

# Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

**Kim L. Tolliver**  
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 25, 2020

It is with great pride that I submit the Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division annual report. The men and women of this division are to be commended for their commitment to providing the highest level of service to the citizens of Shreveport. The 2019 Annual Report provides an overall review of the performance and accomplishments of the Communications Division throughout the year.

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

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

To our Fire Communications Officers and Shift Supervisors, we thank you for your hard work, and best in league performance. Most importantly, we thank you for your dedication in keeping the center staffed even with numerous vacancies. Each of you continue to meet or exceed our expectations and each of you should know that we recognize and understand the exceedingly hard work that you do.

There are many challenges facing us in 2020. Staffing of the Center remains the highest concern. Last fiscal year the Center was authorized for four new Fire Communications Officer Positions to support the operational needs of the Communications Center and we have one new officer as a result of this.

Our information technology needs increase daily. Due to technology requirements and advancements, our operating systems must change as well as the hardware and software. Many of these changes are driven by either the City of Shreveport, Caddo 9-1-1 or the manufacturer but all of these changes require time and hard work from the Communications IT staff.

I am excited about 2020, and we remain committed to providing the best dispatch services possible to the departments and communities we serve. We strive to continue the improvement of our infrastructure, systems, and equipment while also being fiscally responsible. We continue to monitor industry standards and best practices with regard to staffing, technology, and policy-making. I know that our department will continue to do what we do best – take care of our citizens.

As our environment continues to change, our department and our service will continue to adapt to effectively meet the challenges and demands of our community. Our aim is to exceed your expectations. We will strive to build on our accomplishments and exemplify the honor, pride, and long standing history of providing quality and caring service.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim L. Tolliver, B.S. RPL  
Chief of Communications



## Shreveport Fire Department Mission Statement

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

## Communications Division Mission Statement

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



## Shreveport Fire Communications Division

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



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 249,000 calls to 9-1-1 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-one (41) staff members, thirty-five of which are Fire Communications Officers who operate four shifts, supporting eight (8) emergency call-taking and dispatch console positions. Fire Communications Officers are certified in APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator 1 (PST1), APCO Fire Service Communications, and APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch. In addition, many of our members are certified as Fire Fighter 1, a large number of our members are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), and one Fire Communications Officer is certified at the level of EMT- Paramedic. Currently, four of our communications officers have completed the prestigious Registered Public Safety Leader certificate program through APCO and appear on the national registry of RPL.

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

The Shreveport Fire Department Emergency Communications Center serves the citizens and visitors of Caddo Parish. Caddo Parish has a population of over 252,161 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 24,000 square foot facility which houses the Communications Divisions of the Shreveport Fire Department, Shreveport Police Department and the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office. Caddo 9-1-1 provides all of the various technical equipment and

## Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Command

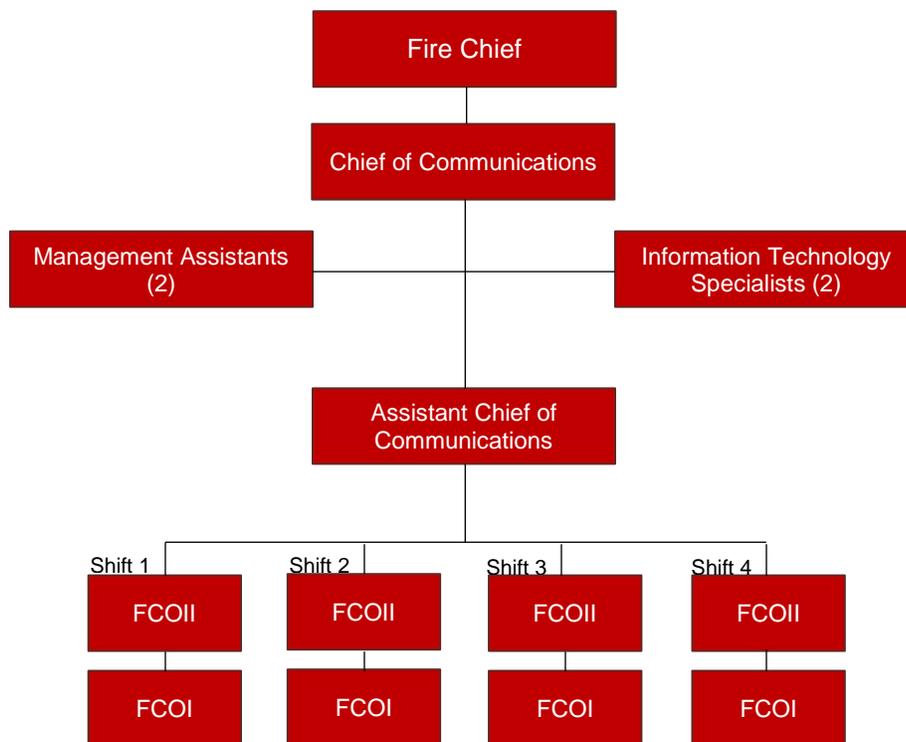


Edwin Scott Wolverton  
Fire Chief



Kim L. Tolliver  
Chief of Communications

## Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Organizational Chart



**Shreveport Fire Department  
Communications Division Operations Command**

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



**Fire Communications Officers II (Supervisors)**



Connie Alamond



Terry Carter



Sharon Clark



Monica Cooper



John Green



Dusty Moore



Veronica Rambo



Emily Ramsey

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

FCOI Lakesha Bennett

FCOI LeKeisha Berry

FCOI Vicki Carter

FCOI Connie Coleman

FCOI Alisalyn Davis

FCOI Heather Dye

FCOI Lavasia Edwards

FCOI John Elliott

FCOI Marlo Francis

FCOI April Gramm

FCOI Caleb Hathorn

FCOI Unique LaCoure

FCOI Luciana LeSane

FCOI Aqueelah McCray

FCOI LaTonya McKinney

FCOI Melissa McKinzy

FCOI Raymond Mathews

FCOI Jalina Meziere

FCOI Randell Owens

FCOI Tamyra Pierce

FCOI Jennifer Rowell

FCOI Derrick Schafer

FCOI Emily Simmons

FCOI Daniel Smith

FCOI Crystal Turner

FCOI Denise Wheeler

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 2019, this unit processed over 1,600 requests for service. On a day-to-day basis, the members of this unit manage the data issues as well as the hardware and software installations and maintenance within the Shreveport Fire Department.



Danny Alexander



Harrietta Parker

## **Shreveport Fire Department Communications Division Administration**

The Administration section of our division provides support to the forty-one members of the division and maintains the radio and telephone support for the Shreveport Fire Department. In addition to, managing the CALEA accreditation



Angela Magee



Jashawna Barfield

## 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



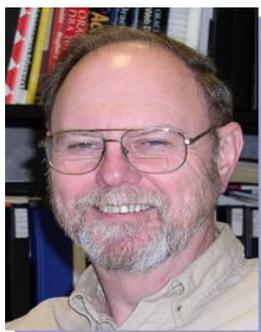
Judy



Richard



Beth



Arthur



Huck



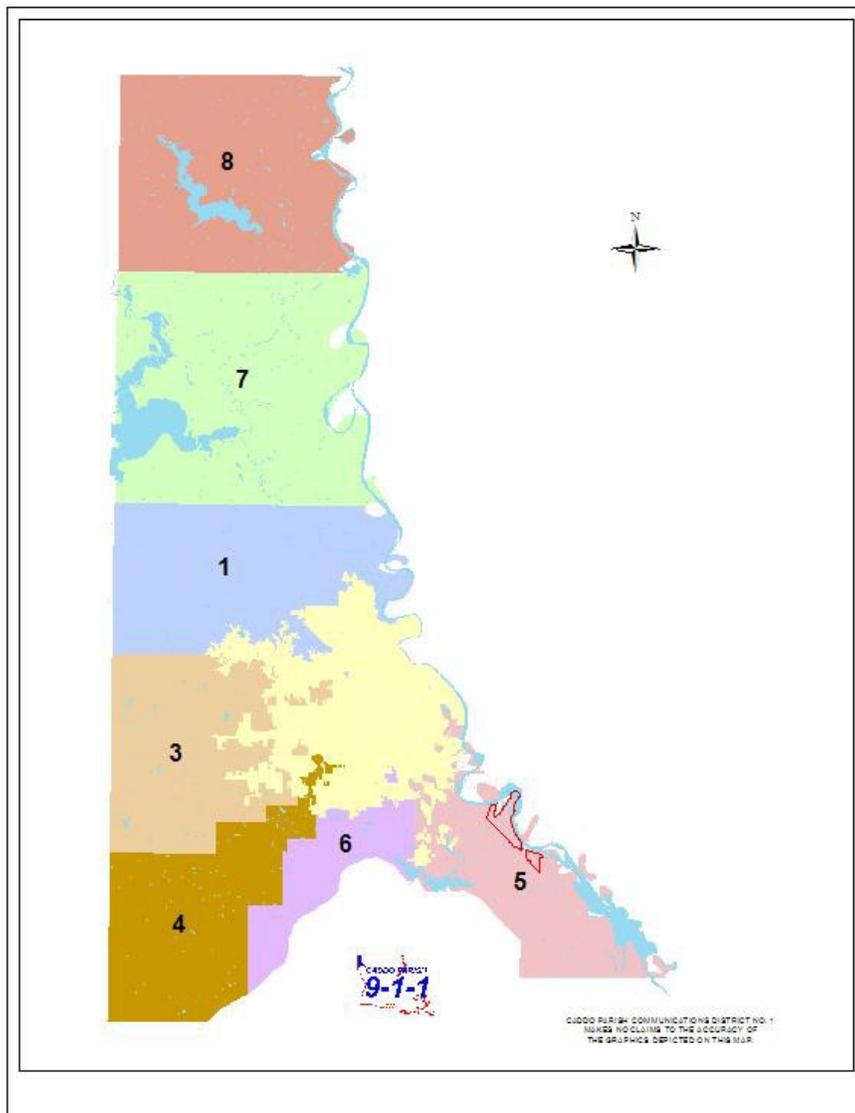
Wes



Mike

## Caddo Parish Fire Districts

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



## 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 2019 Committees were:

#### Training Task Force

This task force is necessary because 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 Leaders:** Connie Alamond (Chair) and Dusty Moore (Co-Chair)

**Members:** All Shifts

#### Quality Assurance

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

**QA Managers:** Terry Carter (Manager) and Veronica Rambo (Asst Manager)

**Members:** Heather Dye, Marlo Francis, April Gramm, Unique LaCoure and LaTonya McKinney

## Policy Review

This committee is responsible for ensuring all division policies are reviewed annually. The committee discusses recommendations for changes 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:** April Gramm (Chair) and Aqueelah McCray (Co-Chair)

**Members:** All FCOI's, Heather Dye, Ray Mathews, Melissa McKinzy, Emily Simmons and Brian Williams

## 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:** Dusty Moore

**Members:** John Elliott, John Green, Luciana LeSane and Jennifer Rowell

## Employee Recognition

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

**Committee Chair:** Dusty Moore (Chair) and Dawn Ramsey (Co-Chair)

**Members:** Connie Alamond, LeKeisha Berry, Sharon Clark, Connie Coleman, Monica Cooper, John Elliott, Aqueelah McCray, Daniel Smith, and Denise Wheeler

## 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:** Monica Cooper (Chair) and LeKeisha Berry (Co-Chair)

**Members:** Sharon Clark, John Elliott, John Green, Unique LaCoure, Ray Mathews, Aqueelah, McCray, Tamyra Pierce, Emily Simmons and Bruce Willis

### **CAD/Technology**

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

**Committee Chair:** John Green

**Members:** LeKeisha Berry, Heather Dye, Randell Owens, Tamyra Pierce and Brian Williams

### **Accreditation**

Members receive training on the CALEA process and how to obtain proofs. They are responsible for ensuring compliance of various CALEA standards. The members of this committee serve through the four year accreditation cycle.

**Committee Chair:** Dusty Moore

**Members:** Vicki Carter, Monica Cooper, Alisalyn Davis, and Marlo Francis

### **Work Groups / Division Representation**

**Strategic Planning:** John Green (Chair), Dusty Moore, Randell Owens, and Jennifer Rowell

**EMD Workgroup:** Connie Alamond (Chair), Randell Owens and Jennifer Rowell

**Peer Fitness Coordinator:** Aqueelah McCray

## **Personnel Awards/Special Recognition**

**Perfect Attendance (Individual):** Danny Alexander, LaTonya McKinney and Harrietta Parker

**Spirit of the City Award:** FCOII Dusty Moore (Leadership) and Harrietta Parker (Customer Service)

**Outside Committees/Work Groups:** Danny Alexander – Member USAR Louisiana Task Force 3

**Community Service Volunteers:** FCOII Monica Cooper, FCOII Sharon Clark, FCOI Unique LaCoure, FCOI Caleb Hathorn

**LifeSaver Awards:** Derrick Schafer, Latonya McKinney and April Gramm

## **Seminar / Conference Attendees/ Classes –**

**APCO Conference:** Assistant Chief Tina Chambers and Sharon O’Neal-Clark

**CALEA Conference:** Chief Kim L. Tolliver, Angela Magee and Jashawna Barfield

**New FCOI Basic Class:** Lakesha Bennett, Lavasia Edwards and Jalina Meziere

## **Accomplishments**

- Filled three funded vacancies
- Completed one FCOI Basic class and set to begin another one
- Smoke Detector Campaign in the Queensborough and Cedar Grove Areas
- With the funds from Caddo 9-1-1 District, we were able to send two employees to the APCO International Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD.
- Received our 5<sup>th</sup> Re-Accreditation certificate in May 2019, our 6<sup>th</sup> award overall.
- Completed our first annual web-based standards review by CALEA®, which is required under the new four-year assessment model used by the Commission.

**Willis T. Carter Fire Communications  
Officer of the Year**



**LeKeisha Berry  
Fire Communications Officer I**

Fire Communications Officer I LeKeisha Berry was awarded the Willis T. Carter Fire Communications Officer of the Year for 2019. FCOI Berry was selected for her strong work ethic, positive attitude and commitment to her job. FCOI Berry was the co-chair on the Recruiting and Hiring Committee; she also served on the Employee Recognition Committee, the Training Taskforce Committee and the CAD Technology Committee. She is respected by her colleagues and an asset to the division. Congratulations LeKeisha on a job well done!

## **Statistical Information-Human Resources**

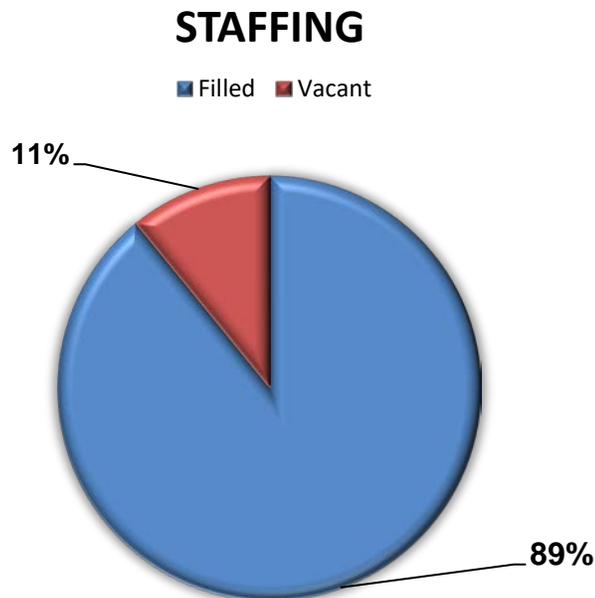
### **Staffing/Vacancies**

**New Employees:** Five new recruits were hired in June 2019; Lakesha Bennett, Erin Davenport, Rebekah Davidson, Lavasia Edwards, and Jalina Meziere.

**Separations:** Two new recruits resigned their position in 2019.

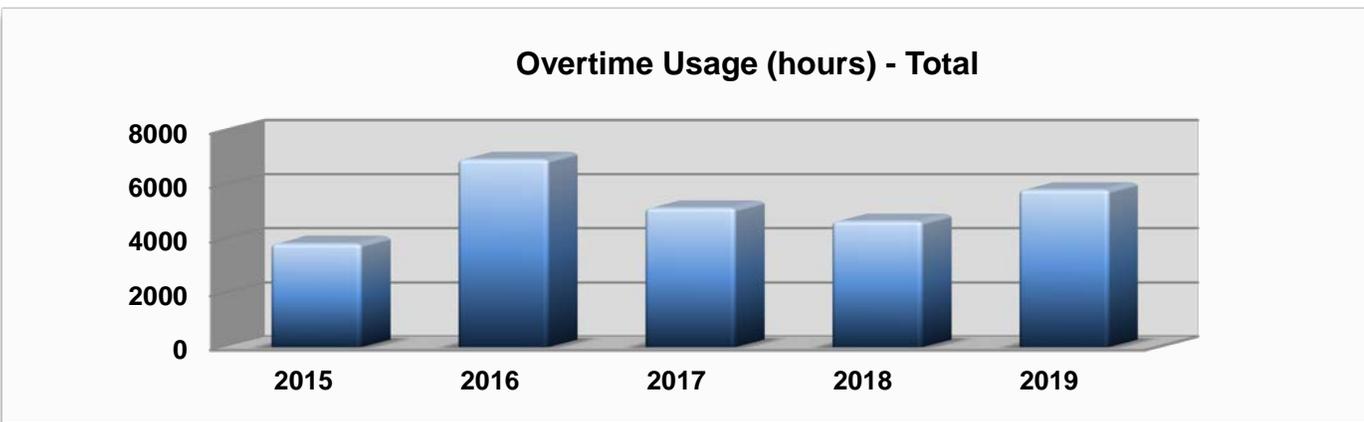
**Vacancies:** The division ended the year with five vacant Fire Communications Officer I positions.

**Filled Positions vs. Vacant Positions**



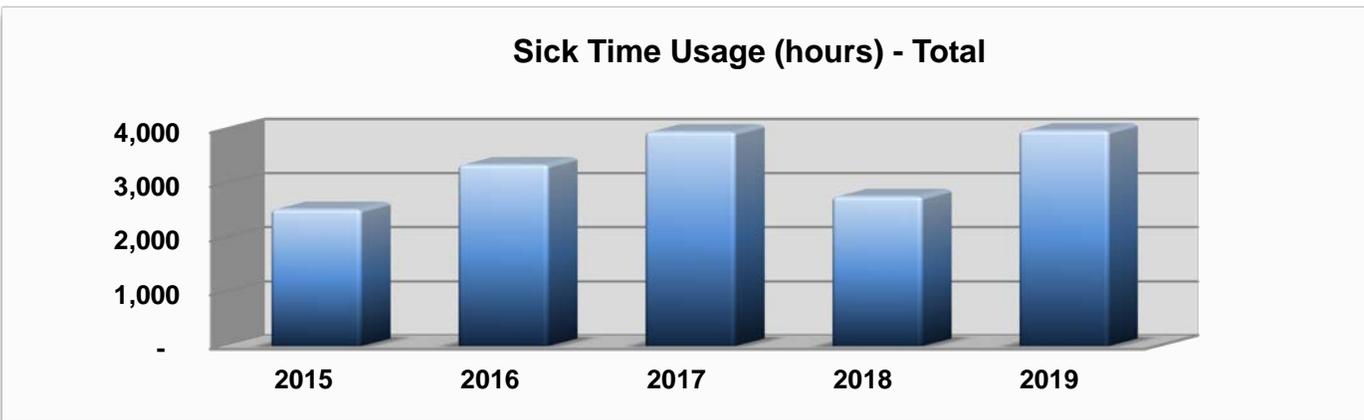
**Staffing/Overtime**

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 **5,848.97** hours of which **5,103.59** 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.



**Staffing/Sick Leave**

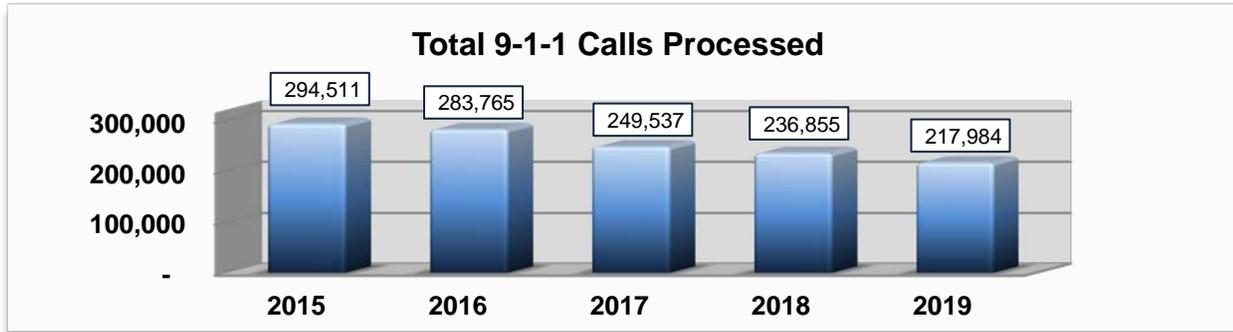
The division had a total of **4,698.81** hours of sick leave usage and three (3) members achieved perfect attendance during 2019. There were no requests for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act.



## **Statistical Information-Workload Indicators**

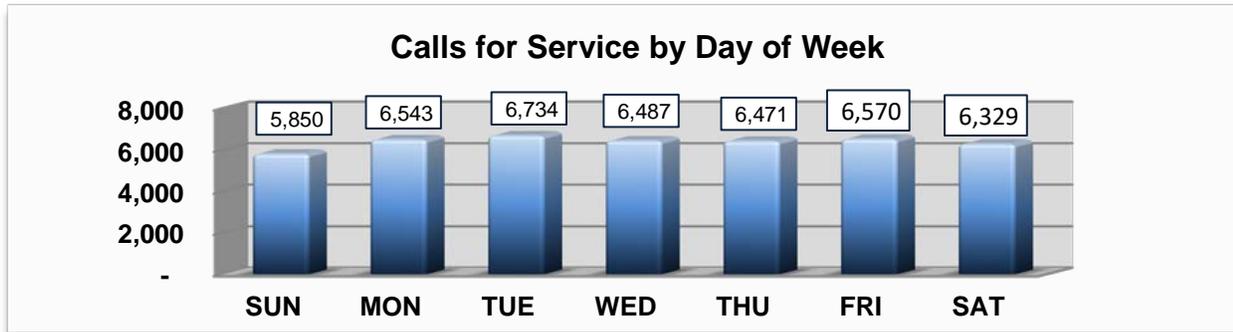
### **9-1-1 Call Volume**

Fire Communications Officers answered **217,984** 9-1-1 calls during 2019.



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

Our largest call volume occurred on Tuesday and Friday with Sundays having the lowest call volume.

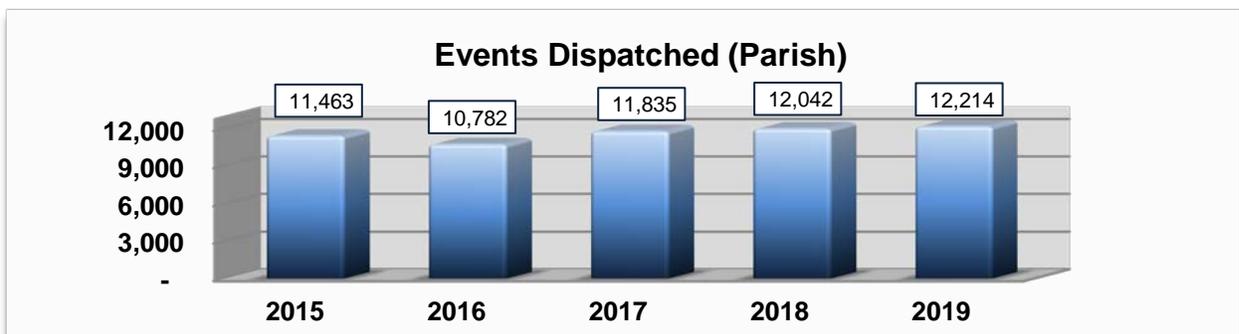
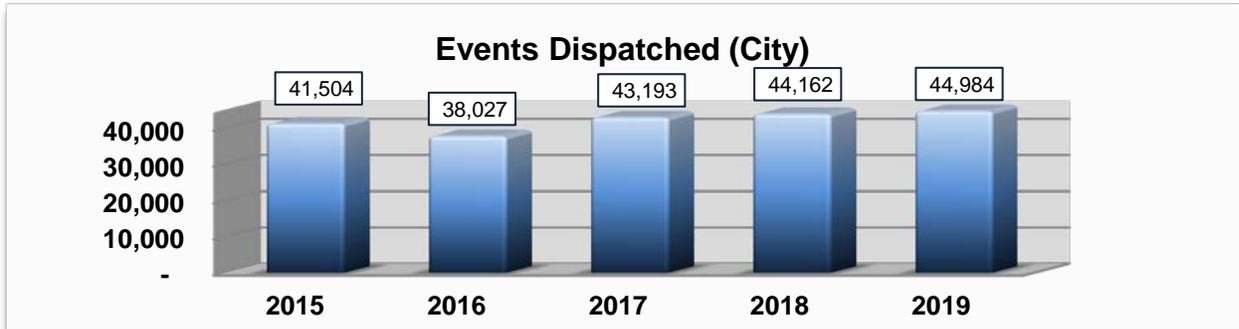


As you can see from the graph below, our call volume decreases in the early morning hours but begins to increase by mid-morning through the early evening hours.

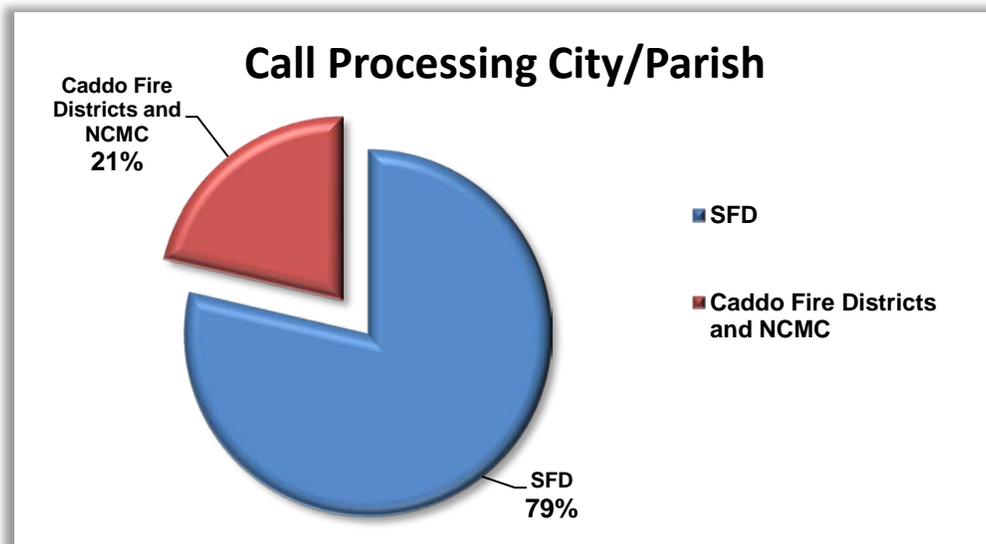


### Events Dispatched

Communications officers dispatched **44,984** events for the Shreveport Fire Department, of which **81%** were EMS. **12,214** events were dispatched for the Caddo Fire Districts and North Caddo Medical Center. Communications Officers also created **8,542** events for Shreveport Police and **1,181** for Caddo Sheriff's Office.



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

For years, the Communications Division has used the standards set in NFPA 1221 to measure our performance. These standards underwent another major revision in 2019 and we are working on meeting each of these revised standards. The 2019 overall average call processing time from call receipt until dispatch was **44.39** seconds. Our performance is reviewed and analyzed monthly to ensure compliance. The following is a list of the standards and our overall average for the year.

| NFPA Standard   | Actual Percentages                          |
|---|---|
| <p>A. <b>Ninety percent</b> of events received on emergency lines shall be answered within <b>15 seconds</b>.</p>   | <p><b>99.91% answered in 15 seconds</b></p> |
| <p>B. <b>Ninety-five percent</b> of alarms shall be answered within <b>20 seconds</b>.</p>  | <p><b>100% processed in 20 seconds</b></p>  |
| <p>C. Emergency alarm processing for the highest prioritization level emergency events listed below shall be completed within <b>60 seconds, ninety percent</b> of the time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Trauma (penetrating chest injury, GSW, etc.)</li> <li>(2) Neurologic emergencies (stroke, seizure)</li> <li>(3) Cardiac-related events</li> <li>(4) Unconscious/unresponsive patients</li> <li>(5) Allergic Reactions</li> <li>(6) Patient not breathing</li> <li>(7) Choking</li> <li>(8) Fire involving or potentially extending to a structure(s)</li> <li>(9) Explosion</li> <li>(10) Other calls as determined by AHJ</li> </ul> | <p><b>84% Processed in 60 seconds</b></p>   |

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## **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.

**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 not any grievances filed in 2019.

**Training:** The Fire Communications Division puts significant emphasis on training activity. New hires are required to successfully complete the Dispatch Academy receiving over **484** 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 in addition to monthly professional development training.

Communications Officers also receive annual training on disaster operations. In 2019, communications officers received over **6016.9** 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 were reviewed each quarter and evaluated by members of the Quality Assurance Team. Calls that did not achieve 100% compliance were sent to the call taker for further review. For the year 2019, the Average QA Score and the Overall Average QA Score for the division were above average.

### **Action Event Reviews (AER) / Other Agency Complaints**

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

All requests for reviews are analyzed for potential trends, policy revisions or any corrective actions that may be necessary. Sustained complaints that are determined to be caused by employee performance are handled with the appropriate level of disciplinary action. Any performance that requires further investigation is referred to the Fire Chief who makes the determination if an internal affairs review is necessary. In 2019, four (4) Action/Event Reviews were conducted; they are categorized below:

|                                  |          |           |           | Findings of Sustained Complaints |                      |       |       |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| Complaint Description            | Total    | Unfounded | Sustained | Training Issue                   | Employee Performance | Equip | Other |
| Dispatched Incorrect Unit/Agency | 2        | 2         |           |                                  |                      |       |       |
| Response Mode Criteria           | 2        | 2         |           |                                  |                      |       |       |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                     | <b>4</b> | <b>4</b>  |           |                                  |                      |       |       |

**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. Two (2) citizen complaints were received in 2019. The results of these complaints are listed below:

|                       |          |           |           | Findings of Sustained Complaints |                      |       |       |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| Complaint Description | Total    | Unfounded | Sustained | Training Issue                   | Employee Performance | Equip | Other |
| Delayed Dispatch      | 1        |           | 1         |                                  | 1                    |       |       |
| Failure to Dispatch   | 1        | 1         |           |                                  |                      |       |       |
|                       | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b>  | <b>1</b>  |                                  | <b>1</b>             |       |       |

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

Kim L. Tolliver, B.S., RPL  
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