APCO ProCHRT

Professional Communications Human Resources Committee

2018 Report

The ProCHRT COMMITTEE ACKNOWEDGES THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

This report is a reflection of the work of the APCO ProCHRT Committee during the past year. The Committee continues to support the mission of ProCHRT and to achieve the goals that align with the Long Range Strategic Plan of APCO International. This report updates the survey results from the 2015 report as well as highlights a new survey about quality assurance and quality improvement. Committee members have been actively monitoring publications and social media to identify trending topics and issues for public safety communications personnel.

Public safety telecommunicators (PSTs) are rarely recognized for the work that they do because it is behind the scenes. Even though the role played is not as visible to the public as that of other first responders, it is every bit as vital and indispensable. PSTs are the first of the first responders and deserve to be recognized as part of emergency communications. ProCHRT has worked hard this year to recognize the work of PSTs on our social media platforms and hope to share an exciting new recognition program within the next few months.

As emergency communications centers (ECCs) embrace Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) technology the way business is conducted will change. PSTs must constantly learn to operate new equipment and computer systems. PSTs will field, process and disseminate images, texts and videos. All of this can affect the health and well-being of PSTs. The benefits of sharing our challenges, experiences, successes and even failures are exponential. PSTs live by the saying "don't reinvent the wheel" - learn from the trials and tribulations of others.

It is important to recognize that with our ever-changing environment and technology advancements that now, more than ever before, we need to prepare our staff for what is ahead. PSTs are the caller's first contact during a critical situation and their training and skills affect the outcome that is crucial to each and every situation. ProCHRT is committed to supporting these highly trained individuals that perform this critical role and serve the public and their community each and every day.

Sincerely,

Celeste Baldino

Celeste Baldino

ProCHRT Chair 2017-2018

TOOLBOX WORKGROUP

Here is what is in the APCO ProCHRT Toolbox!

The ProCHRT Toolbox is available online and free for anyone to use - you don't have to be a member of APCO to access it. The Toolbox contains valuable resources under the following topics:

- Personnel and Recognition
- Training/Certification/Standards
- Public Education and Media Relations
- Legislative Resources
- Public Safety Communication Resources
- Health and Wellness Resources

APCO's Executive Board established a goal to provide APCO membership information regarding trending topics affecting PSTs. Where best to find trending topics? PSConnect! The Toolbox Workgroup monitors PSConnect to determine the trending topics and whether inclusion in the Toolbox is warranted or to provide a link to the information via comment in the discussion group. The Toolbox Workgroup continues to make this goal a priority.

This year the Toolbox Workgroup updated files and refreshed information within the Toolbox as links became broken and out of date.

The goal and purpose of this Workgroup is to educate APCO members on this valuable tool and the resources contained within it while continuing to increase its contents to include up and coming trending topics within our profession.

SOCIAL MEDIA WORKGROUP

The Social Media Workgroup members were appointed as administrative editors for ProCHRT's social media outlets. The Workgroup's primary objective this year was to get more interaction on Facebook. They entered several posts to find out what social media followers were interested in. At the time of this report ProCHRT had 1,230 followers.

ProCHRT's Twitter currently has 923 followers. The Workgroup worked very hard to update the page and the goal is to reach 1,000 followers.

The Workgroup did investigate the possible creation of an Instagram account, however after further discussion it was felt that it was best to just focus on Facebook and Twitter.

The 2017-2018 Committee was tasked with the goal to provide positive recognition of PSTs via social media. The group worked on a recognition program which was approved by the Executive Committee in June 2018. Look for more information about "Teammates in Action" in the 2018-2019 committee year!

CHAPTER RESOURCE WORKGROUP

In accordance with ProCHRT's Strategic Plan for Education, Outreach and Awareness, we encourage each chapter to establish a Chapter ProCHRT Committee. Because change begins at the local level these committees become advocates at the state and chapter level, ultimately influencing change on a larger scale.

The Chapter Resource Workgroup is made up of chapter ProCHRT chairs and/or chapter presidents. This group has one or two conference calls during the committee year and meets at the APCO International Conference. They communicate directly via the established PSConnect community. One of the goals of this group was to update the PSConnect community membership, which can be difficult to keep up to date with the ever-changing chapter chairs and chapter presidents. Contact was made with chapter presidents as well as with the current PSConnect community members.

A conference call was held in April 2018. There were 15 members on the call representing 10 different chapters. Two of the chapters attending wanted information on how to start a ProCHRT Committee. Information was shared during the call and follow-up correspondence was provided to those who requested it. A common theme on these calls is the ability to provide updated information to the membership and to garner more participation, not just on conference calls, but through regular interaction and conversation on the PSConnect community.

The chapters within APCO encompass a unique and diverse group. Some chapters are made up of several individual states where some are made up of just one state. These chapters may communicate with each other on issues such as retention, retirement or any other topics concerning the chapter members. The Chapter Resource Workgroup encourages these chapters to use the PSConnect community to express these needs and discuss what has been successful for others. There is no need to reinvent the wheel when everyone is willing to share information, success stories and failures alike to help others. This collaboration of members within the Chapter Resource Workgroup helps to make ProCHRT a valuable resource to all of our members.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHT

Recent Work of the Virginia Chapter of APCO's ProCHRT Committee

In 2009, the Virginia Chapter of APCO created a taskforce known as Virginia APCO ProCHRT charged with exploring options and topics related to the human (telecommunicator) aspect of those working under the headsets. The focus of the Taskforce for several years was on various topics, including those related to retirement, scheduling, recognition and education, as well as focusing on training and emergency medical dispatch (EMD). After several years, the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Taskforce transitioned into the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee, becoming a permanent committee of the Virginia Chapter.

Recently the focus of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee shifted towards two primary topics: training for those in ECCs and promoting EMD with the majority of time/effort devoted toward providing EMD educational outreach to localities. EMD educational outreach continues to be the primary focus of this committee, however it recognizes that all of the other topics/focuses mentioned earlier remain important and in need of additional attention.

The primary focus of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee is on promoting EMD in the state of Virginia in localities where it is not provided. Currently approximately 30% of ECCs in the state do not provide EMD services during the call processing and dispatch of emergency medical service (EMS) incidents. While there are some states where EMD services are mandated, Virginia is not one of them. EMD is a local (county, city and town) decision in Virginia. There are two overarching focuses of an EMD program, one being a call processing format that is uniform and assists in resource allocation during the dispatch of EMS incidents and the second being the provision to provide pre-arrival instructions to callers to initiate some degree of patient care until EMS personnel arrive on scene with a patient. These pre-arrival instructions can be routine or can be life-saving such as providing CPR instructions for someone not breathing or instructions on how to reduce or stop severe bleeding. The primary focus of the EMD outreach efforts of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee has been geared toward the capabilities of an EMD program to provide a standardized approach to call processing of EMS incidents and providing pre-arrival instructions, with less focus on how a locality or ECC allocates resources during EMS incidents.

The members of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee devoted much of early 2016 toward developing plans for EMD educational outreach, including how to deliver the message of the importance of EMD, how to implement and where to deliver the message. It was determined that the intent of the message should be in an educational format, remembering the implementation of EMD is a local decision. The goal was to provide information about EMD and how to implement. By late 2016, after numerous meetings and several work sessions of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee, the presentation was finalized as well as a plan for initial

outreach efforts; these efforts were to contact localities where EMD is not offered and ask if they would provide an opportunity to our group to discuss EMD.

In early 2017, the first request from a locality was received, inviting members of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee to provide the EMD presentation and discuss how it could be implemented. Our initial expectations were, and continue to be, for several of the committee members to attend each outreach session, for the session to last one-two hours, and to ensure there is time to discuss an EMD program, including time for Q&A. Having several committee members present at each EMD outreach opportunity allows for different conversations and perspectives as needs can vary between rural, suburban and urban ECCs. The request for opportunities of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee's presentation continued throughout 2017 as well as into 2018 with four in-person and one telephone EMD educational outreach. Additional requests have been made since the writing of this report. These educational outreach meetings have been attended by varying audiences, including representatives from fire, EMS, law enforcement, ECC leadership and supervisory personnel as well as local government officials and information technology personnel.

The overall focus of the EMD outreach presentation is to provide an overview of what EMD is and is not, how to implement and fund it, address the deterrents to implementation and share success stories from localities in Virginia where EMD programs are already implemented. The presentation begins with a brief overview of APCO followed by information on EMD with a specific focus on EMD in Virginia.

The focus then shifts to educating ECCs in areas identified below for not moving forward with an EMD program. Concerns addressed included:

- How to fund an EMD program; using a state grant program; the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund Grant (RSAF Grant) which is administered by the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS).

- Sufficient staffing at the ECC assuring that EMD can be implemented generally without the need for additional staff.

- Changing the focus of staff on the dispatch floor away from other critical needs such as law enforcement and field unit safety; identifying how even with an EMD program in place the focus of these other critical needs remains a priority.

- Increased liability for the locality or the agency; identifying how in today's society not providing EMD to the public could add additional liability.

- Comments from current dispatch personnel with a focus on how EMD will add additional responsibilities and training, but is an industry recognized function of ECC personnel.

These efforts are supported in a partnership with OEMS. For the last several years OEMS has committed staff to actively participate in the efforts of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee. This includes assisting in the formation of the outreach presentation, attending the outreach presentations, serving as subject matter experts on details of the state RSAF grant, as well as in the ongoing revisions and changes to the presentations since they were first developed. The partnership between Virginia APCO ProCHRT and OEMS has been instrumental to its success.

The committee maintains momentum during regular conference calls and meetings to update the presentation content based on feedback from the localities and members present. As with any presentation or training session periodic modifications and updates should be considered. A presentation needs to be measured for both the content and relevance of the information presented as well as the delivery of the material.

Most of the members of the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee are APCO members using their time to inform other localities on a program that has the potential to improve service delivery to the community.

While the goal is implementation of the EMD program, presenting the information to localities is still assisting them to make an informed choice.

For questions or for additional information, contact Jeff Flournoy at jflournoy@co.northampton.va.us.

Virginia APCO Chapter Presidents (since creation of the ProCHRT Taskforce in 2009) - Carol Adams (2009), Karen Porterfield (2010), Steve Souder (2011), Julie McKercher (2012), Rich Troshak (2013), Athena Plummer (2014), Rich Troshak (2015), Nicki Tidey (2016), JoAnne Munroe (2017), Gabe Elias (2018)

Virginia APCO ProCHRT Chairpersons - Carol Adams (Stafford County) - 2009-2013 ---- Athena Plummer (Virginia Beach) - 2013-2015 --- Jeffrey Flournoy (Eastern Shore of Virginia) - 2015-Current

Current Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee Members - Steve Weis (Henrico County), Derrick Ruble (Tazewell County), Kathleen Boone (Virginia Beach), Curt Shaffer (Hanover County), Celeste Baldino (Charlottesville-UVA-Albemarle), Denice Marrs (Dinwiddie County), April Corbin (Harrisonburg-Rockingham), Sabrina Ward (Culpepper County), Jo-Anne Munroe (retired City of Alexandria), and Jeffrey Flournoy (Eastern Shore of Virginia)

Jeffrey Flournoy - ESVA 9-1-1 Center Director - Eastern Shore of Virginia - Virginia APCO ProCHRT Chairperson - May 2018

The Art of Growing PSTs With Two Words

Thank you! These two words hold so much power. As a manager, supervisor, communications officer or any other employee, you have the chance to make a difference in your own center with these two words. s (also known as public safety dispatchers, emergency dispatchers, telecommunications officers, telecommunicators or 9-1-1 dispatchers) receive calls from individuals who need assistance from firefighters, police officers and emergency medical services. Once information is obtained from the caller, PSTs activate the services necessary to respond to the nature of the call for help. A PST also operates as the eyes and ears for responding units before they get to the scene, obtaining the pertinent information to relay to field units to help ensure the safety of the responders. These are the people behind the voice on the radio. The ones on the phone that no one ever sees but know when they call 9-1-1 they will always be there. They are the first, first responders and most often the unsung heroes.

Telecommunicators are the calm of the storm when things are going crazy all around them. They work for low pay, long hours, holidays, weekends and shift work. There are many times they sacrifice precious moments with their family to serve the needs of the community and emergency responders. They miss moments when their own little ones take their first steps, Christmas presents being unwrapped, family reunions, sporting events or weddings.

I read a quote in an article that stated "to grow you I must know you" and it really stuck out for me. The more I thought about it, the more that I realized that as managers and supervisors, we are growing future leaders. Yes, I know it may not seem that way, but if you are in this business very long you will understand this by seeing people you have worked with, supervised or managed either stay on board and work their way up through the ranks or leave and become nurses, law enforcement officers, teachers, firefighters, paramedics and even judges.   The road between thank you and leadership is a lot straighter of a path than we may think.

A thank you can be a good investment. Taking the time to just walk around the center and do a "temperature check" saying good morning and making sure that everyone is ready to take on the day. It's important to let them know that you care about them on a personal level and you don't just see them as someone filling the seat. It can also be something as small as putting a sticky note at their console saying, "you rocked that" or making sure you take the time to recognize them during National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week.

You may wonder "how does this have anything to do with them becoming future leaders?" All of this adds up to confidence. When people have confidence they can do amazing things. When you as a manager or supervisor provide that support it is like watching them truly grow into who they are meant to be. Watching that moment when you know they can be so much more and knowing you helped shape that possibility with just those two words.

I found the following statistics: 60% of best-in-class organizations stated that employee recognition is extremely valuable in driving individual performance. In these environments, where opportunity and wellbeing are part of the culture, recognizing employee performance increases engagement by almost 60%. Praise and commendation from managers was rated the top motivator for performance beating out financial incentives by a majority of workers (67%). Recognition is an important psychological need. Employees who know that they will receive recognition will have a strong incentive to do so. When asked what leaders could do more of to improve engagement and 58% of respondents replied "give recognition."

This shows how simple words like "thank you" and "good job" can be powerful! I know that ECCs are not looked at as corporations, but when you think about it they are providing an invaluable service. They are life lines for the officers they serve, the firefighters who could call mayday, to everyday citizens that call for family members that are in cardiac arrest or to someone calling in reporting a stoplight out. They keep the city or county functioning and all the while waiting for the next phone to ring. They work tirelessly every day with ever changing equipment and training on the newest techniques.

After taking all of this into account, how can we not think that one THANK YOU may make a true difference and that we as managers and supervisors are truly blessed with the opportunity to bring out the best in our people with just those two little words.

Written by Teresa Hudson member of the Social Media Workgroup of the 2017-2018 ProCHRT Committee.

APCO PROJECT 43: BROADBAND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PSAP

Project 43 examines the impacts that the nationwide public safety broadband network (NPSBN) will have on ECCs. In combination with Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) the broadband network will change the dynamics of public safety communications more than any other development since computer-aided-dispatch and the implementation of radio systems. NG9-1-1 will greatly expand the amount of information the public can provide to the emergency communication centers. Broadband will not only allow this information to be relayed to field responders, but also exponentially expand data received from scenes both prior to and after responders have arrived.

This change will be an evolution. A glimpse of this evolution can be seen today in fusion centers and data portals. Many centers now have data portals that combine data received from traffic cameras, speed detectors, weather, CAD and portable radio GPS. Broadband will add a myriad of data sources which will increase the speed and efficiency of emergency communications. (This will also create the ugliest of words in a telecommunicators' lexicon: change.) Regardless of how the evolution of broadband affects each ECC, it will bring increasingly rapid changes in both the way calls are processed and how each ECC communicates with one another and other entities such as real-time crime centers (RTCC) and fusion centers. Another foreshadowing of broadband is with enhanced 9-1-1 ANI services provided by private companies. Under a broadband environment, individuals may share this information directly with first responders in both the ECC and field with smart home broadband communicating with the NPSBN.

Project 43 examines six aspects of the impact broadband will have: operations, governance, cybersecurity, technology, training and workforce. For the scope of ProCHRT, we will focus on the impacts of operations, training and workforce. Each of these aspects will greatly expand the challenges currently facing ECCs. The amount of data that can be potentially received is overwhelming.   The Internet of Things (IoTs) can potentially provide data to centers, such as automatic crash notifications devices (ACNs), smart home data and telemetry devices to monitor the vitals of responders in hostile environments. Not all centers will have the resources to manage this data, resulting in some centers specializing in receiving higher levels

of broadband data. This will result in the need for much more communication between ECCs and a higher degree of "virtual consolidation." As technology rapidly evolves in the NextGen and NPSBN environment training will become more essential. This in turn will demand further state mandates for minimum training standards and licensing requirements. A better way of recruiting staff and screening potential trainees will need to be developed to prevent an unmanageable level of turnover.

The most significant advantage of NG9-1-1 and the NPSBN will be interoperability. Today, many centers have rollovers set for their 9-1-1 trunks to ring at another ECC after a specified period. In the broadband environment rules will determine such rollovers based upon proximity of the calls and the type of incoming information being received, such as text, video, voice, etc. Moreover, this information can be moved from one center to another as needed. The incoming data will not be limited to those reporting emergencies. ECCs will be able to pull information when there is an active incident. If you look at today's data portals, then expand it to obtain information from anything with an IP address you can begin to see how rapidly things will expand. Today freeway camera maps can be viewed and sensors send data on traffic flow. This will expand to include such things as system monitors within buildings. If there is a fire, ECCs will be able to access alarm system data and camera systems, then provide the information obtained to responders en route to the scene. On scene there is the potential accountability systems that monitor firefighter location and essential information such as air tank levels as well as their physical condition. The PST at the center can then advise the incident commander when individuals need rehab.

The potential of broadband in the ECC is limitless. Not only will dashboard cameras be viewable and shareable, but sensors can alert the centers when a gun is drawn from a holster. Other data can be pushed out at the discretion of individuals. People may opt to allow responders access to their smart home data. This would offer responders instant information on the layout of a house that is on fire or the pictures of special needs residents who may be missing or endangered. The treatment of medical emergencies will also benefit from broadband. The Internet of Life-Saving Things (IoLST) will provide needed medical information to responders prior to arriving on scene. In rural areas crash notification via broadband may allow PSTs to receive data on the number of passengers and the severity of the damage and or injuries. This may allow for air ambulances to be pre-alerted if needed or prevent them from being sent if not needed, allowing an asset to remain available for other calls.

Broadband and land mobile radio (LMR) will also create operational changes. The infrastructure created for broadband will complement the infrastructure of LMR. This will allow interoperability between the systems. Field responders will be able to access the radio system via their smart device. Some see this mission-critical-push-to-talk (MCPTT) broadband communication system being the primary field communication device with LMR becoming a backup system.

ECC size will drive how quickly the NPSBN will make communications centers evolve with the technology. A hybrid of communications will likely develop in most states. Urban areas will likely combine broadband into their smart city systems, while rural centers will partner with a state or regional multimedia processing centers. But even for the centers who outsource some NG9-1-1 and broadband features they will need to effectively communicate with the regional centers, RTCC and fusion centers. Most medium size and larger centers split PSTs between call takers and radio operators. A new position dedicated to data will likely emerge. Single incidents will result in multiple forms of information received in ECCs. The skill set of interrogating callers following a standard protocol will be accompanied with the task of interpreting visual data. This task will not only include comprehending that data, but determining what information needs to be forwarded to the field responders. Monitoring social media will create yet another data source to be managed within the evolving PSAP/ECC/regional system structure. These will add to the required skillsets PSTs must develop and hone as broadband develops.

Training standards will need to adapt to the new world of NG9-1-1 and the FirstNet environment. Implementing a new computer-aided-dispatch system often creates a monumental training challenge. In the broadband environment change will but much more rapid and require ever evolving skillsets. States will need to further develop minimum training standards. While some smaller ECCs may be slow to adopt the emerging technology the rapidly expanding mutual aid between ECCs will require all PSTs to be familiar with the processing of data with FirstNet.

Most centers currently have some protocol for processing voice calls. Training and quality assurance and improvement programs are an arduous enough task just for this process. In the broadband environment PSTs will process calls using real time video received from the public, traffic or surveillance cameras and unmanned aerial vehicles. These videos may include vehicles placards listing cargo that may be hazardous. They will also be in positions to receive biometric data on victims that may be corroborated with video data providing an initial assessment of the scene and adjust resources based upon this data. All this data may be shared with other ECCs or sent to field responders. PSTs will need to be trained on what data is the most pertinent to field responders.

The public will expect services received from 9-1-1 to be consistent across jurisdictions. The disparate training standards that exist between and even within states will need to be addressed. There will be further generational challenges as PSTs who have grown up with technology will adapt quicker. However, even for technology savvy staff the technology used will be much more fluid than anything seen in public safety communications prior. In additional to training the impact of stress will need to be addressed. PSTs will be exposed to a much higher load of input in the form of data, pictures, texts and video in addition to the voiced calls. The mental health of PSTs will need to be proactively monitored and any critical incident will need a debriefing process in place.

The Project 43 Report notes that turnover can be as high as 56% in some large centers. Large centers, ones that will most likely not outsource data and multimedia processing, will be the most impacted in the broadband environment. New standards for recruiting for ECCs must be considered. Current recruit assessments measure such abilities as data entry, audio recall and multitasking. New assessments must be developed to assess an individual's ability to analyze an influx of data including sensor date and graphical data. The knowledge, skills and abilities will expand rapidly. New KSAs will include a broader knowledge if IT systems, GIS, related mapping tools and social media proficiency. PST candidates will also need to possess demonstrative abilities to examine data for quality, authenticity and reliability. They will also be required to demonstrate what data is actionable for an event and what data must be stored and or shared with counterparts in fusion centers and what needs to be properly tagged and stored.

In addition to considering more specialized positions in the ECC environment a new model should be considered for other sub-unit options. Professionals with background in law enforcement investigations or medical professionals may become shared employee in an ECC system or employed at a regional level to examine data such as from crime scenes or multimedia of trauma victims to obtain a timely understanding of the event as it unfolds with a rapid influx of data.

NG9-1-1 is often defined as a network or network that will allow the public to provide more information about the emergency they a reporting. However, there is little to ensue uniformity as this technology develops. The NPSBN is unfolding in a systematic and standard fashion. It will provoke change in the way public safety is delivered rapidly. While it is too soon to detail how this network will evolve it is clear that this change is inevitable and rapidly approaching. ECC mangers and PSTs need to be prepared to hone their skills and be proactive in preparing for this technology.

QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SURVEY SUMMARY

At the 2017 APCO International Conference one of the requests that was asked of the ProCHRT Committee was to complete a survey on how ECCs complete QA/QI. On March 23, 2018, a survey was sent out and it was available for over a month. It was publicized on PSConnect in several forums and through several APCO chapters. 175 responses were received (not all were complete) and they ranged over 33 different states and Canada.

Of those who responded, over 83% reported that their ECCS complete quality assurance and quality improvement. Out of that 83%, 61% complete QA/QI on both fire/EMS and law enforcement, while 21% only complete QA/QI on fire/EMS and 18% on law enforcement only.

Overwhelmingly 94% reported that their ECC completes QA/QI on call taking, while 62% complete QA/QI on radio dispatching. 45% advise that this process is not mandated, 27.5% are mandated by their EMD program, 15% are mandated by accreditation, 5% are mandated by the state and 7.5% are mandated by another source. 97% reported that the QA/QI is completed internally within their agency, 32% via a dedicated QA/QI person, 44% via a supervisor and 24% by other members of staff.

When asked about the percentage of calls that were listened to each month the ranges were across the board (exact answers can be found in the in the ProCHRT Toolbox). Time spent on QA/QI also were across the board, most reported one QA/QI took less than 14 minutes while some reported that it took up to an hour depending on the type of QA/QI being completed.

Several agencies were willing to share their QA/QI program and scoring sheets with the ProCHRT Committee and this year's committee will be contacting these agencies to get the resources added to the Toolbox.

More detailed results follow and all data is in the ProCHRT Toolbox.

## Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Survey Results

1) What is the name, agency name, and a contact email or phone number of the person completing this survey? 170 answered and 5 skipped. (redacted from published report)

2) Does your agency do any form of QA/QI? 173 answered, 2 skipped. (Those that answered no were skipped to question 14 automatically as following questions did not apply.)
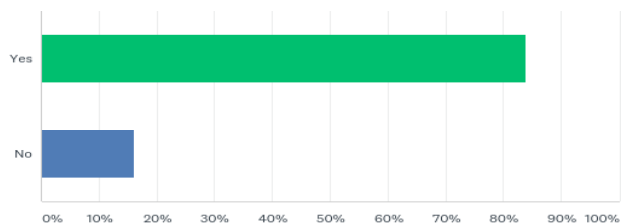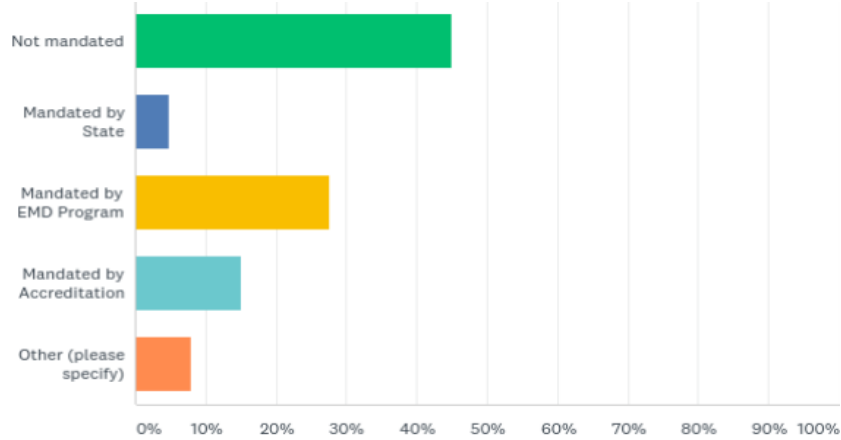

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	83.82%	145
No	16.18%	28
TOTAL		173

3) Does your agency do QA/QI on both law enforcement and fire/EMS? 127 answered, 48 skipped.
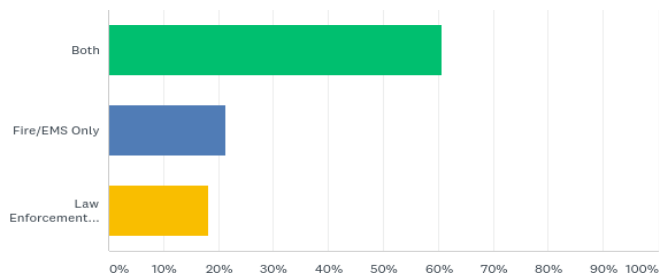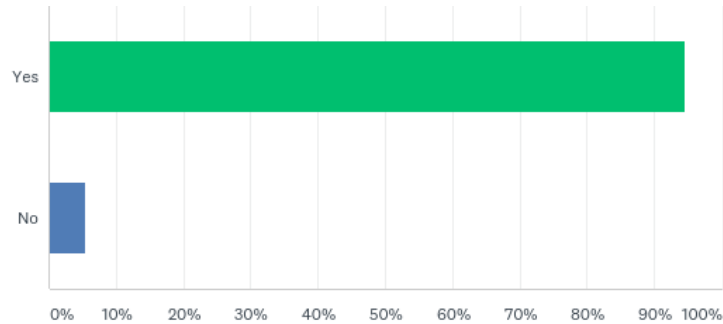

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Both	60.63%	77
Fire/EMS Only	21.26%	27
Law Enforcement Only	18.11%	23
TOTAL		127

4) Is your QA/QI mandated by your state, EMD Program or any other mandate? 127 answered, 48 skipped.
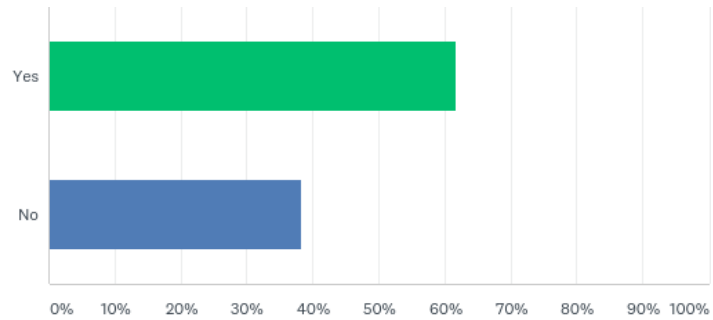

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not mandated	44.88%	57
Mandated by State	4.72%	6
Mandated by EMD Program	27.56%	35
Mandated by Accreditation	14.96%	19
Other (please specify)	7.87%	10
TOTAL		127

5) Does your agency do QA/QI on call taking? 127 answered, 48 skipped.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.49%	120
No	5.51%	7
TOTAL		127

6) Does your agency do QA/QI on radio dispatching? 128 answered, 47 skipped.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.72%	79
No	38.28%	49
TOTAL		128

7) How many or what percentage of calls does your agency QA/QI per month? 128 answered, 47 skipped.

Ranges were across the board. Answers can be viewed in the ProCHRT Toolbox.

8) Is your QA/QI completed internally or by someone outside your agency? 128 answered, 47 skipped.
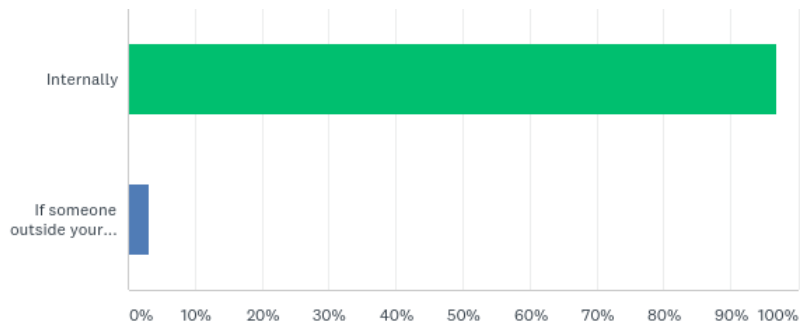
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Internally	96.88%	124
If someone outside your agency (please specify)	3.13%	4
TOTAL		128

9) If internally, who in your agency completes the QA/QI: a dedicated person, supervisor or someone else? 125 answered, 50 skipped.
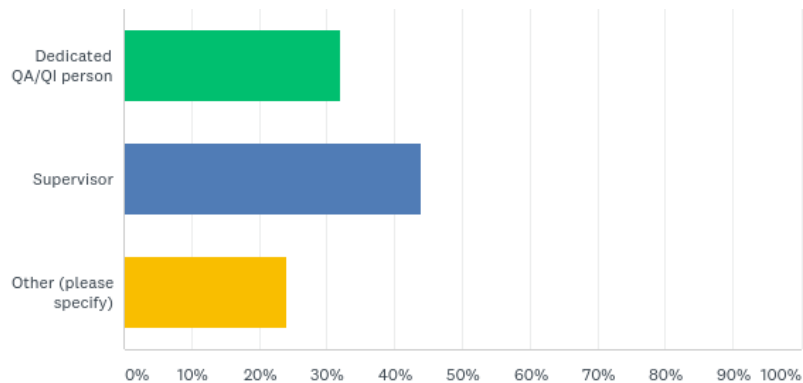
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Dedicated QA/QI person	32.00%	40
Supervisor	44.00%	55
Other (please specify)	24.00%	30
TOTAL		125

10) On average approximately how long does it take to complete one QA/QI? 127 answered, 48 skipped.

These answered varied as well. Answers were divided into 6 categories and are below:

      a) 0-14 minutes – 59 responses
      b) 15-29 minutes – 28 responses
      c) 30-44 minutes – 10 responses
      d) 45 -60 minutes – 8 responses
      e) Over an hour – 12 responses
      f) Unknown/Depends/Varies – 10 responses

11) If you find issues during QA/QI how are they addressed? 126 answered, 49 skipped.

Answers varied and can be viewed in the ProCHRT Toolbox.

12) Do you have a way for communications officers to make comments about specific QA/QI? 125 answered, 50 skipped.

104 responses were yes in some fashion. Some verbally, some via email, some on the response form, and some had a specific form to use for this.
18 responses were no
3 responses were not applicable or unknown

13) Would your agency be willing to share your QA/QI program and scoring sheets in our APCO ProCHRT Toolbox so that other agencies can benefit from them? 120 answered, 55 skipped.
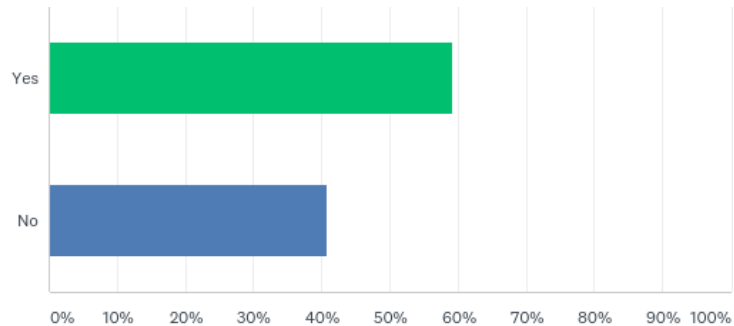
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.17%	71
No	40.83%	49
TOTAL		120

14) Would you be interested in learning more about how other agencies complete their QA/QI after this survey is completed? 147 answered, 28 skipped.
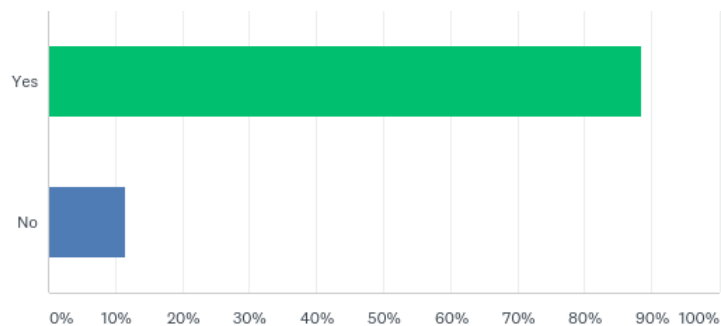
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.44%	130
No	11.56%	17
TOTAL		147

15) Anything else you would like to add on this topic? 62 answered, 113 skipped.

Answers to this question can be viewed in the ProCHRT Toolbox. During the upcoming committee year, ProCHRT will be adding more resources about QA/QI in the ProCHRT Toolbox and assisting those who had other questions or concerns that we can help with.

APCO PROCHRT 2018 SURVEY

And the Survey Says……

One fundamental goal of the APCO ProCHRT Committee is to provide resources, data and reference material to support our public safety professionals. In 2017, the committee solicited information from all APCO chapters/states on the status of the profession in the states they represented. The survey asked about each state's:

1. Basic and continuing education training requirements
2. Retirement benefits
3. Hiring requirements
4. EMD Regulations
5. Employee retention efforts
6. Chapter ProCHRT Committee information

In 2018, the previous year's replies were sent back to the chapters/states for updates and the full survey was sent to those chapters/states whose reply was not received the previous year. APCO representatives from 29 states replied to the survey in 2017. Nine states updated their information and three new states replied to the survey in 2018. Many of them included legislation references and detailed actions that their state officials were taking to achieve a particular goal legislatively. Here are a few excerpts from the 2018 survey.

Training Requirements:

Twenty of the 32 states that responded currently have training mandated by the state. Some highlights of the responses are below. Two states that don't have mandated training have voluntary requirements and at least three states are actively working on getting mandated training.

1. In California, neither law enforcement nor fire dispatch training is legislated. Most law enforcement agencies throughout the state (including California Highway Patrol) are affiliated with POST, which mandates a 120-hour Basic Dispatch Course. No specific training materials or content is required for the PST. However, some law agencies and most fire dispatch centers are not affiliated with POST. Those agencies are not mandated to provide training at all.

2. Connecticut Division of Statewide Emergency Communications (DSET) is responsible for providing training and certification of PSTs according to Connecticut General Statute Sec 28-30. There is a 24-hour state required program, but prior to the state class, telecommunicators must complete an online course and ICS.

3. In North Carolina, currently the only mandated training for PSTs is for those that fall under the direct supervision of a Sheriff. Sheriff telecommunicators are required to attend the Telecommunicator Certification Course through the NC Sheriff Standards and Training Division of the NC Department of Justice. This training is 47 hours. The NC 9-1-1 Board's Education Committee is currently working on the initial steps of establishing minimum training guidelines for all telecommunicators. However, this project is going to take legislative change, so they are in the very early steps of beginning a statewide telecommunicator certification.

4. In Idaho, 80 hours of POST academy course to be certified and 40 hours of continuing education every two years.

5. Indiana is currently working on legislated training

6. Nevada advised that legislature is currently being discussed and it could become mandated later this year.

7. In Virginia, the answer is yes and no. The legislated training in the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) state regulations do mandate initial training for dispatch personnel who dispatch law enforcement services within two years of being hired. There is no hour requirement in the required training, rather a curriculum to be covered, however 40 hours is commonly listed (although some academies cover the material using more than 40 hours) as time allotted for the instruction. The 'no' part of the answer is that the state regulations only apply to those ECCs dispatching law enforcement. While this covers most all ECCs in Virginia, those ECCs who may process 9-1-1 calls and only dispatch fire and/or EMS services (no law enforcement dispatch) are not required to comply with this state regulation. There are changes being considered to the curriculum as well as the addition of an in-service requirement expected (24 hours every two years)

In addition, 16 states reported state legislated PST certification and 16 reported none. Four states that reported that this was not legislated did report that there is a voluntary certification.

Retirement benefits vary greatly from state to state.

1. Arizona reports there was legislation at one time that allowed PSTs to be included in the same 25-year retirement system as correctional officers (CORP - which is not the 20-year public safety retirement). It required the agency/jurisdictional community to opt-in to the program. Not all agencies participated in the telecommunicator retirement program. Since then, the legislation has been rescinded and telecommunicators fall within whatever retirement program is available at that agency. For the PSTs that were enrolled in the CORP, they will remain there as long as they hold that position.

2. In California PSTs are not included in public safety retirement. Additionally, there is no reporting requirement for telecommunicators to report their classification so pulling data regarding retirement benefits is not an option. While it is possible some PSTs may be included in a privately funded city or county retirement system, we are unaware of even one example.

3. In Connecticut benefits are agency specific. Some telecommunicators fall under municipal retirement, state police telecommunicators are in the clerical union. University of Connecticut telecommunicators are in the protective services union under the Buildings and Grounds Patrol Officer. However, they are not considered for hazardous duty.

4. In Mississippi telecommunicators are under the PERS (Public Employee Retirement System of MS) that is the same for LE and fire (except for state police).

5. In Utah telecommunicators are eligible for the same retirement benefits as first responders if certain conditions are met, primarily that the PSTs are POST certified and work for an agency that has opted-in to the inclusion of telecommunicators. State ECCs were automatically 'opted-in' upon passage of the bill authorizing telecommunicator benefits. Local municipal/county/special district ECCs are given the option to include PSTs in public safety retirement through adoption of a resolution. Only one other local jurisdiction has done so to date. Once a local entity has opted in, they cannot opt out.

6. Wyoming telecommunicators have the same retirement benefits as law enforcement officers: 20 years and out with no age limitation drawing 50% pay. Each year after 20, the percentage increases 2.5% with a maximum payout of 75%

Most states have no emergency medical dispatch mandate.

1. In Connecticut, candidates must achieve a passing grade of 75% or better on the State of Connecticut Telecommunicator Exam and submit proof of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Certification. EMD provider is agency specific.
2. In Kentucky, EMD is required for all full time telecommunicators. Kentucky recently passed a statute that mandated T-CPR. Full time employees are already covered in their initial certification. Part time employees will be trained online using AHA standards.
3. In Maine, all ECC employees are required to be EMD certified.
4. In Montana, there are no requirements for agencies to provide EMD, but as of 2017, Montana Law Enforcement Academy includes three days of EMD instruction (King County EMD) within the two-week Public Safety Communications Officer Basic Course.
5. In Ohio Administrative Code 5507-1-09 outlines EMD and becomes effective May 12, 2018, for wireless primary ECCs. For non-wireless ECCs, it is best practice only.
6. In Oklahoma some agencies are certified with EMD but there is no requirement at this time.
7. Approximately 30% of localities in Virginia do not provide EMD services. The Virginia Office of Emergency Services does promote EMD and even has a program providing accreditation for EMD programs. Virginia Office of Emergency Services offers grant funding to implement EMD, however cannot mandate EMD. In addition, Virginia APCO Chapter's ProCHRT Committee is currently engaged in an EMD education outreach effort to promote EMD in those localities where it currently does not exist.
8. All EMS response agencies in Utah must be dispatched by a dispatch center designated by the state Bureau of EMS. The Bureau requires EMD certification for telecommunicators, so indirectly it is required for any ECC that dispatches EMS.

APCO ProCHRT Committees:

In the 2018 ProCHRT survey it was found that seven states have ProCHRT committees, in addition several states/chapters reported having creation of a committee on their radar.

1. Arizona: consistent statewide training standards
2. California: (1) Telecommunicator Culture - finalizing a resource guide to assist PSTs in identifying factors that influence the culture and offer suggestions and resources to actively manage the culture. (2) Telecommunicator Retirement/Benefit Research (3) Develop a Career Development Course for PSTs (4) Obtain certification through the CA State Fire Marshall's Office for a Basic Fire Dispatch Course. (5) Radio Workload Study that is being incorporated into the next version of Project RETAINS
3. Connecticut: getting the word out about ongoing training
4. Montana: mentoring in the industry
5. North Carolina: keeping the local chapter aware of what is happening on the International level of ProCHRT and keeping our local ECCs informed
6. Oklahoma: state mandated training requirements
7. Virginia: EMD educational outreach efforts in hopes to have all VA ECCs provide EMD

This is just a small example of the copious amount of information gathered in the 2017 and 2018 APCO International ProCHRT surveys. The full survey results can be found in the ProCHRT Toolbox.

LOOKING FORWARD

While the membership should be disappointed with the ruling on the reclassification of public safety telecommunicators, the future remains bright for our profession. There are many challenges ahead, but with challenges there are many opportunities as well. Emerging technology that will evolve out of the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network and NG9-1-1 will transform public safety communications in a way not seen since radios were added to patrol cars.

Emerging technology has been talked about for so many years that some may fall into a lackadaisical way of thinking, which is a serious hazard. E merging technology will cause more issues for ECCs already facing a dilemma with generational challenges and an aging workforce. Training will become more intense and recruitment and retention more challenging.

The interoperability between emergency communication centers, real time crime centers and urban and regional fusion centers will enhance public safety for both citizens and field responders alike. The huge amount of data available both from people reporting emergencies via messaging and images will be coupled with data more available from broadband. Smart cities, smart buildings and smart homes will offer access that will allow a treasure trove of data to be forwarded to responders. Operationally, data from so many sources and in such vast quantities will create the need for various positions within centers, locally and or regionally, to accommodate the skillsets required to interpret and relay this data.

Public safety telecommunicators will need to be proactive in their approach to training. Not only do they need to seek out training opportunities they need be aware of the issues their ECCs will face. Training for emerging technology will be an ongoing process and rapidly changing. ECC managers need to start planning on innovative approaches to recruitment and more sophisticated methods of assessing candidates.

Forms of governance will change within many local areas. ECCs will become more expensive to operate and many smaller centers will need to merge. However, virtual consolidation will also be a more viable alternative to the brick and mortar consolidation that has been common place over the years. Technological changes will allow more policy rules to be placed to route calls based on such factors as: number of calls being received within close proximity, the type of data being relayed, the types of call takers available, and the call volume of various emergency communications centers.

While there are many ways broadband and Next Generation will unfold, these changes are coming. Once they start to occur the evolution will be quick and very demanding on the industry. The public will expect all areas to be able to process more than voice calls and the responders will need trained experts interpreting data and forwarding only the most pertinent.