

August, 2012

YEAR 3 UPDATE

Special points of interest:

- Identifying with ProCHRT efforts and findings
- Promoting the Profession and the Professional
- ProCHRT Toolbox
- Core Manifesto

WHO ARE WE?

The Public Safety Communications Professional

.....We have evolved into a very skilled profession, but the recognition of this evolution has not kept pace. The ability of these professionals to adapt to ever-changing situations and technology speaks volumes to the knowledge, skills and abilities required to fill this position. In the past 30 years, public safety communications has so vastly changed, seeing the introduction of technology to perform daily duties. Basic requirements to be a public safety telecommunicator started with a phone, radio, pencil and paper, and have now become a complex and dynamic infrastructure involving trunks, radio towers, fiber optics, and multi-screened consoles.

You would be hard-pressed to find another profession which has experienced such changes and required learning curves as public safety communications. Yet, this profession falls into obscurity – the invisible component of public safety. How many children dress up as public safety telecommunicators for Halloween? What would

this costume look like?

If the public calls 9-1-1, they expect to reach the fire or police department. It's not only that the public is not aware, but also local governance fails to recognize the critical nature of the job and the profession. Without this awareness, how can we stop 9-1-1 fund raiding? How can we ensure the proper infrastructure for training and funding?

70% of APCO members are front-line individuals taking, processing and providing dispatch services. Education about the duties of these members within the public realm, the public safety profession and at the legislative level is essential. Partnering with organizations such as the National Sheriff's Association (NSA), the International Association of Chief's of Police (IACP), the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), and federal agencies such as, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), including its Homeland Security Bureau, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the National 9-1-1 Office is critical to accomplishing our mission.



Who & What is ProCHRT?

The Professional Communications Human Resource Taskforce, was tasked with gathering information, study, and prepare reference materials of communications human resources and recognition issues from across the county. These include professional recognition, certification requirements and retirement eligibility, all of which will poise APCO to be a resource for our members while assisting directly with those issues that are national in scope.

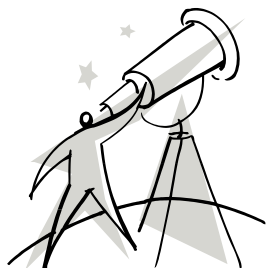


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Taskforce to Committee

How do we move forward on the initiatives identified? Based on the studies conducted and presented in the ProCHRT reports published 2010 and 2011, the Task Force determined that additional studies, education, training and legislative actions are required to attain the items identified in the Core Manifesto. To accomplish this, a transition from Task Force to Committee would be required. This request was made and approved by the APCO Executive Committee.



FINDINGS IDENTIFIED (ProCHRT Report)

The initial findings of the 2010-2011 Report Card present a picture of a significant lack in many states and local jurisdictions for mandated, comprehensive training, including providing EMD pre-arrival instruction and associated certifications for 9-1-1 public safety communications personnel.....who everyday staff the gateway through which over 650,000 9-1-1 calls made in the United States pass daily. That equates to approximately 240 million 9-1-1 calls for help made annually. Some of these states and jurisdictions require more training and certification to be an auto mechanic, hair stylist or manicurist than to be a 9-1-1 Call Taker or Law Enforcement, Fire Rescue and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) dispatcher, who every day, 24 hours a day, are confronted with making instantaneous decisions and providing lifesaving advice and instruction, to citizens in their most critical time of need.

.....Core Principles Manifesto

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials - International, Inc. (APCO), is the world's largest and oldest public safety communications association, representing an industry of over 200,000 professionals. As the leading public safety communications association we believe, stand for, advocate and/or support:

- ◆ That every state mandate and/or adopt standard criterion for 9-1-1 public safety call taker and dispatcher training, using APCO ANS 3.103.1-2010: Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators as a baseline, accredited by American National Standards Institute (ANSI), for certification and re-certification to maintain the highest level of knowledge, skill and ability;
- ◆ That Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) pre-arrival medical protocols are mandated and/or adopted by every state so that every citizen requesting an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) response is provided appropriate medical advice while EMS assistance is en route;
- ◆ That 9-1-1 public safety communications personnel should be paid a fair and equitable wage and receive benefits commensurate with the mission critical life saving nature of the job they perform each day, while working cohesively in providing services to and in support of Law Enforcement, Fire-Rescue and Emergency Medical Service providers;
- ◆ That adequate radio spectrum of all type (narrowband, broadband, etc.) is made available to public safety services to fulfill their mission and the needs and expectations of communities and citizens they serve and protect;
- ◆ That 9-1-1 fees/taxes collected from the public are used exclusively in support of 9-1-1 public safety communications and that funds collected are not diverted to other purposes; and
- ◆ That training, operational and technical standards are utilized and that the public safety communications standards continue to developed in support of the profession.



ProCHRT—Initial Report to the APCO Membership, 2010

Take Care of Yourself

Public safety communications professionals handle stress on a daily basis, but do not readily recognize the impact of daily and cumulative stress has on their lives. What is cumulative stress?

Cumulative stress is more the total of all the stressors impacting a person, taking into consideration the length of time that the person has been under stress, the number of critical incidents, and mid-range incidents that a person has been exposed to.

• All law enforcement officers and Fraternal Order of Police members depend and rely on 911 Dispatchers as our life line each and every shift. The voice on the other end of the radio must handle every emergency and stressful situation. Our members and the public depend on the 911 system for their safety. We appreciate the hard work of these individuals and offer our support of this legislation. *Florida FOP*

9-1-1



Does your APCO Chapter have a ProCHRT committee?

To effect change, it is realized that efforts are critical at the local, state and federal levels. Participating as a ProCHRT partner committee provides access to efforts and successes from across the country, many through outreach, education and awareness of local officials and state legislators. Realizing this, all APCO Chapters are encouraged to establish a Chapter ProCHRT committee for interaction and dialog with APCO's ProCHRT International effort and efforts amongst other Chapters. Chapter level ProCHRT is tasked with monitoring legislation at the State Level; gathering information/data; and assisting in preparation reference and educational materials to help with awareness, education and outreach critical at the local, state and federal levels.

97% of public safety communications personnel **WILL NOT** work long enough to retire..

Challenges Facing Human Resources and Staffing in the Public Safety Communications Center, August 2010

Duty-Related Trauma Exposure in 9-1-1 Telecommunicators: Considering the Risk for Posttraumatic Stress

Study by Michelle M. Lilly and Heather Pierce, Department of Psychology, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois ...

"Telecommunicators rely on their interrogative skills to assess an incident, secure the emergency scene, and send appropriate help, all within minutes of answering a call. Crucial to success is the ability to remain calm and suppress emotional reactions. Yet little is known about the emotional reactions and mental health of telecommunicators. It is possible that physical distance from trauma (i.e., limited risk of physical injury) serves to buffer against post trauma psychopathology; research has shown that threat to an individual's physical integrity heightens risk of development of PTSD symptoms. Telecommunicators, however, have limited control over the event and may encounter extremely distressed callers and/or aversive details of traumatic events. Given these factors, one might expect the level of emotional distress surrounding this work to be evaluated in telecommunicators compared to other professions. In fact, dissertation about telecommunicators found that the majority of telecommunicators in the sample reported experiencing peritraumatic distress in reaction to at least one call handled while on duty as a telecommunicator."

"...This suggests that although telecommunicators are physically distant from the traumatic scene and their

personal integrity is rarely threatened, they may not be buffered from the development of PTSD symptoms."

"...Posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms may be present in telecommunications can impair decision-making abilities and functioning, which could pose significant risk to the general population that relies on them to quickly and effectively coordinate an emergency response."

"...Though telecommunicators may not be physically present at a traumatic event, nor have a personal relationship with the victim, exposure to duty-related aversive details can be sufficient to induce PTSD symptomatology that is severe enough to be consistent with a probable diagnosis."

...although telecommunicators are physically distant from the traumatic scene...they may not be buffered from the development of PTSD symptoms."

**AGENCY TRAINING PROGRAM
CERTIFICATION**

The Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators (PST), formerly Project 33 or P33, provides a comprehensive outline for training programs and curriculum. APCO's Communications Center Standards Committee has worked diligently in the research and composition of this standard stating; "The focus of this standard is to provide the training necessary for front-line public safety communications personnel to be competent in the delivery of service the public deserves and expects".

Education and "Positive" advertising about the work done every day by public safety telecommunicators must be accomplished.

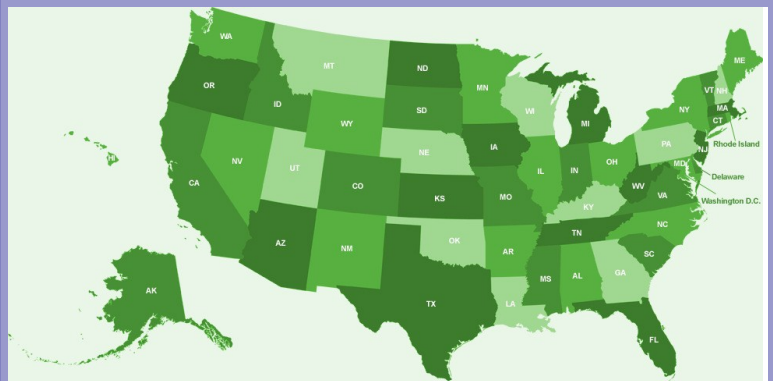
P-33 Certified Agencies (through 2012)

- _ Ada County 911 Center (ID)
- _ Brevard County Sheriff's Office – Communications Center (FL)
- _ Broward County Sheriff's Office – Communications Center (FL)
- _ City of Cedar Rapids Joint Communications Agency (IA)
- _ Cincinnati Police Communications Section (OH)
- _ Charlottesville UVA - Albemarle County Emergency Communications (VA)
- _ Coral Springs Police Department – Communications (FL)
- _ Delaware County Emergency Communications Center (IN)
- _ Delaware State Police Communications Section (DE)
- _ Denver 9-1-1 Communications Center (CO)
- _ Durham Emergency Communications Center (NC)
- _ El Paso County Sheriff's Office (CO)
- _ Fairfax County Public Safety Communications (VA)
- _ Fayetteville Police Department (AR)
- _ Gaston County Police 911 Communications (NC)
- _ Grand Junction Communications Center (CO)
- _ Hamilton County Department of Communications (OH)
- _ Hoke County Emergency Communications (NC)
- _ Lancaster County-Wide Communications (PA)
- _ Lincoln Emergency Communications (NE)
- _ Metropolitan Area Communications Center (MetCom) (CO)
- _ Missoula County 9-1-1 (MT)
- _ Montgomery County (PA)
- _ Naperville Public Safety Answering Point (IL)
- _ North East King County Regional Public Safety Communication Agency (NORCOM) (WA)
- _ Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (FL)
- _ Phoenix Police Department, Communications Bureau (AZ)
- _ Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications (NC)
- _ Regional Emergency Dispatch Authority (NM)
- _ Stafford County Sheriff's Office Emergency Communications (VA)
- _ Spokane County 911 (WA)
- _ Summit County Communications Center (OH York County 9-1-1 (PA)
- _ TriCom Central Dispatch (IL)
- _ Valley Communications (WA)
- _ York County 9-1-1 (PA)

ProCHRT—TOOLBOX / Resources

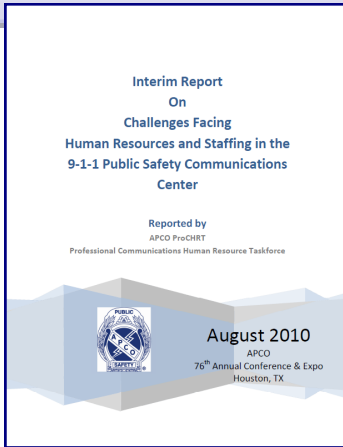
- ◆ **Legislative**
 - ◆ Sample Legislation
 - ◆ Funding and Alternates to cost impact
 - ◆ Statistical Information
- ◆ **Resources**
 - ◆ Sample letters
 - ◆ Keywords/statements
 - ◆ Testimonials
 - ◆ Key Advocates (local, state, federal, professional organizations)
- ◆ **Personnel / Human Factor**
 - ◆ Project RETAINS
 - ◆ Hiring and Retention
 - ◆ Recognition
 - ◆ Health & Welfare
 - ◆ Benefits (scheduling) / Retirement
- ◆ **Training and Certifications**
 - ◆ Standards
- ◆ **Public Education and Media**
 - ◆ Public Service Announcement
 - ◆ Short Educational video about PSC
 - ◆ Sample press release
 - ◆ Dissemination Efforts
 - ◆ Message Brand
 - ◆ Elevator Speech
 - ◆ Inter-discipline education, outreach, awareness

To find out, on a state-to-state basis of how EMD is deployed visit <http://naemd.org/en/EMDLegislationMap>.



Source: <http://naemd.org/en/EMDLegislationMap>

ProCHRT publications



What states reported ... 2011

51%

Required training?

- 51% of states have legislation requiring training for public safety telecommunicators. (51 states and Washington DC were included in the survey)

32

Average number of training hours?

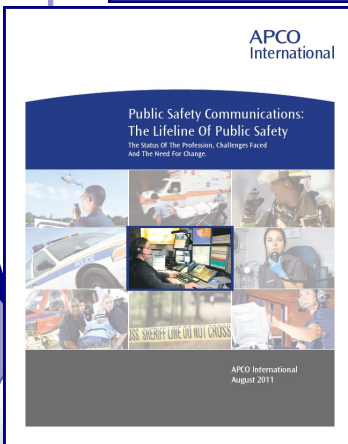
- The average number of hours of training required of the states that require certification is 66. If you include the States that do not have requirement this number drops to 32.
- Two states that require certification but provide no number of hours are not included in these averages. ibid

48%

No Emergency Medical Dispatch requirements?

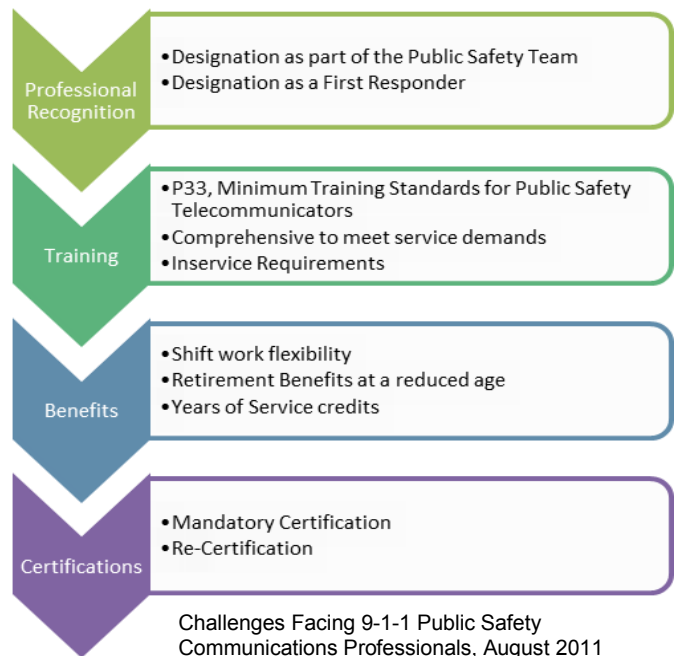
- 24 states (48%) have no EMD requirements
- 18 states (36%) have mandatory EMD requirements
- 8 (16%) have voluntary EMD requirements

These reports can be found and printed from: <http://apointl.org/911-resources/professional-communications-human-resources-committee>



“The communications call receivers and dispatchers are the public safety nucleus. Without them, no police vehicles will respond, no fire trucks will roll and no medical help will respond to emergency scenes. These jobs are highly technical in nature and the job cannot be performed by just anybody. As standards are established, the profession will also be elevated.” William D. Carrow, 2011 APCO International President, Challenges Facing 9-1-1 Public Safety Communications Professionals, August 2011

Challenges facing the Public Safety Communications Profession:



ProCHRT—Moving Forward ... in 2013 ... an APCO International PRIORITY

STRATEGIC PLAN

- ◇ APCO Government Relations Office serving as Liaison
- ◇ Developing a “Road Map”
- ◇ Review of Shift/Hour Factors
- ◇ Education, Outreach and Awareness
- ◇ Partner with key researchers specific to the Public Safety Communications profession

<http://apcointl.org/911-resources/professional-communications-human-resources-committee>

EDUCATION / OUTREACH / AWARENESS

- ◇ Providing information and garnering support are vital to establishing positive awareness of Public Safety Communications Human Resource issues
- ◇ Public, Public Safety entities/associations and legislators
- ◇ Utilizing technology and social media such as Twitter, Facebook and PSAs
- ◇ “Open houses”, Citizen Academies, public forums
- ◇ Meetings with elected officials
- ◇ Promoting ProCHRT at Chapter and International conferences/meetings

PROMOTING PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS CERTIFICATIONS:

- ◇ The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., (CALEA), Public Safety Communications Accreditation
- ◇ APCO’s Registered Public-Safety Leader (RPL)
- ◇ APCO Training Program Certification (P33 Certified)
- ◇ National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 9-1-1 Call Center Partnership
- ◇ Emergency Number Professional (ENP)
- ◇ National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- ◇ National Crime Information Center (NCIC)
- ◇ Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)
- ◇ National 911 Office

Certifications specific to the public safety communications industry adds credibility and solidifies the profession!

Contributors

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