



November 2020 Newsletter

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The Continuing Impact Of COVID 19

When the COVID 19 pandemic first broke in the spring of this year, its impact on the 911 community was significant. In March Winbourne published an article discussing the changes and issues that the Emergency Communications Centers were forced to deal with in a short time frame. Public Safety organizations were forced to adapt very quickly to the changing scenarios. The impacts were varied including personnel shortages and the operational changes required to cope with the ever-changing requirements that the various agencies were faced with.

Initially, the measures taken to deal with the effects of the virus that were considered emergency operations, have morphed into an on-going environment for public safety agencies due to the continuing health threats of the virus. While the severity of the pandemic lessened in the summer, its severity has recently increased.

Since the initial COVID 19 outbreak agencies have been forced to re-engineer their business processes to accommodate new requirements and new mandates while at the same time maintain the high standards which are demanded of them. This meant looking at the organization from multiple perspectives to arrive at solutions needed to address the varying levels of changes to the operating environment.

The responses involve a wide variety of components from personnel policies, to structure, to daily operational routines, to the deployment of additional technology. Some of the changes involved the use of technology in novel ways. One such agency that has adapted itself to these environmental changes is the **Seminole County Fire Department Emergency Communication Center**. Over the course of several months, the agency developed a changing, but adaptable Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). They had found that the most effective way of dealing with a constantly evolving set of circumstances and communicating with all the members of the team was to create such a plan and put it in writing. Following is a high level recap of the actions that the center has taken to ensure the continued smooth operation of the center.

Primary Goals

- Reduce the potential of exposure to the virus within the work environment
- Ensure rapid and constant communications regardless of physical location
- Maintain flexibility in response plans to be able to react to constantly changing scenarios

Personnel

- Established Travel Policy – if visiting an identified pandemic hotspot;

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.

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

upon return, 14 days of isolation through the utilization of personal time off (*see note below on re-imburement)

- Implemented restricted Personal Time Off policy that incorporated scheduling requirements and personnel availability
- Enforced strict Establish strict PPE enforcement that included wearing masks except when eating and drinking
- Implemented COVID 19 work policies such as – if not feeling well - stay home
- Developed a structured work check in procedure including temperature checks and proscribed routines when entering a facility
- Published guidelines for work activities such as taking breaks, etc.

Structure

- Implemented a full back-up communications center at the start of the Pandemic
- Utilizing the back-up center as part of the current standard operations- Example, alternating daily shifts between the ECC and the back-up center
- Use of partitions between stations
- Implemented remote 911 capability

Operations

- Modified initial call taking procedures from asking COVID related questions to treating all incidents as potential COVID exposure
- Provided ability to work from home when job performance was not negatively impacted
- Work schedules were modified to adapt to changing environment
- Work schedules were changed based upon availability of personnel
- Implemented assigned seating during the shift
- Published a mandatory cleaning and sanitizing policy for workstations and equipment
- Mandated use of face masks (N95) when in the facility

Technology

- Use of video teleconferencing (Skype Business) for meetings
- Use of video capability in daily operations to provide virtual and continuous communications regardless of physical location
- Use of technology to enable remote 911
- Additional use of technology to enable work from home

COOP (Continuity of Operations Plan)

- Use Hurricane COOP as the base
- Created multiple plans based upon particular scenarios
- Constantly evolving document that is continually updated

Lessons Learned

- The primary lesson learned was to allow the needed solutions to drive the operational changes and technology decisions needed to accomplish the goals.
- The required changes needed to accommodate the new reality forced the Emergency Communications Center to change the way the center had been doing business.

- The COOP needed to be flexible and updated on a regular basis.

The COVID 19 Pandemic took the world by storm and surprise and we were little prepared for the huge impact that it would have on our lives changing so much of what do and how we do it. The emergency services community was particularly affected due to its role of the "First Responder". However, the community displayed its resiliency in the manner in which it responded to and continues to respond to the challenges of the pandemic.

Our thanks to Suzanne Ladd, Program Manager, Seminole County Fire Department Emergency Communication Center for her participation and contributions to this article.

The continuing COVID19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for effective and on-going operational planning within the public safety community. Winbourne Consulting has extensive experience in assisting in the development and implementation of COOPs and related plans. If you are interested in speaking to us about developing similar plans, please contact us at <mailto:info@w-llc.com>.

*Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA or Act) provides reimbursement eligibility for up to two weeks of fully or partially paid sick leave for COVID-19 related reasons through 2020. For additional information visit: dol.gov/agencies/whd

Industry Events

9-I-I GOES
TO WASHINGTON

NENA Cancels In-Person 2021 9-1-1 Goes to Washington Conference

On October 27, NENA announced that it has cancelled its upcoming 9-1-1 Goes to Washington event, originally planned for February '21, due to the ongoing public-health and safety concerns related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. NENA is exploring the possibility of hosting a virtual 9-1-1 Goes to Washington in February of 2021.



NENA Cancels In-Person 2021 NG9-1-1 Standards & Best Practices Conference

On October 27, NENA announced that it has cancelled its upcoming in-person NG9-1-1 Standards & Best Practices Conference, originally planned for January '21, due to the ongoing public-health and safety concerns related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. NENA looks forward to resuming the in-person Standards & Best Practices Conference in January of 2022.

Articles of Interest



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.

Using Technology To Protect Citizen-Facing Workers

To say 2020 has been a challenge is a massive understatement. A year that started with optimism in January went off the rails in March, when the global pandemic led to the most significant economic disruption since the Great Depression. Millions of people lost their jobs, and while there has been a recovery, the U.S. unemployment rate is still near 7%.

As we rapidly approach a new year, it's reasonably safe to say 2021 will not be much easier. All levels of government will continue to face challenges due to COVID-19. Cities, counties and states may once again be forced to close all non-essential businesses and restrict travel for weeks. Health care facilities will likely be swamped with new cases as the outbreak spreads. Businesses both big and small could close permanently or be forced to make significant job cuts.

All governments will continue to feel COVID-related pain. With less economic activity, states and municipalities are seeing a drop in revenues. This decline includes everything from taxes -- sales, income, property -- and vehicle registration fees, to fewer parking and speeding tickets. As it stands, all 50 states are projecting a drop in revenue for 2021. Simultaneously, expenses are soaring as residents continue to file for unemployment benefits, and the demand for stimulus spending increases. The CARES Act is due to expire at the end of December, and a failure to give additional and adequate aid will make things worse. This budget uncertainty could force some governments to make hard choices to cut jobs, hours or services.

To read the full article visit:

<https://gcn.com/articles/2020/11/24/safer-in-person-service.aspx>



5G Standard Evolution and Its Public-Safety Impact

The arrival of 5G has a lot to offer the public-safety community. With its faster speeds, greater capacity, ultra-low latencies and advanced support for IoT, 5G will enable massive adoption of new public safety applications. These will include remote-controlled devices, field delivery of telemedicine and improved situational awareness using drones and video analytics complementing current LTE/4.9G mission-critical networks.

In anticipation of this new technology, and to prepare for how they will deploy it, public-safety organizations need to have a clear strategy for transitioning to full 5G capabilities. This requires understanding how the 5G standard is evolving and when it will make the most sense to adopt it for increased public safety use.

Traditionally, public-safety networks have relied on narrowband mobile private radio systems such as TETRA and Project 25 (P25) for mission-critical communications. These systems will continue to be an important part of public safety services, but they lack the ability to handle large amounts of data and multimedia. Recognizing these limitations, many public-safety networks have already integrated mobile broadband into their communications toolkit.

The full story can be viewed at:

<https://www.rrmediagroup.com/Features/FeaturesDetails/FID/1028>



RapidDeploy Adds 911 Mapping, Analytics Products To Partnership With

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

www.winbourneconsulting.com

AT&T

RapidDeploy and AT&T announced an expansion of their relationship, allowing AT&T to offer 911 centers access to RapidDeploy RadiusPlus Mapping and Eclipse Analytics solutions, as well as continuing to a similar arrangement for RapidDeploy's Nimbus cloud-aided dispatch platform, according to officials for the companies.

RapidDeploy CEO and co-founder Steve Raucher said the 2018 CAD partnership with AT&T has been key for his company—resulting in notable announced contracts in the states of California, Kansas and Arizona—and expanding the relationship to mapping and analytics should benefit public-safety answering points (PSAPs) in the future.

"We've been working extensively with both the AT&T public-safety side of the house and the AT&T FirstNet side of the house, making sure that we're really covering the end-to-end spectrum of technology that we can provide to not just 911 but positioning ourselves for NG911 and what that will bring in the future," Raucher said during an interview with IWCE's Urgent Communications. "All of this work is being done for the common goal of unifying the 911 experience, from that first call landing, to the responder in the field and everything in between."

This unified approach to 911 is designed to "reduce the time it takes to get a successful response while protecting the first responders with better situational awareness and getting better location accuracy," Raucher said. "All of these elements come together and deliver us this unified experience that AT&T has the market position, technological knowhow and vision to execute with us."

To read the complete article visit: <https://urgentcomm.com/2020/11/24/rapiddeploy-adds-911-mapping-analytics-products-to-partnership-with-att/>



How COVID-19 is Changing How State and Local Governments Approach Technology

The coronavirus outbreak has strained government response efforts, and the current recession will impact state and local revenues for years to come but will force governments to innovate in exciting new ways.

The coronavirus outbreak has strained government response efforts, and the current recession will impact state and local revenues for years to come. But the virus has also forced governments to innovate in exciting new ways that will extend well beyond the pandemic.

"The full impact of Covid-19 has yet to unfold," says Chris Haas, a strategic business executive with Google Cloud. "However, there's clear indication that there are major changes in how technology is being leveraged within government."

It is a seismic paradigm shift, Haas said during a recent webinar, where he joined state and local public officials in discussing the role of cloud technology in responding to the outbreak.

"There's one standout theme, in my opinion, in how our country is managing this pandemic: It's the speed of our response efforts," he said. "Governments and universities are [seeing the need to] break down traditional processes and modernize legacy systems, to ensure they are moving as quickly as possible to

respond to the rapidly expanding needs of our constituents and students.”

To read the full article visit:

https://www.govtech.com/futureready/news/How-COVID-19-is-Changing-How-State-and-Local-Governments-Approach-Technology.html?promo_code=microsite

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

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