



Douglas County Emergency Communications

2014 Personnel Request

Prepared by

Scott W. Ruf

Director of Emergency Communications

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I. OVERVIEW

The Douglas County Emergency Communications Center is a consolidated communications center charged with providing Douglas County and its cities 9-1-1 emergency communication and related dispatch services. Douglas County ECC personnel are required to receive emergency calls from the public and dispatch appropriate emergency units in a maximum allowable time. Without adequate staffing, this cannot be achieved. The inability of units to respond quickly can have a significant impact on the public, both in health and safety issues, and can mean life and death. Without enough communication specialists on-duty, emergency calls can and are delayed. In short, the Douglas County Emergency Communications Center must have adequate staffing to provide fast, accurate emergency response service, and the best way to ensure that ability is to insist on staffing levels that would give the ECC the ability to provide appropriate emergency service.

In the post 9-11 era, law enforcement agencies and fire departments have had their public safety responsibilities increased. Every year, law enforcement and fire departments are required to work harder to provide the best and most efficient public safety services. The departments are continually lobbying and fighting for more officers, more firefighters, more paramedics, more training, and more equipment and facilities to meet population growth and increases in crime and rising health problems of our aging communities. Rarely are there administrative or commission action taken for additional communication officers commensurate with increases in other areas of personnel, support facilities and equipment.

The need for additional/adequate staffing is not unique to Douglas County and is an epidemic being faced across the country. Since the reorganization of the ECC in 2011-12 the workload and service expectations of the public safety agencies we serve has continued to increase. Due to the staffing challenges and agency expectations we have already had to modify and eliminate some programs and job responsibilities.

Because much of what we do is qualitative versus quantitative presents a challenge in trying to communicate certain needs. As you can see in the below chart, the numbers for the agencies we serve have remained fairly flat with slight increases for fire/EMS. These numbers are fluid in that they also reflect changes in how agencies handle calls and their respective workloads based on similar resource challenges being discussed here.

What these statistics do not show is all the activity generated from the field units, administrative duties, and non-emergency calls and activity of the center. The ECC is the central repository for most city and county department calls and/or questions (by default). We receive calls for animal control, parking

POLICE	2010	2011	2012	2011 - 2012		2010 - 2012	
LPD	128,952	125,870	125,636	-234	-2.63%	-3,316	-2.57%
DGSO	27,774	27,215	30,327	3,112	9.38%	2,553	9.19%
EPD	12,919	13,608	10,035	-3,573	-21.19%	-2,884	-22.32%
BCPD	3,748	3,402	3,415	13	-9.79%	-333	-8.88%
Sub-Total	173,393	170,095	169,413	-682	-0.40%	-3,980	-2.30%

FIRE/EMS	2010	2011	2012	2011 - 2012		2010 - 2012	
LDCFM	10,879	11,098	11,615	517	6.63%	736	6.77%
EFD	556	559	557	-2	0.18%	1	0.18%
BCFD	516	474	558	84	8.86%	42	8.14%
Twp FD	865	833	943	110	9.36%	78	9.02%
Sub-Total	12,816	12,964	13,673	709	5.47%	857	6.69%
TOTALS	186,209	183,059	183,086	27	-1.71%	-3,123	-1.68%

enforcement, district and municipal court, street department, signal department, parks and rec, warrants, jail, etc. Over 35% of our incoming call activity is related to non-emergency, administrative calls. Due to staffing we must work to balance this activity. It should be noted that we do receive a large number of what are classified as emergencies over the non-emergency phone lines.

II. STAFFING

Let us look at staffing levels for the ECC as they relate to what we have today versus where we should be staffed pursuant to APCO'sⁱ Project Retains as well as standards set by the NFPAⁱⁱ for fire communications.

Breaking down both law enforcement and fire/EMS needs really shows the inadequate staffing level of the DGCO ECC.

For fire/EMS communications; NFPA 1221 Chapter 6ⁱⁱⁱ requires that communication centers that provide emergency medical dispatching (EMD) protocols shall have two communication officers on duty at all times. It further states that in the event of an incident where the IC requires a dedicated operator that the communication officers assigned is relieved of all other duties except for the dedicated incident (not currently possible in the ECC due to staffing requirements/needs).

Based on the NFPA Standard referenced above the staffing requirements for only fire/EMS the ECC would need 15 communication officers and if more than 3 communication officers are on-duty it requires a supervisor be on-duty which would require an additional 7 persons. For each position required to cover we need to add 8 communication officers. We have not even looked at law enforcement needs and the numbers there are at a minimum of an additional 15 up to 22 personnel.

For law enforcement communications there are only best practices and not yet a formal standard as there are different needs based on jurisdiction and the use of additional positions (i.e. dispatchers, 911 call-takers, etc). In Douglas County all personnel are cross-trained to be qualified at all positions.

The ECC staffing needs are based on Covered Positions (positions that must be covered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year). The following are the positions that should be covered:

1. Shift Supervisor
2. Primary Police Dispatch (all law enforcement agencies)
3. Police Info/Data (all law enforcement agencies information, i.e. warrants, driver license, vehicles)
4. Fire/EMS Dispatch
5. Back-Up Fire/EMS – Call-Taker
6. Call-Taker/Relief

The above staffing requires 37 communication officers and 7 Shift Supervisors to allow for 24/7/365 coverage and accounts for turnover per APCO Project Retains and outlined in Appendix B.

As of the writing of this memo, ECC Operations is allocated 20 FTE communication officers and 2 FTE shift supervisors and are using a modified 12/8 shift schedule to best utilize resources. The following is what our minimum staffing is today based on available resources:

1. Primary Police Dispatch (all law enforcement agencies)
2. Police Info/Data (all law enforcement agencies information, i.e. warrants, driver license, vehicles)
3. Fire/EMS Dispatch – Call-Taker
4. Back-Up Fire/EMS – Call-Taker- Supervisor – Relief person

The above staffing alone with no dedicated/responsible supervisor, relief person, dedicated call-taker still requires 30 communication officers as shown in Appendix C. When someone needs a break or to use the restroom the ECC goes down to 3 communication officers on the floor managing all public safety resources, answering the phones, etc. There have been incidents recently where due to call volume there were delays in getting help dispatched, phones answered and important information relayed to officers in the field. We have been fortunate that we have not experienced a tragic event (i.e. serious injury, death, fire, etc) due to managing activity with limited personnel.

None of the above information factors in all the extra activity and requirements of the agencies when incidents happen (i.e. major crimes, storms, large fires, etc) or there are planned events (i.e. parades, marathons, bike tours, concerts, etc) and dispatch resources are needed. Although we have flexibility when events are planned we do not have the same benefits when the unexpected happens and we have to begin to immediately cease providing identified services (i.e. shutting down dispatch channels, not answering non-emergency phones or alarm lines) to name a couple of the more impactful options.

From an administrative side we have greatly reduced our quality assurance and audits. The training position has been folded back into operations and is being used as a coordinator to help track and be sure employees maintain their minimum certifications. Development/updating of training program and materials have been deferred to the future when we have staffing and can dedicate time off the dispatch floor to work on those things. We will no longer be able to do community outreach, education programs and tours for various civic and community organizations will be evaluated based on time and staffing. These are just a few things that we have begun to review and scale back or eliminate.

In addition to the challenges and changes above there are ongoing discussions on how to deal with the continued growth and activity of the Lawrence Police Department. Currently, all law enforcement agencies (Lawrence, Douglas County Sheriff, Baldwin, Eudora and occasionally Kansas Highway Patrol) are dispatched on one primary channel. This creates challenges for the dispatcher in managing each agency's resources and calls-for-service. Due to the diversity of the call types and the volume of the Lawrence PD there are specific challenges to and needs from the ECC. In the very near future we will need to evaluate breaking LKPD onto their own dispatch channel, thereby requiring the ECC to have two primary police channels in addition to the other channels.

III. PROPOSAL

As during the 2013 budget process we are once again requesting the addition of four (4) communication officers. The addition of these positions will greatly enhance our ability to provide vital public safety services. The need to promptly handle emergency and non-emergency calls for service is vital. Our current staffing levels create periods that quickly overwhelm the capabilities of the center and its staff. The addition of these positions will enable the ECC to begin to staff accordingly based on the agency's needs/requirements.

There must also be consideration to allow for one or two over hires. Because staffing has been at a minimum, we continue to have turnover, training takes 6-8 months, and are always dealing with sick leave, vacations, FMLA, etc. we never are able to stay current and accommodate our staffing needs.

We would then request that two (2) additional communication officers be added in 2015 and 2016 taking the total to twenty-eight (28) communication officers.

a. Alternative Proposal

As we continue to review options and staffing levels the only other way to achieve greater staffing is to modify the ECC shift schedule to a 12-hour shift rotation. In this scenario we would request three (3) communication officers in 2014 and increase the overtime line item in the budget to \$100,000.00 (increase of \$65K from 2013 budget). This would allow for 4 squads of 6 communication officers (still utilizing the training coordinator position in operations) and the two shift supervisors could be actual supervisors.

We would still request the one or two over hire positions to use as floaters due to vacation, sick leave, etc. We are also requesting the addition of two (2) additional communication officers in 2015 and 2016.

IV. SUMMARY

The ECC is not your local telephone company or company switchboard; we cannot put callers on hold and "you'll be helped by the next available customer service representative." These 9-1-1 calls must be answered very quickly, a great deal of informational must be gathered quickly, then disseminated accurately to the first responders. In some cases, the communication officer stays on the line providing CPR instructions or telling a father how to deliver their baby; all while the units are responding.

We are reacting to the needs of the ECC and the agencies we serve, but we need to take a proactive approach to deal with ECC staffing before facing a "staffing crisis" which we are close to reaching.

ⁱ Association of Public Safety Communications Officers (<http://www.apcointl.org>)

ⁱⁱ National Fire Protection Association (<http://www.nfpa.org>)

ⁱⁱⁱ NFPA 1221, *Chapter 6, Operations*, Copyright © 2002

Appendix A

APCO Project Retains Summary

For

Required Staffed Positions of

4 Communication Officers / 1 Dedicated Supervisor



APCO PROJECT RETAINS

Agency Overview of Douglas County Emergency Communications

This is a summary of agency demographics, services, call volumes and current & estimated staffing needs.

About Your Agency

Demographics

Service Population	115000
Square Miles	460
Service Area	Suburban
Sworn Employees	300
Civilian Employees	25
Number of VOIP Calls	146
Number of TDD Calls	1700
Number of Domestic Violence Calls	3600
Average Time for Domestic Violence Calls	4.5
Number of EMD Calls	10450
Average Time for EMD Calls	6

Communication Services Provided

Emergency Calls

	Call Taking	Dispatch
Law Enforcement	✓	✓
Fire	✓	✓
Medical (EMS)	✓	✓
Medical (EMD)	✓	✓
HazMat	✓	✓
NCIC/CIC	✓	✓

Non-Emergency Calls

	Call Taking	Dispatch
Administrative Calls	✓	✓
Public Works/Utilities	✓	
Animal Control	✓	✓
Emergency Weather Information	✓	✓
Transportation/Transit Information	✓	
After Hours (for public emergencies)	✓	✓
Other	✓	

Workload Summary

	Total Number	Percent of Total
Total Call Volume	281794	100%
Incoming Call Volume	188400	66.9%
9-1-1/Emergency Call Volume	69756	24.8%
Dispatched 9-1-1/Emergency Calls	69756	24.8%
Wireless Call Volume	37250	19.8%

This provides an annual summary of total call volume including a categorized breakdown of types of calls and their percentage of the total volume.

Staffing Summary

Coverage Positions

These positions handle a particular task or "cover" a work station for a specified length of time.	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE	Difference
Dispatcher	20	30.12	10.12
Supervisor	2.0	7.22	5.22
<i>Subtotal</i>	22	37.34	

Function Positions

The positions are roles that are independent of coverage or call volume.	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE
Training Coordinator	1.0	1.0
Manager	1.0	1.0
Admin Asst	.5	.5
Deputy Director	1.0	1.0
<i>Subtotal</i>	3.5	3.5

Current and Estimated Staffing Needs

Based on the data you entered these are the overall current and estimated staffing needs of your agency.

	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE	Difference
Overall Staffing Total	25.5	40.8	15.3

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In case of technical difficulties contact retains@sononaco.com

Appendix B

APCO Project Retains Summary

For

Required Staffed Positions of

5 Communication Officers / 1 Dedicated Supervisor



APCO PROJECT RETAINS

Agency Overview of Douglas County Emergency Communications

This is a summary of agency demographics, services, call volumes and current & estimated staffing needs.

About Your Agency

Demographics

Service Population	115000
Square Miles	460
Service Area	Suburban
Sworn Employees	300
Civilian Employees	25
Number of VOIP Calls	146
Number of TDD Calls	1700
Number of Domestic Violence Calls	3600
Average Time for Domestic Violence Calls	4.5
Number of EMD Calls	10450
Average Time for EMD Calls	6

Communication Services Provided

Emergency Calls	Call Taking	Dispatch
Law Enforcement	✓	✓
Fire	✓	✓
Medical (EMS)	✓	✓
Medical (EMD)	✓	✓
HazMat	✓	✓
NCIC/CIC	✓	✓
Non-Emergency Calls	Call Taking	Dispatch
Administrative Calls	✓	✓
Public Works/Utilities	✓	
Animal Control	✓	✓
Emergency Weather Information	✓	✓
Transportation/Transit Information	✓	
After Hours (for public emergencies)	✓	✓
Other	✓	

Workload Summary

	Total Number	Percent of Total
Total Call Volume	281794	100%
Incoming Call Volume	188400	66.9%
9-1-1/Emergency Call Volume	69756	24.8%
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Wireless Call Volume	37250	19.8%

This provides an annual summary of total call volume including a categorized breakdown of types of calls and their percentage of the total volume.

Staffing Summary

Coverage Positions

These positions handle a particular task or "cover" a work station for a specified length of time.	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE	Difference
Dispatcher	20	37.65	17.65
Supervisor	2.0	7.22	5.22
<i>Subtotal</i>	22	44.87	

Function Positions

The positions are roles that are independent of coverage or call volume.	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE
Training Coordinator	1.0	1.0
Manager	1.0	1.0
Admin Asst	.5	.5
Deputy Director	1.0	1.0
<i>Subtotal</i>	3.5	3.5

Current and Estimated Staffing Needs

Based on the data you entered these are the overall current and estimated staffing needs of your agency.

	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE	Difference
Overall Staffing Total	25.5	48.4	22.9

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Appendix C

APCO Project Retains Summary

For

Required Staffed Positions of

4 Communication Officers / No Dedicated Supervisor

(current minimum staffing)



APCO PROJECT RETAINS

Agency Overview of Douglas County Emergency Communications

This is a summary of agency demographics, services, call volumes and current & estimated staffing needs.

About Your Agency

Demographics

Service Population	115000
Square Miles	460
Service Area	Suburban
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Civilian Employees	25
Number of VOIP Calls	146
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Average Time for EMD Calls	6

Communication Services Provided

Emergency Calls	Call Taking	Dispatch
Law Enforcement	✓	✓
Fire	✓	✓
Medical (EMS)	✓	✓
Medical (EMD)	✓	✓
HazMat	✓	✓
NCIC/CIC	✓	✓
Non-Emergency Calls	Call Taking	Dispatch
Administrative Calls	✓	✓
Public Works/Utilities	✓	
Animal Control	✓	✓
Emergency Weather Information	✓	✓
Transportation/Transit Information	✓	
After Hours (for public emergencies)	✓	✓
Other	✓	

Workload Summary

	Total Number	Percent of Total
Total Call Volume	281794	100%
Incoming Call Volume	188400	66.9%
9-1-1/Emergency Call Volume	69756	24.8%
Dispatched 9-1-1/Emergency Calls	69756	24.8%
Wireless Call Volume	37250	19.8%

This provides an annual summary of total call volume including a categorized breakdown of types of calls and their percentage of the total volume.

Staffing Summary

Coverage Positions

These positions handle a particular task or "cover" a work station for a specified length of time.	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE	Difference
Dispatcher	20	30.12	10.12
Supervisor	2.0	0	-2
<i>Subtotal</i>	22	30.12	

Function Positions

The positions are roles that are independent of coverage or call volume.	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE
Training Coordinator	1.0	1.0
Manager	1.0	1.0
Admin Asst	.5	.5
Deputy Director	1.0	1.0
<i>Subtotal</i>	3.5	3.5

Current and Estimated Staffing Needs

Based on the data you entered these are the overall current and estimated staffing needs of your agency.

	Current Authorized	Estimated FTE	Difference
Overall Staffing Total	25.5	33.6	8.1

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Appendix D

**ECC Organization Chart Reflecting Changes
For
Douglas County Emergency Communications**

**DOUGLAS COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

**DIRECTOR
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS
(1)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT
(1)**

**DEPUTY
DIRECTOR of OPERATIONS
(1)**

**DAY SHIFT
SUPERVISOR
(1)**

**NIGHT SHIFT
SUPERVISOR
(1)**

**TRAINING /
QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPERVISOR
(1)**

**ASSISTANT
DAY SHIFT SUPERVISOR
(2)**

**ASSISTANT
NIGHT SHIFT SUPERVISOR
(2)**

**TRAINING OFFICERS
QUALITY ASSURANCE
EMD GROUP**

**COMMUNICATION
OFFICER II
(2)**

**COMMUNICATION
OFFICER II
(2)**

TRAINEES / NEW HIRES

**COMMUNICATION OFFICERS
TRAINEES
9-1-1 CALLTAKERS
(7)**

**COMMUNICATION OFFICERS
TRAINEES
9-1-1 CALLTAKERS
(7)**

**TAC / ASST. TACS
KCJIS / NCIC
EMD PROGRAM
COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS
CONTINUING EDUCATION**



Appendix E

Estimated Costs

For

Additional ECC Personnel 2014-16 Budget Years

FY 2014 Budget Supplemental Request

Department	Emergency Communications	Priority	1
Fund	100-18000-52001		1 thru 5
Description	4 F.T.E. Dispatcher 1 - Pay Grade 36		

Data Entry in Yellow Fields

Fund	Dept	Acct	Costs of Supplemental Request	Amount	Additional Narrative
Personnel					
			4 F.T.E. Dispatcher 1	\$136,615	
			<i>Total Personnel Expenses</i>	\$136,615	\$90,165.90
Employee Benefits					
218	21000	59001	FICA	\$10,452	
218	21000	59002	Health Insurance	\$42,000	single plus one
218	21000	59003	KPERS	\$13,445	
218	21000	59005	Unemployment	\$775	
			Work Comp	\$438	
			<i>Total Employee Benefits</i>	\$67,110	\$44,292.60
Contractual					
			<i>Total Contractual Expenses</i>	\$0	
Commodities					
			<i>Total Commodities</i>	\$0	
Capital Outlay					
			<i>Total Capital Outlay Expenses</i>	\$0	
Miscellaneous					
			Total Miscellaneous Expenses	\$0	
			Grand Total Expenditures	\$203,725	
			Net Cost of Request to County	\$69,267	34% of cost
			Net Cost of Request to City	\$134,459	66% of cost

FY 2015 Budget Supplemental Request

Department	Emergency Communications	Priority	1
Fund	100-18000-52001		1 thru 5
Description	2 F.T.E. Dispatcher 1 - Pay Grade 36		

Data Entry in Yellow Fields

Fund	Dept	Acct	Costs of Supplemental Request	Amount	Additional Narrative
Personnel					
			2 F.T.E. Dispatcher 1	\$70,345	
			<i>Total Personnel Expenses</i>	\$70,345	\$46,427.70
Employee Benefits					
218	21000	59001	FICA	\$5,381	
218	21000	59002	Health Insurance	\$22,000	single plus one
218	21000	59003	KPERS	\$6,860	
218	21000	59005	Unemployment	\$388	
			Work Comp	\$219	
			<i>Total Employee Benefits</i>	\$34,848	\$22,999.68
Contractual					
			<i>Total Contractual Expenses</i>	\$0	
Commodities					
			<i>Total Commodities</i>	\$0	
Capital Outlay					
			<i>Total Capital Outlay Expenses</i>	\$0	
Miscellaneous					
			<i>Total Miscellaneous Expenses</i>	\$0	
			Grand Total Expenditures	\$105,193	
			Net Cost of Request to County	\$35,766	34% of cost
			Net Cost of Request to City	\$69,427	66% of cost

FY 2016 Budget Supplemental Request

Department	Emergency Communications	Priority	1
Fund	100-18000-52001		1 thru 5
Description	2 F.T.E. Dispatcher 1 - Pay Grade 36		

Data Entry in Yellow Fields

Fund	Dept	Acct	Costs of Supplemental Request	Amount	Additional Narrative
Personnel					
			2 F.T.E. Dispatcher 1	\$72,467	
			<i>Total Personnel Expenses</i>	\$72,467	\$47,828.22
Employee Benefits					
218	21000	59001	FICA	\$5,545	
218	21000	59002	Health Insurance	\$24,000	single plus one
218	21000	59003	KPERS	\$6,860	
218	21000	59005	Unemployment	\$388	
			Work Comp	\$219	
			<i>Total Employee Benefits</i>	\$37,012	\$24,427.92
Contractual					
			<i>Total Contractual Expenses</i>	\$0	
Commodities					
			<i>Total Commodities</i>	\$0	
Capital Outlay					
			<i>Total Capital Outlay Expenses</i>	\$0	
Miscellaneous					
			<i>Total Miscellaneous Expenses</i>	\$0	
			Grand Total Expenditures	\$109,479	
			Net Cost of Request to County	\$37,223	34% of cost
			Net Cost of Request to City	\$72,256	66% of cost