

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

1144 Texas Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71101

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

February 26, 2010

It is with a great deal of pride that I submit the 2009 Fire Communications Annual Report. As you will see in our report, the year 2009 was a productive year and we had many accomplishments.

The division successfully underwent reassessment by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) which resulted in our agency maintaining the status of an accredited Public Safety Communications Center.

Two new committees were created in 2009 to help us achieve our goals. Training has always been a high priority for the division and the Training Task Force was created to continue this focus and to fill the gap left by the vacant Assistant Chief of Communications position. Quality Assurance has also been a priority over the years and in 2009 the program was changed to focus on a peer evaluation system. I am pleased to report that both of these new committees achieved their goals and were a success.

Employee performance remains at a high level. It is significant to note that our division experienced a 3% turnover rate when the national average is 19%. Due to budget constraints, no vacancies were filled in 2009 and we ended the year with three vacant positions.

The communications and information technology fields are constantly evolving and the administrative staff works diligently to improve and expand our services. In 2009, among many projects, a new mobile data computer system was implemented, radios were rebanded and HEAR radios were installed in medic units.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the communications officers, supervisors and administrative staff of the division. It is my honor to lead such dedicated individuals who recognize the importance of excellent customer service, high standards and professionalism.

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.

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

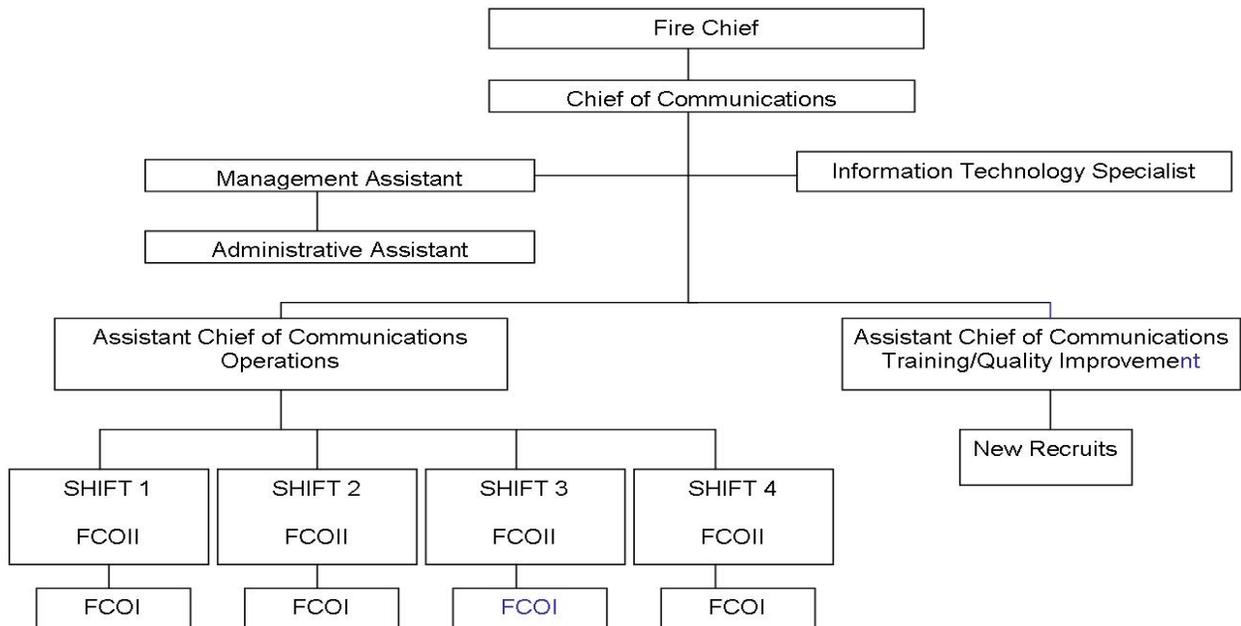


Brian Crawford
Fire Chief



Kathy Rushworth
Chief of Communications

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Organizational Chart



**Shreveport Fire Department
Communications Division Operations Command**

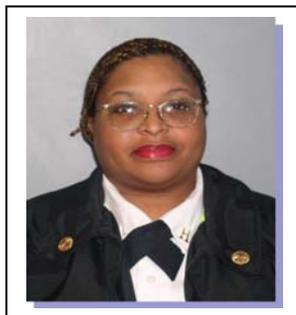
Violet Anderson
Assistant Chief of
Communications/Operations



Fire Communications Officers II (Supervisors)



Pat Bradford



Marlo Francis



Toni Johns



Ray Mathews



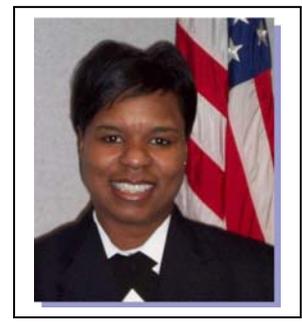
Sharon O'Neal Clark



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 Karen Pilcher
FCOI Connie Coleman	FCOI Dawn Ramsey
FCOI Alisalyn Davis	FCOI Derrick Schafer
FCOI John Elliott	FCOI Emily Simmons
FCOI LaTonya Falcon	FCOI Dan Smith
FCOI Monica Graham	FCOI Stephen St. John
FCOI John Green, Jr.	FCOI Denise Wheeler
FCOI Kathy Hudson	FCOI Brian Williams
FCOI Unique LaCoure	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 2009, this unit processed over 1,078 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



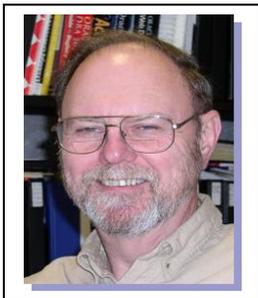
Judy



Richard



Beth Ann



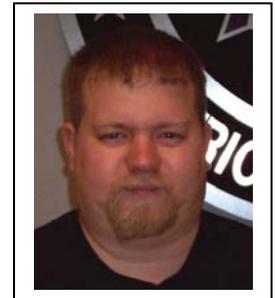
Arthur



Huck



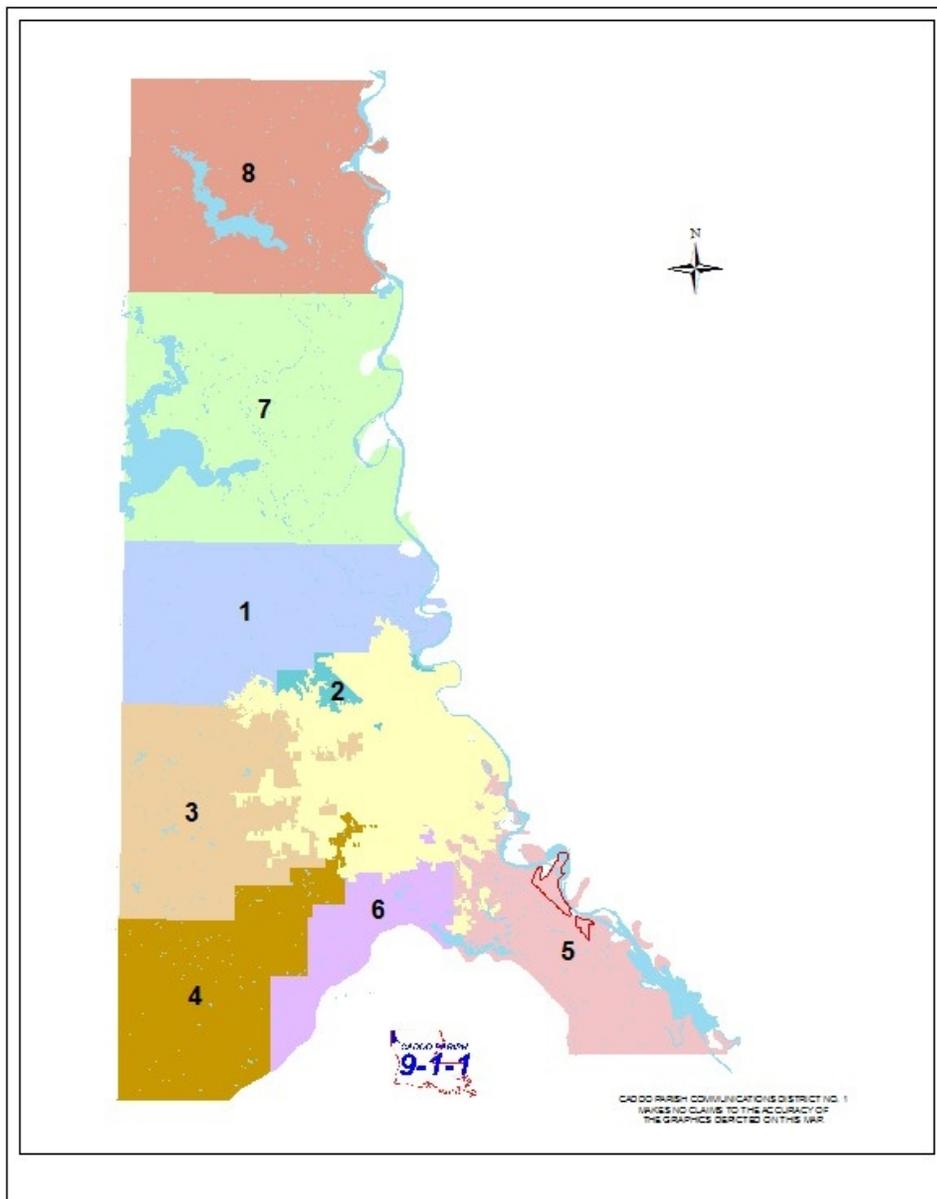
Wes



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.





Dan Cotten
Fire Chief-CFD 1

Harry Lowery
Fire Chief-CFD 2

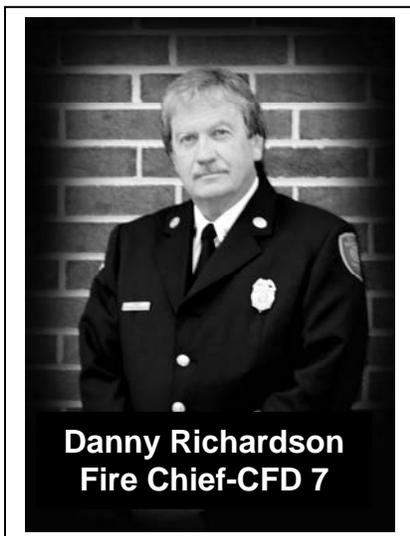
Ernest Mitchell
Fire Chief-CFD 3



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

Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division CALEA Reaccreditation in 2009



The Shreveport Fire Communications Division was the first and is currently one of two fire communications centers in the nation accredited by Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement (CALEA). CALEA has been accrediting law enforcement agencies since 1984 and in the late 1990's partnered with APCO to create an accreditation program for public safety communications centers. In 2003, the Shreveport Fire Department received its initial accreditation. In 2009, our center went through a detailed reassessment and was reaccredited. This process is not just a plaque on the wall. Accreditation is proof that this center follows nationally recognized standards of operation.



2009 Accreditation Award at the Salt Lake City CALEA Conference pictured Left to Right: Sylvester Daughter (CALEA Executive Director), Bill Carrow (President-Elect of APCO), Valerie deVries, Kathy Rushworth, and Chief Louis Dekmar (CALEA Commission Chair)

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 2009 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: 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.

QA Manager: Tina Chambers

Members: Veronica Rambo, Brian Williams, John Elliott, and Angela Boyter

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: Lane Owens

Members: LeKeisha Berry, Monica Cooper, Toni Johns, Bruce Willis

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: Marlo Francis

Members: Patricia Bradford, Emily Simmons, Stephen St. John, Kim Tolliver

Work Groups / Division Representation

Strategic Planning Team Member: Connie Alamond

Peer Fitness Coordinator: Aqueelah McCray

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

Employee Recognition: Roxanna Taylor, Terry Carter

Personnel Awards/Special Recognition/Accomplishments

“Cardiac Saves” Recognition from EMS: Patricia Bradford (2), Terry Carter, John Elliott (2), LaTonya Falcon (2), Monica Graham, Kathy Hudson, Sabrina Parker, Tammy Pierce, Dawn Ramsey (2), Emily Simmons (2), Denise Wheeler

Perfect Attendance (Individual): Connie Alamond, Danny Alexander, Violet Anderson, LeKeisha Berry, Angela Boyter, Sharon O’Neal Clark, Valerie deVries, LaTonya Falcon, Monica Graham, Aqueelah McCray, Cissy McKinzy, Karen Pilcher, Kathy Rushworth, Brian Williams

Perfect Attendance (Shift): Shift 1 – April, Shift 2 – October & December

Commendations: Kim Tolliver – Commendation for attaining certification as a Registered Public Safety Leader through APCO’s year-long course; Sharon O’Neal Clark – Commendation for the excellent job she did leading her shift while a tornado passed over the Communications Center; Violet Anderson – Commendation for attaining certification as a Registered Public Safety Leader through APCO’s year-long course; Monica Graham – Commendation for the way she handled a hysterical caller reporting a house fire.

QA 100%: John Elliott (5), Emily Simmons (4), Patricia Bradford (3), Derrick Schafer (2), LaTonya Falcon (2), Tina Chambers (2), Karen Pilcher (2), Lane Owens (2), John Green (2), Monica Graham (2), Terry Carter (2), Michelle Bradley (2), Dusty Moore (2), Connie Alamond (2), Sharon O’Neal Clark (2), Connie Coleman (2), Kathy Hudson (1), Denise Wheeler (1), Toni Johns (1), Veronica Rambo (1), Ray Mathews (1), Vicki Carter (1), Cissy McKinzy (1), LeKeisha Berry (1), Kim Tolliver (1), Tammy Pierce (1)

Fire Fighter I: LaTonya Falcon, Alisalyn Davis, LeKeisha Berry, Sabrina Parker

College Graduate: Tina Chambers – Associate’s Degree in Business Administration

National Fire Academy Attendees: Patricia Bradford, Sharon O’Neal-Clark, Marlo Francis, Toni Johns

ACPO Committees/Work Groups: Kathy Rushworth-2nd Vice President Louisiana APCO, Member of APCO International’s Member Chapter Services Committee, Member of APCO International’s Call Center Standards Committee, Member of FEMA Region VI Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECCWG) Violet Anderson-Member of APCO International’s Professional Development Events Committee

Seminar / Conference Attendees: CALEA Conference – Valerie deVries, Kathy Rushworth APCO International Annual Conference – Violet Anderson, Brian Williams Louisiana APCO Symposium – Terry Carter, Violet Anderson, Kathy Rushworth Region 7 Communications Training – Veronica Rambo, Kim Tolliver, Connie Almond, Patricia Bradford, Sharon O’Neal Clark, Tina Chambers, Unique LaCour, Monica Graham, Brian Williams, Toni Johns, Ray Mathews, Marlo Francis, Bruce Willis, Cissy McKinzy, Kathy Hudson, Dan Smith, Sabrina Parker, Violet Anderson

Major Accomplishments

CALEA Re-accreditation – The division maintained its CALEA Accredited status by undergoing an on-site assessment in August, 2009. The accreditation cycle is for three years and the next on-site assessment will be conducted in 2012.

Re-banded all Shreveport Fire Department Radios - Due to an FCC mandate, approximately 400 radios that are used by the Shreveport Fire Department had to be re-banded. Re-banding is a two part process and the first part was completed in 2009. It is anticipated that the second part will be completed in 2010.

Upgraded the Audio Recording System – The Shreveport Fire Department, in conjunction with the Shreveport Police Department, purchased a new audio recording system. Audio recordings of emergency calls and traffic are an important risk management tool and a reliable recorder is necessity.

Implemented a Training Task Force – Professional development and continued training are vital to the success of our division. The Assistant Chief of Communications /Training position has remained unfilled for over a year and to fill the training gap left by that vacancy, a Training Task Force was created. The members of this task force create professional development training, 6-minute training topics, mandatory refresher training and in-service training.

Developed a Quality Assurance Program - Over the years, the division has developed and implemented several different quality assurance programs that have had varying degrees of success. Recognizing the importance of a quality assurance program and to involve peer evaluation, a new QA program was implemented in 2009.

Increased spare portable radio inventory - The spare radio inventory that is used for special events and as loaners while equipment is being repaired had been depleted due to the addition of several emergency units and lost equipment. An additional 20 radios were purchased with grant funding to supplement this inventory.

Installed HEAR Radios in Medic Units - State mandated radios were purchased and installed through grant funding in all medic units. These radios can be used state-wide to communicate with other emergency transport units during a major event.

Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year**Fire Communications Officer I John Elliott**

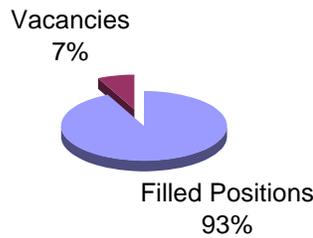
Fire Communications Officer John Elliott was awarded the Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year for 2009. FCOI Elliott has been employed with the Shreveport Fire Department for 8 years. Some of John's accomplishments for 2009 included attaining 100% in Quality Assurance compliance for 5 months and maintaining an above average score throughout the year. FCOI Elliott also served on the Quality Assurance Team. Congratulations John on a job well done!

Statistical Information-Human Resources

Staffing/Vacancies

During 2009, one employee voluntarily resigned and there were no new hires. The division ended the year with three vacant positions, two Fire Communications Officer I, and one Assistant Chief of Communications / Training.

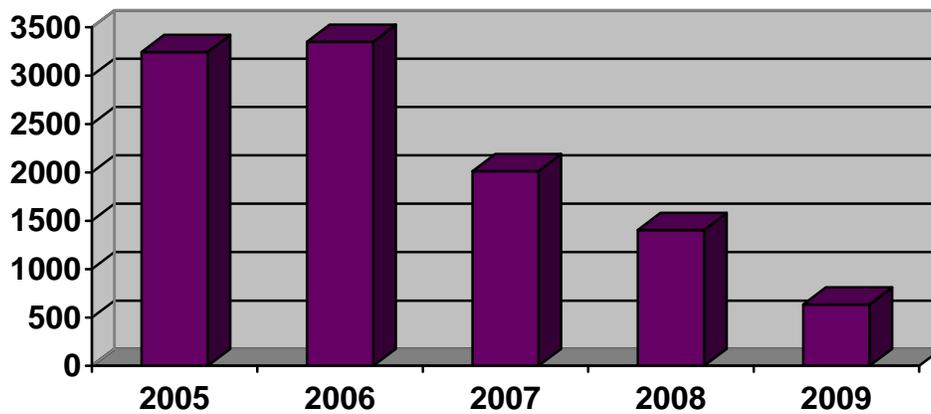
Filled Positions vs. Vacant Positions



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 613 hours of which 414 overtime hours were used to cover minimum staffing. In 2009, as a result of a budgetary mandate, minimum staffing requirements had to be modified.

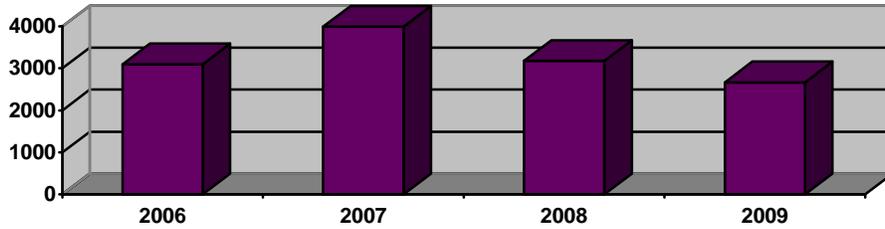
Overtime Usage (hours)-Total



Staffing/Sick Leave

The division had a total of 2,665 hours of sick leave usage and fourteen (14) employees achieved perfect attendance during 2009. There were no requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.

Operations Section - Sick Leave Usage (hours)

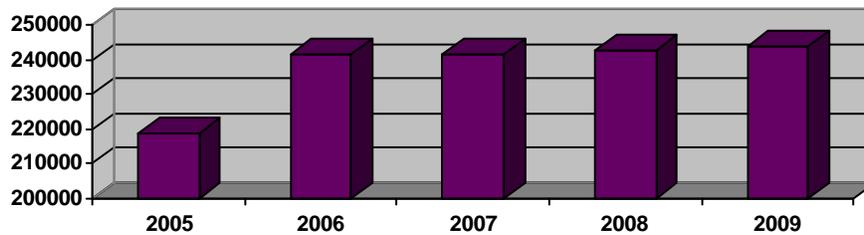


Statistical Information-Workload Indicators

9-1-1 Call Volume

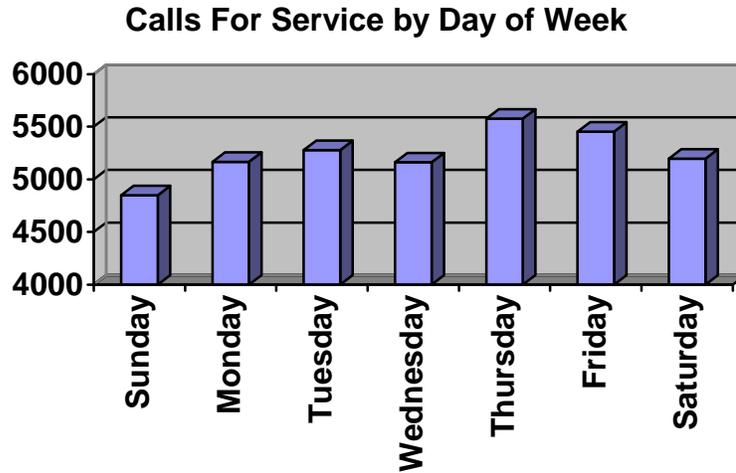
Fire Communications Officers answered 243,681 9-1-1 calls during 2009.

Total 9-1-1 Calls Processed

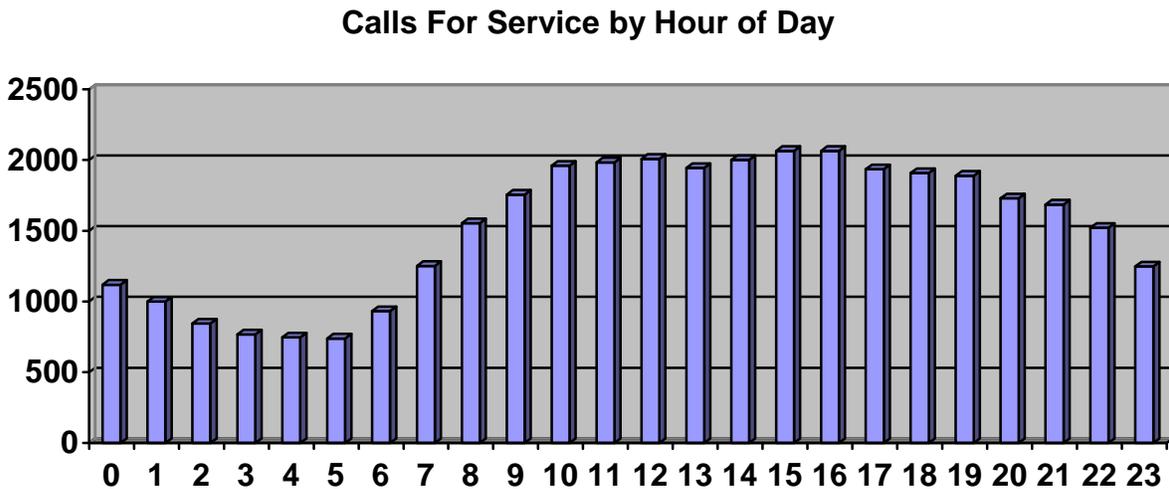


9-1-1 Call Volume by Day of Week and Time of Day

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



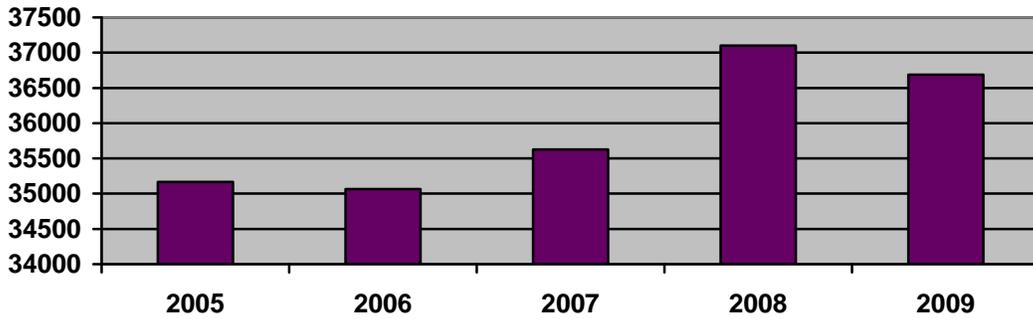
As you can see from the graph below, our call volume decreases in the early morning hours but begins to increase by mid-morning through the early evening hours.



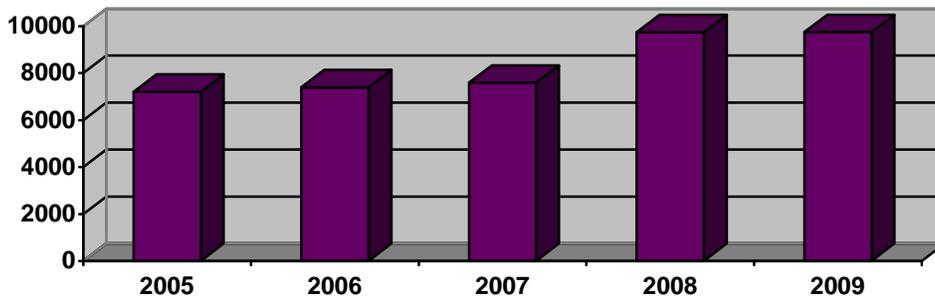
Events Dispatched

Communications officers also dispatched **36,689** events for the Shreveport Fire Department, of which **80%** were EMS. For the Caddo Fire Districts and North Caddo Medical Center, **9,874** events were dispatched.

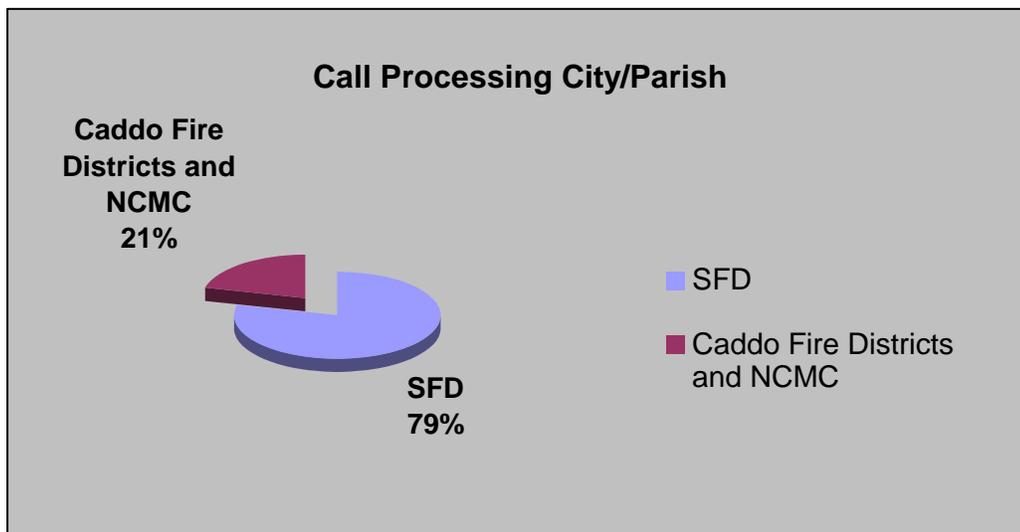
Events Dispatched (City)



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 2009, the average call processing time from call receipt until dispatch was 1 minute and 14 seconds.

	FIRE	EMS
CAT (Call Answer Time) Elapsed time before call answered	98.5% 15 seconds or less	98.5% 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.	75% 60 seconds or less	66% 60 seconds or less
CPT (Dispatcher Processing) Elapsed time from CAD event creation by Call-Taker, to field unit dispatch by Dispatcher.	96% 60 seconds or less	96% 60 seconds or less
TPT (Total Processing Time by Dispatch) Elapsed time from transfer of E9-1-1 data to field unit dispatch.	91% 120 seconds or less	88% 120 seconds or less
TRT (Total Response Time) Elapsed time from call answer by Dispatch, to arrival of the first unit.	85% 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 32 were revised. One new directive was issued in 2009.

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 2009.

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 2009, communications officers received over 2,100 hours of training. Since no new employees were hired in 2009, a Dispatch Academy was not 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 2009, the average QA score for 79% of all employees fell into the above average category 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 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 2009, no internal affairs investigations were conducted. Action/Event Reviews for 2009 are listed below:

Complaint Description	Total	Unfounded	Sustained	Findings of Sustained Complaints			
				Training Issue	Employee Performance	Equip	Other
Dispatched Incorrect Unit	7	2	5		5		
Dispatched Incorrect Agency	3		3		3		
Delayed Dispatch	8	2	6		6		
Incorrect / Not Enough Info	3	2	1	1			
Improper Notification	3		3		3		
Rudeness / Unprofessional	4	3	1		1		
TOTALS	28	9	19	1	18	0	0

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. Fire Communications processed a total of three citizen complaints for the year 2009, none of which were sustained.

Complaint Description	Total Number	Findings
Improper release of confidential information	1	Unfounded
Rudeness / Unprofessional	2	Unfounded