



2008 Annual Report

Santa Cruz
Consolidated
Emergency
Communications
Center



February 26, 2009



MISSION STATEMENT

The Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center is dedicated to serving as the vital link between the public and public safety organizations through *responsiveness* and *technical excellence* while in *partnership* with its Users and employees.

SCCECC provides 9-1-1 and public safety dispatch services for:

County of Santa Cruz • City of Santa Cruz

City of Watsonville • City of Capitola

Law • Fire • Medical

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Scotty Douglass, Interim General Manager

Dennis Kidd, Support Services Manager

Lola Crain, Operations Coordinator

Kevin Fink, Operations Supervisor

Margaret Parker, Operations Supervisor

Amethyst Uchida, Systems Coordinator

Anita Miller, Administrative Supervisor

Sherry Paul, Senior Administrative Assistant

Anne Miller, Senior Administrative Assistant

Kristine Ebersole, Senior Administrative Dispatcher

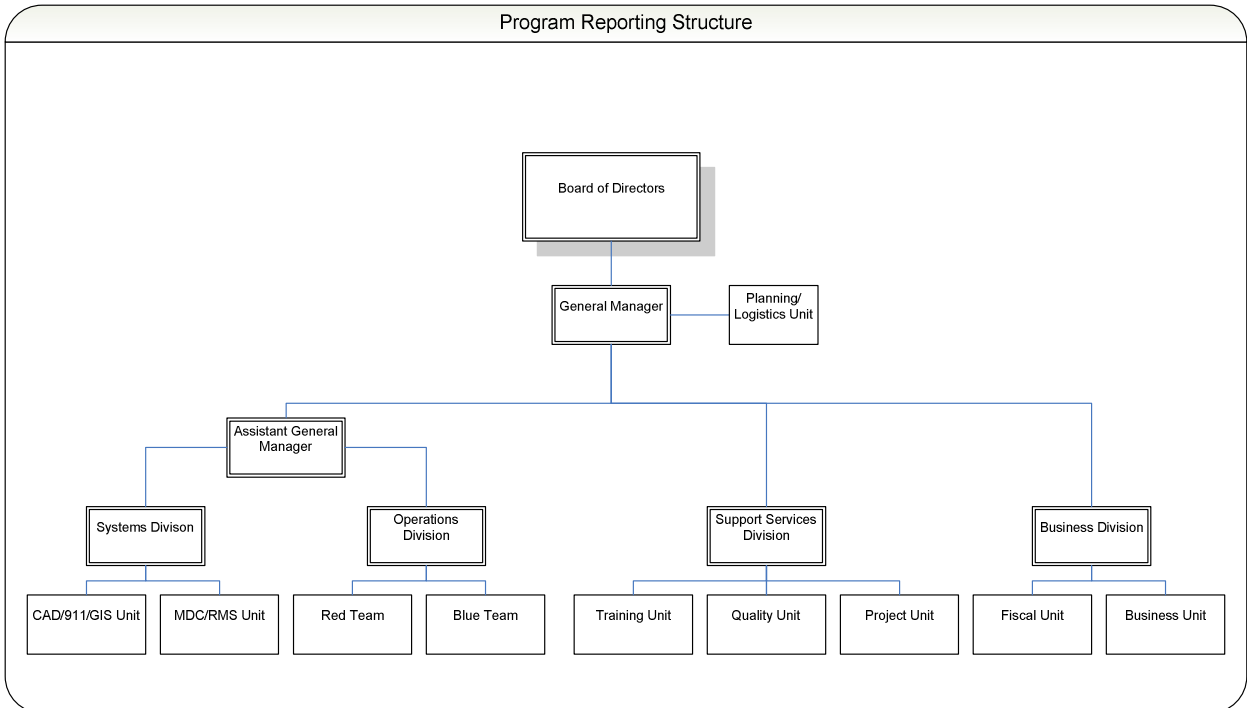
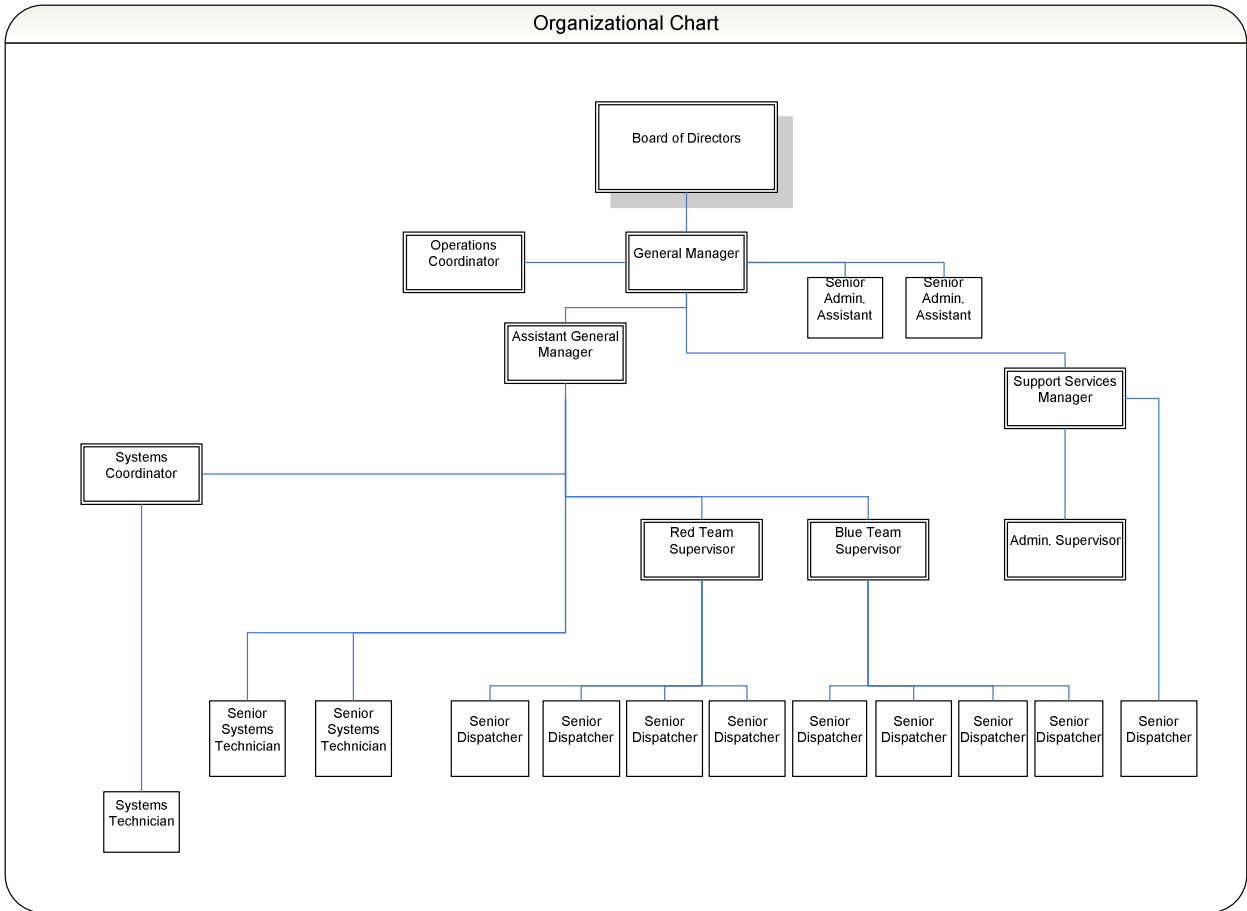


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SANTA CRUZ CONSOLIDATED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER





SCCECC Management Team

Scotty Douglass,
Interim General Manager



SCCECC Dispatch Staff

Senior Public Safety Dispatchers

Marsha Ayers - Dee Kenville - Michael Krakowiak -
Teresa Minogue - Benjamin Saunders -
Stephanie Zube

Public Safety Dispatchers

Jodi Boles - David Brenner - Hilary Brighton -
William Burnett - Kristine Cisco-Voorhees -
Karen Clark - Valerie Conner - Meghan Dixon -
Amanda Douglas - Michael Fairbanks -
Adrienne Heebner - Daniel Hendrix -
Abigail Hernandez - Ashley Hiles - Jo Irving -
Anna Kiff - Angela Lackey - Gina Loftin -
Melody MacDonald - Catherine McAllister -
Eric Mello - Charles Minuti - Michaelle Mowery -
Rosa Puga - Jim Rock - Sean Schorovsky -
Cheryl Selden - Melanie Sherwood - Lyndsay Sotelo -
Tammy Spath - Michele Stevison - Dave Sumner -
Wendy Van Winkle - Lisa Yee

Support Services Division

Dennis Kidd, Support Services Manager
Anita Miller, Administrative Supervisor
Kristine Ebersole, Administrative Senior Dispatcher

Systems Division

Amethyst Uchida, Communications Systems Coordinator
Wolff Bloss, Sr. Communications Systems Technician
Tom Ginsburg, Sr. Communications Systems Technician
Nicola Nelson, Systems Technician

Operations Division

Lola Crain, Operations Coordinator
Kevin Fink, Operations Supervisor
Margaret Parker, Operations Supervisor

Business Division

Anne Miller, Senior Administrative Assistant
Sherry Paul, Senior Administrative Assistant

Extra Help Staff

Steffen Andrews, Linda Friedlander, Felicia Venezio



Lisa Yee, Public Safety Dispatcher II and
Benjamin Saunders, Senior Public Safety Dispatcher



Summary of 2008 Goals

PREPARE the Authority to petition for Accreditation through the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch (NAED) as an emergency medical dispatch (EMD) "Center of Excellence" by:

- Updating and/or enhancing the individual certification of all Authority EMD personnel.
- Enhancing our Quality Improvement (QI) program to meet NAED requirements.
- Meet or exceed NAED standards by conducting quality reviews on 100 or more medical calls per month.

ACCOMPLISHED

Certifications have been kept up to date for all current EMDs. Those who need certification have been scheduled to attend a course that will provide them the instruction they need for NAED certification. Completion of this course in March 2009 will put us at 100% in compliance to the certification requirement. Over the past year, dispatchers have been provided continuous training through monthly protocol training, scenarios, and an EMD newsletter. Along with the training, dispatchers have received timely feedback from the QI Unit that has led to marked improvements in the individual dispatchers. We have improved our overall compliance to 95.42%. The NAED minimum overall compliance is 95%. The QI team attempted to review one call per dispatcher per week, with a goal of 100 reviews each month. Starting in August the EMD-Qs were able to do over 100 reviews per month. The Standards Team has assessed the completed reviews and has begun specialized instruction in the areas where improvement is needed most .



VALIDATE the efforts of the Supervisor Consistency Team through a re-survey of Operations Division employees with the expectation of improvement as follows:

- Increased employee satisfaction with the performance evaluations system and administration from 52% (April 2007) to 70%.
- Increased employee satisfaction with corrective action and/or individual performance improvement planning from 30% (April 2007) to 60%.
- Increased employee satisfaction in the consistent application and interpretation of operating policy and procedures from 47% (April 2007) to 70%.

ACCOMPLISHED

The Consistency of Supervision Team is comprised of one dispatcher from each team/work group and all three Operations Supervisors. This team was formed in 2007 to explore methods by which to improve the consistency of supervision across all work groups. The team continued to meet periodically throughout 2008 and has completed a follow-up survey of the dispatch staff to determine whether or not the strategies implemented in 2007/2008 resulted in significant improvements in the consistency of supervision.

Constitution of Continuity

We, the Operations Supervisors of Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center, in order to form team continuity and equality within the Operations Division, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution so that dispatch employees can expect . . .

1. To be treated with respect, tact, diplomacy and fairness at all times.
2. To have time off requests (submitted pursuant to policy and procedure) approved, if at all possible, in good faith.
3. Supervisors will use a common, easy-to-read and interpret "Seating Chart".
4. To sustain an on-going process to improve the interpretation of policy and procedure on both teams.
5. To have "Acting Lead" assignments made based on qualifications, training, experience and professional development needs.
6. To have their work performance evaluated regularly in an honest, candid, constructive and timely manner.
7. To have all complaints and concerns investigated objectively and fairly.
8. To have disciplinary and/or corrective action taken in response to poor performance, behaviors and/or conduct.
9. Supervisors will make every effort to fill shift vacancies to bring staffing levels to "minimum" based on operational needs (or the lack thereof), dispatcher issues, fiscal responsibility or any other legitimate factors or circumstances.
10. To be trusted to exercise good common sense and judgment within an appropriate range of discretion in every day operations.
11. Supervisors will view the request of a dispatcher to talk as a priority.



SANTA CRUZ CONSOLIDATED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

As a result of the strategies implemented and maintained over the course of the past 18 months and the confirming survey results, it has been determined that the three main areas of focus for the team have experienced improvement. Those focus areas were to increase employee satisfaction with 1) the performance evaluation system (increased by 7%), 2) corrective action and/or individual performance improvement planning (increased by 9%), and 3) the consistent application and interpretation of operating policy and procedures (increased by 40%). Although the team expected higher scores in the first two areas, they were particularly pleased to see the significant increase in satisfaction in the area of policy and procedure interpretation. The overall average in satisfaction improved from 61% to 76% according to the recent survey. Additionally, there was 94% participation in the final survey where the rate of return on the original survey was 63%.

Although the 2008 goal in this area has been accomplished, the team plans to continue ad-hoc meetings in 2009. This will allow them to monitor the consistent adherence to the *Constitution of Continuity* and give the dispatch and supervisory staff the ability to make adjustments as necessary going forward.



EXPAND the role of the Authority's Awareness and Community Education (ACE) Team by:

- *Partnering with the County's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to conduct community education and disaster preparedness presentations, participate in disaster exercises, and attend planning meetings.*

ACCOMPLISHED

The Authority focused on the public during its annual quality improvement process survey in 2007. A common theme throughout the comments was the desire for more information on disaster preparedness. We applied to the County of Santa Cruz Office of Emergency Services for a Super Urban Area Security Issue (SUASI) grant to purchase audiovisual equipment and supplies, and funding to staff publicly attended events with ACE Team members. As an annual goal for 2008, the Support Services Division took on the role of educating the public about disaster preparedness through the Awareness and Community Education (ACE) Team.

The ACE Team was able to produce free disaster preparedness kits using information found on the Internet, including emergency supply lists, family reunification cards, basic first aid and directions on how to make your home safe during earthquakes or weather related events. Over 3,000 9-1-1 coloring and activity books were created and distributed to school-aged and younger children and their families. A sample backpack full of emergency supplies for a family of four for three days was purchased to demonstrate what kinds of items an average family should have on hand in case disaster strikes.

The importance of preparing for disasters was brought to the forefront at the Watsonville Fly-In as event participants watched the hills of the Summit and Corralitos area burn in the background of the air show.

Our goal was to make contact with 2,500 people regarding disaster preparedness during the course of the year. By the end of 2008, that goal had been well surpassed having made over 10,000 contacts!



ACE Team member Melody MacDonald



Statement of 2009 Goals

Implement a Strategic Plan to Address Fiscal Challenges Facing the Authority in 2009 by utilizing the following strategies:

- Identify ways to improve operational efficiency
- Explore methods of saving energy and water to “Go Green”
- Determine methods of assisting member agencies by assuming more responsibility offsetting their operational costs
- Identify areas of SCCECC’s budget for targeted reductions in spending



The Customer Bill of Rights

NetCom dispatchers have determined their customers have the right to a knowledgeable dispatcher who will

1. Answer in a timely manner.
2. Treat them fairly, impartially, courteously and respectfully.
3. Hear and understand them.
4. Give them a turn to speak and listen actively when they do.
5. Show a degree of empathy.
6. Have tolerance for a lack of understanding.
7. Process their call quickly and effectively.
8. Provide an explanation of the processes (i.e. delays, non-response calls, confirmation of response or action that will be taken, referrals, etc.)
9. Provide an avenue for making complaints, if needed.
10. Terminate their calls courteously.

Develop Employees’ ability to work at a higher level by providing avenues for professional development through the following:

- Develop an internal training and certification process for a “higher level dispatcher”
- Work with Lead Dispatchers to implement solutions offered by the Consistency of Supervision Team
- Enhance customer service relationships with our internal and external customers

The Technical Operational Advisory Committee (TOAC), in collaboration with the Systems Division, will research, select, and replace the 9-1-1 phone system.

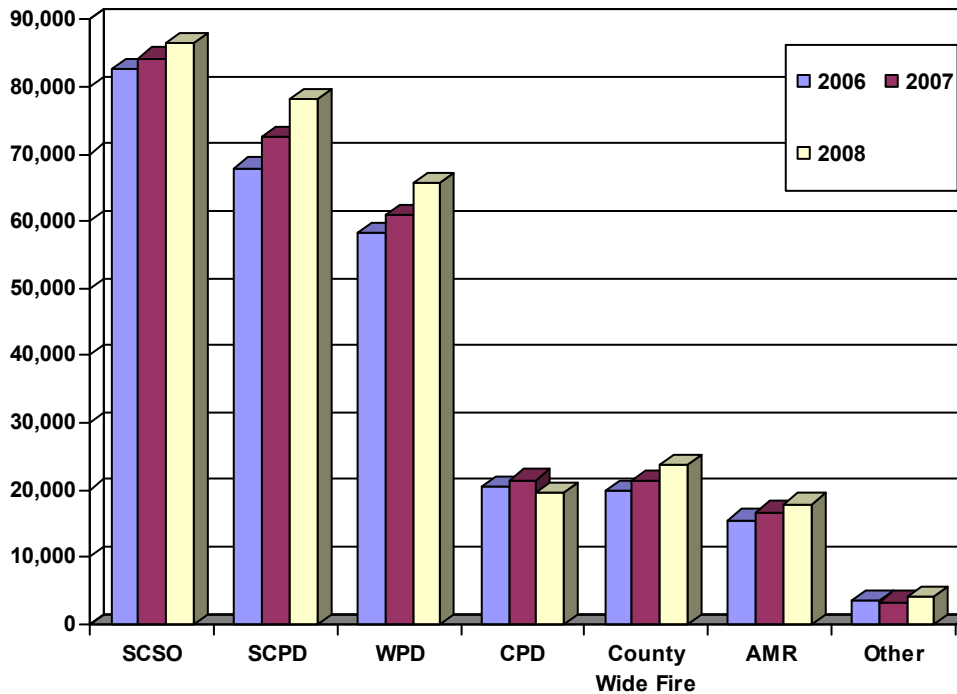




Workload and Call Statistics

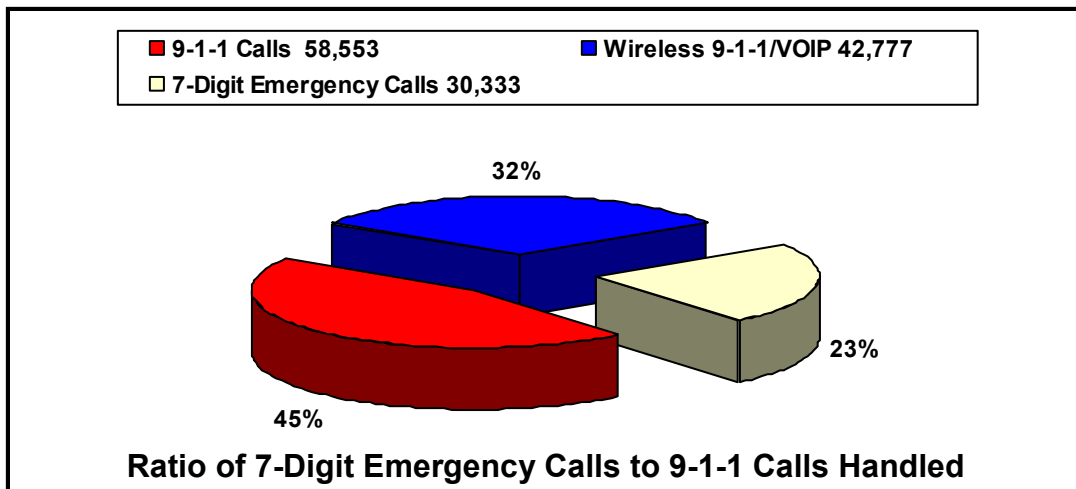
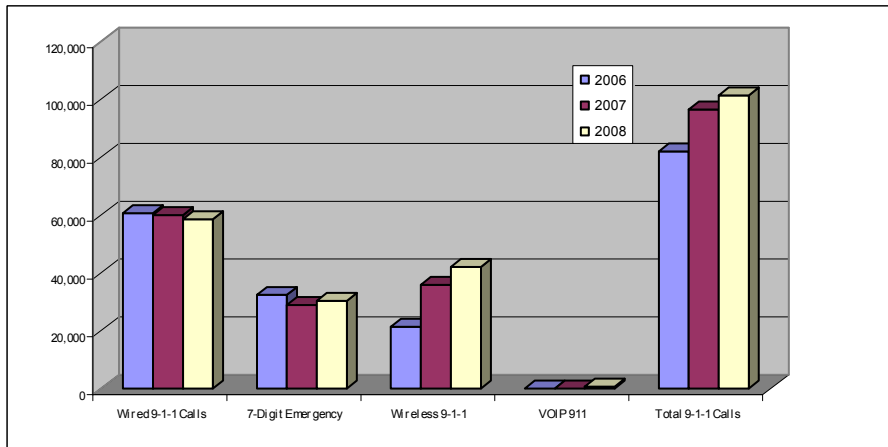
Calls for Service (CFS) Handled and Processed			
2007	2008	Agency	% Annual Change
84,249	86,560	Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office (SCSO)	2.7%
72,601	78,132	Santa Cruz Police Department (SCPD)	7.1%
60,966	65,568	Watsonville Police Department (WPD)	7.0%
21,507	19,641	Capitola Police Department (CPD)	-9.5%
21,306	23,642	County-Wide Fire	9.9%
16,741	17,975	AMR	6.9%
3,379	4,185	Other	19.3%
280,749	295,703	Total Calls For Service	5.1%

Calls for Service Agency Comparison



Total Phone Calls Handled and Processed				
Type of Call	2006	2007	2008	07-08% Change
Wired 9-1-1	60,533	60,196	58,553	-2.73%
Wireless 9-1-1	21,474	35,845	41,880	+16.84%
Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) 9-1-1	116	336	897	+166.96%
Total 9-1-1	82,123	96,377	101,330	+5.14%
7-Digit Emergency	32,560	28,757	30,333	+5.48%
7-Digit Non-Emergency (Law)	138,660	134,098	132,422	-1.25%
7-Digit Other	191,158	191,361	181,905	-4.94%
Total 7-Digit Calls	362,378	354,216	344,660	-2.70%
Total Phone Calls	444,501	450,593	445,990	-1.02%

Emergency Phone Call Origin Comparison





Operations Division

The Operations Division is responsible for providing emergency and routine public safety radio, telephone, 9-1-1 and computer aided dispatch services to our Users and the public. Personnel assigned to the Operations Division include the General Manager (.25 FTE), the Operations Coordinator (.75 FTE), two Operations Supervisors, six Senior Public Safety Dispatchers, and thirty-four Public Safety Dispatchers.

The Operations Division continues to be comprised of two teams, providing uninterrupted public safety services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Blue Team staffs the Center alternating Wednesdays through Saturday and the Red Team staffs the Center Sunday through alternating Wednesdays.



Operations Supervisors Kevin Fink, Margaret Parker, and Operations Coordinator Lola Crain

2008 Significant Events

Once again, it was a very busy year in Operations. In addition to dispatchers processing calls for service – including medical emergencies, traffic accidents, assaults, and burglaries – 2008 proved to be the busiest and most destructive year for wildland fires.

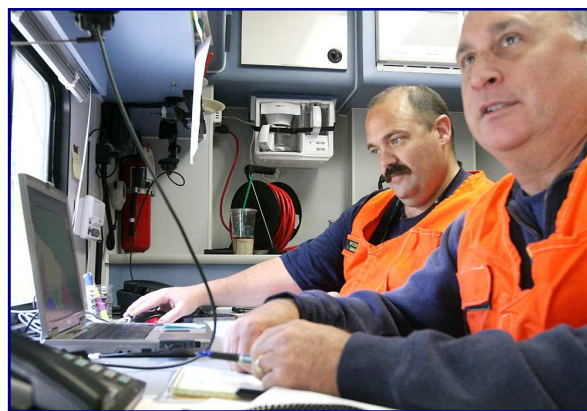
Within a 30-day period, Santa Cruz County experienced three major wildland fires, all lasting several days, including the Summit Fire on May 22, the Martin Fire on June 11, and the Trabing Fire on June 20.

At 5:57 in the morning on May 22, dispatchers began receiving 9-1-1 calls reporting a fast-moving wildland fire at Summit Road and Loma Prieta Way. The fire, later named the Summit Fire, quickly spread and threatened hundreds of acres and many homes as dispatchers processed more than 2,000 9-1-1 calls and dispatched hundreds of firefighters, peace officers and other mutual aid personnel during the following six days. Additionally, the Operations Division fielded two Incident Dispatch Team (IDT) dispatchers to staff the Sheriff’s Summit Fire Command Post during the week, later prompting an appreciative call from the Sheriff, commending the professionalism and training of the dispatchers. Dispatchers were also deployed to the County’s OES Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to assist with coordination of emergency services. Ultimately, the Summit Fire was the largest of the three fires and consumed 4,270 acres, 35 homes and 65 out buildings.



Marsha Ayers and David Brenner

Incident Dispatch Team In the Field



Dave Sumner and Chuck Minuti



Bonny Doon Fire Station flag damaged in Martin Fire

At 3:20 in the afternoon on June 11, dispatchers again began receiving 9-1-1 calls reporting a large wildland fire on Martin Road in Bonny Doon. That fire became known as the Martin Fire and dispatchers processed over 1,300 9-1-1 calls during the three days of the initial response. Again, the Operations Division fielded IDT dispatchers directly to the scene to assist with command post operations, and again dispatchers were staffed in the County EOC. In the end, the Martin Fire consumed 600 acres, 2 homes and 8 out buildings.

And finally, at 1:55 in the afternoon on June 20, dispatchers received several 9-1-1 calls of five separate very fast-moving fires in the eucalyptus trees near State Route 1 and Buena Vista Drive. Dispatchers quickly dispatched equipment and personnel and processed over 1,600 9-1-1 calls during the initial two days of the fire, later named the Trabling Fire. While several NetCom employees were evacuated from the fire area, several responded to work in the Operations Division to assist with the extreme workload. IDT dispatchers were once again deployed in the field, and the County EOC was staffed with dispatchers. The Trabling Fire ultimately consumed 630 acres, 14 homes and an unknown number of out buildings.

In total, these three fires consumed 5,500 acres and destroyed 51 homes. Although these fires proved to be some of the most destructive in county history, they also demonstrated that even under the most adverse circumstances, the personnel of the Operations Division were not only able to apply their teamwork, training and experience expertly and professionally, but were also able to cope with and overcome these conditions to deliver the very best in public safety dispatching to the public and our User agencies.

During these three fire storms our “reverse 9-1-1” software, CityWatch, was used to alert 13,000 phone numbers. This proved to be a very valuable resource in assisting the Sheriff’s Office with evacuation orders and updates.



Operations Supervisor Kevin Fink and Interim General Manager Scotty Douglass review maps of the fire area.



Dispatcher Citations of Merit

2008 was a very busy year in the Operations Division, and dispatchers received many commendations and citations for exemplary performance in the course of their difficult duties. Here are some examples.

Dispatchers **Douglas, Conner, Kiff, Vogl, Brighton, Hendrix, Mello, and Rock** and Senior Dispatchers **Minogue** and **Kenville** received a **Letter of Commendation** for outstanding teamwork during a particularly difficult homicide incident on **January 29**. Additionally, all of the dispatchers were praised by the on-duty Sheriff's lieutenant for their "team coordination and professionalism." Through the swift actions of dispatchers, both suspects were quickly located and apprehended.



Red Team from top left: Stephanie Zube, Dan Hendrix, Amanda Douglas, Adrienne Heebner, Dee Kenville, Abby Hernandez, Wendy Van Winkle, and in front Val Conner and Eric Mello.

Incident Dispatcher Team (IDT) Dispatchers **Sumner** and **Krakowiak** were both **praised** by the Sheriff for their "impressive level of training" at the Sheriff's Command Post during the Summit Fire in **May**.

Dispatcher **Cisco-Voorhees** received a **Letter of Commendation** for her "demonstration of compassion, empathy and concern" during her handling and processing of a very difficult suicide in progress on **June 30**. Cisco-Voorhees was able to use her training and experience to determine the victim's exact location, and though he received critical injuries, he did survive.

IDT Dispatcher **Krakowiak** was **praised** by the Sheriff and his command staff for his performance at the Sheriff's Command Post during the **Fourth of July** operations.

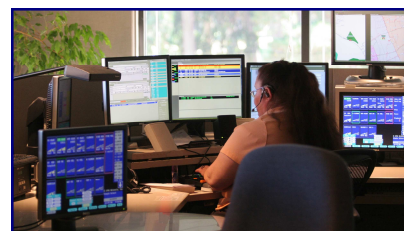
Dispatchers **Brenner** and **Sotelo**, and Senior Dispatcher **Saunders** received **recognition** from their supervisor for outstanding performance and teamwork during a tense situation involving an armed, and barricaded suicidal subject on **August 7**. After a lengthy negotiation period, with both Sotelo and Sheriff's negotiators, the victim was eventually taken into custody without incident.



Mike Krakowiak

Senior Dispatcher **Krakowiak** received **recognition** on **September 5** from the Sheriff's Office Narcotics Unit supervisor for "doing a little extra that made the Sheriff's Office shine" when dealing with a citizen complaining of continued drug activity in her neighborhood. The supervisor described Dispatcher Krakowiak's efforts as "awesome."

Dispatcher **Puga** received a **Letter of Commendation** from both her supervisor and Watsonville Police Department for her extra efforts and dedication that directly resulted in the apprehension of two burglary suspects on **October 24**. Additionally, her performance was cited in local media reports.



Rosa Puga



Dispatcher of the Year

“Dispatcher of the Year” is a highly esteemed and honorary title given to a single dispatcher for outstanding performance according to the characteristics identified in the Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center proclamation, “A Successful NetCom Employee . . .” The purpose of this program is to publicly show support to an employee for outstanding efforts and performance on behalf of the citizens and User Agencies served by SCCECC.

In April 2008, the management team received Dispatcher of the Year nominations from the dispatch staff. From those nominees, the management team unanimously selected Melody MacDonald as the recipient of the Dispatcher of the Year Award for Fiscal Year 2008/2009 in recognition of her professionalism and outstanding performance.



Melody MacDonald

Melody MacDonald began her career as a 9-1-1 Public Safety Dispatcher with Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center in October 1998, resigned in October 2002 to start a family, and then returned to her career in June 2006. Melody has successfully balanced her family and personal life throughout her six year career, allowing her to quickly learn all aspects of 9-1-1 call taking, EMD, and law enforcement dispatching. Additionally, she has been praised by her supervisors and coworkers for her professional demeanor, strong work ethic, upbeat attitude, sense of humor and friendly personality. Her integrity and consideration for others truly set an example for all to follow.

All of Melody’s skills and abilities came to fruition on October 24, 2007 when she quickly and expertly gave CPR instructions to a caller with a friend who had attempted suicide, ultimately assisting in saving the young woman’s life. Only a few weeks later, on November 5, 2007, Melody again used all of her skills in an attempt to save a six month old baby’s life after answering a 9-1-1 call from a hysterical parent who had discovered the baby not breathing.

In May 2008, Melody was honored by the local chapter of the American Red Cross as a Rescue Professional Hero. This award singles out acts of “heroism performed by an individual trained to respond as part of his or her professional employment.”



Melody MacDonald receives Dispatcher of the Year award from Interim General Manager Scotty Douglass.



Melody MacDonald is congratulated by Supervisor Kevin Fink and Interim General Manager Scotty Douglass.



A Successful NetCom Employee . . .

- 1. Treats Users, the public and peers with respect and care. Commits random acts of kindness by anticipating needs and lending a helping hand.**
- 2. Remains cheerful, up beat and positive. Realizes that a “mood” can be contagious.**
- 3. Demonstrates a positive attitude about his/her job and Organization. Continues to look for ways to improve.**
- 4. Uses humor to “lighten” the day, relieve stress and support his/her colleagues.**
- 5. Takes a stand that “this *is* a part of my job” rather than “that’s not my job”.**
- 6. Takes responsibility for his/her own performance and attitude.**
- 7. Is tolerant of others and open to different ideas, styles, approaches and opinions.**
- 8. Is willing to take on issues and work towards solving problems and supports others who are doing the same.**
- 9. Is willing to work through conflict by understanding and accepting change and demonstrating collaboration and concession.**
- 10. Accepts mistakes and feedback as part of the learning experience.**
- 11. Brings complaints, concerns, suggestions and ideas to the attention of his/her Supervisor in an appropriate, timely and constructive manner.**
- 12. Understands, embraces and looks to enhance his/her role in the success of the public safety mission.**



User Task Teams

The role of the Law and Fire/EMS task teams is to recommend and draft new policies and procedures and review existing operational policies and procedures to ensure they remain effective and up-to-date for the dispatching of law, fire and EMS units. The teams include representatives from user agencies and SCCECC supervisory and line-level employees.

Fire/EMS Task Team

The Fire/EMS Task Team includes representatives from paid and volunteer fire agencies, American Medical Response (AMR), and SCCECC supervisory and line-level employees. Task Team members in 2008 were: **B.C. Ron Whittle**, Scotts Valley Fire; **B.C. John Ritchey**, Central Fire; **B.C. Jeff Terpstra**, Aptos/La Selva Fire; **D.C. Matt Tracy**, Santa Cruz Fire; **Chief John Charcho**, Ben Lomond Fire; **Capt.. Rudy Lopez**, Watsonville Fire; **Operations Director Brenda Brenner**, AMR; and SCCECC's Support Services Manager **Dennis Kidd**, dispatchers **Terri Minogue**, **Mike Krakowiak**, **Kristine Ebersole**, and **Cheryl Selden**, and Senior Systems Technician **Ralph Wilcox**.

The Task Team accomplished much this past year.

- Successful implementation of the CityWatch software program to call back off-duty fire fighters. This process allows for a very efficient method to call back staff during large scale events.
- Finalized all procedures related to the successful implementation of Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) system for AMR. These procedures allow for reduction in radio traffic, quick location of closest ambulance to an incident, and a more efficient system status management program.
- Completion of a project to help reconcile run numbers between Fire agencies, AMR, and the Firehouse records management system. This allows for agencies to more efficiently track patient care reports.
- Established a Future Technology workgroup to assist fire and EMS agencies in developing technological solutions to existing and future issues.
- Continued development and refinement of operational policies to meet current needs.

Law Task Team

The Law Enforcement Operations Task Team is charged with addressing operational issues and needs concerning NetCom and our law User agencies. This includes reviewing policies and procedures and making recommendations to the Users group, and addressing other operational issues as they arise.

The team members include **Sgt. Darrell Harrison**, Capitola Police Department; **Lt. Colleen McMahon**, and **Sgt. Tom Bailey**, Santa Cruz Police Department; **Lt. Gretchen Hurley**, Sheriff's Office; **Lt. Ed Gluhan**, Watsonville Police Department; SCCECC Dispatchers **Megan Dixon**, **Hilary Brighton**, **Ashley Hiles**, **Kristine Ebersole** and Operations Supervisors **Kevin Fink** and **Margaret Parker**.

This past year team members reviewed several policies and procedures, making recommendations for updates and revisions. Some of the recommendations included the revised procedure for requests of medical aid by law enforcement personnel in the field that is more aligned with Fire/EMS System Status Management, a more comprehensive (single) policy addressing coroner's cases, and a new animal noise disturbance policy.

The team also addressed several other day-to-day operational issues including major events briefings and debriefings, and technological enhancements.



Support Services Division

The Support Services Division is organized into three units: Quality, Training, and Projects. Personnel assigned to the division include the General Manager (.25 FTE), the Support Services Manager, Administrative Supervisor, and Administrative Senior Dispatcher. Traditionally this division has been responsible for recruiting, hiring, and training; quality assurance/improvement; accreditation; and community outreach. For 2008, the Support Services Division maintained all of the traditional responsibilities as well as added responsibilities related to Human Resources, such as, Family and Medical Leave Act processes, CalPERS, Safety, and labor negotiations.

Quality Unit

The Quality Unit is responsible for quantifying the Authority's performance, facilitating performance data analysis to determine equipment, procedural, and training needs, designing and proctoring the annual customer service satisfaction survey, guiding, staffing, and measuring the Authority's participative Task Team processes, maintaining the Authority's accreditation efforts, and coordinating the development, approval, and distribution of the Authority's policies and procedures.

During 2008, the Quality Unit focused on three areas: compliance to performance standards, User satisfaction, and a focused effort to improve compliance to standards for Emergency Medical Dispatch. As always, the Quality Unit continued to maintain our CALEA accreditation.

Standards Team

The primary responsibility for carrying out the functions of the Quality Unit is assigned to the Standards Team and is comprised of managers and dispatchers representing a variety of operational functions such as day-to-day dispatching, emergency medical call-taking, training, and Communications Center room operations. The Standards Team members for 2008 were: **David Brenner, Kevin Fink, Dee Kenville, Dennis Kidd, Mike Krakowiak, Anita Miller, Margaret Parker, Tammy Spath and Stephanie Zube.**

One project the team took on was to benchmark NetCom's compliance to our time standard during medical calls. Our hypothesis was that there were some aspects of the software program ProQA that could not be configured to allow us to keep the same time standard as when we were utilizing the card set. By allowing an additional 40 seconds for C/D medicals and an additional 15 seconds for A/B calls, we were able to bring our compliance up to an average of 87%. Adding a few seconds of processing time to only the call taking portion did not affect our "building time" of less than 120 seconds to process and dispatch every medical call received.

The second big project completed was a revamping of the various Quality Improvement forms supervisors use to score calls for service created by our dispatchers. The team rearranged the law call taking criteria, and weighted the information the call taker received. The high priority/low frequency fire call taking form was also revamped to more closely match the call taking criteria in Policy 4701.80, *Creating and Dispatching First Priority Calls for Service.*

During 2008, the team implemented a customer service review process into our Quality Improvement program. The team approved basing the criteria on the same factors currently used by the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatching.



Support Services Manager Dennis Kidd, Operations Supervisor Anita Miller, and Administrative Senior Dispatcher Kristine Ebersole.



Emergency Medical Dispatch Quality Assurance (EMD QA) Committee

The EMD QA committee is comprised of line-level and management representatives from emergency medical service User agencies and SCCECC. Members are **Dr. Kent Benedict, EMS Medical Director; Celia Barry, County EMS Manager; Brenda Brenner and Brad Cramer, AMR; Scott Vahradian, EMSIA; and Kristine Ebersole, SCCECC.**

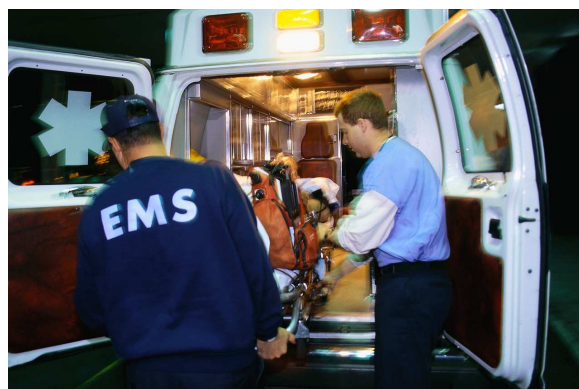
The committee provides oversight and local medical control to the Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) program, reviews high risk and unusual medical calls, and provides EMD program clarification to the dispatchers. The Committee met quarterly in 2008.

The EMD QA Committee met to review all calls that were given a Code 2 determinant through the EMD process and then transported Code 3 to the hospital. As the committee looked at these calls, a trend with law enforcement field units under-prioritizing the medical requests became apparent. In response, the committee requested a policy change to require on-duty law enforcement to provide patient information along with a response code when requesting an EMS response. This will act as a check and balance for the field units.

Another significant policy change that the committee embarked upon was the ongoing issue of medical professionals requesting transport from their own offices and medical clinics. Many of the physicians and staff in the urgent care facilities and in private practice have expressed frustration with the EMD process. (The questions are designed for non-medical personnel.) In an effort to serve this part of the community more efficiently, the committee explored using EMD Protocol 33: Transfer/Interfacility/Palliative Care. This protocol asks questions that are more appropriate to a medical doctor and allows for a streamlined call taking process. The policy revision was approved by the EMS User committee.

Compliance to Performance Standards

To paraphrase SCCECC's mission statement, we are dedicated to continually finding ways to work better, faster, and more efficiently to improve our service to our Users and our community. In partnership with our law, fire, and EMS agencies, time and content performance standards were developed for the highest priority calls for service created and broadcast by our dispatchers. Agency and individual dispatcher performance is measured in 13 different areas, with feedback to dispatchers monthly and published to our Users quarterly. Performance goals are typically stated as compliance percentages (i.e. 90% of a specific type of call was handled within the time threshold or contained appropriate content).

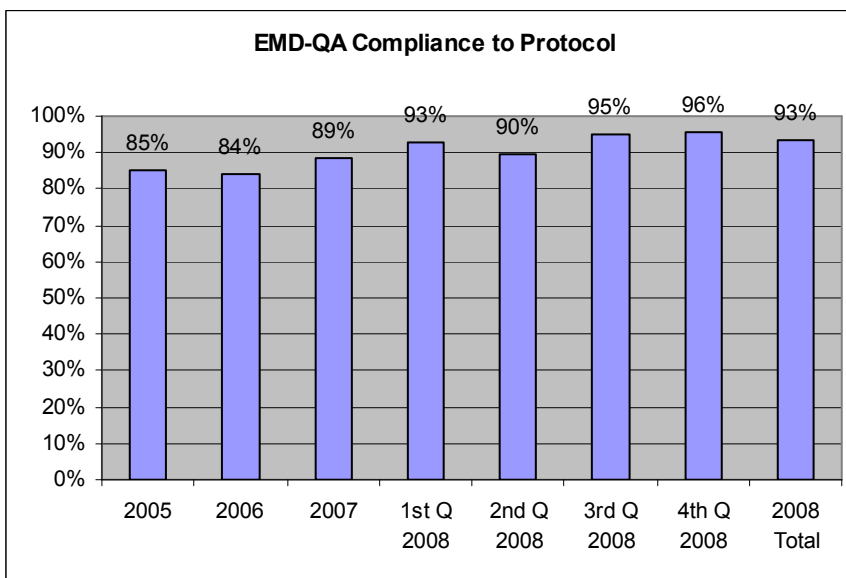




EMS

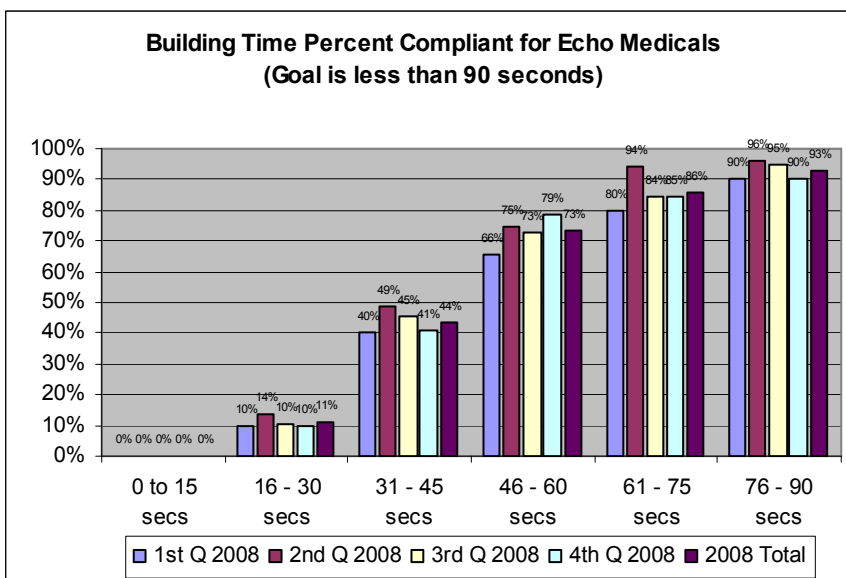
Emergency Medical Dispatch

Medical calls are processed using our computerized Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) system. The EMD program allows dispatchers to correctly determine the medically appropriate level of response, conserving resources needed to deal with other types of medical emergencies. EMD prioritizes medical calls into one of five levels, Alpha through Echo, with Echo being the most severe. EMD also provides dispatchers with the tools they need to administer pre-arrival medical instructions via the phone.



Echo Level Compliance

The highest priority medical emergency involves a person not breathing or having severe respiratory distress (Echo level). Our goal is to have these calls fully processed and dispatched to our Users within 90 seconds. This total time of 90 seconds is what we refer to as “building time” -- from phone answered to radio dispatched. Our average building time for 2008 was 54 seconds. All Echo level calls that exceed the 60-second call taking standard are reviewed by the operations supervisors.



It is significant to mention that field “notification” is done before the official dispatch time through pre-alerting. During 2008, we measured a random sample of Echo level calls and have determined that our pre-alerts reduced the total response time by an average of 28 seconds. Combined with our 54-second average, if a responder reacted to the pre-alert, the total processing time would be reduced to 26 seconds.

Charlie and Delta Level Compliance

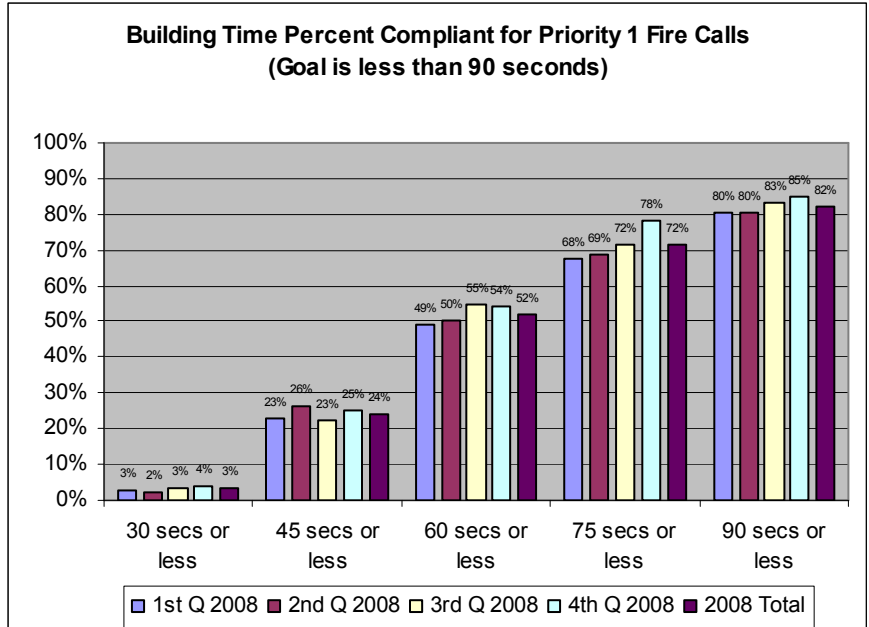
These levels of calls are urgent but less so than Echo level medicals. Our goal for these calls is a building time of 150 seconds. This year, we were 90% compliant to this standard.



Fire

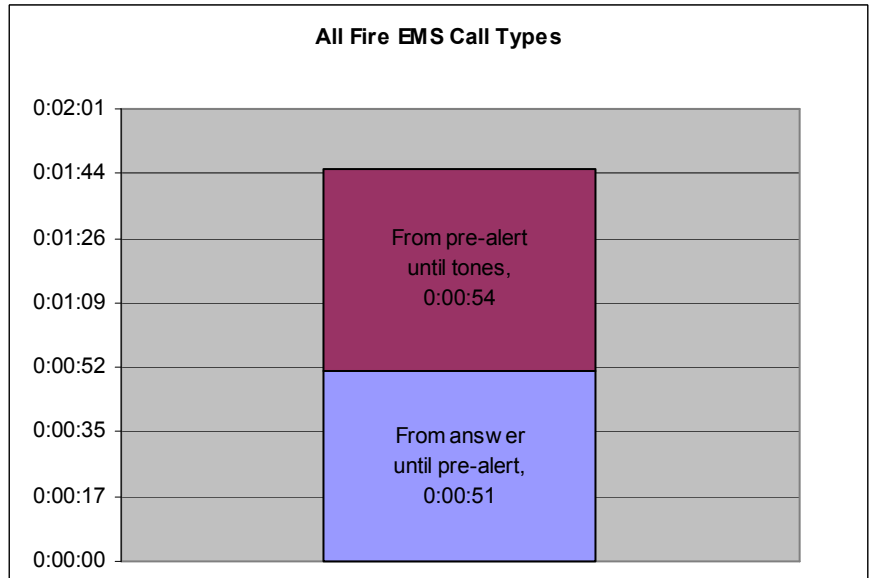
First Priority Fire Compliance

During 2008, our compliance to the 90-second building time was 93%. Along with measuring processing time, all High Risk/ Low Priority first priority fire calls are reviewed by an operations supervisor for content. This review determines if the call was created with the proper type code and contains the proper information. Our average content compliance was 91%. This high level of accuracy allows our responding Users to maximize their resources.



Pre-Alert Effectiveness

We continued to study the effectiveness of our practice of pre-alerting field units while we are in the process of creating an incident. By notifying field units of a call that is in progress, they have the opportunity to begin responding to the call while the dispatcher is still on the phone with the reporting party, saving valuable seconds responding to the incident. For 2008, we averaged a pre-alert 54 seconds prior to the formal dispatch of all Fire and EMS calls for service.

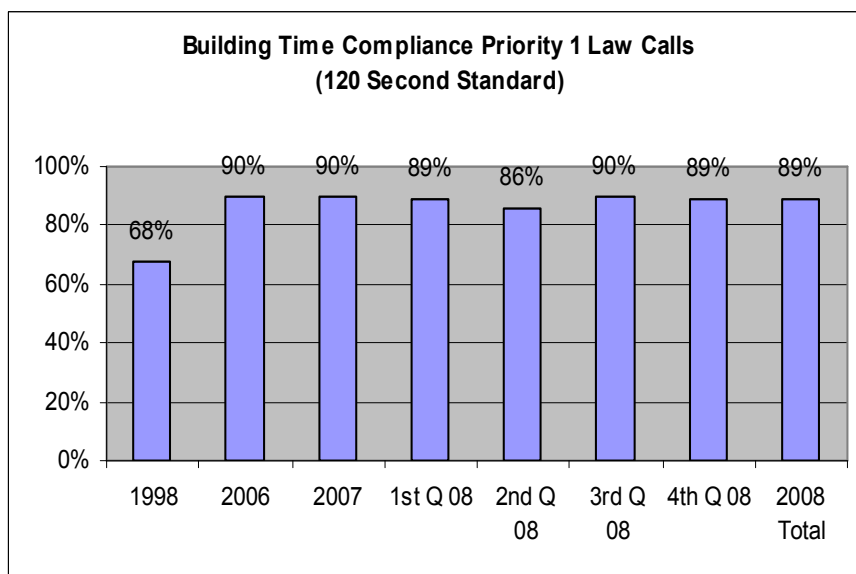




Law

Time Measurements

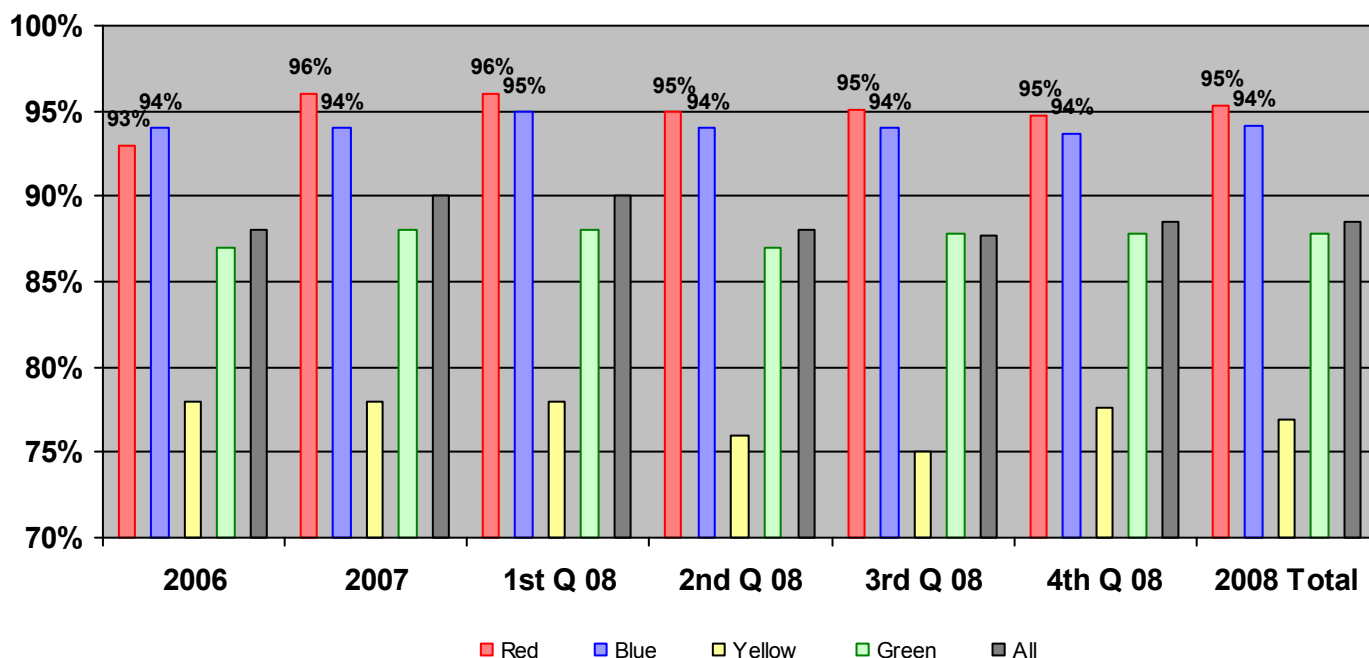
SCCECC measures the time it takes call takers to process priority one calls combined with the time it takes the radio dispatcher to assign a primary law enforcement unit. Our goal is to complete both of these tasks within 120 seconds. We attained an average compliance to the 120-second standard of 89% and averaged 80 seconds. This critical measurement is vitally important to our community – we process these high priority calls in a timely manner allowing responding law enforcement units to arrive quickly.



Management of Pending Calls

Once a call is created it is important that the dispatcher assign a law unit to the call as soon as possible. While on the surface this may seem an easy task, it is not. Dispatchers must be assertive in providing important information to officers in a timely manner. To measure this, we look at the time that calls remain undispached after they have been created. All law calls are given a priority – red, blue, yellow, or green – with red and blue calls being the most important, “in progress” types of incidents. During 2008 our compliance to our pending queue time out for red and blue calls was 95% and 94%, respectively.

**Pending Queue Time-Out Compliance
All Law Agencies**





Training Unit

The training unit is responsible for conducting initial training for the Authority's new dispatchers, providing continued professional training for experienced dispatchers, and participating in the Authority's community outreach activities. In addition to these responsibilities, the Training Unit maintains affiliations with Association of Public Safety Communications Officers (APCO), California Association of Policy Training Officers (CAPTO), South Bay Regional Public Safety Training Consortium, and the Santa Cruz County Training Manager's Association.

Entry Level Training

Training for newly hired dispatchers is conducted in two phases: classroom training in our Academy and on-the-job training in the Communications Training Officer (CTO) program.

The Dispatch Academy is taught in two segments. The first segment is a five-week course that teaches public safety dispatch, call taking, and radio back-up duties. The second segment is a two-week course that teaches public safety law radio dispatching. For the first time in the Authority's history, the 2008 new hire academy was designed to add 80 hours of live call taking in the classroom setting. The trainees answered the non-emergency business lines in the training lab under the supervision of academy instructors. This allowed the trainees to complete the non-emergency call taking segment of their training while still in the Academy, and they went into the CTO program already able to handle non-emergency calls.

The trainees then returned to traditional classroom training for two weeks to learn high priority call taking. This academy session was followed by another 40 hours of live call taking on emergency lines. Due to the success of all the trainees, they broke from tradition and went directly into the two-week (80 hour) Radio Dispatching Academy. This classroom section of the academy gives the trainee a foundation of policy and officer safety basics that will help them succeed in the CTO program.



New hire trainees clockwise from lower left: Michealle Mowery, Gina Loftin, Sean Schorovsky and Michele Steverson.

Academy Instructors

The Dispatch Academy is managed by Support Services Manager **Dennis Kidd**. It is facilitated by the five academy instructors: **Karen Clark, Kristine Ebersole, Mike Krakowiak, Melanie Sherwood, and Tammy Spath**. These instructors prepare lesson plans, instructional material, and conduct the classroom instruction. This year the instructors took a more active role in presenting at the Continued Education Classroom sessions held in January, July, and November. The Academy staff meets monthly to update and refine all academy materials.



Communications Training Officer (CTO) Program

The CTO program is designed to provide new dispatchers (and dispatchers learning a new skill) with on-the-job training, guided practice, and meaningful performance feedback. CTOs are selected from our dispatchers and must have 18 months of experience and his or her supervisor’s recommendation. Every CTO must complete the CTO course authored by the APCO Institute and is an APCO Certified Training Officer. Our CTO team this year consists of **Marsha Ayers, David Brenner, Kristine Ebersole, Abby Hernandez, Jo Irving, Chuck Minuti, Dave Sumner, and Stephanie Zube.**

CTO Program Performance					
		Entry Level	Lateral	EMD	Fire/EMS Pod
2008	Total Hours	2960	440	0	200
	Number of Trainees	7	2	0	5
	Completed Training	1	2	0	5
	In-Progress Training	5	0	---	0

A total of 14 trainees were assigned to the training program in 2008. Of these, seven were entry level, two were laterals and five were NetCom employees learning a new skill.

Continued Professional Training (CPT)

The Training Unit provides continued professional training for experienced dispatchers through on-site and off-site classes. Continuing Education (CE) is provided on-site and typically is required for all dispatchers. These classes focus on updating skills and knowledge, particularly in areas that may be affected by changes in laws, policies, or other mandates. Off-site classes are typically voluntary training opportunities, usually hosted by another agency or organization, and attendance is based on individual dispatcher needs and interests.

This year there was a concerted effort to maximize the efficiency of our continuing education program. As this training must be conducted in group settings while dispatchers are off-duty, it is very expensive. By designing the training to be “just in time”, we were able to lessen the number of overall hours required and provide more specific, responsive training to the needs of the day. Three on-site CE sessions were conducted during 2008. The Training Committee met approximately one month prior to decide on the topics to be presented.

January – (8 hrs) Animal Control issues, ergonomics, wireless 9-1-1, technical operational updates, school lockdown, radio authenticity, CalFire transfers, officer down protocols, and policy review.

July – (6 hrs) EMD update, User’s survey results, advanced ergonomics, stress management, policy review, and 2008 Santa Cruz wildfires debrief.

November – (6 hrs) Supervisor Consistency Survey, Incident Dispatch Team update, suicidal subjects and negotiations for dispatch, high priority law enforcement update, and policy review.



January training day



CPT Program Performance

	CE Training Hours	Off-Site Training Hours	Classroom Hours	Ride-Alongs	Total Hours	Avg. Hours per Employee
2006	1,632	498	1,611	56	3,797	93
2007	1,543	375	1,503	48	3,469	65
2008	1,045	324	844	56	2,269*	54

*The Total Hours per Employee has become much more efficient by utilizing written training documents that can be quickly and easily referenced through our Power DMS software.



Aptos/La Selva Division Chief Jeff Terpstra discussing the Summit Fire during the November 2008 CE

Citizens' Academy for 9-1-1

The primary goal of our Citizens' Academy for 9-1-1 is to provide a forum for informing and educating the public about 9-1-1 and, specifically, the Santa Cruz Consolidated Emergency Communications Center's role within the community. Since we are a consolidated communications center, it is important to explain our organizational structure as our center differs greatly from a communications center that serves a single jurisdiction. A self-paced, on-line version of our Citizens' Academy for 9-1-1 is available for those whose schedules cannot accommodate the on-site version.

This year, only the on-line version of the course was offered. Since its inception in 1998, 236 individuals have successfully completed the Citizens' Academy for 9-1-1.





Project Unit

The Project Unit was responsible for coordinating the installation and training of our new “reverse 9-1-1” software, *CityWatch*. This is our second generation emergency notification program, and it has proven to be much more reliable and easy to use than our previous software.

Along with the initial installation and training of *CityWatch*, the Project Unit designed, publicized, and developed a cell phone self-registration program that allows community members to self-register their cell phones via our website. This will allow them to be notified on their cell phones during *CityWatch* activations. To date 2,150 citizens have registered their cell phones. In 2008 there were 54 activations of *CityWatch*, in which 68,881 phone numbers were called and 40,589 minutes were utilized.

The Project Unit continues to produce *The NetCom Dispatch*. This internal newsletter is produced by NetCom employees for NetCom employees. It provides information about recent activities undertaken and events experienced by NetCom employees, work related tips, and fun facts. The newsletter has proven to be an all around morale booster for the dispatchers.

Awareness and Community Education (ACE) Team

The ACE Team’s responsibilities have evolved from recruiting to representing the Authority at public education and community outreach events. The ACE Team is comprised of both Lead and line-level dispatchers. The original team members were **Jodi Boles, Kristine Ebersole, Mike Krakowiak, Abby Hernandez, Jo Irving, Melody MacDonald, Anita Miller, and Rosa Puga**. As the ACE team became more involved in educating our community about disaster preparedness, an invitation to join the team was extended to all dispatchers. As a result of that recruitment, four new members joined the ACE Team in 2008: **Ashley Hiles, Angie Lackey, Melanie Sherwood and Lyndsay Sotelo**.

The ACE Team met monthly to plan the Authority’s current campaign – increasing the public’s awareness and understanding of the 9-1-1 process with a focus on disaster preparedness. The team had the opportunity to participate in the Ducky Derby, the Watsonville Fly-In, the Monterey Bay Strawberry Festival, the Santa Cruz County Fair, and several National Night Out locations with our Users. The ACE team also had a booth at the Santa Cruz Boardwalk Public Safety Fair and the Cabrillo College Job Fair. They partnered with the Aptos/LaSelva, Branciforte, Central and Scotts Valley fire departments/districts at their annual Open House and Fire Prevention Month activities during October. ACE Team members were also presenters for the County’s “Be a Friend, Save a Friend” community CPR project. Well over 10,000 contacts were made by the ACE Team during the year at the various events.



ACE Team member Melanie Sherwood staffs the booth at the Santa Cruz County Fair in September.

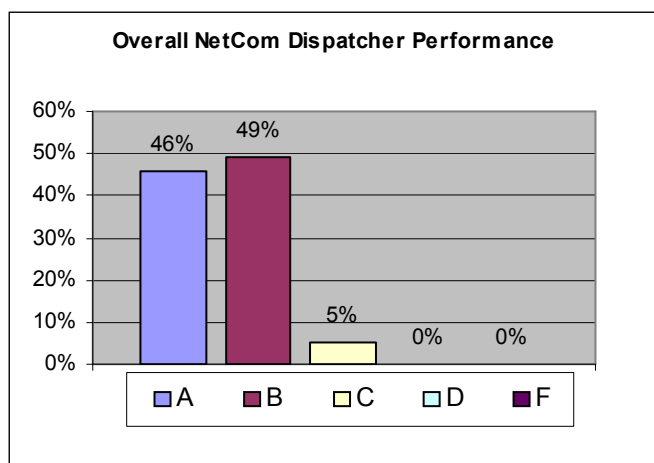


2008 Users Survey

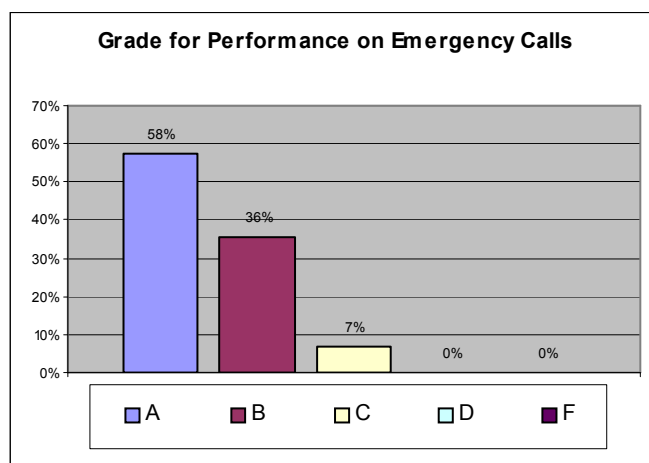
Each year SCCECC surveys a different segment of our customer base. This year we conducted a survey of our Users by soliciting input from law enforcement personnel with a rank of Sergeant and above, field training officers, fire personnel with a rank of Captain and above, and EMS supervisory personnel. For the first time, we completed the entire survey process electronically via email and a website survey product. We distributed 186 surveys and received 71 responses for a return rate of thirty-eight percent.

Survey questions were designed to have our Users grade our performance in several different areas, including overall performance and performance on high- and low-priority calls.

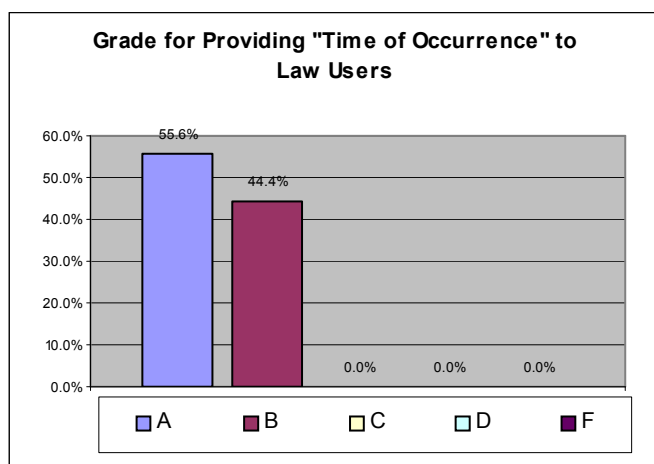
Full results of the Users survey can be found in Addendum C.



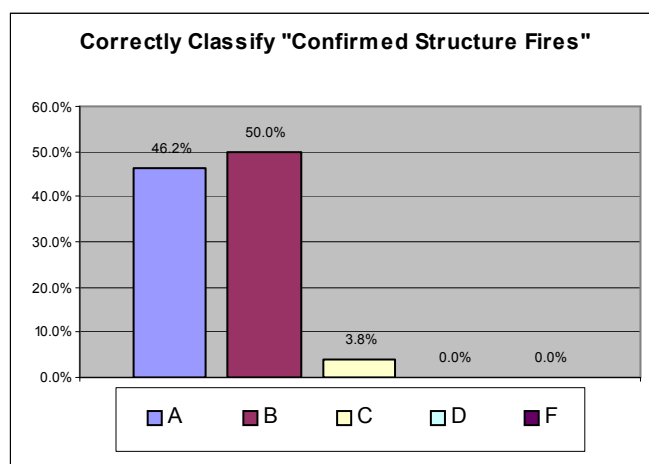
95% of the surveyed Users graded our dispatchers' overall performance at A or B



93% of our Users graded our performance during emergency incidents at A or B.



We have continued to provide accurate "time of occurrence" to our law Users with 100% of respondents grading us A or B in this area.



Our fire Users requested that we assist them with more appropriate responses to working structure fires (without over-responding). By working to correctly classify the incidents, 96% of respondents gave us an A or B.



Systems Division



Systems Coordinator Amethyst Uchida, Senior Systems Technicians Wolff Bloss and Tom Ginsburg, Administrative Assistant Steffen Andrews, and Systems Technician Nicola Nelson.

Personnel assigned to the Systems Division includes the General Manager (.25), Systems Coordinator, two Senior Communications Systems Technicians, and a Communications Systems Technician. In addition to the permanent staff, two extra-help employees (an Administrative Assistant and a Reports Developer), allow Systems to continue to provide the high standards of service that are expected from this division. The Systems Division consists of three distinct units: CAD/9-1-1, SCMRs and MDCs.

This past year saw many structural and personnel changes in the Systems Division with the departures of Scotty Douglass and Ralph Wilcox from the division. Systems operated at 60% staffing for half the year. This presented many challenges for the remaining staff members, but also provided many opportunities for growth and learning.

In 2008, the Systems Division instituted a formalized cross-training program. The purpose of this program was to better distribute knowledge and expertise among the division personnel. We accomplished this by first identifying the types of specialized knowledge which existed within our division. Next we determined who the subject-matter expert for each topic was and who would benefit from training in each subject. We then scheduled a minimum of one Friday afternoon per month for these trainings. The instructor was required to create documents for each of these classes, so over the course of the last year we have created more than 80 pages of new documentation in our division, and participated in at least 100 total staff hours of training - all at no additional cost to the Authority.

CAD/9-1-1 Unit

The CAD/9-1-1 Unit manages a variety of systems and projects. A primary purpose of this unit is to support the Computer Aided Dispatch application, Motorola's Premier CAD Client and related applications such as the ProQA software for emergency medical dispatch and Motorola's Advanced Tactical Mapping. This unit also supports and manages the 9-1-1 telephone system and the hardware and software that integrates 9-1-1 into the CAD applications. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) projects and maintenance are also covered by this unit.

This year the CAD/9-1-1 Unit completed the conversion of our 150 Crystal Reports from the outdated CAD data format to the new data format. This project was crucial as support of the old data format ended on December 31, 2008. We also took on a new role as our first Fire Technology Committee was convened in July and eventually led to our taking on coordination of a few technology projects for the fire Users. We are working with a developer to upgrade the data transfer to *Firehouse* records management system from our CAD system, which is affected by the new data format. This project will continue in 2009, assisting as the County Health Services Agency implements a new EMS patient care reporting system that will exchange data with the existing *Firehouse* records management system.



Systems Tech Nicola Nelson at work in the radio room.



The GIS section completed several projects in 2008, including the Community Names project which better defines unincorporated areas of the county and allows dispatchers to identify a caller's location more rapidly in the event of duplicate street names. An additional GIS project was to create a new map layer for water districts. This was done in April and allows dispatchers to identify the water provider for a particular address or area. The GIS technician also worked closely with the County GIS department to create an emergency mapping plan. During the wildland fires in Santa Cruz County, there were many requests for maps which needed to be created immediately. The new EOC Activation Plan for GIS anticipates the potential needs of public safety and emergency services users. A plan was created for efficient generation and distribution of the information and defines standards for the maps that are produced.

In addition to these projects, the CAD Unit resolved 512 concern forms. The Concern Forms system is our internal problem tracking program. Geofile issues represented 196 of the concern forms handled by Systems. These were about issues such as missing or incorrect commonplace names, address changes or updates, or how jurisdictional or beat boundaries are set. Issues related to AVL routing for AMR ambulances (which could represent geofile problems, MDC computer equipment malfunctions or CAD problems) comprised 30 of the total issues. The GIS unit also managed 21 premise history concern forms. The other 265 concern forms related to other computer systems and equipment at SCCECC such as the CAD program, the radio system, telephone system programming or the miscellaneous other applications utilized by dispatchers in the course of their duties.



Division Chief Gary Rowe, Central Fire, and Chief Pat O'Connell, Branciforte Fire, during EOC activation.

SCMRS Unit

The SCMRS Unit was created in 2000 to provide support for the police departments' Records Management System and its Wide Area Network infrastructure. The SCMRS unit expanded its scope in recent years to take on the *Crossroads* traffic reporting system, the high speed wireless MESH access pilot project, the L3 mobile video system at Santa Cruz Police Department, and the implementation of the *CopLogic* citizen reporting software. SCMRS personnel also participate in ad hoc projects such as performing a needs-analysis for possible future replacement of our Records Management System.

A significant number of hours were spent on the *Crossroads* project in the 2008 calendar year, working with the vendor and police department personnel to identify and resolve serious problems including data loss within the *Crossroads* system. Ultimately, Santa Cruz Police Department administration made the decision to shelve the system, with Capitola and Scotts Valley following suit. Because Watsonville Police Department is still using the system, SCMRS staff continue to devote time to tracking down and resolving remaining issues with the goal of successfully concluding this project in 2009.

Investigation of a new Records Management System reached a critical stage this year when the County of Santa Cruz put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a new integrated criminal justice system for the Santa Cruz Sheriff's Office. The SCMRS agencies participated in the RFP process, providing a list of our requirements for vendors to include in their proposals. The



SCSO ultimately selected a vendor and is working on implementing the new system. The SCMRS agencies were unable to secure any funding to join the purchase at this time, but continue to watch the project with the hope of doing so in the future.

In 2008, we were able to migrate all remaining devices out of the original SCMRS network domain and into a new Windows 2003 network which we began implementing in 2006. In addition, we replaced two Alliance servers, one at SCCECC and one at SCPD, with newer servers. In addition to these projects, the SCMRS Unit completed 100 trouble tickets for Alliance issues and 81 trouble tickets for a variety of issues relating to network infrastructure, supported in-car systems at Santa Cruz Police Department, and miscellaneous hardware and software concerns.

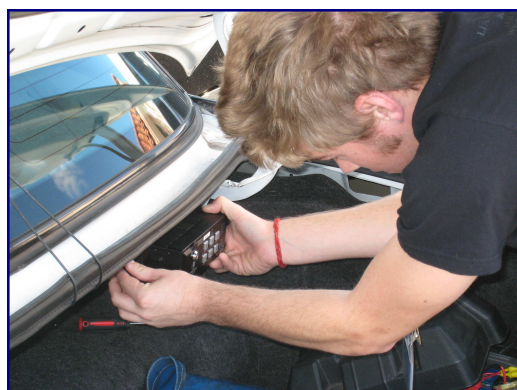
MDC Unit

There are two Mobile Data Computer (MDC) systems supported by the Systems Division. The first is the Packet Cluster system which is used by Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville police departments, as well as by the Santa Cruz and Watsonville fire departments. This system runs over an 800-MHz radio network. The second MDC system belongs to AMR which utilizes a cellular infrastructure.

An unexpected hardware failure in April 2008 resulted in the SCMRS MDCs being down for three days while a temporary replacement server was shipped from the vendor. The system that failed was the multi-site controller (MSC), which manages traffic on the 800 MHz radio network that is the backbone of the SCMRS MDC system. Systems Division staff then coordinated installation of the permanent replacement when it arrived in November. In addition to the unplanned upgrade of the MSC, Systems also upgraded the MDC server. This server runs the Packet Cluster Server application which allows MDC users to interface with CAD including updating their status, and attaching and clearing themselves from calls. The server running the Packet Cluster software had been in operation since 2001 and needed to be replaced.

During 2008, Systems began working with the Information Technology Department of the City of Santa Cruz on a project to create a new network infrastructure to support the Santa Cruz Fire Department's Mobile Data Computers. The fire department has been using MDCs for several years on the SCMRS radio network and are migrating to a cellular data solution so that they can deploy additional applications which will greatly enhance the effectiveness and function of their MDCs. This solution is expected to go live in 2009 and could potentially serve as a model for other local fire agencies who are exploring the use of MDCs. Systems resolved 174 tickets related to repairs of SCMRS MDCs in 2008.

During the Spring, Motorola delivered an upgrade of the Automated Vehicle Location server software for AMR's MDC system. Systems personnel worked with Motorola to complete the upgrade and to troubleshoot a subsequent sign-on problem which occurred. An upgrade of the MDC client software was also performed twice in 2008. Systems staff handled 42 MDC hardware issues for AMR in 2008. Some repairs to AMR hardware are conducted on-site by Systems staff, while in other situations Systems coordinates with the vendor so that repairs can be completed under warranty.



Systems Administrative Assistant
Steffen Andrews working on MDC.



Business Division

The Business Division, which consists of the Fiscal Unit and the Business Services Unit, manages and supports the Authority's day-to-day administrative activities. The Business Division staff was reduced in 2008 to two part-time senior administrative assistants and one part-time intern. Some of the duties of the administrative assistant have been absorbed by other divisions. We have also adjusted to changes in personnel around us as new managers settle into their positions.

Business Services Unit

The Business Services Unit maintains employees' personnel and benefits records, including processing new employees, salary adjustments, and CalPERS data. The Business Unit is responsible for maintaining the schedules, notices and materials for meetings of the Board of Directors, Users and several committees. The unit also provides general administrative support and produces the Authority's annual report that is distributed to the Board and Users.

The Business Services Unit is responsible for processing requests for dispatch recordings and incident reports for the Authority. In 2008, 745 records requests were processed, 40 subpoenas were served to the Authority, and the Custodian of Records made two court appearances in support of reproduced records.

Fiscal Unit

The Fiscal Unit is responsible for accounting duties which include processing payroll and maintaining the associated records, tracking purchases and inventory, reconciling the general ledger with the County's FAMIS system, the annual audit, and budget preparation.

Authority payroll is based on a 14-day reporting period. Time cards are submitted to the Santa Cruz County Auditor/Controller's Office, which then issues paychecks. Their Payroll Division assesses the Authority an annual fee for services that include payments to PERS for health and retirement benefits, state and federal tax withholdings, and payments for Medicare taxes and unemployment insurance.

Accounting is performed according to generally accepted accounting practices. All expenditures are tracked in sub-object accounts and reconciled with the County Auditor/Controller's FAMIS computer tracking system. Claims are generally submitted to the Fiscal Unit, where they are processed and forwarded to the County Auditor/Controller's Office for payment. Administrative staff prepare routine invoices and deposit revenue into appropriate sub-object accounts identified in the Operating, Capital, Debt Service and SCMRS budgets. An annual audit is performed by the County Auditor/Controller's Office and is presented to the Board of Directors. The Authority also maintains a certified inventory of all fixed asset equipment, which is presented to the Board of Directors annually.

The Authority tracks employee vacation accrual changes, step increases, holiday hours, ETO (Elective Time Off) hours and compensatory time accrued and taken.



Senior Administrative Assistants Sherry Paul and Anne Miller and Administrative Intern Felicia Venezio



Addendum A

Public Safety Dispatchers Association

By Meghan Dixon, Association President

The Dispatchers Association collects dues of \$5 per pay period from each member dispatcher and management through voluntary payroll deductions. These dues fund Justin Keele Memorial Scholarships, National Dispatchers Week activities, and outreach projects.

For the third year, two scholarships of \$1,000 each were awarded through the Justin Keele Memorial Scholarship Fund. This year Meghan Bensen, a student at CSU Stanislaus, and Jennifer Bailey, a student at San Jose State, were the fortunate recipients. Ms. Bailey had previously received one of the first Justin Keele Memorial Scholarships, given in 2005.

The Association contributed to recognition gifts for several of our retiring employees. This year our General Manager Mike McDougall, Senior Systems Technician Ralph Wilcox, and Dispatchers Beth Vogl and Ben Saunders were presented with gifts in recognition of their many years of service, along with custom photo albums created by Historian Anna Kiff. We also presented Melody MacDonald, Dispatcher of the Year, with a gift certificate.

In April we celebrated National Dispatchers Week that included food and games for our members, as well as a Cook-Off with Central Fire Department taking home the winning trophy. For National EMS and Fire Prevention weeks the Association delivered dozens of cookies from the Pacific Cookie Company to our User agencies.

The Association purchased a gas BBQ grill for the Justin Keele Memorial Deck for dispatchers to be used for meals and parties.

The Association spearheaded adoption of three families for the holiday season through the women's crisis center, Defensa de Mujeres. Gifts for the families were generously donated by employees and delivered to the women's center in time for Christmas.

Association Officers 2008



Meghan Dixon, President

Cheryl Selden, Vice President

Terri Minogue, Secretary

Bill Burnett, Treasurer

Rosa Puga, Sergeant at Arms

Anna Kiff, Historian



Terri Minogue presents the Cook-Off winners' plaque to Central Fire's Battalion Chief Owen Miller and Firefighter Mike McCloskey.



Ashley Hiles and David Brenner celebrate Dispatcher Week.



Addendum B

Employee Retirements

Michael J. McDougall

Michael J. McDougall has retired (deferred) from his position as NetCom’s founding General Manager after sixteen years of dedicated service to the Authority and its User Agencies.

Mike began his public safety management career as the Director of Emergency Communications for the County of San Mateo in February, 1989. In August 1992, he was selected as the Authority’s General Manager after a nation-wide search and has proven to be pivotal in Netcom’s success as a Joint Powers Authority. The task of assembling a combined dispatch center was certainly one that would quickly show his talent, vision, and leadership and continue throughout his time as General Manager.



As noted in his proclamation, Mike’s “accomplishments as General Manager are too numerous to list.” He was extraordinarily talented and dedicated to fostering collaboration amongst the four law enforcement, ten fire, emergency medical, and associated users of the 9-1-1 center’s services; creating an organizational climate resulting in amazingly high satisfaction among employees and Users; garnering national recognition for the quality of the services provided by the Authority including two successive accreditation awards from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), the Authority being the only 9-1-1 center in the State of California to receive two such awards; developing a fully functional alternate dispatch site including an Emergency Response Team of dispatchers to ensure the continuity of 9-1-1 services; personally mentoring past and current management staff to ensure the future leadership of the Authority.

During Mike’s tenure as the General Manager, he proved to be a highly skilled executive manager and administrator who was a loyal and trusted advisor to the Board of Directors and to the Users Committee. Mike also had a very special way of developing personal and professional relationships with his employees and continues to maintain those relationships in his new endeavor as the Director of Personnel at the County of Santa Cruz. His most notable quality was the whistling he would do as he would walk the halls of Netcom. When we heard the whistling of a melody, we knew that Netcom was in good hands and that no issue was ever too big to overcome.

We thank Mike for his years of service, dedication, enthusiasm, direction and guidance, mentoring, his eagerness for others to succeed, and most of all, for his ongoing friendship. He will be truly missed.

Ralph Wilcox



Senior Systems Technician Ralph Wilcox retired from SCCECC on August 1, 2008. Ralph began his career as a public safety dispatcher with the County of Santa Cruz in 1986. During his 23 years of service, Ralph has contributed in many significant ways to the success of this agency. Ralph served as an Emergency Medical Dispatcher, a Certified Training Officer, an Academy Instructor, an Incident Dispatcher Team member, and a member of the Fire Task Team. In many ways, Ralph found his work as an Instructor the most rewarding. His many students and trainees over the years can attest to the fact that Ralph was dedicated to do his best, and cared deeply for the welfare of all his students and colleagues.

Ralph had informally assisted Systems for many years by updating and maintaining the Geo-File and CAD Configuration. On his assignment to Systems in 2005, Ralph took on new responsibilities such as maintaining the SCMRS agencies' MDCs and creating and modifying ad-hoc Crystal Reports. In particular, Ralph contributed substantially to the project of getting MDCs equipped for Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) running for Santa Cruz County's EMS provider, American Medical Response (AMR). In 2007, Ralph formally transitioned to Systems as a Senior Communications Systems Technician.

During his tenure, Ralph formed many positive relationships with our User personnel and has been commended many times for his operational expertise.

Beth Vogl



This past July saw the retirement of a long-time NetCom employee, Public Safety Dispatcher Beth Vogl. Beth began her career as a public safety dispatcher with the County of Santa Cruz in June of 1987.

During her 21 years of service, Beth served as an Emergency Medical Dispatcher and participated on many task teams and committees. As a dispatcher, she was able to not only gain and share valuable knowledge and expertise, but she possessed a unique ability to deliver compassion and empathy to callers in their time of need.

Aside from her operational qualities, Beth is probably best remembered for her strong and passionate support of her fellow dispatchers. She was a true "champion" of dispatchers' issues and needs.

Beth's immediate plans include pursuing a personal business interest locally.



Benjamin Saunders



After 25 years of service, Senior Public Safety Dispatcher Ben Saunders retired this past year. Ben began his dispatching career with the County of Santa Cruz in 1983 and ultimately was promoted to Senior Public Safety Dispatcher. He also was certified as an Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD).

Over the years, Ben has received several commendations for his performance, including a medical incident resulting in the birth of a baby that attracted local media attention. In 1999, Ben was recognized by management and his peers as the recipient of the 'Dispatcher of the Year' award.

Ben's service to his community over the past 25 years has called upon him to perform day in and day out during countless police, fire and medical emergencies. Additionally, his career has seen several federal, state and local disasters, including the 1985 Lexington Fire, the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, and the recent 2008 wildfires. Ben's selflessness coupled with his personal work ethic required him to respond whenever he was called upon without reservation or hesitation.

Ben was known by his peers, supervisors and User personnel as having an "easy going" personality that was complimented with his calming delivery and techniques. As senior dispatcher, Ben was known for his devotion to his subordinates, always putting their interests above all, and advocating their issues when necessary. Having been schooled at Harvard University in his earlier years, Ben continually amazed his peers with his unique knowledge of just about any subject matter. It is therefore no surprise that Ben also unofficially served as NetCom's own "human encyclopedia."

There is little doubt that NetCom and the community will miss Ben's knowledge, expertise, and his extraordinary work ethic. Ben's immediate plans include working on his home and spending time with his family.



Addendum C

2008 Users Survey Results

2008 NetCom User's Satisfaction Survey		
Please provide some information about yourself (name, email, and phone are voluntary).		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Name:	95.2%	60
Agency:	100.0%	63
Email Address:	90.5%	57
Phone Number:	90.5%	57
<i>answered question</i>		63
<i>skipped question</i>		8
How long have you been a NetCom customer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 1 year	0.0%	0
1 to 3 years	1.4%	1
4 to 7 years	2.8%	2
More than 7 years	95.8%	68
<i>answered question</i>		71
<i>skipped question</i>		0
What is your current rank?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Field Training Officer	5.8%	4
Law Enforcement SGT	30.4%	21
Fire Captain	23.2%	16
Law Enforcement Lieutenant	5.8%	4
Fire Battalion Chief	10.1%	7
Law Enforcement Captain	2.9%	2
AMR Supervisor/Administrator	1.4%	1
Fire Chief	8.7%	6
Police Chief/Sheriff	4.3%	3
Other	7.2%	5
<i>answered question</i>		69
<i>skipped question</i>		2
What is your current assignment?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Field Operations	62.3%	43
Traffic	1.4%	1
Investigations	21.7%	15
Administration	23.2%	16
Training	11.6%	8
Other	11.6%	8

How would you grade the overall performance of NetCom dispatchers?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	46.8%	29
B	48.4%	30
C	4.8%	3
D	0.0%	0
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		62
<i>skipped question</i>		9
In general, has NetCom's performance improved or declined during the time you have been a NetCom customer?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Improved	80.3%	49
Stayed the same	16.4%	10
Declined	3.3%	2
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		10
How would you grade the performance of NetCom dispatchers on routine/non-emergency calls?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	48.4%	30
B	45.2%	28
C	6.5%	4
D	0.0%	0
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		62
<i>skipped question</i>		9
How important is the performance of NetCom dispatchers on routine/non-emergency calls?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	48.4%	30
Important	46.8%	29
Somewhat Important	4.8%	3
Not Important	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		62
<i>skipped question</i>		9

How would you grade the performance of NetCom dispatchers on emergency/hot calls?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	56.5%	35
B	37.1%	23
C	6.5%	4
D	0.0%	0
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		62
<i>skipped question</i>		9
How important is the performance of NetCom dispatchers on emergency/hot calls?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	98.4%	60
Important	1.6%	1
Somewhat Important	0.0%	0
Not Important	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		10
How would you grade NetCom's responsiveness to operational issues/complaints?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	55.7%	34
B	32.8%	20
C	9.8%	6
D	1.6%	1
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		61
<i>skipped question</i>		10
How important is NetCom's responsiveness to operational issues/complaints?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	57.6%	34
Important	40.7%	24
Somewhat Important	1.7%	1
Not Important	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		59
<i>skipped question</i>		12

How would you grade NetCom dispatchers on providing CLETS returns in a timely manner?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	31.7%	19
B	21.7%	13
C	6.7%	4
D	0.0%	0
F	0.0%	0
Does not apply	40.0%	24
<i>answered question</i>		60
<i>skipped question</i>		11
How important is it that CLETS returns are timely?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	51.1%	23
Important	31.1%	14
Somewhat Important	2.2%	1
Not Important	15.6%	7
<i>answered question</i>		45
<i>skipped question</i>		26
Have you been in contact with an Operations Supervisor in the past six months?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	62.9%	39
No	37.1%	23
<i>answered question</i>		62
<i>skipped question</i>		9
If yes, were you able to easily contact the Supervisor?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	90.5%	38
No	9.5%	4
<i>answered question</i>		42
<i>skipped question</i>		29

Does your agency use MDC's that are managed/supported by NetCom?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	69.5%	41
No	30.5%	18
<i>answered question</i>		59
<i>skipped question</i>		12
If so, what grade would you give regarding the usefulness of your MDC?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	37.2%	16
B	37.2%	16
C	16.3%	7
D	7.0%	3
F	2.3%	1
<i>answered question</i>		43
<i>skipped question</i>		28
What functions of your MDC do you find the most useful?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Receive dispatch info	72.4%	42
Run warrants/DL	22.4%	13
Report Writing	3.4%	2
Records system access	8.6%	5
Messaging	25.9%	15
Other	12.1%	7
NA	20.7%	12
<i>answered question</i>		58
<i>skipped question</i>		13
How would you grade NetCom regarding the support provided for your MDC/RMS system?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	26.2%	11
B	57.1%	24
C	14.3%	6
D	2.4%	1
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		42
<i>skipped question</i>		29

If you would like more training on your MDC, what functions would you like to learn more about?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	18
<i>answered question</i>	18
<i>skipped question</i>	53

Of the services NetCom provides to you, what do we do best?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	41
<i>answered question</i>	41
<i>skipped question</i>	30

Of the services NetCom provides to you, what needs the most improvement?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	42
<i>answered question</i>	42
<i>skipped question</i>	29

(For Law Enforcement) When dispatching calls for service, we have worked on consistently providing a "time of occurrence." How would you grade us today on consistently providing a "time of occurrence"?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	58.6%	17
B	41.4%	12
C	0.0%	0
D	0.0%	0
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		29
<i>skipped question</i>		42

How important to you is it that a "time of occurrence" is provided?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	77.4%	24
Important	16.1%	5
Somewhat Important	3.2%	1
Not Important	3.2%	1
<i>answered question</i>		31
<i>skipped question</i>		40



(For Fire) We have worked on more accurately classifying "confirmed" structure fires. How would you grade us today on correctly classifying "confirmed" structure fires?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	51.5%	17
B	45.5%	15
C	3.0%	1
D	0.0%	0
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		33
<i>skipped question</i>		38
How important is it that NetCom correctly classify "confirmed" structure fires?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	61.8%	21
Important	20.6%	7
Somewhat Important	14.7%	5
Not Important	2.9%	1
<i>answered question</i>		34
<i>skipped question</i>		37
Specific performance standards were created as it relates to "high risk/low frequency" incidents including proper alerting procedures, notification protocols, and incident type classification. How would you grade us today on "high risk/low frequency" incidents?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A	38.2%	21
B	52.7%	29
C	7.3%	4
D	1.8%	1
F	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		55
<i>skipped question</i>		16
How important is our performance on "high risk/low frequency" incidents?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Important	89.1%	49
Important	10.9%	6
Somewhat Important	0.0%	0
Not Important	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		55
<i>skipped question</i>		16

Are you aware that NetCom's website (www.sccecc.org) has a password protected section for NetCom Users that includes all NetCom Policy and Procedures; Countywide Protocols; meeting announcements, agendas, and minutes; etc...?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	62.5%	35
No	37.5%	21
<i>answered question</i>		56
<i>skipped question</i>		15

Currently, NetCom produces quarterly Quality Assurance reports on NetCom's performance. Would you be interested in receiving Quality Assurance/Improvement reports on your agency's performance?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	45.3%	24
No	54.7%	29
<i>answered question</i>		53
<i>skipped question</i>		18