

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



BRIAN L. CUMMINGS
FIRE CHIEF

June 25, 2012

TO: Fire Chief, THROUGH CHANNELS

FROM: Daniel R. McCarthy, Commander
Metropolitan Fire Communications

SUBJECT: NEXT GENERATION PSAP STAFFING PLAN -COVER LETTER

SUMMARY

As directed, the "Next Generation PSAP Workgroup" was formed to address operational issues with 40-hour work week staffing plan. The workgroup's detailed report is attached (see attachment A). The original concept plan was approved on January 5, 2012 (see attachment B). The original goal of this modified work schedule was to improve overall operational efficiency while reducing overtime costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The new staffing plan **not** be considered until the current Fire Station Alerting System (FSA) and the current Computer Assisted Dispatch System (CAD) can be replaced and tested.
2. The ERO meet and negotiate with UFLAC prior to any further work on this staffing plan.
3. Modifications to the Network Staffing System be developed to accommodate the new work schedule.
4. The workgroup be reconvened to develop a "transition plan" from the current 24 hour schedule to the Next Generation PSAP Staffing Plan.
5. The attached report titled "NEXT GENERATION PSAP STAFFING PLAN" be approved pending completion of recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4.

COMPANY/STATION/UNIT COMMANDER	DATE	EMS BATTALION CAPTAIN	DATE	BATTALION COMMANDER	DATE	DIVISION COMMANDER	DATE
BUREAU COMMANDER	DATE	EMERGENCY OPERATIONS COMMANDER	DATE	ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS COMMANDER	DATE		

FINDINGS

The Los Angeles Fire Department's Metropolitan Fire Communications Center is one of the busiest 9-1-1 call centers in the nation. It is also the highest rated dispatch center for answering and processing 9-1-1 emergency calls in the state. Currently, 78 sworn LAFD Firefighter/Dispatchers are assigned to Metro and handle the duties and responsibilities of both a call-taker and resource controller. There are 26 dispatchers assigned to each of the 26 watches on each 24-hour period.

The new 40-hour week staffing model documented in this report is based upon a 4/10 work schedule requiring 77 sworn members per week and 44 members per 24-hour period to cover the call-taker and resource controller positions that are necessary to manage both the anticipated 9-1-1 calls and minimum radio communications. With this plan, the number of Resource Controllers on the dispatch floor is unchanged from the standard three consoles; Metro Fire, Metro Rescue, and Valley Fire/Rescue. Phone answering positions are increased during most hours of the day.

These 44 members start times will be staggered at the change of shift to accommodate required training, line-ups, wellness, and other routine duties. The overlap allows for a surge capacity of additional dispatchers during certain periods of the day if high incident or increased call-load activity is experienced. It also improves telephone coverage and provides for potential hold over periods. This new schedule raises the member's percentage of time working on the dispatch floor from the platoon duty amount of about 45% to 75%. These additional hours equate to an increase in staffing over the previous schedule on the dispatch floor during normal operations while eliminating 13 hours per workweek in overtime costs (FLSA) per each dispatcher as compared to the current platoon duty schedule.

The normal "average" 9-1-1 call activity can be closely predicted through the review of past historical data. However, it is not possible to predict short activity spikes. These increases in call loads are often of short duration and are a result of a spontaneous event or incident. The result of not having enough staff on the dispatch floor to answer these emergency calls is excessive wait times, delayed emergency response, and abandoned calls. Simply recalling additional off-watch staff to the dispatch floor during these short duration activity spikes is not always effective. By the time off-watch members are recalled and logged into their consoles, the activity spike often subsides.

The most effective way to manage short duration activity spikes is to increase the number of call-takers on the dispatch floor at all times of the day (24-hour period). With the new staffing plan and watch schedules, an evaluation of the communication center's telephone data for the past year determined the average calls normally received throughout the day. This data was broken down into 30-minute increments with the

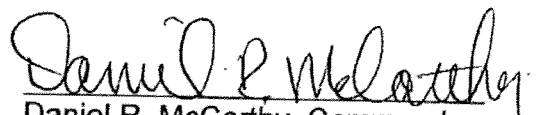
appropriate number of call-takers needed determined to effectively manage the incoming calls. This new schedule provides an increase in staff hours as compared to the current platoon duty watch schedule. The result will be an increased ability to handle these increases in call activity.

Longer duration activity spikes most often occur as a result of a large spontaneous incident or event. Increased activity as a result of a known event such as a public demonstration or weather conditions (i.e. wind, heat, cold, or rain) can often be planned for in advance. Unplanned spontaneous incidents, events, or dispatch equipment failures cause a significant increased work load for MFC is the most challenging situation. It is caused by an unexpected large scale event (such as a terrorist incident, multiple long term incidents [i.e. brush], a significant earthquake), or a major MFC equipment failure. While the new staffing plan's configuration creates shift overlaps to allow the flexibility to increase dispatch floor staff during times of increased activity, it does not allow for a rapid response of 26 dispatch/call takers needed to operate in the "manual mode."

Since February 28, 2012, the date the Metropolitan Fire Dispatch Center went live, we have called all 26 dispatcher/call takers to the floor 22 times. The majority of these times were caused by failure of the CAD, Fiber Conductivity, or Fire Station Alerting Systems.

CONCLUSION

The final 40-hour workweek staffing plan outlined in this report will be successful if we provide a reliable CAD and Fire Station Alerting Systems for our 9-1-1 operators. Implementing the attached plan prior to providing both a reliable CAD and Fire Station Alerting system would be a tragedy to those we are sworn to protect.


Daniel R. McCarthy, Commander
Metropolitan Fire Communications

Attachments

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

BRIAN L. CUMMINGS
FIRE CHIEF

May 30, 2012

TO: Daniel McCarthy, Commander, Metro Fire Communications

FROM: Michael L. Rhodes, Battalion Chief
Next Generation PSAP Workgroup (Chairman)

SUBJECT: NEXT GENERATION PSAP STAFFING PLAN

SUMMARY

The Metropolitan Fire Communications (MFC) Battalion Commanders completed a 40-hour workweek staffing schedule subject, "40-Hour Workweek Staffing Plan" dated December 14, 2011, that was approved by the Fire Chief. The report contained a number of items that required further research and development in order to bring completion to the plan. A workgroup, "Next Generation PSAP Workgroup" was recently approved by the Department to address these remaining items with the primary goal of providing a finished product readied for implementation.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommend that:

- The new staffing plan be approved as detailed in this report

DISCUSSION

The Los Angeles Fire Department's Metropolitan Fire Communications center is one of the busiest 9-1-1 call centers in the nation. It is also the highest rated dispatch center for answering and processing 9-1-1 emergency calls in the state. Currently, 78 sworn LAFD firefighter/dispatchers are assigned to MFC and work a platoon duty schedule

Daniel R. McCarthy, Commander MFC

May 30, 2012

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handling the duties and responsibilities of both a call-taker and resource controller. There are 26 dispatchers assigned to each of the 26 watches in each 24-hour period.

MFC is unlike most dispatch centers in the world: It is not only a 9-1-1 telephone call center - it is a "Command and Control" component providing intelligence gathering and management of emergency incidents and resource coverage throughout the city.

The new 40-hour week staffing model as described in this report is based upon a 4/10 work schedule concept that requires a total assignment of 77 sworn personnel. There are 44 firefighter/dispatchers on duty each 24-hour period covering both the call-taker and resource controller positions which are necessary to manage the anticipated 9-1-1 call workload and necessary radio communications. With this model, the number of resource controllers working the dispatch floor at any given time remains the same. The required 3 resource controllers manage Metro Fire, Metro Rescue, and Valley Fire/Rescue dispatch consoles. The phone answering positions are modestly increased throughout the day, decreasing the workload for each dispatcher during normal operations.

There are 5 work "shifts" in each 24-hour period which have varied start and end times in order to accommodate the required training, continuing education, line-ups, wellness, and to provide a surge capacity for recalling additional members to the dispatch floor. This "surge capacity" of personnel will assist dispatch floor operations during large or multi incidents and increased call-load activity. However, the maximum surge capability is decreased during most time periods of the day.

The new schedule raises the percentage of time each dispatcher actually works on the dispatch floor from the platoon duty level of about 45% to 75%. The schedule also eliminates 13 hours (per workweek) in overtime costs (FLSA) for each dispatcher. However, it is important to note that the surge capacity for the new schedule is significantly less overall as compared to the current platoon duty schedule.

Dispatcher Surge Capacity

Currently, the platoon duty staffing model allows for immediate increase of staffing on the dispatch floor at any time within a 24-hour period. The staffing on the dispatch floor can be maintained at a maximum of 26 dispatchers in the event of a large incident, increased 9-1-1 call activity, or a malfunction of the Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD). The new staffing plan has varied surge capacities dependent on the time of day. For example; there are 4.5 hours during the daytime in which the number of available dispatchers match or exceed the current platoon duty schedule. However, during all other hours in the 24-hour time frame, the total available dispatchers vary between 10 and 22. During normal workload levels (no recall), there is a moderate call-taker increase working the dispatch floor which decreases the workload for each dispatcher.

MFC CAD and Operating System

The current CAD and operating system has had a long history of unexpected issues requiring city-wide "radio watch", "manual mode" operation, and on rare occasions "area command" of resources. During these times it is a challenge to maintain 9-1-1 call management efficiency and field resource situational status. Long call wait times or "dropping" 9-1-1 calls and/or losing resource status poses a high risk to both public and firefighter safety.

The following bulleted items show the basic structure of the new staffing plan:

- Requires a total of 77 authorized dispatcher positions
- 44 members are required for each 24-hour period
- Each dispatcher is assigned to four 10.5-hour shifts per workweek
- There are 5 shifts in each 24-hour period:
 - Shift 1 AM (Goldenrod) – 0200 - 1230 hours (12 members)
 - Shift 2 Days (Red) – 0630 - 1700 hours (10 members)
 - Shift 3 Mid Days (Yellow) – 0930 - 2000 hours (6 members)
 - Shift 4 Swing (Blue) – 1100 - 2130 hours (3 members)
 - Shift 5 Nights (Green) – 1530 - 0200 hours (13 members)
- Each shift provides a member with 1.5 hours for training/wellness
- Each shift provides for two 15 minute breaks
- A thirty-minute unpaid meal break is included
- Members are scheduled for 8 hours of floor time out of each 10-hour paid shift
- The MFC nutritionist has not been incorporated in this plan. Members will be responsible for their own meals

The normal "average" 9-1-1 call activity can be closely predicted through the review of past historical data. However, it is not possible to predict the relatively short activity spikes which occur throughout the day. These increases in call loads are often of short duration and are a result of a spontaneous event or incident. The result of not having enough staff on the dispatch floor to answer these emergency calls is excessive wait times, delayed emergency response, and abandoned calls. Simply recalling additional off-watch staff to the dispatch floor during these spikes is not always effective. By the time off-watch members are recalled and logged into their consoles, the activity spike often subsides.

The most effective way to manage short duration activity spikes is to increase the number of call-takers on the dispatch floor at all times of the day (24-hour period). An evaluation of the communication center's telephone data for the past year determined the average calls normally received throughout the day. This data was broken down into 30-minute increments with the appropriate number of call-takers needed determined to effectively manage the incoming calls. This new schedule provides an increase in staff hours as compared to the current platoon duty watch schedule. The result will be an increased ability to handle these short increases in call activity.

Longer duration activity spikes most often occur as a result of a large spontaneous incident or event. Increased activity as a result of a known event such as a public demonstration or weather conditions (i.e. wind, heat, cold, or rain) can often be planned for in advance. Unplanned spontaneous incidents or events, which cause a significant increased work load for MFC is the most challenging situation. It is caused by an unexpected large scale event (such as a terrorist incident, multiple long term incidents [i.e. brush], a significant earthquake), or a major MFC equipment failure. While the new staffing plan's configuration creates shift overlaps to allow the flexibility to increase dispatch floor staff during times of increased activity, it is these relatively rare occurrences that hold-over and recall procedures would need to be implemented as approved by the Fire Chief or Deputy Department Commander (DDC).

This new plan maintains a "constant staffing" model. In order to ensure all vacancies are filled, the following hiring guidelines in addition to the Department's approved hiring procedures have been developed:

- Timekeeping procedures for firefighter/dispatchers working at MFC
- Special restrictions governing overtime scheduling
- Special restrictions governing exchange of time (F-360)
- Hiring procedures for the filling of vacancies including: SOD, assign hiring, recall, and detailing field members to fill vacancies
- Vacation selection process specific to the new MFC staffing model
- Network Staffing (NSS) enhancements to manage hiring and timekeeping
- EMT recertification for MFC members
- Banking of Overtime (OS)

FINDINGS

The following topics are detailed in this report:

- Floor Captains
- Time Keeping
- Work Conditions
- Dispatch Floor Rules

Floor Captains

The nine floor captains assigned to MFC will remain on a platoon duty schedule. Each floor captain will be responsible for the personal management of 8-9 dispatchers which will include completion of performance evaluations, Quality Improvement (QI) training and remedial, timekeeping and other administrative responsibilities.

The floor captains' watch schedules will remain the same. Dispatchers will be assigned to an administrative floor captain as they are currently (under the platoon duty schedule). Floor captains currently have sufficient supervisory knowledge of their subordinates including performance level and past history.

Time Keeping

Work Hours

The new staffing schedule is a 4/10 configuration consisting of 5 shifts within each 24-hour period. Each shift is actually 10.5 hours to accommodate a 30 minute non-paid meal time. Shift start and end times are as follows:

Exchange of Time (F-360)

Exchange of time between members will not be allowed.

Holidays

Holidays will be converted to hours. Each holiday is calculated at 8 hours and each member is entitled to 14 holidays for a total of: $8 \times 14 = 112$ holiday hours per year. Each 10.5 hour shift is compensated at 10 hours. $112 \text{ hours} \div 10 \text{ hours per shift} = 11.2$ holiday shifts per year. To balance the holidays throughout the calendar year each member will be scheduled one holiday shift per month for 11 months of the year. Up to 3 positions will be scheduled each calendar day with the exception of: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Years Eve. The member may select which month not to be scheduled for a holiday. The remaining .2 hours will be paid in cash or time.

Assign Hire Procedures

Assign hiring a member to fill a vacancy will be limited due to the minimum mandatory rest period requirements. Supervisors shall obtain a list of all available members through NSS and proceed by lowest assign hire number. A certified member assigned to the field signed up for voluntary SOD may be hired to alleviate the assign hire. Members holding the rank of firefighter will be considered first. If no firefighters are available, certified out of rank members may then be hired.

Detailing Members

In the event a member cannot be assign hired for a vacancy, a dispatcher qualified member assigned to the field may be detailed into the position. The detailed member may then be hired behind by the station in which the member was working. Detailing field members to MFC shall be in accordance to established Department policies.

Recall

In the event a member cannot be assign hired or a certified member detailed from the field, supervisors shall "Recall" a dispatcher by following the Department's established recall procedures. Note: The members available for recall will be affected by the mandatory minimum rest requirements between working shifts.

Pool Placement

When pool members are assigned to MFC, supervisors shall fill vacancies in accordance with the established Departmental hiring procedures.

Work Conditions

Shift/Position Selection

Members assigned to MFC shall select their regular working shift and start day (start number) based on their seniority at assignment (MFC). Note: Prior assignment time at OCD/MFC does not count as commulative assignment time.

Shift/Position Rotation

The new staffing plan's 40-hour workweek schedule does not automatically rotate. Selection of shifts/start days shall be on a seniority basis and be completed by November 1st of each calendar year. The new dispatcher roster shall be implemented effective the start of the first pay period in January of each calendar year. Yearly shift rotations may change a member's hours worked in a 7-day pay period depending on the new shift acquired. Adjustment of hours shall be in accordance to established Department procedures.

Reporting to Duty

Members shall report promptly to the dispatch floor in proper uniform and sign in on the floor captains' duty roster or other approved accountability system which may be in place. Members shall conform to the established approved uniform guidelines. Upon completing their shift, members shall sign out on the duty roster.

Floor Captain's Duty Roster or Other Approved System

The floor captain shall provide and manage a duty roster in which each member will be required to sign in and sign out during his or her shift. This includes required entries for 15 minute breaks and the 30 minute meal time.

Relief

Members reporting to duty shall immediately log in to their assigned dispatch console. Member's will either relieve an off-going member, or report to a particular un-staffed console, depending on their assignment. The off-going member is responsible for leaving their console in a clean and operable condition.

Trading Watches

Trading a watch with another member is not allowed. For example: Members are assigned to watches within a particular shift. The watches vary due to different meal and training/wellness times with the shift.

Floor Recall

Members shall remain available for potential recall to the dispatch floor which may be due to high activity and/or technical issues. Members on their 1.5 hour training/wellness

time block are considered available for recall to the dispatch floor. Members on their 15 minute break or meal time will not be recalled.

Out of Quarters

Members shall adhere to the MFC approved Out of Quarters policy regarding this work schedule.

Training/Wellness

Members may participate in Department approved exercise during their 90 minute block of Training/Wellness time when training and/or other official business does not occur. Required training, which includes, but is not limited to; line-ups, continuing education, remedial and training drills, take precedence over all wellness activities. Members shall also be immediately available for potential recall to the dispatch floor during the 90-minute Training/Wellness time block.

Meals/Breaks

Members have a 30- minute meal break that is considered unpaid time (not hours worked). Members shall use their meal time as indicated on their shift schedule. Members are allowed two 15-minute breaks that may be taken at a time approved by the floor captain. Floor captains shall give approval for breaks based on the availability of dispatchers and current floor activity.

Vacation Selection

Members shall select their vacation days in accordance to the Department's established vacation selection procedures as to minimize hiring difficulties throughout the calendar year.

Locker Room/Dorms

Members shall have a locker assigned to them. Members may use the dorms for resting purposes between working shifts with the approval of the on-duty floor captain.

Fire Station 4/Facility & Kitchen

Members shall follow the approved MOU and all other established rules in place at the time.

Hiring Procedures

NSS has to be modified to accommodate the new work schedule for proficient timekeeping and reports. The 6-hour restriction must be built into the system providing accurate member availability to fill vacancies and to process trades. Hiring procedures should mirror as close as possible to the Department's established rules and policies.

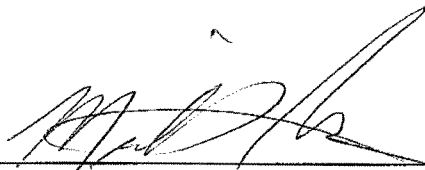
Transition Plan

This plan will require a "transition plan" for implementation due primarily to timekeeping changes.

Daniel R. McCarthy, Commander MFC
May 30, 2012
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CONCLUSION

The final 40-hour workweek staffing plan and recommendations contained in this report is a result of the Next Generation PSAP Workgroup's efforts to provide a completed staffing model that satisfies all the operational needs of our Metro Fire Communications dispatch center. The plan still requires modifications to Network Staffing followed by an approved "implementation plan."



Michael L. Rhodes, Battalion chairman
Next Generation PSAP Workgroup

File: OCD Admin/Project 40/NGPSAP Workgroup Final Plan

Position Number	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Shift 1							
1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4
3	4	4	5	5	5	5	6
4	6	6	6	7	7	7	7
5	8	8	8	8	9	9	9
6	9	10	10	10	10	11	11
7	11	11	12	12	12	12	13
8	13	13	13	14	14	14	14
9	15	15	15	15	16	16	16
10	16	17	17	17	17	18	18
Shift 2							
11	18	18	19	19	19	19	20
12	20	20	20	21	21	21	21
13	22	22	22	22	23	23	23
14	23	24	24	24	24	25	25
15	25	25	26	26	26	26	27
16	27	27	27	28	28	28	28
Shift 3							
17	29	29	29	29	30	30	30
18	30	31	31	31	31	32	32
19	32	32	33	33	33	33	34
Shift 4							
20	34	34	34	35	35	35	35
21	36	36	36	36	37	37	37
22	37	38	38	38	38	39	39
23	39	39	40	40	40	40	41
24	41	41	41	42	42	42	42
25	43	43	43	43	44	44	44
26	44	45	45	45	45	46	46
27	46	46	47	47	47	47	48
28	48	48	48	49	49	49	49
29	50	50	50	50	51	51	51
30	51	52	52	52	52	53	53
31	53	53	54	54	54	54	55
32	55	55	55	56	56	56	56
Shift 5							
33	57	57	57	57	58	58	58
34	58	59	59	59	59	60	60
35	60	60	61	61	61	61	62
36	62	62	62	63	63	63	63
37	64	64	64	64	65	65	65
38	65	66	66	66	66	67	67
39	67	67	68	68	68	68	69
40	69	69	69	70	70	70	70
41	71	71	71	71	72	72	72
42	72	73	73	73	73	74	74
43	74	74	75	75	75	75	76
44	76	76	76	77	77	77	77

5 Shift Schedule

Sunday

Day Shift	0630	0700	0730	0800	0830	0900	0930	1000	1030	1100	1130	1200	1230	1300	1330	1400	1430	1500	1530	1600	1630	1700	1730	1800	1830	1900	1930	2000	2030	2100	2130	2200	2230	2300	2330	0000	0030	0100	0130	0200	0230	0300	0330	0400	0430	0500	0530	0600	
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Monday

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Tuesday

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Wednesday

Metro Fire Communications
Worksheet Schedule

Thursday

Day Shift	0630	0700	0730	0800	0830	0900	0930	1000	1030	1100	1130	1200	1230	1300	1330	1400	1430	1500	1530	1600	1630	1700	1730	1800	1830	1900	1930	2000	2030	2100	2130	2200	2230	2300	2330	0000	0030	0100	0130	0200	0230	0300	0330	0400	0430	0500	0530	0600	
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Friday

Day Shift	0630	0700	0730	0800	0830	0900	0930	1000	1030	1100	1130	1200	1230	1300	1330	1400	1430	1500	1530	1600	1630	1700	1730	1800	1830	1900	1930	2000	2030	2100	2130	2200	2230	2300	2330	0000	0030	0100	0130	0200	0230	0300	0330	0400	0430	0500	0530	0600		
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Saturday

Day Shift	0630	0700	0730	0800	0830	0900	0930	1000	1030	1100	1130	1200	1230	1300	1330	1400	1430	1500	1530	1600	1630	1700	1730	1800	1830	1900	1930	2000	2030	2100	2130	2200	2230	2300	2330	0000	0030	0100	0130	0200	0230	0300	0330	0400	0430	0500	0530	0600	
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LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

BRIAN L. CUMMINGS
FIRE CHIEF

December 14, 2011

APPROVED

TO: Fire Chief, THROUGH CHANNELS

FROM: Daniel R. McCarthy, Assistant Chief, Operations Control Division

SUBJECT: METRO FIRE COMMUNICATIONS (MFC)
40-HOUR WEEK STAFFING PLAN

SUMMARY

The Operations Control Dispatch (OCD) Battalion Commanders were directed to conduct a study to develop a 40-hour week schedule for LAFD sworn Firefighter/Dispatchers. This goal of the plan was to improve overall operational efficiency while reducing overtime costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommend that:

1. The Planning Section develops the necessary hiring procedures for this new schedule with the intent to minimize overtime costs.
2. MIS modify NSS to adopt these new hiring procedures developed by Planning.
3. The ERO meet and negotiate with the concerned Labor Unions.
4. Accounting Services Section review all costs associate with a 40 hour work week to determine the actual anticipated cost savings.
5. Review the Quality Improvement Unit for possible improvements.
6. Form a group to implement the Fire Cards.
7. A workgroup be formed for the purpose of developing a practical and comprehensive plan for civilianizing some or all of the call-taker positions immediately after the implementation of the new 40 hour work week staffing plan.
8. Form a committee to initiate the replacement of the CAD.
9. The vacant position at DSSS that was created when Kathy Evansen retired be filled.

COMPANY/STATION/UNIT COMMANDER	DATE	EMS BATTALION CAPTAIN	DATE	BATTALION COMMANDER	DATE	DIVISION COMMANDER	DATE
BUREAU COMMANDER	DATE	EMERGENCY OPERATIONS COMMANDER	DATE	ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS COMMANDER	DATE		

102 [Signature] 12-14-11

FINDINGS

The Los Angeles Fire Department's Communications Center is one of the busiest 9-1-1 call centers in the nation. It is also the highest rated dispatch center for answering and processing 9-1-1 emergency calls in the state. Currently, 78 sworn LAFD Firefighter/Dispatchers are assigned to OCD and handle the duties and responsibilities of both a call-taker and resource controller. There are 26 dispatchers assigned to each of the 26 watches on each 24-hour period.

The new 40-hour week staffing model documented in this report is based upon a 4/10 work schedule requiring 77 sworn members per week and 44 members per 24-hour period to cover the call-taker and resource controller positions that are necessary to manage both the anticipated 9-1-1 calls and minimum radio communications. With this plan, the number of Resource Controllers on the dispatch floor is unchanged from the standard three consoles; Metro Fire, Metro Rescue, and Valley Fire/Rescue. Phone answering positions are increased during most hours of the day.

These 44 members start times will be staggered at the change of shift to accommodate required training, line-ups, wellness, and other routine duties. The overlap allows for a surge capacity of additional dispatchers during certain periods of the day if high incident or increased call-load activity is experienced. It also improves telephone coverage and provides for potential hold over periods. This new schedule raises the member's percentage of time working on the dispatch floor from the platoon duty amount of about 45% to 75%. These additional hours equate to an increase in staffing over the previous schedule on the dispatch floor during normal operations while eliminating 13 hours per workweek in overtime costs (FLSA) per each dispatcher as compared to the current platoon duty schedule.

The following bulleted items show the basic structure of the new staffing plan:

- Requires a total of 77 authorized dispatcher positions
- 44 members are required for each 24-hour period
- Each dispatcher is assigned four 10.5-hour shifts per workweek
- There are 5 shifts in each 24-hour period:
 - Group 1 Days (Pink) – 0630 - 1700 hours (10 members)
 - Group 2 Mid Days (Yellow) – 0930 - 2000 hours (6 members)
 - Group 3 Swing (Blue) – 1100 - 2130 hours (3 members)
 - Group 4 Nights (Green) – 1530 - 0200 hours (13 members)
 - Group 5 AM (Goldenrod) – 0200 - 1230 hours (12 members)
- Each shift provides a member with 1.5 hours for training/wellness
- Each shift provides for two 15 minute breaks
- A thirty-minute unpaid meal break is included
- Members are scheduled for 8 hours of floor time out of each 10.5 hour shift
- The OCD cook has not been incorporated in this plan. Members will be responsible for their own meals

The normal "average" 9-1-1 call activity can be closely predicted through the review of past historical data. However, it is not possible to predict short activity spikes. These increases in call loads are often of short duration and are a result of a spontaneous event or incident. The result of not having enough staff on the dispatch floor to answer these emergency calls is excessive wait times, delayed emergency response, and abandoned calls. Simply recalling additional off-watch staff to the dispatch floor during these short duration activity spikes is not always effective. By the time off-watch members are recalled and logged into their consoles, the activity spike often subsides.

The most effective way to manage short duration activity spikes is to increase the number of call-takers on the dispatch floor at all times of the day (24-hour period). With the new staffing plan and watch schedules, an evaluation of the communication center's telephone data for the past year determined the average calls normally received throughout the day. This data was broken down into 30-minute increments with the appropriate number of call-takers needed determined to effectively manage the incoming calls. This new schedule provides an increase in staff hours as compared to the current platoon duty watch schedule. The result will be an increased ability to handle these increases in call activity.

Longer duration activity spikes most often occur as a result of a large spontaneous incident or event. Increased activity as a result of a known event such as a public demonstration or weather conditions (i.e. wind, heat, cold, or rain) can often be planned for in advance. Unplanned spontaneous incidents or events, which cause a significant increased work load for OCD is the most challenging situation. It is caused by an unexpected large scale event (such as a terrorist incident, multiple long term incidents [i.e. brush], a significant earthquake), or a major OCD equipment failure. While the new staffing plan's configuration creates shift overlaps to allow the flexibility to increase dispatch floor staff during times of increased activity, it is these relatively rare occurrences that hold-over and recall procedures would need to be implemented as approved by the Fire Chief or Deputy Department Commander (DDC).

This new plan maintains a constant staffing concept. In order to ensure all vacancies are filled while minimizing overtime costs, the Planning Section and the ERO will need to develop and negotiate new overtime hiring procedures. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Re-write the timekeeping procedures for members assigned to the MFC as it relates to the new administrative duty schedule.
- Address any potential concerns relative to members working a 4/10 schedule but required to work night shifts and major holidays.
- Review the current inconsistent bonus system to standardize.
- Utilize risk management practices to determine maximum hours allowed to work, both continuous hours and within specific time periods.
- Include placement of pool personnel to fill for EMT recertification and other scheduled or planned vacancies.

- Develop policy and procedures for the filling of vacancies including: assign hiring, recall, and detailing field members to fill vacancies that cannot be filled voluntarily.
- Develop a vacation selection process specific to the new MFC staffing model which spreads vacations throughout the year and limits the number of members off at any one time.
- Program Network Staffing (NSS) to manage the approved timekeeping plan
- Eliminate all Trades (F-360).
- Eliminate all Banking of Overtime (OS).

When vacancies at OCD are anticipated, members from the field with at least 4 years of experience are selected. A comprehensive computer skills test (Criticall Dispatcher Screening Test) and an oral interview are administered with a maximum of 12 members selected to participate. A Floor Captain and several experienced dispatchers provide the classroom program. Upon completion of the classroom portion, the candidate works with a qualified preceptor on the dispatch floor for twenty 24-hour shifts. Once the firefighter/dispatcher candidate becomes qualified, they are assigned to OCD for a minimum of 3-years at their new assignment.

Throughout the years, the attrition rates of firefighters assigned to OCD remains very low. With the very popular platoon duty schedule eliminated through the implementation of the 40-hour work schedule, recruiting sworn dispatchers may very well become more of a challenge for the Department. An increase in transfer requests back to the field from those currently assigned to OCD has already been noticed since the OCD B/C's were tasked with developing this new schedule. In addition, an increase in sick time use, family leave, and other absences may also occur. These problems could potentially degrade the dispatch center's ability to adequately staff the required watch positions which could result an increase in vacancies in a relatively short period of time.

In the event it becomes difficult or unfeasible to maintain a sufficient number of sworn personnel, the Department will be required to look at staffing alternatives. Other dispatch centers are utilizing civilian call-takers. Civilianization of the MFC will likely be a very challenging and an expensive undertaking due primarily to high attrition rates and training costs inherent with other dispatch centers. Nationwide, dispatch centers with civilian staffing models experience critical staffing levels on a daily basis. Attrition rates during actual training averages 50% with attrition levels in maintaining certified dispatchers in the 40% range. National averages for salary and benefits are generally considered "excellent" however, the stress levels associated with 9-1-1 call-taking is very high as compared to other types of employment.

Another notable challenge next to the high attrition rates is the training time required for certification as a LAFD call-taker. It is estimated that the time required will increase dramatically before certification as a dispatcher is accomplished. The current Computer Assisted Dispatch system (CAD) is primitive in design as compared to the more

efficient, user friendly CAD systems available on the market. The existing CAD is far behind in technological advances and will pose additional difficulties to a civilian staff.

Currently the Department uses the Emergency Medical Dispatch System (EMD) for the management of medical calls. EMD is a scripted card system that walks the call processor through a series of questions based on the response received from the caller. The use of a scripted line of questioning has several advantages:

- The system is continually reviewed, updated, and validated.
- It provides added efficiency by keeping the call processor on track.
- It provides more consistency in the way calls are processed.
- It provides a proven method to measure the performance of the call-taker.
- It ensures that the most appropriate resources are sent based on the information the caller provides.
- It provides scripted pre-arrival instructions.

The most recent version of the EMD system includes a computer automated version (Pro-QA). Pro-QA is integrated into CAD providing a searchable data base. With the information collected in the Pro-QA data base, Quality Improvement personnel can more efficiently locate and review EMS related calls, conduct special studies, identify various trends, and review staff performance and training needs. Priority Dispatch also offers a non-medical version of EMD. "The Emergency Fire Dispatch" (EFD) system is fully integrated with the EMD system, provides a seamless line of caller interrogation, and provides similar advantages when processing non-medical emergency calls.

As with the EMD system, the EFD system has several elements that are required for successful implementation and effective use.

- Members have to be trained and certified in the use of the program.
- Members use of the program needs to be monitored and reviewed to ensure compliance with established program standards.
- Members need to participate in an on-going continuing education program to improve efficiency and to maintain certification.

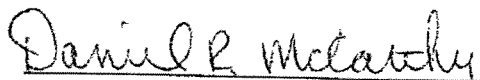
Under the Department's current non-EMS call processing procedures, although some specific guidelines are in place, the dispatcher's knowledge gained from field experience plays an important role. There are over 100 non-medical incident types currently in place making it difficult for even seasoned dispatchers to manage all these calls in an effectively consistent manner. The implementation of an EFD system will result in improved call-taker performance. In the event MFC call-taker positions are civilianized, having the EFD system on board and functioning is a must-have product.

CONCLUSION

Dispatching operations are a critical component of the service this Department provides. The information entering the dispatch center and the process of dispatching appropriate resources has a direct bearing on the positive or negative outcome of an incident. The proper handling by call-takers of Pre-Arrival Instructions can make the difference of life or death. Therefore, it is extremely important for the Department to properly plan before implementing any changes to the current staffing model.

Understandably, costs have become a significant concern especially with the FLSA lawsuit and the difficult financial condition the City has encountered. But it must be remembered that much of OCD's past success can be attributed to its sworn members and the vast experience brought with them from the field. Not only does this experience manifest itself at OCD but members transferring back to the field or promoting out of OCD, take with them valuable skills and knowledge. Some of these members later return to OCD and serve as Floor Captains. In addition, the Fire Department has always been about taking care of its people, OCD has also provided injured members with a job who are classified as permanent and stationary.

While this new plan may pose many challenges with the members and Labor Unions, it does provide an improvement from the previous schedule for the Department and public on a daily basis. Where it has the potential to fall short is on those rare significant events that are unpredictable.


Daniel R. McCarthy, Assistant Chief
Operations Control Division

- Attachment 1: OCD Watch Schedule Version 10 includes 2 (15) minutes breaks.
- Attachment 2: OCD Watch Schedule Version 10 whole hour, no breaks.
- Attachment 3: 77 member, 5 shift schedule.
- Attachment 4: 4/10 Work Schedule to be reviewed.

File: OCD Admin/Project 40/MFC 40-Hour Workweek Staffing Plan-Final Draft

July 18, 2012

TO: Fire Chief, THROUGH CHANNELS

FROM: Daniel R. McCarthy, Commander
Metropolitan Fire Communications

SUBJECT: **NEXT GENERATION PSAP STAFFING PLAN
5-40 SCHEDULE – MINIMUM STAFFING OPTION**

SUMMARY

The Metropolitan Fire Communications (MFC) Battalion Commanders completed a 40-hour workweek staffing schedule subject; "40-Hour Workweek Staffing Plan" dated December 14, 2011, that was submitted to the Fire Chief. The report contained a number of items that required further research and development in order to bring the plan to completion. A workgroup, "Next Generation PSAP Workgroup" was approved by the Department to address those items with the primary goal of providing a finished product that met specific objectives.

The plan detailed in this report is similar to LAPD Communications 8-hour schedule which differs moderately from the original 40-hour workweek plan. The most notable changes in this staffing model are the work shifts and number of on-duty dispatchers at any given time. This model also addresses those concerns involving the ability to manage the dispatch operations during surges in incident activity and in times of technical difficulties.

This 5-40 Schedule requires additional dispatcher positions, supervisory staff and support staff. The Minimum Staffing Option gives the Department some flexibility regarding overtime costs at the expense of reduced dispatcher staffing available to answer calls. Budgetary analysis and a cutover plan are not included in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommend that:

- The 5/40 Schedule – Minimum Staffing plan be considered for approval
- The Department authorize 3 Captain II positions
- A PSAP Manager position be implemented
- Quality Improvement be expanded to meet EMD standards
- The Department authorize 3 civilian "Scheduling Staff" positions
- Maintain daily Maximum Staffing (25 dispatchers at all times)
- Provide 40,000 V-hours (at a cost of \$2,303,200) to train additional dispatch staff

DISCUSSION

The Los Angeles Fire Department's command and control center is one of the busiest 9-1-1 call centers in the nation. It is also the highest "performance rated" dispatch center for answering and processing 9-1-1 emergency calls in the state. Currently, 78 sworn LAFD firefighter/dispatchers are assigned to MFC and work a platoon duty schedule handling the duties and responsibilities of both a "call-taker" and "resource controller." There are 26 dispatchers assigned to fill the 26 watches in each 24-hour operational period.

MFC is unlike most dispatch centers in the world. It is not only a 9-1-1 telephone call center (secondary PSAP) – it's also "command and control" section of the fire department providing intelligence gathering and resource management during both routine and emergency situations.

The new 40-hour workweek model (5-40 Schedule – Minimum Staffing) is based upon a 5-day, 40-hour workweek schedule that requires a total staffing of 105 personnel (dispatchers). Currently, the dispatch center's staffing needs require all 26 dispatchers are on-duty at any given time to not only manage the anticipated 9-1-1 call workload and radio communications, but to provide a dispatcher "surge capacity." This allows dispatch floor supervisors to recall on-duty (off-watch) personnel to the dispatch floor to assist with managing unexpected increases in 9-1-1 call and/or emergency incident activity. In addition to increased dispatch floor activity, this level of staffing is critical in order to effectively manage dispatch operations in the event of a Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) operational issue or other technical difficulty. Although these technical events occur only occasionally, there are also routine CAD upgrades and repairs that require the full complement of on-duty dispatchers while in "radio watch" and "manual mode" operation.

With this staffing model, the number of resource controllers working the dispatch floor at any given time remains the same. The required 3 resource controllers manage Metro Fire, Metro Rescue, and Valley Fire/Rescue dispatch consoles. However, the number of "on watch" call-takers are increased throughout the day as compared to the current platoon duty model. This is primarily due to the increased percentage of dispatch "floor time" regularly scheduled for each dispatcher.

This staffing model consists of three 8-hour work shifts in each 24-hour operational period. As mentioned, the new schedule raises the percentage of time each dispatcher works on the dispatch floor from the platoon duty level of about 45% to 75%. The schedule also eliminates 16 hours of time and a half (FLSA) per workweek for each dispatcher.

Dispatcher Surge Capacity

Currently, the platoon duty staffing model allows for the immediate increase of staffing on the dispatch floor at any time within a 24-hour period when needed. The staffing on the dispatch floor can be maintained at a maximum of 26 dispatchers in the event of a large incident, increased 9-1-1 call activity, or during technical issues with CAD or other system component. The new staffing plan's dispatcher surge capacity is comparable at 25 (if fully staffed).

MFC CAD and Operating System

The current CAD and operating system has had a long history of unexpected technical issues requiring city-wide "radio watch" and/or "manual mode" operation. During these times it becomes a challenge to maintain 9-1-1 call management efficiency and field resource situational status. Extended call wait times or "dropping" 9-1-1 calls poses a high risk to both public and firefighter safety. It is also difficult to maintain resource status accountability which can affect dispatch response times.

Basic Model

The following bulleted items show the basic design of the new staffing plan:

- There are a total of 105 authorized dispatcher positions
- 75 dispatchers work within each 24-hour operational period
- 25 dispatchers works each 8.5-hour shift block
- Full constant staffing or minimum staffing (as options)
- Each dispatcher is assigned to five (5) 8.5 hour shifts per workweek
- There are 3 shifts in each 24-hour operational period:
 - Shift 1 AM (Red) – 2200 - 0630 hours
 - Shift 2 Days (Blue) – 0600 – 1430 hours
 - Shift 3 PM (Green) – 1400 - 2230 hours

- Each shift provides for two 15 minute breaks
- A thirty-minute meal break is included (non-paid time)
- One hour (per shift) is provided for training and wellness
- Allows for a 30 minute "lineup" at start of each shift
- Members are scheduled for 6.5 hours of floor time out of each 8-hour (paid) shift

Surges in Dispatch Floor Activity

The normal/average 9-1-1 call activity loads can be closely predicted through the review of historical telephone data. However, it is not possible to predict the relatively short "activity spikes" which occur throughout the day. These increases in call loads are usually of short duration and sometimes a result of a spontaneous event or incident. The result of not having enough staff on the dispatch floor to answer these emergency calls is excessive wait times, delayed emergency response, and abandoned calls. Simply recalling additional off-watch staff to the dispatch floor during these activity increases is not always effective. By the time off-watch members are recalled and logged into their consoles, the level of incoming calls often subsides.

The most effective way to manage short duration spikes in activity is to increase the number of call-takers scheduled on the dispatch floor throughout the 24-hour period. Analyzing the dispatch center's telephone data (past 12 months) determined the average call loads throughout the day. These figures were broken down into 30-minute increments with the appropriate number of call-takers needed to effectively manage these calls. This new schedule provides an increase in call-taker staffing hours as compared to the current platoon duty watch schedule. The result will be an increased ability to handle these short increases in call activity.

Longer duration activity spikes most often occur as a result of a large spontaneous incident or event. Increased activity as a result of a known event such as a public demonstration or weather conditions (i.e. wind, heat, cold, or rain) can often be planned in advance. Unplanned spontaneous incidents or events, which cause a significant increased work load for MFC is the most challenging situation. It is caused by an unexpected large scale event such as a terrorist incident, multiple long-run incidents [i.e. brush], a significant earthquake, or a major MFC equipment failure. While the new staffing plan schedules more call-takers on the dispatch floor, it is these relatively rare occurrences that personnel hold-over and recall procedures would need to be implemented.

Practical Consequences/Considerations

Due to the plan's staffing model change, and an increase in personnel, the following items must be addressed prior to implementation:

- Dispatch Supervisors (Captain II)
- PSAP Manager
- Quality Improvement Unit
- Permanent Dispatcher Training Cadre
- Continuing Education/Dispatcher Certification
- Timekeeping Procedures
- Shift Change Requests
- Days-Off Requests
- Vacation Selection
- New Network Staffing (NSS)
- EMT Recertification
- Holiday Code Schedule
- Banking of Holidays (OS)
- Trades (F-360)
- Overtime
- Daily Staffing Level Determination

FINDINGS

Work Schedules/Time Keeping

Work Hours

The new staffing schedule is a 5/40 configuration consisting of three 8-hour shifts within each 24-hour operational period. Shift start and end times are as follows:

- Shift 1 AM (Red) – 2200 - 0630 hours
- Shift 2 Days (Blue) – 0600 – 1430 hours
- Shift 3 PM (Green) – 1400 - 2230 hours

Operational Period

An operational period consists of 24 continuous hours.

Deployment Periods

Member's work schedules are based on 28-day deployment periods for time-keeping purposes.

OPTION A (Fixed Dispatcher Schedule)

Each shift is divided into seven rotations:

Rotation	Days Worked
1	Sunday – Thursday
2	Friday – Tuesday
3	Wednesday – Sunday
4	Monday – Friday
5	Saturday – Wednesday
6	Thursday – Monday
7	Tuesday – Saturday

Exchange of Time – F-360D

Shift trades are permitted under the following conditions:

- A trade between two members shall be consummated within each member's 7-day work period
- Trades are for an entire shift – partial work shifts are not permitted
- Trades are limited to two trades per workweek.

OPTION B (Flexible Dispatcher Schedule)

Days off Request – Deployment Period

Members shall begin their initial work shift start day as directed by supervisory staff. This is based on a member's seniority (at MFC assignment) and the shifts available at the time of the initial plan implementation or assignment transfer to MFC. Members shall adhere to his or her assigned shift schedule for the completion of that deployment period. Members shall request their choice of days off during the first week of each new deployment period for the next deployment period. The selection process shall be done through a computer program assuring fair and equitable selection for all member's (similar to LAPD Dispatch Communications). LAPD has three dedicated staff personnel to handle staffing scheduling. This new staffing schedule requires the addition of 27 dispatchers adding to supervisor's workload.

Exchange of Time (F-360)

The exchange of time between members is not included in this option.

Constant Staffing

Currently, 26 dispatchers are on-duty and available for recall to the dispatch floor at any given time. The full complement of dispatch personnel is critical primarily due to the number of dispatchers needed to manage dispatch operations in the event of a CAD system malfunction or other technical difficulty requiring "manual mode" operation and "radio watch." Also, this surge capacity of dispatchers is critical in the event of a large emergency incident or catastrophe.

Until such a time that the dispatch center's CAD system upgrade project is complete, it is highly recommended that the Department maintain full dispatcher staffing (105) and also constant staffing to assure a minimum of 25 dispatchers on duty throughout the 24-hour operational period.

Minimum Staffing/Overtime Reduction

With the future upgrade to a state-of-the-art CAD system, it may be reasonable to consider staffing modifications to manage the 9-1-1 call workloads. Although a reasonable surge capacity of dispatchers is critical in a day to day basis, the need for 25 dispatchers (on-duty at all times) may be reduced considering a dependable dispatch system.

With 105 authorized dispatcher positions (which will change over time due to future increases of 9-1-1 call activity and other factors), the Department may consider hiring overtime to fill routine vacancies due to VC, SK and other leave types, only when the dispatcher staffing level for each particular shift reaches a pre-calculated minimum level. For example: AM shift may have a minimum staffing level of 16 dispatchers, Day shift may have 20, and PM shift may have 20, depending on analysis of phone data.

This minimum staffing model also allows the Department to increase to maximum staffing for pre-determined operational periods due to anticipated weather conditions (brush, flood, heat) or during planned events (marathons, entertainment, multi-events).

Floor Captains/Dispatch Supervisors (Captain II's)

The Floor Captains assigned to MFC assume many responsibilities including dispatch floor supervision, management of Fire Department resources and equipment, radio tracking, notifications during incidents, event planning, resource "move-ups" to maximize city-wide coverage, personnel training, investigation of complaints, various reports and many other administrative duties. Currently, these nine supervisors cannot

effectively carry out all the duties and responsibilities they have acquired through the years which ultimately take them away from their primary duty – dispatch floor supervision.

Two of the responsibilities, for example, that have increased their workloads to unmanageable levels are Quality Improvement (QI) and event planning. The QI component is an important and required part of dispatcher training and performance improvement. QI staff reviews 9-1-1 calls as required by EMD standards then forwards reports to the member's supervisor for review. In cases where deficiencies are found, remedial training is planned and implemented to improve performance. The Fire Department has been increasingly involved in supporting various planned events throughout the City working in Unified Command with LAPD and other agencies. These events require MFC supervisory staff to assist with planning and managing LAFD resources supporting these events.

It is important to consider the addition of three Captain II Dispatch Supervisors for providing proper "span of control" and to responsively manage the routine and emergency duties of the dispatch center (see attached Position Description). With the addition of 27 dispatchers, the Floor Captains' workload will continue to expand due to operational and staffing challenges along with a continuous dispatcher candidate training and certification program.

PSAP Manager (Sworn or Civilian)

As standardized in many public safety dispatch centers nationwide, a PSAP Manager is important to assure overall operational efficiency. The PSAP manager will work a 40-hour workweek schedule and conduct the many duties of the dispatch and radio system maintenance, development, and improvement affecting the dispatch center (see attached PSAP Manager description). With the increased supervisory workload along with the recent reduction of experienced staff, the PSAP Manager will be a key component in assuring dispatch and communications performance and reliability.

Dispatcher Training Cadre

This fiscal year will require a dispatcher training class of 12 candidates to maintain the current authorized staffing at MFC (testing in progress). The addition of 27 dispatchers to fill the required positions of the new staffing schedule will require a permanent training cadre. Past dispatcher classes utilizes at least one Floor Captain and several seasoned MFC dispatchers to plan and instruct training through a 10-week classroom session. Following the classroom portion, each candidate is detailed to twenty, 24-hour shifts as a "Dispatcher Intern" working both call-taking and resource controlling positions with the assistance of a qualified preceptor.

Dispatcher training costs for a Firefighter III is approximately \$60,000. This includes hiring behind the member and detailing a training staff. Dispatcher certification success rate has been relatively high at about 90%. Each dispatcher class is limited to 12 candidates due to the number of training consoles in the MFC Training Room.

Quality Improvement Unit

The addition of 27 dispatchers will also require increased staffing within the Quality Improvement Unit to assure EMD standards are maintained for dispatchers, particularly in the area of pre-arrival instructions (PAI's) that is used to provide for patient care prior to Fire Department units arriving on-scene. QI also prepares the continuing education (CE) training programs required by EMD (Priority Dispatch) with input and approval of the Department's Medical Director.

Civilian Scheduling Staff

Currently, the MFC Floor Captains manage the timekeeping entries and reports for 78 dispatchers, 9 Floor Captains, and 3 Battalion Chiefs. These duties, along with the increase in dispatchers, require the addition of 3 civilian staff to manage timekeeping and scheduling of dispatcher staffing.

Holidays

Firefighter/dispatchers assigned to MFC shall be given 14 holidays in a calendar year. Note that a holiday (day) is calculated at 8 hours. Members shall be assigned a holiday code and may either take the day off, or work the holiday for cash or time (PB or OS). A member's 40-hour workweek shift is a fixed schedule and working days may fall on any of the 7 days in the week (except Major Holidays). Since members must utilize coded holidays, the privilege of banking holiday hours give the member some flexibility in taking time off. Compensation shall be in accordance to Departmental policies and procedures

Scheduled Overtime Duty (Voluntary SOD)

Members may work voluntary SOD and will be hired based on the member's lowest work number. The maximum continuous hours a member may work is two continuous full shifts (16 paid hours).

Members assigned to MFC may also sign up and work SOD in the field. Hiring of those members shall be in accordance to established Department hiring policies and will be at an adjusted pay rate. Currently, members assigned to MFC can only be hired in the field to alleviate an assign hire. However, working in the field shall not interfere with the member's work-shift responsibility at MFC.

Work Numbers

It is recommended that SOD "work numbers" be on an hour for hour basis, i.e.; 8 hours = 8 work numbers, V-4 hours = 4 work numbers. The ability to work SOD is based on the member's lowest work number.

Assign Hire Procedures

Assign hiring a member to fill a vacancy will be limited due to the maximum hours worked requirement. Supervisors shall obtain a list of all available members through NSS and proceed by lowest assign hire number. A certified member assigned to the field available for voluntary SOD may be hired to alleviate the assign hire. Members holding the rank of firefighter will be considered first.

Detailing Members

In the event existing dispatcher vacancies cannot be filled by voluntary SOD or assign hire, certified member(s) may be detailed from the field if available.

Recall

In the event a member cannot be assign hired or a certified member detailed from the field, supervisors shall "recall" a dispatcher by following the Department's established recall procedures. Note: The members available for recall will be limited due to the maximum hours worked requirement.

Pool Placement

When pool members are assigned to MFC, supervisors shall fill vacancies in accordance with the established Departmental hiring procedures.

Work Conditions

Shift/Position Selection

Members assigned to MFC shall select their regular working shift based on their seniority at assignment (MFC). Note: Prior assignment time at OCD/MFC does not count as assignment time for this purpose.

Shift/Position Rotation

This new 40-hour workweek schedule does not automatically rotate. Selection of shift requests shall be done on a seniority basis and be completed by every six (6) deployment periods beginning upon implementation of this plan or from time of assignment transfer. Selection will also depend on the shifts available at the time.

Reporting to Duty

Members shall report promptly to the dispatch floor in proper uniform and sign in on the floor captains' duty roster or other approved personnel accountability system in place. Members shall conform to the approved uniform guidelines. Upon completing their shift, the member shall sign out.

Floor Captain's Duty Roster or Other Approved System

The floor captain shall provide and manage a duty roster in which each member will be required to sign in and sign out during his or her shift. This includes the member's required meal time.

Relief

Following Line-up, members will either relieve an off-going member, or report to a particular un-staffed console, depending on their assignment and/or supervisor instruction. The off-going member is responsible for leaving their console in a clean and operable condition.

Line-ups

Normally, at the start of each shift, members shall attend a lineup presented by a supervisor covering fire department related business and dispatch operations. Lineups will normally be limited to 30 minutes.

Training

Required training, which includes, but is not limited to, continuing education, remedial and training drills, will include members on their training and wellness time block and, when necessary, rotating members off the dispatch floor in a manner prescribed by supervisory staff. Members participating in scheduled training will also be immediately available for potential recall to the dispatch floor in the event of increased 9-1-1 calls, incident activity, or a technical difficulty effecting dispatch operations.

Wellness

During shifts in which no training is scheduled, members shall participate in Department approved wellness activities. Members shall also be immediately available for recall as required during training.

Meals/Breaks

Members shall use their meal time as indicated on their watch schedule. Members are also allowed two 15-minute breaks that may be taken at a time approved by their supervisor. Supervisors shall give approval for breaks based on the availability of dispatchers and current floor activity.

Floor Recall

Members shall remain available for potential recall to the dispatch floor at any time which may be due to high activity and/or technical issues. Members on their meal break time will not be recalled during that time.

Out of Quarters

Members shall adhere to established rules when leaving and returning to quarters.

Trading Watches

Trading a watch with another member is not allowed. For example: Members are assigned to watches within a particular shift. The watches vary due to varying meal times within each watch.

Vacation Selection

Members shall select their vacation days in accordance to the Department's established vacation selection procedures as it relates to this new staffing plan. The purpose is to minimize hiring difficulties throughout the calendar year.

Locker Room/Dorms

Members shall have a locker assigned to them. Members may use the dorms for resting purposes between working shifts with the approval of the on-duty floor captain.

Fire Station 4/Facility & Kitchen

Members shall follow the approved LAFD/LAPD/EMD Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and any other established rules that may be in place.

CONCLUSION

This staffing model is a 40-hour workweek utilizing a maximum of 25 dispatchers on duty at all times. The Department has the option of using a "full constant staffing" or "minimum staffing" model. In any case, the Department authorities must always consider the potential risks when determining the number of dispatcher's on-duty each day.

Budgetary costs to support this staffing model's initial startup and longer term operation must be analyzed with the assistance of the Department's Accounting Services Section and/or other authority. In addition, Network Staffing (NSS) must be modified to accommodate this new work schedule for the required timekeeping and reports of MFC personnel. If approved for implementation, this plan will require a comprehensive "transition plan" due to the major staffing and timekeeping changes.

Daniel R. McCarthy, Commander
Metropolitan Fire Communications

Attachment

File: OCD Admin/Project 40/Workgroup/Next Generation PSAP 5-40 Minimum Staffing Plan REVISED July 18, 2012

