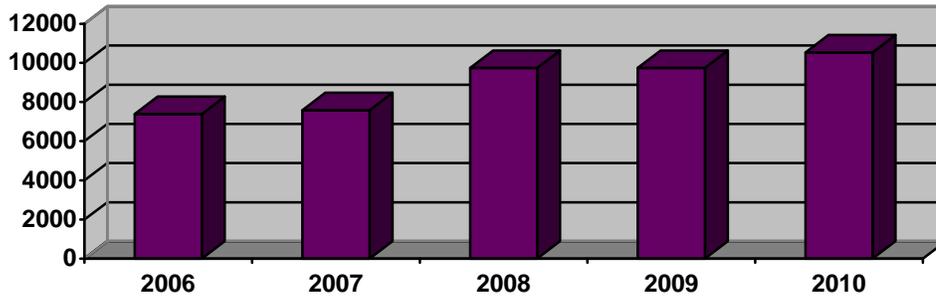
Events Dispatched

Communications officers also dispatched **36,794** events for the Shreveport Fire Department, of which 79% were EMS. For the Caddo Fire Districts and North Caddo Medical Center, **10,534** events were dispatched. Communications Officers also created **11,828** events for Shreveport Police and **2,114** for Caddo Sheriff's Office.

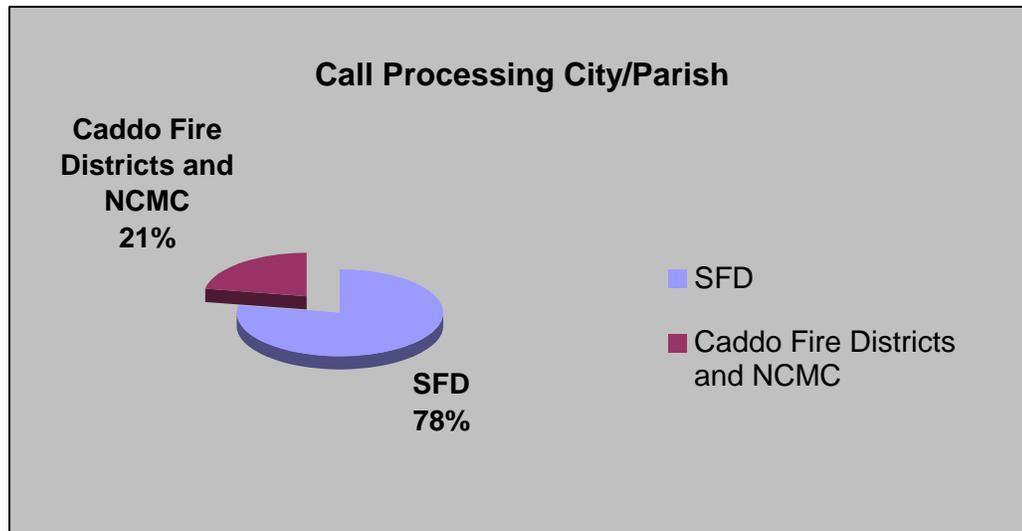
Events Dispatched (City)



Events Dispatched (Parish)



The chart below shows the percentage of calls processed for the Shreveport Fire Department compared to the eight Caddo Fire Districts and the 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 2010, the average call processing time from call receipt until dispatch was 1 minute and 11 seconds.

	FIRE	EMS
CAT (Call Answer Time) Elapsed time before call answered	98% 15 seconds or less	98% 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.	77% 60 seconds or less	67% 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	98% 60 seconds or less
TPT (Total Processing Time by Dispatch) Elapsed time from transfer of E9-1-1 data to field unit dispatch.	93% 120 seconds or less	91% 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 94 Communications Directives, of which 16 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. One employee grievance was filed in 2010.

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 2010, communications officers received over 2,300 hours of training and one Dispatch Academy was conducted.

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 2010, the average QA score for 97% of all calltakers fell into the above average category, an increase of 18% over 2009. 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 correction 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 2010, no internal affairs investigations were conducted. Action/Event Reviews for 2010 are listed below:

Complaint Description	Total	Unfounded	Sustained	Findings of Sustained Complaints			
				Training Issue	Employee Performance	Equip	Other
Dispatched Incorrect Unit	1	1					
Dispatched Incorrect Agency							
Delayed Dispatch	6	2	4		3	1	
Incorrect / Not Enough Info	2	2					
Improper Notification	6	2	4	1	3		
Rudeness / Unprofessional							
TOTALS	15	7	8	1	6	1	

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. No citizen complaints were received in 2010.