



Santa Barbara County Dispatch Study

Findings and Alternatives

July 12, 2017



DELTAWRX
management consultants

Agenda



- Background and goals
- Findings
- Alternatives
 - Optimize current operation
 - Create EMS/Fire dispatch center
- Estimated costs of alternatives
- Discussion



Santa Barbara County Dispatch Study

BACKGROUND AND GOALS

Project Background



- ❑ History of studies conducted
 - 2004 – 911 Dispatch Project Charter was initiated to “explore, cost out, and make recommendations on ways to best meet community needs for emergency dispatch services”
 - 2005 – Management Partners conducts an organizational review of the county fire department which includes analysis on fire dispatch
 - 2012 – City Gate report commissioned to review dispatch services
 - 2014 – RCC report commissioned, drafted and eventually not accepted
 - 2016 – Dispatch Center Audit report conducted by County
 - 2016 – DELTAWRX study commissioned
- ❑ Each study outlines recommendations to improve dispatch operations and equalize partner responsibilities and contributions
- ❑ While changes have been made over the years, Fire/EMS have not been satisfied with improvements to the dispatch center

Stakeholder Goals



- ❑ **Establish service level agreements, clear policies and practices and appropriate expectations**
- ❑ **Improve call management with focus on operational efficiency and improved service delivery to the general public**
- ❑ Improve CAD functionality and comprehensive data metrics
- ❑ Identify clear long term implementation goals for routine CAD upgrades deemed necessary by all three stakeholders.
- ❑ Develop back up facility options for disasters, system outages and special operations
- ❑ **Provide consistent, accurate and uninterrupted EMD for all medical calls**
- ❑ Implement AMR's system status management plan consistently
- ❑ **Create a true governance group with shared authority among the agencies**
- ❑ Create a transparent, reasonable and appropriate cost allocation methodology for shared dispatch services
- ❑ Increase dispatching capabilities and focus on medical fire rescue issues
- ❑ Implement consistent supervision for dispatchers
- ❑ **Dedicate a dispatcher with specific medical fire rescue knowledge, skills & abilities (KSA) for large incidents/fires**
- ❑ Develop common dispatch/operating frequencies for all medical fire rescue dispatches
- ❑ **Dispatch closest resource to medical and fire emergencies via AVL and direct resources across jurisdictional boundaries**
- ❑ Ensure all Fire/EMS dispatchers are Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) trained and familiar with State/Federal incident ordering practices



Santa Barbara County Dispatch Study

FINDINGS

Findings



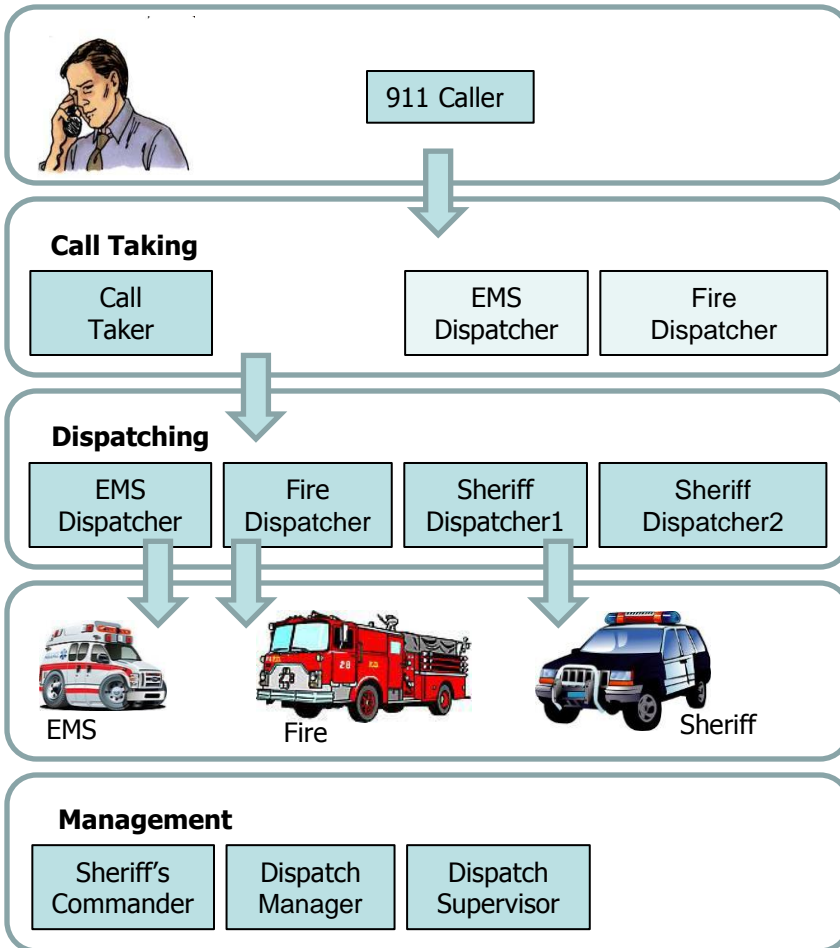
- ❑ Dispatch center staff members are dedicated and hard working
- ❑ EMS and Fire do not share executive oversight of the dispatch center with Sheriff
- ❑ There is limited continuity in the executive management of the dispatch center
- ❑ The dispatch center is rarely at full staffing levels
- ❑ Supervisors are often relied upon as Dispatchers
- ❑ The CAD system is not being fully utilized and has limited expert support
- ❑ There is limited backup for the County's existing dispatch center



Santa Barbara County Dispatch Study

ALTERNATIVES

Current Environment



- ❑ 24 dispatchers (authorized)
 - Dispatcher 1 – call taking and law
 - Dispatcher 2 – all functions
 - Call taking function also provides medical instructions for critical calls
 - When call taker is not available, EMS and/or Fire answer 911 calls

- ❑ 6 Supervisors
 - 4 floor supervisors
 - Training supervisor
 - Project supervisor
 - Perform duties as call taker/dispatcher as needed

- ❑ GIS Technician

- ❑ Executive Management
 - Sheriff's Commander (part time)
 - Dispatch Manager

Alternative 1

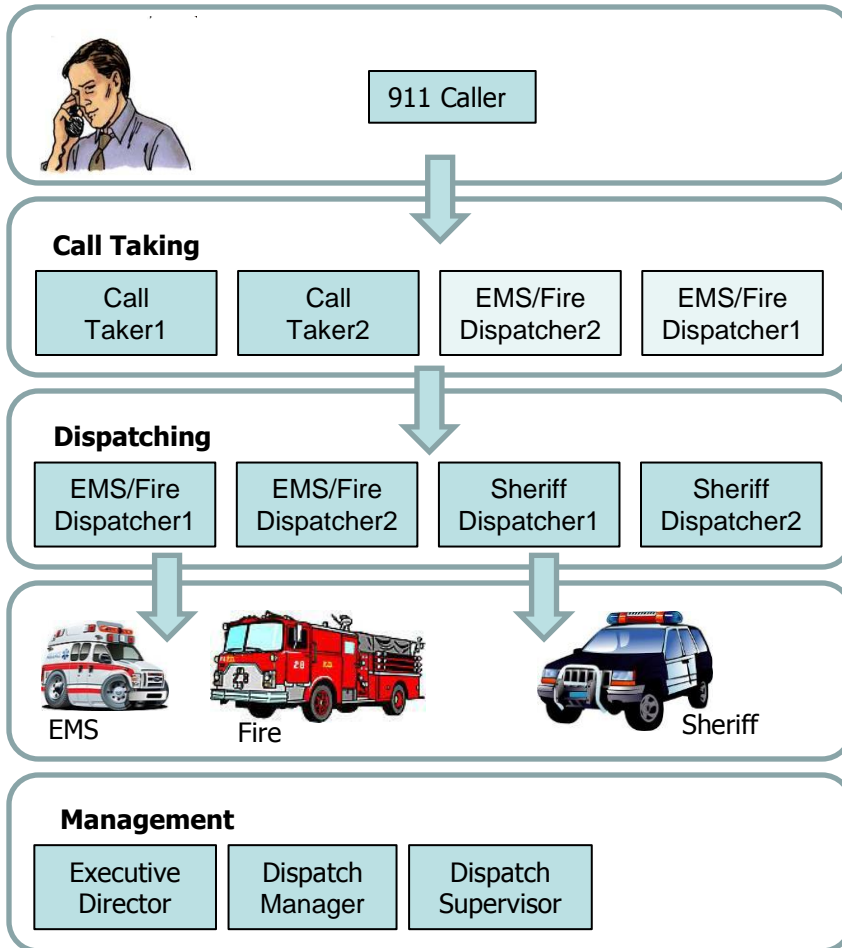
Optimize Current Operation



- ❑ Current primary public safety answering point (PSAP) is maintained
- ❑ All dispatch personnel will remain in a single location
- ❑ A civilian Executive Director will be hired to manage the PSAP
- ❑ The Executive Director will report to an oversight group made up of EMS, Fire and Sheriff's Office executives
- ❑ EMS and Fire dispatch functions will be combined to improve the dispatch process

Alternative 1

Optimize Current PSAP



- ❑ Executive Director will manage PSAP
- ❑ Call taker position created (5 FTEs)
- ❑ Certified call takers can then train as law or EMS/Fire dispatchers
- ❑ EMS & Fire will combine dispatching positions
 - Dispatcher 1 to dispatch both EMS and Fire units
 - Dispatcher 2 will handle move-ups, system status management and administrative traffic
 - Dispatcher 2 can also be used for major incidents

Alternative 1

Optimize Current PSAP



Advantages

- ❑ Proximity of EMS, Fire and Law dispatch personnel simplifies coordination
- ❑ Cross trained personnel provide staffing flexibility
- ❑ Additional call taker position will:
 - reduce overtime needs
 - allow dispatchers to be more responsive to field personnel
 - Decrease EMD interruptions
- ❑ 911 callers speak to a single person
- ❑ Combined PSAP provides efficiencies of scale
- ❑ Utilization of CAD system improved by technology investment

Disadvantages

- ❑ Dispatchers are required to know multiple dispatch disciplines
- ❑ California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) & SBSO Requirements will continue to restrict recruiting pool
- ❑ Single PSAP does not provide a backup dispatch facility
- ❑ Participation of other Fire Agencies may be more challenging
- ❑ Fire Expanded Dispatch would remain separate from the PSAP

Alternative 1

Optimize Current Operation



Recommendations

- ❑ Form a multi-disciplinary executive oversight group
- ❑ Replace Sheriff's Commander with Civilian Executive Director
- ❑ Develop a multi-year budget for the dispatch center
- ❑ Create a new position for E9-1-1 call taking
- ❑ Combine EMS and Fire dispatch functions
- ❑ Revise the approach for training dispatchers
- ❑ Provide additional technical resources for CAD system
- ❑ Explore the creation of a backup dispatch facility

Alternative 2

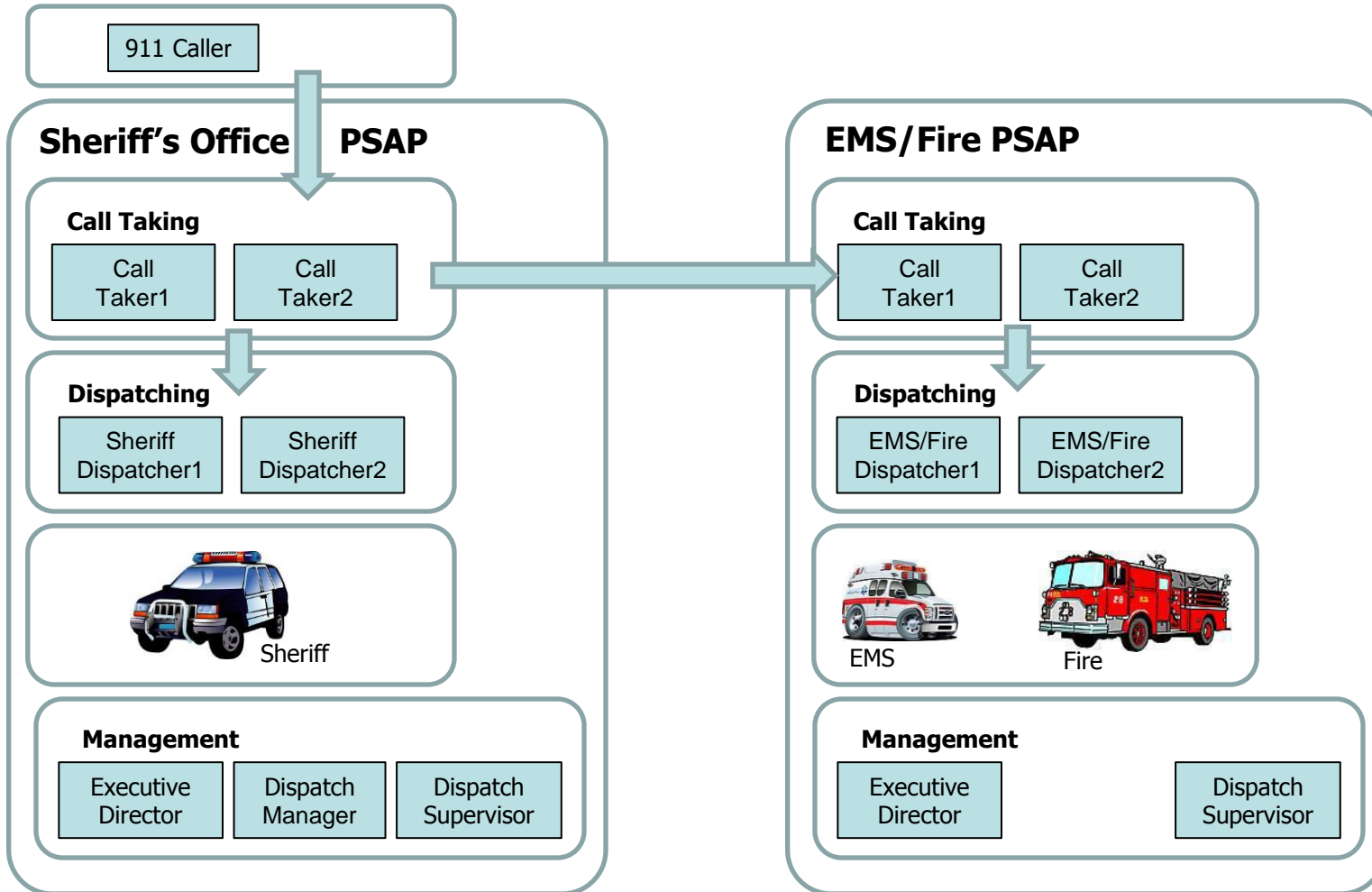
Create EMS/Fire Dispatch PSAP



- ❑ Relocate EMS/Fire dispatch function to a secondary public safety answering point (PSAP) that would exclusively serve EMS and Fire
- ❑ Sheriff's Office would be the primary PSAP and would answer all county 911 calls
- ❑ EMS/Fire calls would be transferred to secondary EMS/Fire PSAP as soon as incident type is determined
- ❑ EMS/Fire would hire their own dispatch personnel and manage secondary PSAP

Alternative 2

Create EMS/Fire Dispatch PSAP



Alternative 2

Create EMS/Fire Dispatch PSAP



Advantages

- Allows each PSAP to focus on specific disciplines
- Dispatcher training and skill mastery requirements would be focused on each PSAP discipline
- EMS/Fire PSAP will be able to broaden their recruiting pool
- EMS/Fire PSAP will support regional fire dispatching allowing closest resource response
- PSAPs can provide backup to one-another
- Secondary PSAP will incorporate Expanded Fire Dispatch for large incidents
- Utilization of CAD system improved by technology investment
- EMD calls less likely to be interrupted

Disadvantages

- EMS/Fire calls will experience a slight delay as they are transferred to secondary PSAP
- 911 callers must talk to two different people
- Multi-discipline events may be more difficult to coordinate
- Smaller staffing pools will reduce staffing flexibility
- Duplication of positions within PSAPs (Executive Directors/Supervisors)
- Higher overall costs

Alternative 2

Create EMS/Fire Dispatch PSAP



Recommendations

- Form migration planning working group
- Coordinate with CAL OES to identify potential startup funding
- Identify Executive Director of secondary PSAP
- Identify technology requirements for secondary PSAP
- Develop timeline and budget for the project
- Identify location and construct/renovate secondary PSAP
- Recruit and train secondary PSAP staff
- Transition EMS/fire calls to secondary PSAP



Santa Barbara County Dispatch Analysis

ESTIMATED COSTS OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1 Costs

Optimize Current PSAP



- ❑ One time costs: \$140,000
 - CAD Software Enhancements (GIS upgrade & CAD-CAD interface)
- ❑ Additional annual recurring costs: \$1,139,000
 - Add 5 call takers
 - Add 1 dispatcher
 - Replace Sheriff's Commander with Civilian Executive Director
 - Provide additional CAD support

Alternative 2 Costs

Create EMS/Fire Dispatch PSAP



- ❑ One time costs: \$8,657,000
 - Secondary PSAP facility and equipment
- ❑ Sheriff's PSAP additional annual recurring costs: \$2,165,000
 - Add 2.5 call takers
 - Replace Sheriff's Commander with Executive Director
 - Provide additional CAD support
 - Loss of significant EMS/Fire contributions
- ❑ EMS/Fire PSAP additional annual recurring costs: \$673,000
 - Transfer existing EMS/Fire positions from Sheriff
 - Add 4 supervisors
 - Add 7 call takers
 - Add Executive Director position
 - Assumes 24 hour shifts for most (10 hour shifts for overlap personnel)

Discussion



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