

**Interim Report
On
Challenges Facing
Human Resources and Staffing in the
9-1-1 Public Safety Communications
Center**

Reported by

APCO ProCHRT

Professional Communications Human Resources Taskforce



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2009, the Association of Public-Safety Communication Officials International (APCO, Inc.) established a task force to specifically review human resource challenges affecting the 9-1-1 Public Safety Communication Center (PSCC).

The individuals who manage 9-1-1 public safety communications centers (PSCC) throughout the United States are confronted everyday with challenges associated with the human resource aspect of PSCC operations.

The “National Grade by Category” seeks to represent the *national* view of the identified human resource need based upon the overall support from a statewide perspective. Although we found a virtual non-existent statewide mandate for training, we recognize that many localities and agencies have developed a comprehensive training program which meets or exceeds the Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators; there is

insufficient information at this writing to place a grade to in-service and/or continuing education opportunities; EMD is repeatedly found to be a local initiative with little or no support from a statewide perspective; and retirement benefits commensurate with the public safety contribution of these individuals is non-existent. We can

only conclude, at the writing of this interim report that the nation would rank an F. *The* final report will continue to grade these and other major areas of importance to the human factor of 9-1-1 public safety communications professionals in the United States. It does not and is not meant to measure the quality of services provided by 9-1-1 public safety communication centers – rather, it considers the legislative, regulatory and work environments, the existing infrastructure related to personnel, and the available trained and qualified workforce that

constitute the public safety communication centers relied upon every day by citizens as well as public safety responders.

The preliminary findings in this progress report should raise concern in every locality and state in the country. It should raise awareness and concern to legislatures both at the state and federal levels. Improvements relative to many human resource issues within the PSCC will most likely require a different mindset of the critical nature of these individuals and will most likely require legislative change(s), etc.

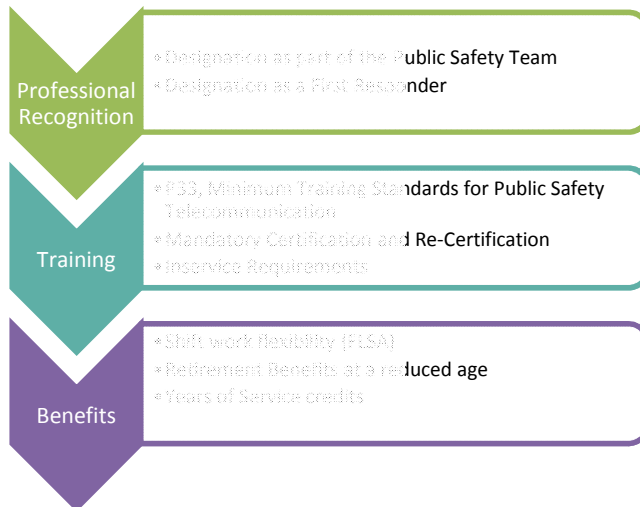
NATIONAL GRADE BY CATEGORY	
STATE MANDATED TRAINING REQUIREMENTS	D
INSERVICE OPPORTUNITIES	N/A
EMD	D
RETIREMENT BENEFITS	F
OVERALL	F



HISTORY

This taskforce was established by APCO as a result of growing concern amongst 9-1-1 public safety communications center professionals about the many challenges faced daily in the nation's 9-1-1 public safety communications centers. They include:

These are issues that have plagued these professionals and the industry for far too many years.



- Why are these individuals not formally considered part of the *public safety* effort in this country? Why they are not considered *first responders*? These individuals are the *very first* part of the 'response' to any emergency and remain a critical part of the subsequent public safety 'response' to its conclusion. Everywhere in between *they* support the citizen in need and the public safety responder, additional resources, managing communications, etc.

- Why is not more attention paid to the training and certification/re-certification of 9-1-1 call takers, law enforcement, fire-rescue and

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) dispatchers and those that supervise them?

- What can be done through the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to provide for scheduling flexibility in a manner similar to those provided our partner public safety agencies.....Law Enforcement and Fire-Rescue?
- What needs to be done, considering the extraordinarily demanding and stressful environment of 9-1-1 public safety communications to reduce the required years of service before personnel are eligible to retire to align the profession with other public safety professionals?

PURPOSE

APCO President-Elect, Bill Carrow, established, with the support of APCO's Board of Directors, the Professional Communications Human Resources Taskforce (ProCHRT). The Taskforce has, during the past year gathered information, reviewed, studied, and compared existing data regarding relative human resource material from across the country. This "Progress Report " is the interim report to a final "Report Card" to the APCO membership on the state of human resource and staffing challenges to those critical individuals who staff the 9-1-1 Public Safety Communication Centers answering the approximately 250,000 9-1-1 and emergency calls made daily and dispatching and providing safety and support to the other public safety responders. These challenges include professional recognition, certification requirements, and retirement eligibility all of which will assist the professionals directly with these issues which are and should be of national concern.

These issues are of local, state and national importance and in one way or another affect every 9-1-1 public safety communications center in the nation.

BACKGROUND

9-1-1 Public Safety Communications works closely with Law Enforcement, Fire-Rescue and Emergency Medical Services every day. 9-1-1 is the gateway through which virtually every emergency is reported resulting in communications center personnel being the first to assist citizens in their time of need while simultaneously dispatching appropriate resources. However, the public safety communications professionals are not afforded nor required to have a similar level of training, certification and benefits as their comrades in public safety. The vast majority

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

FACTS ABOUT 9-1-1 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS*

- Number of calls 9-1-1 daily: 260,000 (approx.)
- Number of 9-1-1 calls annually: 240 million
- Number of primary and secondary 9-1-1 public safety communications center (i.e. Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs): 6,170
- Number of personnel staffing communication centers: 99,900
- Number of Law Enforcement Officers supported: 883,600
- Number of Firefighters supported: 731,200
- Number of EMS personnel supported: 210,700

* Personnel numbers for occupations supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics; 9-1-1 statistics provided by the National Emergency Number Association (NENA)

of communications personnel in this country have to work 30 or more years to receive a full retirement benefit, yet the stress of the job routinely precludes employees from completing their career and achieving retirement. From a previous APCO study Project RETAINS (**Responsive Efforts To Address Integral Needs in Staffing**) it is estimated that 97 % of public safety communications personnel **WILL NOT** work in the profession long enough to retire... and it is also estimated that 97 % of Law Enforcement and Fire- Rescue personnel **WILL** work long enough to retire. Even though some progress has been made in recent years in having some public safety communications personnel recognized as *First Responders* it is the exception not the rule. When dealing with work schedules, the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) excludes public safety communication professionals from the ability to work a more condensed and efficient work week.

OVERVIEW

This task force has begun an in-depth study of the human resource related issues affecting public safety communications professionals across the nation currently. It has thus involved a research of state laws and practices as well as interaction with the APCO chapters, resulting in a future report card outlining the current status of training standards and certification requirements, retirement options and other key topic areas by state, along with recommendations. A preliminary glimpse of the research conducted to date is included in this Taskforce update below. The final results of this research will eventually be provided electronically in a tool kit that will be made available free to APCO members as a ready reference. This tool kit will include useful resources, documents, sample letters, templates, etc. to help in promoting the public safety communication professional wherever and whenever possible.

OBJECTIVES

- Study professional certification and minimum training requirements throughout the country.
- Study the retirement benefit years of service for communications professionals throughout the country, outlining specific states and jurisdictions that have made changes (by improvement) and those that are in-process.
- Study the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act as it pertains to scheduling of communications professionals and report findings with recommendations to include raising pertinent issues to a national level.
- Working with the APCO Call Center (9-1-1 Public Safety Communications Center) Standards & Member Chapter Services Committees, promote the importance of local training programs becoming APCO Project 33 Training Certification Program certified compliant:.
- Develop strategies and make recommendations toward promotion of the “First Responder” status of 9-1-1 Public Safety Telecommunicators.
- Recommend position titles that more aptly describe the 9-1-1 Call Taker, Law Enforcement dispatcher, Fire-Rescue dispatcher and EMS dispatcher.
- Identify those states and jurisdictions that mandate the use of life saving Emergency Medical Dispatcher pre-arrival instruction.
- Develop a tool kit to include the following information at a minimum, which will be made available to APCO members:
 - Master list of states to include a synopsis of their labor laws, retirement and training certification requirements specific to public safety communications professionals
 - Sample legislation
 - Effective strategies for:
 - Writing legislation
 - Advocating positions (provide explanation for clarification – it was a question about what it meant?)
 - Garnering Support
 - Internal changes (provide explanation for clarification – it was a question about what this meant?)
 - Promote professional training and certification
 - Sample press releases
- Inclusion of and well-deserved recognition of the communications professional and their contribution as a member of the public safety community.
- Complete a report to the industry and those with a vested interest in the human factor of public safety communications to include the findings of the research along with recommendations on a path forward.

As law enforcement officers and Fraternal Order of Police members depend and rely on 911 Dispatchers as our life line and every shift. The work 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 the system. Florida FOP

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All of the above are in support of the newly promulgated....

APCO

CORE PRINCIPLES MANIFESTO

*Introduced at the 76th annual
APCO Conference and Exposition
Houston Texas on August 2, 2010*

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's Project 33 - 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.
- That training, operational and technical standards are utilized and that the public safety communications standards continue to be developed in support of the profession.

A copy of the Manifesto, suitable for posting and/or framing, is attached at the end of this document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the taskforce continues its work, it will continue to look for a means and recommendations to the public safety communications community which will help to meet the objectives as identified above which will serve to support the critical “human” element.

INITIAL REPORT CARDS.....BY STATE

THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BELOW HAS BEEN REPORTED TO PROCHRT BY APCO MEMBERS REPRESENTING EACH OF THE STATES BELOW. INFORMATION IS MEANT TO PROVIDE GENERAL FACT-GATHERING INFORMATION TO IDENTIFY IF STATEWIDE TRAINING EXISTS, WHETHER IMPROVED RETIREMENT BENEFITS COMPARABLE TO OUR PUBLIC SAFETY PARTNERS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIRE AND RESCUE ARE AVAILABLE , AND WHETHER, IN GENERAL, PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS ARE ‘OFFICIALLY’ CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE *FIRST RESPONDER* OR PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNITY BY AND IN THE IDENTIFIED STATE. THE INFORMATION IS ONLY ACCURATE AND COMPLETE TO THE EXTENT THE INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED TO PROCHRT.

TRAINING STANDARDS – THE BELOW LIST OF INFORMATION BY STATE IDENTIFIES SPECIFIC TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF THE STATE IDENTIFIED. IT DOES NOT INCLUDE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF THE US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE FBI IN ORDER FOR STATES AND LOCALITIES TO FACILITATE NLETS AND SUBSEQUENTLY NCIC OR SUBSEQUENT TRAINING FOR IN-STATE ACCESS TO STATE INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE, DRIVER INFORMATION WITH A CONNECTION TO NLETS AND NCIC.

ALABAMA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Most Public Safety Telecommunicators are employees of state or local government. All state employees and almost all local government employees are members of the Retirement Systems of Alabama. There are only a handful of local governments that are not RSA member agencies.

LABOR LAWS

A right to work state and abides by federal labor laws.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR’S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

ALASKA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

State retirement provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR’S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

ARIZONA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Arizona Public Safety Telecommunicators are covered by a variety of retirement programs. Most fall under the State Retirement System (www.assrs.state.az.us). Some fall under the Corrections Office Retirement Program (www.psprs.com and choose CORP). The City of Tucson has its own retirement program.

ARIZONA CONT'D

LABOR LAWS

Arizona Public Safety Telecommunicators are covered by a variety of retirement programs; however most fall under the State's retirement system. The remaining Telecommunicators are covered by their city-wide retirement program.

Labor laws can be found at www.azleg.state.az.us/ArizonaRevisedStatutes. Look for Title 23.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

As considered on an *individual governmental entity*, a few localities may consider these individuals as part of the public safety team. Statewide, none are classified to be "Public Safety" or "First Responders."

ARKANSAS

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

P33 Certified: *Fayetteville Police Department*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

State and local retirement, for the most part provided (see <http://www.apers.org>). Some smaller agencies or municipalities may have their own 401k plan in supplement.

LABOR LAWS

Can be found at <http://www.arkansas.gov/labor>

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

CALIFORNIA

TRAINING STANDARDS

Telecommunicators in the state of California must successfully complete the basic course within one (1) year of employment. **Is there any continuing educational requirements?**

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit <http://www.td.dgs.ca.gov/Publications/911/911OpeaManual+.htm>.

Labor Laws

Most cities belong to the California Public Employees Retirement System; however, **each agency is different** (what does this mean?) For additional information visit, <http://www.td.dgs.ca.gov/Publications/911/911OpeaManul+.htm>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS? Currently, California allows Telecommunicators to be considered "First Responders," but it is at the discretion of their employing agency. Most Telecommunicators are not considered part of the Public Safety team since "Safety" is in direct correlation to retirement benefits for non-public safety personnel.

COLORADO

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

P33 Certified: *Summit County Communications Center*

P33 Certified: *Denver 9-1-1 Communications Center*

P33 Certified: *El Paso County Sheriff's Office*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

It was reported there are no benefits.

Labor Laws

For information, visit www.coworkforce.com/lab/

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Depending upon the agency, some could be considered first responders, support staff or administrative support.

CONNECTICUT

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

Labor Laws

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

DELAWARE

TRAINING STANDARDS

The only required training standard is the "Establishment of 9-1-1 Emergency Medical Dispatch System." Public Safety Communication Centers in Delaware are made up of a combination of State, County or municipal employees. Each agency or center may have specific training guidelines or requirements; they just have not reached to the level of a statewide requirement. The E911 Emergency Services Board has discussed the topic but has not pursued a state mandate. For more information, see www.delcode.delaware.gov/title16.c100/index.shtml.

P33 Certified: *Delaware State Police Communications Section*

DELAWARE CONT'D

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Combination: The State Police employees are covered under the State of Delaware retirement plan. County and Municipal agencies follow their respective retirement plans. For more information, visit www.delawarepensions.com/pensionplans.shtml.

LABOR LAWS

The State of Delaware labor laws can be found at www.delawarepersonnel.com/labor/index.shtml. Please keep in mind that a good majority of the employees are covered by established contracts. The State Police are covered through the Communications Workers of America.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

FLORIDA

TRAINING STANDARDS

NEW! As of October 1, 2012, Florida now has mandated certification facilitated by 232 hours of training. For more information, visit www.doh.state.fl.

P33 Certified: *Brevard County Sheriff's Office – Communications Center*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

NEW! Eligibility for retirement after 30 years of employment at a rate of 1.6% of salary, per year. There is no special/high risk classification. For more information visit www.myfrs.com.

LABOR LAWS

For information visit, www.stateofflorida.com/labem.html.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

NEW! Recognized as Public Safety Telecommunicators; however, there is no correlation to a public safety emergency (first) responder.

GEORGIA

TRAINING STANDARDS

Georgia has a state law requiring that "any person employed by a local government agency to receive, process or transmit public safety information and dispatch law enforcement, fire fighters, medical, and emergency management personnel..." be certified by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council. Ga. POST requires this training to be completed within the first six months of employment. O.C.G.A. 36-60-19 requires that all Comm. Officers be certified in the use of TTY (which they get as part of the Basic Comm. Class), Part B of that code section says that "on and after January 1, 1999, no monthly 9-1-1 charge provided for in Code Section 46-5-133 may be imposed for the support of any dispatch center unless such dispatch center is in compliance with the requirements of this Code section." This code section has been used to enforce the POST rules requiring certification within the first six months of employment. Further information on laws governing public safety communications in GA can be found in O.C.G.A. Title 46 Chapter 5 Article 2 Part 4. Visit www.gapost.org/rules & <http://www.lexis-nexis.com/hottopics/gacode/default.asp>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Communications Officers are covered by the various local government policies. Most have some form of retirement through their agency; however, there is no state public safety retirement system for them.

LABOR LAWS

Labor laws can be found in Title 34 of the O.C.G.A. (<http://www.lexis-nexis.com/hottopics/gacode/default.asp>)

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

HAWAII

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://hawaii.gov/labor/>

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

IDAHO

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators. The IECC is working on establishing those standards with the help of their PSAP Sub-Committee; The Sub-committee has put together a training manual which has been approved by the Idaho Sheriff's Association, the Idaho Chiefs of Police Association and POST Academy. The Training Manual, upon the gathering of this data, was going to press to be distributed to each PSAP in Idaho in January 2010; the PSAP Sub-Committee is developing a website where this information will be available and accessible.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Idaho full-time Dispatchers are covered by Idaho PERSI as is any full-time employee of any state, county or city government. For more information, visit Idaho PERSI's website at <http://www.persi.state.id.us/>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://labor.idaho.gov/dnn/idl/laborlaws/tabid/667/default.aspx>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

ILLINOIS

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

P33 Certified: *Naperville Public Safety Answering Point*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Defined benefits (mandatory participation) Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund *IMRF can be found at <http://www.imrf.org/>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.state.il.us/agencyidol/laws/laws.htm>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

INDIANA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators. A training standard related to EMD can be found in Indiana Code 16-31-3.5. For further, visit <http://www.in.gov/legislative/ic/code/title16/ar31/ch3.5.html>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

IOWA

TRAINING STANDARDS

A training requirement within the first year exists. For further information visit <http://www.state.ia.us.ilea/Telecom.htm>.

P33 Certified: *City of Cedar Rapids Joint Communications Agency*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit <http://www.ipers.org/>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.iowaworkforce.org/labor/>. Links are on the lower left of the page.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

KANSAS

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit www.kpers.org.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit www.dol.ks.gov.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

KENTUCKY

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

LOUISIANA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Covered under the agency's retirement system.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Generally, Public Safety Telecommunicators are considered "essential" personnel and are considered Public Safety employees.

MAINE

TRAINING STANDARDS

Training standards required within Maine for Public Safety Telecommunications can be found at <http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26ch0sec0.html>. See section 3-A training, basic training & continuing education. Also, <http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/25/title25sec2927.html>; see funding section for required EMD training for all Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Generally, dispatchers are covered as participating members of the state run employee retirement program. Some communities have alternate programs, may offer other benefits in lieu of state retirement. Visit, <http://www.msrs.org>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26ch0sec0.html>

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Subject to debate, depending upon who you ask that question; although not clearly defined by any statute or regulation, Public Safety Telecommunicators are generally considered public safety employees and they consider themselves as the "first, first responders." In Maine they are in a changing evolution as to how they are seen in the profession. Certainly with our increasing training and certification criteria, they are getting more recognition as a true profession.

MARYLAND

TRAINING STANDARDS

Training standards are described in COMAR and are regulated and inspected by the Emergency Number Systems Board under the direction of the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services. The legislative code number is 12.11.03.10. For further, visit www.dsd.state.md.us/comar.aspx.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Generally, in each county the people in Communications fall under their respective general county retirement plan. There may be a couple who fall under the general state employee retirement plan. There is no known differentiation between 911 operators or public safety telecommunications and all other general county employees. Different counties do provide different percentages.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit www.dllr.state.md.us

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes.

MASSACHUSETTS

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

MICHIGAN

TRAINING STANDARDS

Proposed training standards are in development. For more information, visit http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/Training_Recommendations_final_reports_10-22-2007_219712_7.pdf.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

State, County, Townships, Municipal or individual authorities have quite a variety of retirement programs.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit [http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-10573\)35828000,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-10573)35828000,00.html)

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Generally yes. Again, it depends upon who they work for, but the general designation is First Responder.

MINNESOTA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

MISSISSIPPI

TRAINING STANDARDS

The Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training (BETST) Professional Certification Policy and Procedures Manual, Mississippi defines training requirements of Public Safety Telecommunicators. For further information visit: [http://www.dps.state.ms.us/dps/dps.nsf/allforms/65A5CA97BGFD3FDD86256D2E007556A1/\\$File/BETST%20Policy%20&%20Procedures%20manual%20-%20SOS%20v2009%20-%20rev%2004-03-2009.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.dps.state.ms.us/dps/dps.nsf/allforms/65A5CA97BGFD3FDD86256D2E007556A1/$File/BETST%20Policy%20&%20Procedures%20manual%20-%20SOS%20v2009%20-%20rev%2004-03-2009.pdf?OpenElement) and <http://www.dps.state.ms.us/dps/dps.nsf/divpages/ps2ost-emt-requirements?OpenDocument>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Public Safety Telecommunicators are covered by the state or local Public Safety or general government employee retirement programs. Different agencies do different things. For more information, visit <http://www.pers.state.ms.us/>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.laborlawtalk.com/archive/index.php/f-73.html>

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes, in name only. It appears there is a self-imposed title of Public Safety; however, the same benefits available to fire and law enforcement services as part of the public safety team are not afforded to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

MISSOURI

TRAINING STANDARDS

Training standards are applicable in Missouri and are currently under revision. For more information visit <http://sema.dps.mo.gov/911/911Page.htm>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.dolir.mo.gov/>

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Not officially.

MONTANA

TRAINING STANDARDS

Training standards applicable in Montana can be found in Montana Code 7-31203. For more information, visit http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/mca_toc/7.htm.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Montana has different configurations of PSAPs. Some are under County/City and some are governed by Boards. The retirement system, for the most part, is under PERS which is a 30 year system. Some are under the SRS or Sheriff's Retirement System which provides for 20 year retirement eligibility. Montana passed a law in 2005 that included Detention Officers in the SRS. Some dispatchers who work in a center with a detention center may qualify as Detention Officers. For recent activities, see <http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/2005/billhtml/SB0370.htm>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://dli.mt.gov/resources/laws.asp#stlaws>

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

For information, visit <http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/mcs/44/4/44-4-401.htm>.

NEBRASKA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

P33 Certified: *Lincoln Emergency Communications*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

In Lincoln, a local bargaining unit negotiates salaries and benefits. Pension is considered part of compensation for comparability. The City of Lincoln matches \$2 for every \$1 the employee contributes; however City/County, at the time the information was gathered, was exploring negotiating this to a \$1 for \$1 match in future labor contracts with all of the City's bargaining units (there are three (3), plus separate pensions for both police and fire). If adopted, this would apply only to newly hired personnel.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.dol.nebraska.gov/>. In addition to this, much of our salaries/benefits are governed by the Commission of Industrial Relations (CIR) – this is where comparability and other factors come into play and where disputes are settled. For additional, visit <http://www.ncir.ne.gov/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

NEVADA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators. A Governor appointed committee was established approximately 4 years ago. It was subsequently disbanded by the Governor approximately 2 years later without ever meeting.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit www.nvpers.org.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit www.laborcommissioner.com.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes - considered Public Safety. Not considered First Responders.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Public Safety Telecommunicators are included in Group I of the NH Retirement System. For information, visit <http://www.nhrs.org/>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.labor.state.nh.us/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes – considered Public Safety. Not considered First Responders.

NEW JERSEY

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

NEW MEXICO

TRAINING STANDARDS

The New Mexico Department of Public Safety certifies Public Safety Telecommunicators within one year of their hire date. The course requires 120 hours of classroom training, written tests and two practical exams. The 911 regulations (administered by the Department of Finance & Administration) require 20 hours of continuing education every two (2) years for telecommunicators. If the agency provides Emergency Medical Dispatch, additional training requirements may apply.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

NEW YORK

TRAINING STANDARDS

Training requirements for Public Safety Telecommunicators in New York may be found at <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/fire/911program/911notices.htm>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/>

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.labor.ny.us/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Generally considered public safety, but it depends on the agency.

NORTH CAROLINA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No training standard reportedly exists statewide and applicable to all Public Safety Telecommunicators. In North Carolina, a Telecommunicator Certification Course that is mandatory for those telecommunicators who work under the direction of a Sheriff. The course is a total 47 hours, which is covered in six days. It is offered through the NC Justice Academy, the NC Community College system and local agencies who become accredited through the NC Community College system and local agencies, who become accredited through the NC Sheriff Education and Training Standards Commission. You can read more about this at www.ncdoj.gov, click on law enforcement, and then click on Sheriff's standards on the left side of the page. In addition to the certification course, those who take that training and become "certified," as of January 1, 2007 are required to take sixteen (16) hours of mandatory in-service training. The topics and their hours change annually. The lesson plans are created by the NC Justice Academy and then disseminated to all who will deliver the training and meet the General Instructor Certification through the state of North Carolina.

NORTH CAROLINA CONT'D

Those who do not take the required training from January 1 to December 31 of the given year are subject to their certification being suspended until they come into compliance.

P33 Certified: *Durham Emergency Communications Center*

P33 Certified: *Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

In North Carolina it depends upon whether you work for a Sheriff's office, a municipality, city agency or state agency as to which kind of retirement system your monies go into. Currently, there is 30 years mandatory for public safety personnel. There has been talk about making it a 20 or 25 year retirement; however, to date that has not been approved.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit www.Nclabor.com.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes. In North Carolina, we are considered Public Safety Telecommunicators and/or Justice Officers. as referred to by statute synonymously.

NORTH DAKOTA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No defined training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Each communications center sets their own retirement policies.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.nd.gov/labor>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

OHIO

TRAINING STANDARDS

No defined training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

P33 Certified: *Hamilton County Department of Communications*

P33 Certified: *Cincinnati Police Communications Section*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Most Telecommunicators employed by the public sector are covered by Ohio's Public Employees Retirement System (<https://www.opers.org>.) Many larger cities (population 100,000 or greater) maintain their own retirement system.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.com/ohio.gov/laws/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

OKLAHOMA

TRAINING STANDARDS

No defined training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Oklahoma Highway Patrol Dispatchers have early retirement. Most county and local agencies do not and fit into general retirement programs. For more information, visit <http://www.ok.gov/redirect.php?link+id=401>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.ok.gov/odol/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

OREGON

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training certifications applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators and managed through the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST). They are the same agency that oversee policy and fire training certifications. For more information visit, <http://www.oregon.gov/DPSST/SC/docs/Rules/259-008-0011revisedtext5-20-09.pdf>. The DPSST works closely with the Oregon Chapter of APCO in defining its statewide training requirements for Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

There are a variety of governance models in Oregon. Some PSAPs are under a city or county and included in PERS or something similar. Some are "special districts" and have their own tax base; some are under the Oregon Revised Statute which is run by an intergovernmental council and not in PERS.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/BOLI/>. This is the link to the State of Oregon's Bureau of Labor.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes.

PENNSYLVANIA

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training standards applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators in Pennsylvania can be located at http://www.pema.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/programs_and_services/4547/911_program/458019.

P33 Certified: York County 9-1-1

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Depends on the employer.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.dli.state.pa.us/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Depends on the employer.

RHODE ISLAND

TRAINING STANDARDS

No information provided.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

SOUTH CAROLINA

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training standards applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators in South Carolina can be located at www.sccja.org. Training is provided through the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy 911 training.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Telecommunicators are covered under the SC State Retirement System unless an agency chooses to contribute extra to make them a part of the SC Law Enforcement Officer's retirement system. For more information, visit <http://www.retirement.sc.gov/>.

LABOR LAWS

South Carolina is a "right to work" state. For information on SC labor laws, visit <http://www.lir.state.sc.us/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

SOUTH DAKOTA

TRAINING STANDARDS

There is a two (2) week mandatory training for new telecommunicators hosted by the Law Enforcement Training Center (LET Center). For more information, visit <http://dci.sd.gov/let/index.htm>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The Public Safety Telecommunicators in South Dakota are covered under the same provisions as other general government employees. For more information, visit dol.sd.gov/bdcomm/dolerb/erbminute062906.pdf

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://dol.sd.gov/>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes – considered public safety.

TENNESSEE

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training required in Tennessee for Public Safety Telecommunicators requires no less than 40 hours of training.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit http://www.emergencydispatch.org/res_legislation.php

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit http://www.emergencydispatch.org/res_legislation.php.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

For more information, visit http://www.emergencydispatch.org/res_legislation.php.

TEXAS

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training requirements for Public Safety Telecommunicators in Texas are mandated through Texas Occupation Code 1701.352: 4 year training cycle 2009 to 2013: There are no minimum training hour requirements; Required Courses (Texas Occupation Code 1701.351(a-1) and 1701.352); 4 year training cycle 2009 to 2013: There are no required courses. For more information, visit http://www.tcleose.state.tx.us/content/law_enforcement_tele.cfm.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

UTAH

TRAINING STANDARDS

The required certifications in Utah are BCI (for police dispatch agencies) and EMD as per the BEMS rules for dispatch center designation. Utah does have POST certification, and although it is not mandated, the majority of dispatchers in the state are certified. Some agencies throughout the state have used APCO's CTO Certification program, but it is not mandated and each agency has trainer specifics. BEMS accepts several EMD programs (Priority Dispatch, a state system developed years ago, APCO). POST: 40 hour course initially with 20 hours annually; EMD: 12 hours annually; BCI does not have required recertification hours, but an operator must recertify every 2 years. State legislation for EMS designations and also for POST (although POST is not mandatory). When POST certification was developed, dispatchers were grandfathered in as long as they had other required certifications (EMD, BCI, and CPR). The grandfathering only applied in the first year of the certification program being implemented, and only for those who were employed at the time of the legislation passing. For additional information, visit <http://publicsafety.utah.gov/post/portal/index.html>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Most are covered by state retirement. There is also ICMA, depending on how they are classified. For more information, visit <http://www.urs.org>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://www.laborcommission.utah.gov/index.html>. Most dispatch agencies work an 80 hour pay period/40 hour week. Shifts range from 8-10-12 hours and we have both full and part time dispatchers throughout the state.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Varies from agency to agency. Some depending on whether they monitor inmates may be considered "sworn" versus civilian. Again, this depends on how they are classified at their agency and what their job duties entail.

VERMONT

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators include a "Certification." In order to be certified, candidates must 1) complete the Board's 40-hour basic telecommunicator course and achieve a passing grade on all exams, 2) complete the board's operations course and achieve a passing grade on all exams; and 3) receive CPR certification within the twelve months prior to attending the required training.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

VIRGINIA

TRAINING STANDARDS

Defined training standard for Public Safety Telecommunicators in Virginia are governed by legislative mandate and facilitated through the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The "mandated" training is unfunded and only mandates a curriculum for law enforcement dispatching and does not include FIRE/EMS/EMD training requirements. There are no requirements for in-service or continuing education for Public Safety Telecommunicators – no additional training ever is required after the initial certification. The VA Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) encourages the training of dispatchers to facilitate EMD and provide an in-state accreditation program which includes a training requirement for EMD. EMD in Virginia is not required, but strongly suggested and fully supported by the OEMS. For more information, visit www.dcjs.virginia.gov.

P33 Certified: *Charlottesville-UVA-Albemarle County Emergency Communications Center*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Public Safety Telecommunicators (Dispatchers) fall under the Virginia Retirement System which requires 30 years of service. For more information, visit <http://www.varetire.org/Members/Benefits/DefinedBenefit/Index.asp>. Some larger localities (Fairfax County) offer a 25 year retirement through a retirement plan offered solely through their County. Other public safety personnel, including corrections officers, are classified different and have a reduced retirement plan.

LABOR LAWS

Virginia is a 'right to work' state. For more information, see Title 16, Labor and Employment of the Virginia Administrative Code.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No. To do so would require a legislative change in statute.

WASHINGTON

TRAINING STANDARDS

There are no defined training standards reportedly existing statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators in Washington. Many follow CJTC training. For more information, visit www.cjtc.state.wa.us.

P33 Certified: *Valley Communications Center*

P33 Certified: *North East King County Regional Public Safety Communication Agency (NORCOM)*

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

For information, visit www.drs.wa.gov.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit www.lni.wa.gov.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No.

WEST VIRGINIA

TRAINING STANDARDS

An unsubstantiated training requirement for Public Safety Telecommunicators compliance with APCO's 40 hour course is reported. For more information, visit <http://law.justis.com/westvirginia/codes/24/wvc24-6-5.html>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

No information provided.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

No information provided.

WISCONSIN

TRAINING STANDARDS

No defined training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Each hiring authority decides the retirement process. Not all dispatchers are covered under the state retirement plan, but most are. For more information, visit <http://etf.wi.gov/>.

LABOR LAWS

No information provided.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Unsure; believes general considered public safety but not first responders.

WYOMING

TRAINING STANDARDS

A defined training standard reportedly exists statewide or applicable to Public Safety Telecommunicators through the Wyoming Peace Officer Standards and Training Program. For more information, visit <http://attorneygeneral.state.wy.us/post.htm>.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Telecommunicators, statewide, are covered under the Law Enforcement plan at the Wyoming Retirement System. Telecommunicators at the Wyoming Highway Patrol have their own plan within the Wyoming Retirement System. For more information, visit <http://retirement.state.wy.us/>.

LABOR LAWS

For information, visit <http://doe.wyo.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

ARE PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S CONSIDERED PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES AND/OR FIRST RESPONDERS?

Yes – considered public safety employees. Not considered first responders.

INITIAL FINDINGS

F 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 Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) pre-arrival instruction and associated certifications for 9-1-1 public safety communications personnel..... who everyday staff the gateway through which the approximately 260,000 9-1-1 calls made daily in the United States pass. Some of these states and jurisdictions require more training and certification to be an auto mechanic, hair stylist or manicurist then to be a 9-1-1 Call Taker or Law Enforcement, Fire Rescue and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) dispatcher, who everyday, 24 hours a day, are confronted with making instantaneous life saving decisions and providing life saving advice and instruction, to citizens in their most critical time of need. However there are other states and jurisdictions that have done a good job at recognizing the criticality of those positions and the expectation citizens have when calling 9-1-1. Current and emerging technologies being utilized within the centers are placing additional demands upon staff. The overall initial findings, if this were a final report card would result in a grade of D. As PRO-CHRT continues its work and analyzes its initial findings, it is hoped that, given the importance of 9-1-1 to **EVERY** citizen in the US..... that those states and jurisdictions will move quickly to improve and/or initiate mandated comprehensive training, certification and EMD pre-arrival medical advice programs. The top areas of need and/or concern across the nation include:

- Need for comprehensive Mandated Initial Training.

- Need for ongoing in-service training required to ensure skills and knowledge are maintained and continually updated.
- Need for Emergency Medical Dispatch pre-arrival instruction programs to be adopted in every state and utilized by every 9-1-1 public safety communications center.
- Concern about the limited access to improved retirement benefits commensurate with the high stress of the 9-1-1 profession in relation to other public safety personnel.
- Concern about the restraints imposed by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) on the ability to schedule personal in relation to other public safety personnel.
- Concern about the continuing challenge of attracting highly qualified personnel the 9-1-1 profession and retaining them and the experience gained.
- Recognizing 9-1-1 personnel by title, training, certification, salary and benefits as fully fledged members of the public safety First Responder continuum..... because every public safety response begins with a 9-1-1 call.

TRAINING

9-1-1 Public Safety communications training have and continue to be developed by APCO and other organizations. However, APCO is the only public safety communications association accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to develop true STANDARDS and APCO pursues and assumes that responsibility very seriously. Identifying three (3) primary target areas for standards development, i.e. training, operations, and technology, APCO has set out to provide a comprehensive suite of STANDARDS for use throughout the industry.¹

Public Safety Training STANDARDS will help facilitate the training of 9-1-1 and Law Enforcement, Fire-Rescue and EMS dispatchers and other supporting staff, assisting Public Safety Communications Centers (PSCC) establishment of baseline criteria for training, and provide baselines for expectations in the PSCC and the individual(s) who every day support the public's request for help and the response of the public safety team.

The Minimum Training Standards for (Public Safety) Telecommunicators, formerly Project 33 or P33, provides a comprehensive outline for training programs and curriculum. The APCO's (Public Safety Communications) Call 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"*.

The following have completed the requirements and are P33 certified:

- ✓ Cincinnati Police Communications Section (OH)
- ✓ Delaware State Police Communications Section (DE)

APCO PROJECT 33 CERTIFICATIONS AS OF August 2010, include:	
Arizona	1
Colorado	3
Delaware	1
Florida	1
Indiana	1
Illinois	1
North Carolina	2
New England	1
Ohio	2
Pennsylvania	1
Virginia	1
Washington	2

¹ APCO Standards, www.apcostandards.org

P33 certifications cont'd:

- ✓ Denver 9-1-1 Communications Center (CO)
- ✓ El Paso County Sheriff's Office (CO)
- ✓ Fayetteville Police Department (AR)
- ✓ North East King County Regional Public Safety Communication Agency (NORCOM) (WA)
- ✓ Raleigh-Wake Emergency Communications (NC)
- ✓ York County 9-1-1 (PA)
- ✓ Valley Communications (WA)
- ✓ Lincoln Emergency Communications (NE)
- ✓ City of Cedar Rapids Joint Communications Agency (IA)
- ✓ Brevard County Sheriff's Office – Communications Center (FL)
- ✓ Durham Emergency Communications Center (NC)
- ✓ Hamilton County Department of Communications (OH)
- ✓ Naperville Public Safety Answering Point (IL)
- ✓ Summit County Communications Center (OH)

You may ask, "How does APCO insure compliance to these Minimum Standards?" Through APCO's Project 33 Training Certification Program began in 2006, agencies can have their training curriculums reviewed for compliance with this standard. Each of these agencies have had their training programs recognized as having achieved certified compliance in meeting or exceeding the APCO Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators (2006).

"For many years APCO International has established competent training standards, which effectively prepare trainees to better understand their role and responsibilities within both public safety and related public service occupations," APCO International Executive Director George S. Rice, Jr. said. "We congratulate the recipients for recognizing the need for certification in their center and for the hard work employed to achieve the standard."

Although the number reflected may seem small in comparison to the number of individual agencies and/or training programs, it is through the efforts of PRO CHRT that an awareness of this essential tool can be utilized to insure a standard and comprehensive training program. It is the desire of this Taskforce that, through the support of localities, states and federal officials, that these minimum training standards can be seen as an opportunity to insure an up-to-date and current training opportunity for every public safety telecommunicator in the country, to insure these individuals receive all of the tools necessary to perform their very difficult and stressful task for, as we all know, those who are trained in the truest sense of the word will deliver a better product. This equates to individuals performing to the highest level across this country on a consistent and at a level expected by every citizen in this country.

A special thank you to the Virginia and Montana Chapters of APCO for their assistance in funding the printing of this document.

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials - International

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's Project 33 - 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.
- That training, operational and technical standards are utilized and that the public safety communications standards continue to developed in support of the profession.