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Emergency Dispatch and Communication ESA 227

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Emergency Dispatch and Communication

1. **Describe at least some of the challenges facing 9-1-1 in the next few years and how you feel these challenges should be addressed to ensure that 9-1-1 remains effective.**

911 is faced with a number of challenges when it comes to communication which it has to overcome in the coming years. Although the 911 is known to cater to an emergency situation with high vigilance, however, it is also faced with a number of issues. The most common are those which result from the initial level such as miscommunication, the chain of command, network, technological and functionality. (Common challenges for 911 Dispatch centers)

The miscommunication between the caller and 911 staff is a highly projected challenge for the 911 in the next few years. The dispatch misunderstandings and errors in communicating can lead heavily to gaps in emergency dispatch. Such miscommunication is large because calls of non-emergency calls, lengthy hold time due to system overloads, services outages, call abandoned due to long hold times and the time used for calling them back to confirm, trapped in the cycle of miscommunication. Another problem is insufficient training of staff to serve and guide the public accordingly. Employees are sometimes subject to overworking and fatigue hence cannot cater to calls from suicidal or angry callers or mistake calls for being fraudulent. Moreover, insufficient knowledge about a subject may lead the dispatcher to delay or complicate the information. Another most recurring challenge 911 might face in the future is that of technology and equipment used. Although anticipated problems may be resolved quickly however those which pose a greater challenge for 911 which cannot be anticipated. Most callers in an emergency cannot be located due to the imprecision of locations (J.H. Reed).

The solutions to the challenges need to go beyond just managing the calls, time and the staffing requirements to manage dispatch to calls. 911 should be able to increase its management to three-fold calling networks i.e. audio, video and photo calls instead of directly calling. Another solution to the system is the Next Generation 911 (NG911) which allows calls types of calls along with the cooperation of mobile carriers within the state (Corral-De-Witt and Enrique V. Carrera). Another solution to the most accurate service by 911 is to improve on location services from a spot to precision on the map from where the call might be coming from.

# Provide a brief summary of the history of 9-1-1 from its beginnings to today. Focus on the structure of 9-1-1 and how its haphazard growth has impacted its effectiveness, as reflected in the varied implementation dates, different technologies, and different operational capabilities.

The number 911 is known as the Universal Emergency Number in the united states of America. It was first proposed by the Association of Fire Chiefs as a use of a single number in 1957. Later in 1967, the Presidents Commission On Law Enforcement and Administration Of Justice reinforce the use of single number instead of the different number to contact for emergencies. Hence a consensus was reached and 911 was established as America's single emergency number (9-1-1 Origin and History). AT&T and other departments worked together to make 911 better, to respond to calls and dispatch operation ability. By 1980 the system had grown out to be used by more half of the population in the United States. Today the services have stretched to over to 50 states and saved millions of lives. In 1996, with the advent of wireless, wireless location mandate was established. The Wireless communication and public safety bill were also established to include and development of seamless messages. Adding to its development increasing effectiveness Federal Communication Commission adopted VoIP for 911 followed by texting to 911 in 2009. In 2012 the process accelerated and induced ESInets, which enabled video, audio and photo communication. Initiatives to further enhance the precision of location within 50 meters for wireless calls were established in 2015. AT& T announced ESInet nationwide coverage in 2016. And recently the First net which is broadband allocated for large emergency situations and to transfer and aid in first-hand information response (History 911 Timeline).

The operational ability of 911 has by far developed effectively by incorporating the latest equipment and technology. The ideals of technological advancement especially in terms of access and response to the caller and the location in case of emergency and wireless calling.

The burden of returning calls can also be reduced by enhanced technological use. The underlying idea of enhancing 911 technological with times is to provide quick response and avert emergencies to the public at large (How 911 Became the Emergency Call Number).

# How essential is 9-1-1 to the field operations and responses of Police, Fire, and EMS agencies? What can be done by 9-1-1 to ensure that it is able to contribute consistently to on-scene operations and how can police, fire, and EMS professionals be encouraged to learn about 9-1-1 so that barriers of misunderstanding or misinformation are reduced?

American emergency response department; 911 is considered the backbone of operations and response. It plays a vital role in security and safety in government administration. The responsibility of the 911 response officer is to dispatch and communicate information to Police, Fire, and EMS as a first step to for generating a quick response on an emergency. The operations wing in 911 is incharge of mitigation for safety and emergency to protect and serve the population. (What is a 911 Operations Supervisor?)

 The staff at 911 is the first in the queue to informatively respond to the engine is the key points of an emergency, any error occurring at this step alters the response altogether. Depending on the kind of emergency and the location, the 911 staff then forwards the facts to the concerned agency. The 911 dispatcher is the key link between the emergency caller and the resolving agency (Dispatchers Role in Situational Awareness).

A number of issues within 911 communications constraint the in field operations of police, fire and EMS agencies. the miscommunications and misinterpretations lead to abandoning of the operation altogether (Improving police 911 operations in Washington, D.C). Emergency operations held on delay due to miscommunication and misinterpretations is due to staff inefficiency (i.e. low morale, staff shortage, and stress) to comprehend the callers emergency demand, lack of call handling and immediate decision making in dispatching information to police, fire and EMS agencies (COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (DISPATCH)).

The efficiency and the correctness of facts dispatched to the police fire andEMS agency need to revise in order to reduce the ineffective resolution and the gap between the emergency and its respondents. Higher productivity in 911setup can reduce this vacuum. Thus, higher efficiency can be achieved through updated software that predefines events along with appropriate actions, systems like Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), trained professional dispatchers and adoption of telecommunicators. All these and many more reduce the barriers of misinterpretation and miscommunication for operations in event of an emergency.

# How would you address the staffing challenge or crisis faced by many 9-1-1 centers across the United States? What strategies would you implement to ensure that qualified candidates are interested in careers with 9-1-1 and that these qualified candidates are successful?

The 911 has been witnessing staffing crisis since a long time in the United States of America. This lack of staffing is proportionally associated with the decline in responsiveness and dispatch of communication. The recent challenge is the surmount number of calls received by the 911 staff leaves them with low morale low efficiency and hence decline in productivity. The level of response has significantly decreased amongst the 911 dispatch staff which can lead to the occurrence of tragedy. This is usually as a result of the numbers of staff recruited and the training they are offered. Moreover, the personal choice to work stress-free makes 911 centers unfavorable (Client Success Story: Fort Myers 911 Staffing Assessment and Workforce Development).

The labor competitiveness and the economic landscape have intensified the recruitment process in 911 centers. This makes the staff to respond to hundreds of calls in minutes, responding to their emotional state, and giving them information and achieve rapid decision making, creating work overload and stress (Emergency Call-Takers, Dispatchers Overcome Staffing Challenges, Stressful Work). This is a consequence of insufficient staffing. The regular recruitment procedure takes months and intervals of time to train and recruit operators in 911, delaying the recruitment process and raising costs.

The challenges of shortages in staff and training to create an effective emergency response can be overcome through a number of staffing strategies, i.e. recruiting directly by posting online ads and job tests. The costs of training can be reduced by recruiting professional and subject majors in criminal justice or medical health. This can further also reduce the stress of the burden of non-emergency callers. The pay scale of staff at 911 centers is similar to those of less stressful jobs. therefore raising incentives and internal encouragement to stay can eventually stop staff from leaving and become an important career option for many (With 911 dispatchers in short supply, average response time is slower).

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