



March 2020 Newsletter

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Coronavirus Impact on 9-1-1

Winbourne Consulting would like to thank 9-1-1 professionals and all emergency responders for continuing to do their job, and more, during these very difficult times. As millions of Americans are told to stay home, stay away from others and isolate themselves, 9-1-1 service is still up and running, busier than ever, thanks to the dedication of the nation's telecommunicators. Like so many of our nation's first responders who are selflessly serving their communities during this coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, telecommunicators continue to report for duty, and answer our calls for help, despite the personal risk. Below are some examples of the impact on our PSAPs and Emergency Communications Centers.

Personnel Concerns:

- Schools across the country are closed so call takers have to deal with unexpected child care issues;
- Many 9-1-1 centers are "close quarters" making it difficult to maintain the recommended social distancing, so call takers may feel less comfortable coming to work;
- Most work stations are used by 3 or 4 people a day, so concerns over sanitation of keyboards, mouse, touch screens has increased;
- In an urban environment, many telecommunicators commute to work via public transportation, and may resist using this method during the crisis and call out sick instead; and;
- Sadly, there has already been a case of a 9-1-1 dispatcher dying from the virus¹; fellow dispatchers are dealing with the tragic loss of a co-worker while still answering 9-1-1 calls, and worrying about their own health.

Operational Impact:

- There is a need for new or increased coordination between 9-1-1 and EMS/Public Health Officials/ Emergency Medical Control leadership to provide consistent messaging and guidance to potentially infected individuals;
- Changes in pre-arrival emergency medical protocols may now include specific questions about the caller, such as "do you have a temperature, or have a cough?" In some situations, the dispatcher can now inform the police officers and first responders of this;
- There are likely changes in dispatch protocol and process, due to the changing availability of the EMS teams, and the potential need for communications with additional agencies, such as health departments. In NYC, for example, the calls for Fire/EMS services have increased by

Winbourne Consulting offers a full range of public safety services, including strategic planning, systems integration, specifications development, solution acquisition, and implementation project management and quality assurance.

¹ https://www.policeone.com/coronavirus-covid-19/articles/detroit-police-911-dispatcher-dies-of-covid-19-g6CsvxJZbEyDzxPI/?utm_source=PoliceOne+Member+Newsletter&utm_campaign=a7c1b80a7c-g6CsvxJZbEyDzxPI
EMAIL CAMPAIGN 2020 03 24 06 41&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ca044a84ea-a7c1b80a7c-41944631

Our Areas of Expertise encompass all segments of Public Safety, including:

- PSAP Consolidation
- NG911 Strategic Planning and Implementation
- Public Safety Communications and Telephony
- Public Safety Applications and Systems Requirements and Implementation Support
- Mission Critical Facilities Design and Fit-Out
- 311 Call Centers and Implementation
- PSAP Staffing and Operations Analysis

40%, while the FDNY workforce is seriously depleted due to COVID-19 exposure;

- There may be an increased medical call response time due to responders' need to utilize full bio-hazard suits;
- Unique contingency plans are being developed for an alternate PSAP location, in case an employee contracts COVID-19; these plans may include: quarantine requirements for team of infected employees and potential identification of specific (isolated) rooms in existing Center to use in addition to traditional backup centers. Some 9-1-1 centers have chosen to split their staffing between two locations to improve the chances that one team will remain free of exposure to the virus;
- In smaller 9-1-1 centers, there is minimal staffing, so there is limited capacity to handle multiple employees out on sick leave, or quarantined at home;
- Determination if a state's or region's NG911 network be used for alternate call routing in the case of a 9-1-1 Center becoming disabled due to the infection;
- Centers are reviewing Collective bargaining contracts to determine language regarding the 9-1-1 Center's ability to waive or relax some of the labor provisions regarding overtime, call-ins, and vacation schedules, during a time of an emergency.

The Experts Weigh In

The **National 9-1-1 Office** has been incorporated into the national COVID-19 Task Force, run by FEMA² and is providing valuable input into the impact of this virus on 9-1-1 Centers. The National 9-1-1 Office is communicating information from the Task Force out to the public via their website:

<https://www.911.gov/needtocallortext911.html>.

On Wed Mar 25, 2020, **NENA** held a webinar "*Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic from the 9-1-1 Center*" John Kelly, Jamison Peevyhouse, and April Heinze did a fantastic job discussing the human resource implications of this virus in the PSAPs. A recording of the webinar is available:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/3553121708983073804>,

NENA has provided more information on COVID-19 at:

<https://www.nena.org/page/covid19>.

NASNA (National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators) provides a useful website (<http://www.nasna911.org/>) for 9-1-1 leaders to learn the latest news regarding the 9-1-1 impact of the coronavirus from leading agencies such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Emergency Medical Services (EMS) stakeholders, and others. A link for a sample Coronavirus Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is also provided.

APCO has created a web page dedicated to aiding APCO members in learning more about COVID-19 and how agencies can prepare.

Visit: <https://www.apcointl.org/covid19>.

IACP has provided coronavirus information at: <https://www.theiacp.org/>.

Topics for "After the Dust Settles"

Once this virus has been controlled and life in the 9-1-1 Centers, and the emergency response environment, returns to "normal", there are topics that public safety leaders in a community may review to adapt to future catastrophic scenarios, to include:

- Is there a need to review and modify local inter-agency and inter-jurisdictional agreements to address regional responses for mutual aid?

² <https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus>

Clients include city, county, state, and federal agencies located throughout the United States and the world, as well as countries in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, the Caribbean, and South America.

- Would shared technology, such as telephony, computer aided dispatch, mapping, and radios have provided more functionality for the telecommunicators who had to relocate to the alternate 9-1-1 Center?
- Are there mapping boundary issues that the region could address?
- Would enabling work-from-home technology for call takers have assisted in telecommunicator availability?
- Were the full capabilities of a 9-1-1 Center's NG911 Emergency Services IP Network (ESInet) utilized, for example for alternate call routing, or geospatial routing based on caller's location?
- Are COOP plans and Disaster Recovery infrastructure updated and tested on a regular basis?

As we come to terms with the impact of the Corona outbreak on our industry, we are all grappling with adopting techniques to keep essential operations up and running. Like many of our clients and partners, Winbourne has shifted its operations to working remotely. Through the hard work of our staff, we continue to be able provide our services with the usual high standards for our partners and clients.

We at Winbourne are deeply appreciative of the efforts put forth by our nation's 9-1-1 telecommunicators and first responders as we all face this emergency together. Thank you all for your continued sacrifice, and please stay safe!

Industry Events



Every year during the second week of April, the telecommunications personnel in the public safety community, are honored.

For more information, visit: <https://www.npstw.org/>



In response to the COVID-19 virus and for the safety and welfare of everyone, APCO's Nexus event scheduled for May 21-22, 2020, in Washington, DC, has been rescheduled to May 18-19, 2021. The location will remain the same.



For more information about our services and solutions, visit our website at:

www.winbourneconsulting.com

Look us up on LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/winbourne-consulting-llc?trk=biz-companies-cym>

The LEIT Conference has been cancelled due to the NOVID-19 Virus

**We Are Interested in Your Thoughts on the Above Topics.
To share them with us, please:**

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