

### INTRODUCTION

We examine the organizational alignment and physical space requirements of the 3-1-1 operations in this chapter. In Austin, the 3-1-1 unit is under the direction of the Emergency Communications Division within the Austin Police Department. This Division manages all emergency communications for the City of Austin. Included are call takers and dispatchers for police, fire, and emergency services.

At the time this guide was written, call takers and dispatchers were physically separated in the Austin Police Department headquarters. The 3-1-1 operation was located in a small area on a separate floor from the 9-1-1 operation and the dispatch operation.

Austin residents passed a bond issue in 1999 to build a new Emergency Communications Center. This new facility resolved physical space and technical issues faced by the Department. A new caller aided dispatch (CAD) system and a new records management system (RMS) are expected to accompany its completion. The 3-1-1 operation is to be integrated with these systems.

Figure 8: Rendition of New Emergency Communication Center



In this chapter, we discuss how Austin implemented 3-1-1 and overcame physical space constraints that encouraged organizational division between call takers and dispatchers.

## QUESTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

### Questions about What Organizational Alignments Impact 3-1-1:

- Where can organizational responsibilities for 3-1-1 rest in the police only model?
- What units interact with 3-1-1 operations in the police only model?

### Questions about What Are the Fundamental Physical Space Requirements for This Size 3-1-1 Operation:

- How much office space did APD allocate to 3-1-1?
- What space requirements are inherent with a 3-1-1 operation?

### Questions about the Impacts of Physical Space Constraints on Organizational Communications and Operations:

- How does physical space constraints impact operations?
- What communication steps are necessary to address these issues?

### **Organizational Alignment's Impact on 3-1-1.**

The Manager of Emergency Communications oversees 3-1-1 operations in Austin. He works for the Assistant Chief responsible for community policing support. The Emergency Communication Manager is responsible for managing all aspects of emergency communications, including 9-1-1 and dispatch services. Currently, the division employs 155 FTE.

To ensure public safety, APD set a policy that all 3-1-1 call takers would be certified as 9-1-1 call takers. This ensured that if a 3-1-1 call escalated to an emergency situation, the 3-1-1 call taker would be prepared to staff the call and forward it to dispatch for appropriate action.

In addition, it allowed for rotations of staff through the units of Emergency Communications. As a 24/7 operation, APD emergency communications used a rotating shift. Every six months, call takers changed shifts and could change units. 9-1-1 call takers could rotate into 3-1-1 or teletype positions. Rotations ensured that staff were cross-trained, understood how the units worked together, and developed career-enhancing skills.

3-1-1 call takers worked with a broader range of units, both in the police department and external to the department, than 9-1-1 call takers. Within the department, 3-1-1 call takers filed police reports that were reviewed by the Reports Unit and analyzed by the Planning and Research Unit. Detectives rely on the reports from 3-1-1 calls for investigations. Outside the department, 3-1-1 call takers need to understand the roles of other city agencies to appropriately refer calls to them.

**Physical Space.** APD's emergency communication units were physically separated in

APD headquarters. The 9-1-1 call center was located on the fourth floor across an open corridor and elevator area from the dispatch areas. Dispatchers were separated into three adjacent areas by semi-permanent walls. One area housed police dispatchers, another was for fire dispatchers and another for emergency services dispatchers. The manager, was located in another building across a parking lot from headquarters.

When the Teleserve unit was established, semi-permanent walls were erected on the third floor creating a 700-square-foot open area. In this trapezoid-shaped area, APD installed 11 mobile desk units along the walls and one supervisory desk. The Teleserve area was converted to the 3-1-1 call center.

**Figure 9: Original 3-1-1 Call Center**



With the construction of the new Communication Center underway, this space was a temporary solution. It did have its drawbacks, however. At any one time, 11 or more conversations were occurring in a relatively small space. Depending on voice levels, concentration could be distracted at best. In the 9-1-1 call center and the police dispatch call center, half-walls improved privacy and eliminate noise overflow.

In addition, a small space was allocated in the information technology area for the 3-1-1 server and equipment.

**Communication Challenges.** Separation of the units created some real and perceived com-

munication challenges between the units. If the 9-1-1 system went down, runners were assigned to physically transport paper notes to the dispatch center across the corridor. Communication among the fire, emergency services and police dispatchers sometimes was stifled by the physical separation.

Likewise, the 3-1-1 operations were on a different floor from the 9-1-1 and dispatch centers. In order to communicate information that could not be electronically transmitted, 3-1-1 staff had to take an elevator upstairs.

These separations affected sharing of information among the units and on-the-job cross-training. Asking questions about specific calls required time; in emergency situations, quickness is essential. Asking questions and sharing information about policies was also slowed.

To overcome these problems, APD instituted the cross-training rotation. In addition, APD managers spent significant time and effort conducting training and updating staff on policy changes. Supervisors were well-informed about all operations. Most had worked in all units prior to becoming a supervisor. They assisted in problem-solving between the divisions.

The Emergency Communications Manager, his managers and staff anticipated the opening of the new emergency communications center. While they worked well within their existing logistical arrangements, they knew that co-location of staff and the expansion of space would enhance their operations. Combined with the new computer systems, they expected vast improvements in information handling and customer service.

## INTRODUCTION

### Timeline

#### Chapter IX

From concept to 3-1-1 system implementation in Austin, two years elapsed. When the Chief hired the Manager of Emergency Communications in 1999, one of the manager's first challenges was to build a 3-1-1 call center. Once the plan was defined and the COPS Office grant was approved, implementation took one year.

Project managers created and followed a detailed timeline and project management plan. Sufficient time was included for training, testing, marketing and debugging. Almost everyone involved commented after the start date that they were pleased that APD "nailed" the timeline. Consistent weekly meetings helped maintain the momentum and assured problem-solving.

Well before the national tragedies of September 11, 2001, APD had already scheduled the 3-1-1 kick-off for September 17, 2001. In planning, APD had focused on using 9-1-1 day, September 11th, to bolster press and support for 3-1-1. As it turned out, the timing of the 3-1-1 kick-off was an unexpected blessing to the Police Department and the citizens of Austin. APD's preparation paid off at a time when tensions were escalating. 3-1-1 provided a needed alternative to 9-1-1 and an important source of general information for citizens.

## QUESTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

Questions about the Timeline for Planning, Securing Funding and Creating Support for Change:

- How much time is required to assess a concept and develop a plan to make it a reality?
- What steps are involved in developing a concept for implementation?
- How do funding timelines impact concept development?
- What steps need to be taken up front to create support for implementing a new concept?

Questions about the Timeline for Equipment and Technology:

- How much time should be budgeted for each phase of technology procurement?
- What are the standard technology steps APD followed to install the new system?
- How does the procurement process impact the timeline?
- How can project managers maintain momentum during an extended implementation process?

Questions about the Timeline for Training and System Acceptance:

- When should training for a new 3-1-1 system occur?
- How much time and what steps are needed to ensure call takers are able to effectively use the new system by the start date?

Questions about the Timeline for Marketing:

- How much time is needed to develop a marketing plan for 3-1-1?
- When should marketing for 3-1-1 commence?
- What tasks are important in implementing a marketing campaign with limited funding?

**First Steps: Planning, Securing Funding and Creating Support for Change.** Implementing a “police only” 3-1-1 system redefines the police role to some extent. This action publicly demonstrates that police are not responding to all calls and that some calls are not “true” emergencies. In Austin, this concept was not entirely welcome. Citizens were accustomed to a police officer arriving at their homes or places of work every time they contacted the police.

Continuing that level of service was not possible and not appropriate. Defining non-emergencies involved policy and operational changes. The Chief was dismayed that Austin only operated a 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. non-emergency number. The first step to changing this situation involved creating the Teleserve unit. This unit allowed citizens to file police reports over the phone without an officer being involved. It was funded under the COPS MORE program in 1995.

The Chief recognized that while he was freeing officer time on a limited number of calls (approximately 3,000 per year), he had not yet conquered the vast majority of non-emergency 9-1-1 calls. With the hiring of the Manager of Emergency Communications, he wanted to find a solution. He sought to create a true non-emergency call center to improve 9-1-1 responses and to provide Austinites with a non-emergency alternative to 9-1-1.

The Emergency Communication Manager used his first six months to develop staff and cost estimates for developing a 3-1-1 operation. He assessed current staffing and equipment. Talking with call takers, he identified what tools were needed. He worked with information technology staff to develop estimates for equip-

ment and technology requirements. He also analyzed call data to determine target 9-1-1 call reductions to demonstrate success with the new system. Most importantly, he formulated a vision for APD’s 3-1-1 operation. The Emergency Communication Manager defined how 3-1-1 would address the critical concerns with 9-1-1 and how it would improve APD’s interactions with its citizens.

## Planning

The Emergency Communication Manager used the first six months to develop a manpower and cost estimate for developing a 3-1-1 operation.

Using this plan, police department officials began identifying avenues for obtaining funding. They developed presentations for the 9-1-1 oversight board, CAPCO and for City Hall. The Planning and Research Director reached out to the COPS Office and was able to identify a grant opportunity. The search for funding took approximately six months.

It should be noted that timing was key. Austin contacted the COPS Office three to six months before the end of the Federal fiscal year. It is not uncommon for Federal agencies to make program and funding decisions in this time period.

Because APD laid the groundwork for 3-1-1 by implementing Teleserve, individuals inside and outside the department were able to envision how the 3-1-1 system could improve the operations of the department. In addition, APD staff could demonstrate the success of Teleserve as an indicator of the anticipated impact of a 3-1-1 system.

The public was also prepared for changes in police interactions. The public understood their options for obtaining information and for accessing the department without a personal police encounter.

**Equipment and Technology Procurement.** From design to implementation, the equipment and technology components required approximately one year to put into place. Upon receipt of the COPS Office grant, three ISD staff were assigned to the project. They followed the standard IT steps for developing the 3-1-1 solution. These steps included:

- Project Definition
- Analysis Phase
- Design Phase
- Procurement Phase
- Construction Phase
- Implementation Phase

The project definition phase covered approximately four months and examined the scope and resources available for the project. The analysis phase overlapped with the project definition phase and focused on determining what APD needed and why they needed it.

During these phases, the ISD Project Manager developed the detailed project plan, including the timeline. The timeline listed each task to be completed, who was responsible for completing it, the start and end dates, and what tasks were related. She coordinated weekly core team meetings to discuss progress on each task, to review upcoming tasks, to problem-solve on any delinquent task, and to add any new tasks that may have appeared. These weekly meetings occurred throughout the equipment and technology phases until APD formally accepted the system from ISD. The meetings were critical for maintaining focus and momentum to complete the project on time.

The design phase involved identifying the functions that were needed and the available options for obtaining those functions. Basically, the Project Manager and her team conducted an intensive internet search for available 3-1-1 systems. About one month was spent on this phase.

Procurement is often the phase that leads to implementation delays and failure. By building a strong partnership with the Purchasing Office of the City of Austin, the core team learned that Austin had a special “safety umbrella procurement policy.” Under this policy any items that would improve the safety of the public could be obtained without issuing a standard request for proposals. The team demonstrated that 3-1-1 would improve the safety of the citizens of Austin by removing non-emergency calls from the 9-1-1 system.

Application of this policy eliminated the need for an RFP and all the details associated with the process. Instead, the 3-1-1 core team hosted one-day demonstration sessions for vendors. They proceeded straight to receipt of a statement of work proposal for the selected vendors. For other items, they were able to modify existing contracts, which also saved time. In some cases, equipment was received within four weeks of placing the order.

The construction phase involved working with vendors to install, customize and debug the equipment and software. This phase took approximately three months, the most hectic time. Many tasks depended on the completion of other tasks. Vendors and APD staff depended on each other to complete these tasks.

During the construction phase, the importance of the Geographic Information System (GIS) link became critical and complex for APD. Problems with this link created delays of up to three weeks for some tasks. However, the Emergency Communication Manager and the ISD Project Manager redirected staff to use this time to test other components of the system and to finish training.

During the implementation phase, vendors worked closely with APD staff to ensure that the system would operate properly and to make any necessary adjustments. This phase took approximately two weeks. Vendor staff participated in the operation on-site during the first two to three days of operation.

**Training and System Acceptance.** APD's decision to use existing staff as 3-1-1 call takers resulted in fewer requirements for training, but led to resistance to change among personnel. Teleserve call takers were trained on 9-1-1 policies and some were aware of dispatch operations. They were experts with police reporting and the CAD system.

3-1-1 introduced new software and a new telephone system, and required a broader range of knowledge. Not only did 3-1-1 call takers need to understand police reports and patrol functions, they needed to be aware of operations in all areas of the department and in other city agencies in order to make appropriate referrals. The requirement raised anxieties for the call takers.

As 9-1-1-trained call takers, these individuals initially were not willing to become general purpose call takers. Teleserve had allowed them to specialize and increase their expertise. Call takers in Teleserve had acquired in-depth knowledge of offense categories and reporting requirements. At first, the expansion of Teleserve appeared to dilute their expertise. Instead of being specialists, they would know a little about everything. They did not view this as a positive outcome.

To overcome staff anxieties, APD 3-1-1 managers took a number of steps. During the procurement phase, all call takers participated in the evaluation of vendor demonstrations. This introduced them to the 3-1-1 plan eight months prior to implementation.

Once the software was constructed, 10 call takers participated in a train-the-trainer vendor class. This 12-hour training was conducted three months prior to implementation. The managers also participated in this training, as well as a half-day training on the phone tracking software.

About ten weeks prior to implementation, all call takers participated in one-on-one training with

the training manager. She relied on call takers who attended the vendor class to help explain how the CRM system operated. This training was conducted on a live test database. Using a live system allowed call takers to experience a real operating environment well before the kick-off date. One month before implementation, a limited number of call takers tested the system by completing test plans on the master database.

In addition, all call takers were trained in Teleserve and 3-1-1 responsibilities. During this training, the Emergency Communication Manager and his assistant managers reviewed other areas of the police department and city administration that call takers needed to know. They outlined how call takers would learn these skills through the CRM system. Finally, they presented performance expectations and obtained signed agreements from the call takers stating that they understood their responsibilities.

Approximately two weeks before implementation, all call takers began using the system for Teleserve calls. At this point, all were accessing the master database. This use was limited, but allowed call takers to access the database and learn the functions in a live setting.

**Timeline for Marketing.** Development of the marketing component took approximately six months. The Chief and the Emergency Communication Manager believed that the original intent of 9-1-1 needed to be re-explained to the public in order for 3-1-1 to work.

The Chief appealed to the Greater Area Austin Crime Commission (GACC) for help with the marketing effort. This organization was formed in October 1997, to support law enforcement, raise public awareness about crime prevention programs, and promote a cooperative and coordinated anti-crime effort in the community. The Commission assumed responsibility for the project and coordinated planning meetings four months prior to the start date. The marketing team consisted of APD staff from the public

information office, the community outreach office and the emergency communications staff. Representatives from CAPCO and the City of Austin public information office were involved. Finally a media consultant was hired to provide advice to the marketing team.

The Executive Director of the Commission led the marketing team in creating a slogan and developing a logo by the end of the first month. He worked with graphic design experts to create the logo and brochures. Orders for materials were placed two months prior to the event.

Through weekly meetings, the marketing team identified potential contributors, defined outlets for public announcements, and prepared a press announcement. The initial press announcement occurred one and a half months before the start date. At this press event, the team had hoped to talk with media managers about providing public service announcements and other complementary media coverage. Using the clout of GACC, APD was able to generate significant interest in 3-1-1. However, the event evolved into a press release about the effort rather than a plea for media assistance.

Prior to this announcement, the Commission Executive Director had prepared a grant application to the Southwestern Bell Foundation to solicit funding for the brochures and handouts. He also had

solicited funding for additional marketing materials from other sources. The solicitation effort had taken approximately four months of persistent and continuous attention in order to raise \$35,000.

District representatives and community liaisons distributed brochures at public meetings in the month preceding implementation. Newsletter announcements appeared in utility bills, school handouts and city materials in the month immediately preceding the announcement.

An earlier public service announcement had been planned in combination with 9-1-1 day, but was pre-empted by the national emergency and tragedies on September 11, 2001. APD did proceed with the 3-1-1 announcement a week later on September 17, 2001. This announcement received significant newspaper and television news coverage.

Following the announcement, 3-1-1 marketing team members continued to pass out written materials at all public meetings and to patrol officers.

Table 5: Timeline for 3-1-1 Implementation

|                                    | Sept 99-<br>Mar 00 | Apr 00-<br>Sep 00 | Oct-<br>00 | Nov<br>-00 | Dec-<br>00 | Jan<br>- 01 | Feb<br>- o1 | Mar<br>-01 | Apr<br>- 01 | May<br>- 01 | Jun-<br>01 | Jul<br>- 01 | Aug<br>- 01 | Sep<br>- 01 | Oct-01-<br>current |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| <b>Planning</b>                    | ██████████         |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| <b>Securing Funding</b>            |                    | ██████████        |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| <b>Creating Support for Change</b> | ██████████         | ██████████        | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████         |
| <b>Equipment/Tech Procurement</b>  |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Project Definition Phase           |                    |                   | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Analysis Phase                     |                    |                   | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Design Phase                       |                    |                   |            |            | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Procurement Phase                  |                    |                   |            |            |            |             | ██████████  | ██████████ | ██████████  |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Construction Phase                 |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  |             |                    |
| Implementation Phase               |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             | ██████████  | ██████████         |
| <b>Training</b>                    |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Call Takers                        |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████         |
| Patrol and Dispatchers             |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             | ██████████  | ██████████  |                    |
| <b>Marketing</b>                   |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Research                           |                    |                   |            |            | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  |            |             |             |             |                    |
| Team Planning Meetings             |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             | ██████████ | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████  |                    |
| Marketing Material Distribution    |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             | ██████████  | ██████████  | ██████████         |
| Meeting with Media Executives      |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            | X           |             |             |                    |
| Kick-off Media Event               |                    |                   |            |            |            |             |             |            |             |             |            |             |             |             | X                  |

## INTRODUCTION

# Public Education/ Marketing

## Chapter X

At its most basic level, implementing 3-1-1 requires activating the phone number and creating a change in public perception and use of 9-1-1. APD's policy changes, staffing shifts and new software systems leveraged the 3-1-1 phone number concept to improve efficiency and customer service. However, the future success of APD's 3-1-1 effort would rely upon their ability to change the public's perception and use of 9-1-1.

This chapter focuses on the steps APD took to market 3-1-1 to the public. It details how they developed the marketing plan, who they engaged to help market 3-1-1, and the key messages and methods they employed. Marketing efforts were rooted in the Director's philosophy that without reeducating the public about 9-1-1, even all the "bells and whistles" of 3-1-1 could not achieve his primary goal of reducing 9-1-1 call loads.

The national tragedies of September 11, 2001 played an unexpected role in the success of the marketing campaign. APD seized the opportunity to demonstrate how 3-1-1 would improve public safety in Austin at this critical time. The media responded positively to their message.

## QUESTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

### Questions about the Marketing Plan for 3-1-1:

- How did APD approach marketing for 3-1-1?
- Who should be involved in marketing 3-1-1?
- What planning should be conducted?
- What are the key elements in the plan? (i.e., Is there a special audience such as a Spanish speaking community?)

### Questions about How Funding Is Secured for Marketing:

- What are the sources of funding for marketing?
- How much funding should communities attempt to secured to publize 3-1-1?
- How can the funding used?

### Questions about How 3-1-1 Is Publicized:

- Who should be involved in marketing 3-1-1?
- How effective were the different marketing channels for APD's effort?

**Leveraging Community Support.** Once the 3-1-1 concept paper was drafted, the Chief and the Emergency Communications Director approached the Greater Austin Crime Commission (GACC) for support. GACC was formed in October 1997 to support law enforcement, raise public awareness about crime prevention programs, and promote a cooperative and coordinated anti-crime effort in the community. Its 32 members are recognized business and community leaders. The President was a former chancellor of the University of Texas. The Commission agreed to become APD's marketing partner.

The assistance of these well-known community leaders opened doors to the print and television media for APD staff. The Commission was also able to reach corporate funding decision-makers and encourage significant donations.

More importantly, APD was able to garner the talents of an internationally known graphic designer. His firm developed and tested the logo and marketing materials for 3-1-1. They worked to assure audience recognition and a positive response to the 3-1-1 concept. The firm donated its time to the project.

**Developing the Marketing Plan.** GACC's Executive Director assumed leadership of the 3-1-1 marketing team. The team consisted of APD staff from the public information office, the community outreach office, and emergency communications staff. Representatives from CAPCO and the City of Austin public information office were also involved. Finally, an outside media consultant was hired by GACC to provide advice and conduct research on media efforts in other communities.

Prior to convening the team, the Commission Executive Director conducted a two-phase research effort to outline a marketing plan. First, he reviewed literature on developing marketing and product branding plans, generally. These materials provided information on why and how

to develop a marketing strategy, templates for marketing action plans, and ways to measure success.

The second phase of the Commission Executive Director's review involved contacting other jurisdictions that had implemented 3-1-1. He requested information about their marketing activities and asked for samples of their materials. He also joined the technical team on site visits to Baltimore, San Antonio and Dallas. Based on his research, he developed a chart highlighting the 3-1-1 marketing strategies that had been tried by others, and noted his perceptions of the impacts of these strategies.

With the Emergency Communication Manager, the Commission Executive Director drafted a two-page "3-1-1 Marketing Action Plan Overview." He convened the marketing team four months prior to the planned 3-1-1 start date. At this meeting, he discussed his research findings, displayed sample marketing materials from other 3-1-1 sites, and disseminated his marketing action plan including the following:

- the target launch date
- objectives for the marketing effort
- control points for decision-making and financial oversight
- key milestones and dates
- a budget estimate for the effort by media category
- evaluation measurement tools
- special media news events
- print materials to be developed
- potential community partners

The team briefly reviewed the plan and adopted it. Some team members were aware of the first tasks, determining a logo and slogan. After the plan was adopted, these team members reported on their brainstorming ideas for the logo. The team built on these ideas and proceeded to brainstorm about logos and slogans, potential media outlets and potential community partners for funding.

By the end of the first month of meetings, Austin's 3-1-1 initiative had a logo and slogan. The team created the slogan, "Austin's Answers," with great care. They pondered a number of choices, often testing potential slogans on APD staff who were not involved with the project. Once the choices were narrowed, they discussed variations of the chosen slogan such as "Austin Answers" or "Austin's Answer." In part, the final choice was driven by the decision to use APD's famous search and rescue dog, Austin, as the 3-1-1 mascot, especially in order to reach children. Austin attended the marketing meetings with his handler, though he did not add many comments.

Selection of the logo also involved extensive thought. The Commission Executive Director worked directly with a well-known graphic designer, to develop and test alternative logos to brand Austin's 3-1-1 effort. The team conducted a written vote to choose among the top three designs. Once the final design concept was presented to the team, a discussion ensued about whether to have dashes between the numbers, similar to the required 9-1-1 marketing style.

During the logo selection meeting, team members also presented text for a potential brochure. The team discussed ways to reach target audiences such as children, the elderly and the Hispanic-speaking population. In addition to a brochure, team members designed a quiz to point out the differences between 3-1-1 and 9-1-1 calls especially for use with children.

By the middle of the second month, production on all printed materials started. These materials included:

- 5 ½" by 8 ½" tri-fold brochures, compliant with US Postal Service mail standards

- 2 ½" by 3 ½" wallet cards contrasting when to call 3-1-1 with when to call 9-1-1
- 4 ¼" by 11" bookmark cards, explaining when to call 3-1-1 instead of 9-1-1 on one side, with a quiz with matching 40 situations with 3-1-1 or 9-1-1 on the other
- pencils
- bumper stickers
- logo T-shirts
- logo balloons

The brochure, wallet cards and bookmark quiz were printed in both English and Spanish to reach Austin's diverse population.

Figure 11: APD 3-1-1 Logo



The brochure:

- provided a four-paragraph description of 3-1-1 as "a toll-free telephone number that allows people within the city limits to request police services in non-emergency situations"
  - discussed why 3-1-1 was needed
  - identified who would answer 3-1-1 calls (i.e., cross-trained 9-1-1 call takers)
  - explained when to call 3-1-1 versus when to call 911, including a list of potential situations
  - explained what would happen if a person dialed 3-1-1 when they intended to dial 9-1-1 (again highlighting the cross-trained call takers)
  - noted that the APD's main number (974-5000) would remain in service and was available to callers outside the city limits with non-emergency requests
  - highlighted non-emergency calls to APD's 9-1-1 system by pulling out quotes of caller's questions, such as "Will trick-or-treating be legal tonight because of the rain?"
- While the materials were being-printed the team continued

Figure 10: 3-1-1 Marketing Materials



to meet weekly. Next steps involved solidifying donations from corporations, developing and coordinating insertion of newsletter articles, and scheduling special media events.

**Seeking Donations.** Based upon the Chief’s and the Emergency Communication Manager’s initial presentation of the 3-1-1 concept, GACC provided \$10,000 to the marketing endeavor. They also took the lead in soliciting other sup-

port. As public employees, APD staff could not seek funding directly from private individuals or corporations. The Commission Executive Director established an advertising budget estimate of \$85,000 in his marketing action plan. He planned:

- \$15,000 for design
- \$10,000 for print materials
- \$15,000 for television spots
- \$10,000 for radio spots
- \$25,000 for production
- \$10,000 for coordination.

Figure 12: Bookmark 9-1-1 v. 3-1-1 Quiz

| WHO YA' GONNA CALL?  |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| SITUATION  | call 3-1-1 | call 9-1-1 |
| 1. A vehicle is blocking my driveway.                                  |            |            |
| 2. A house is on fire.   |            |            |
| 3. My cat is stuck high up in a tree.                                  |            |            |
| 4. There is a refrigerator in the road.                                |            |            |
| 5. Loud music is coming from a house on my street.                     |            |            |
| 6. Someone is peering around in my yard.                               |            |            |
| 7. My bicycle is missing.  |            |            |
| 8. The couple next door are screaming and shouting.                    |            |            |
| 9. Someone broke into my car and took my purse.                        |            |            |
| 10. I heard a gunshot.   |            |            |
| 11. A car is parked in a handicapped space.                            |            |            |
| 12. A dumpster is on fire.   |            |            |
| 13. A dog is loose in my neighborhood.                                 |            |            |
| 14. A baby is in a locked car.   |            |            |
| 15. Someone took a statue from my front yard.                          |            |            |
| 16. My husband just hit me.  |            |            |
| 17. My son ran away from home.   |            |            |
| 18. There is a person lying on the sidewalk.                           |            |            |
| 19. There are potholes in the street.                                  |            |            |
| 20. A car is stalled on the road.                                      |            |            |
| 21. My ex-girlfriend keeps calling me on the telephone.                |            |            |
| 22. I just swallowed a bottle of pills.                                |            |            |
| 23. I need to get personal items from my ex-wife's house.              |            |            |
| 24. My Dad fell off a ladder.  |            |            |
| 25. Graffiti is all over my fence.                                     |            |            |
| 26. My baby isn't breathing.   |            |            |
| 27. My car is missing.   |            |            |
| 28. I have just been raped.  |            |            |
| 29. I found a gun on the sidewalk.                                     |            |            |
| 30. Someone is breaking into my neighbor's house.                      |            |            |
| 31. There are two teenagers in the park when they should be in school. |            |            |
| 32. I was just held up by a man with a gun.                            |            |            |
| 33. A dead deer is on the side of the road.                            |            |            |
| 34. I hear screams for help.   |            |            |
| 35. What detective is working on my case?                              |            |            |
| 36. My wife is having a baby right now.                                |            |            |
| 37. I think my neighbor sells drugs.                                   |            |            |
| 38. A man is looking in the windows of cars in the parking lot.        |            |            |
| 39. Someone is using my credit card.                                   |            |            |
| 40. There is a bad collision on the highway.                           |            |            |

He also set an advertising target with a two-to-one spending ratio. For every dollar spent by GACC on advertising, he sought two dollars in cost-free media coverage, such as public service announcements.

The Commission Executive Director, with the assistance of the media consultant, contacted CAPCO, the 9-1-1 oversight organization, Southwestern Bell and Motorola for possible donations. These three organizations were directly involved with the 3-1-1 effort.

CAPCO agreed to provide \$10,000 for print media that would highlight both 3-1-1 and 9-1-1. They also agreed to create teasers within their advertising and public recognition events to spark interest in the 3-1-1 announcement planned for September 17th.

Responding to a grant application to their foundation, Southwestern Bell contributed \$25,000. Once pledged, foundation funding takes time to secure. Fortunately, GACC was able to cover expenses until the funds were received.

Motorola did not respond to the Commission Executive Director’s solicitations for help with marketing expenses, despite repeated inquiries.

The team discussed approaching other potential donors. However, time and personnel limitations did not permit aggressive follow-up on these leads.

## Involve the Media

In the end, \$45,000 was used almost exclusively to develop print media. GACC's influence helped secure pro-bono services from the designer. This saved the marketing team \$15,000 of the funds that had been planned for design.

APD did not run radio, television or print advertisements. They did seek and obtain significant cost-free television and print coverage for 3-1-1. We will discuss how they achieved this in the next section.

### Marketing 3-1-1

**Pre-Kick Off Marketing.** Television coverage of APD's 3-1-1 plans began on July 31, 2001. GACC President invited 86 editors and station managers (radio and television) to a media briefing. The media advisory stated that:

*"The 3-1-1 launch is the city's largest public safety initiative in recent memory. The Austin Police Department and the Greater Austin Crime Commission need your help to educate the public concerning the importance of this new system."*

Media kits included:

- a 3-1-1 system overview
- a list of 3-1-1 media contacts
- a 2-page description of the need for 3-1-1
- a 2-page introduction of the Greater Austin Crime Commission
- the COPS Office press release about the 3-1-1 grant.

Although GACC President invited editors and managers to the 11:00 a.m. briefing, entire crews arrived with cameras and reporters. The GACC President introduced the 3-1-1 concept and the need for community involvement to market the new service. The Emergency Communications Director followed him, providing a more detailed description of APD's goals with 3-1-1. The Emergency Communication Manager fielded questions from reporters about the costs

The GACC President invited 86 editors and station managers to a media briefing about 3-1-1.

of the service, other cities that were using 3-1-1 and the reasons people call 9-1-1 with non-emergencies. He used the example of the man who called 9-1-1 about his neighbor's noisy rooster.

Despite their best efforts, this briefing evolved into a press release for 3-1-1 rather than a discussion about how to garner future media support and coverage.

During the six o'clock news that evening (July 31, 2001) 3-1-1 was announced to the public. The news stations reported that 3-1-1 would not be operational until September 17, 2001. Fortunately, the Emergency Communication Manager anticipated that the public might miss that critical information. Prior to the briefing, he confirmed that the 3-1-1 number had been established and connected. On August 1, 2001, 3-1-1 calls began trickling into the Tele-serve operation.

Following this television announcement, APD received editorial reviews in print media. In addition, the Emergency Communication Manager and other APD executives received numerous requests for interviews. APD decided not to allow any press walk-throughs of the operation until the official kick-off date.

Over the next month, members of the marketing team began handing out printed brochures and attending community meetings. The school district provided every student with printed brochures about 3-1-1 in combination with their educational efforts about 9-1-1.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, APD Emergency Communication staff was preparing to participate in a media event highlighting 9-1-1 day at the Texas State Capitol. An APD Call Taker was to be recognized as an outstanding 9-1-1 operator during the ceremony. According to the plan, CAPCO staff was going to foreshadow the announcement of 3-1-1 as an alternative to 9-1-1 at the end of this event.

Unfortunately, the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington DC occurred on that day. As was the case in every community and city in the US, APD quickly refocused its activities. Calls to 9-1-1 and Teleserve surged. The entire 3-1-1 team realized that it was even more imperative than before that the public announcements about 3-1-1 occur the following week.

**Kick Off Marketing.** On September 17, the Mayor, Chief and other city and APD executives gathered to officially announce the service during a media briefing. APD seized the opportunity to remind everyone that “public safety is a community concern” and that “9-1-1 was endangered” by the growing number of non-emergency calls.

All of the major media carriers attended the briefing. Immediately following the briefing, camera crews and reporters participated in an open house. The Emergency Communication Manager encouraged everyone to watch and interview call takers.

All three major networks carried the 3-1-1 announcement, spending between 45 seconds and three minutes on the story. This was a remarkable level of coverage, especially given the extensive amount of news about national events and local reactions to the events. Securing this level of television coverage had a

Figure 13 and 14: Press Coverage of September 17th 3-1-1 Kick-Off Event



Chief Knee During an Interview



positive impact on the dissemination of information about 3-1-1.

**Follow-up Marketing.** Following the official kick-off announcement, APD received scattered coverage about 3-1-1 over the next two months. At one point, AT&T asserted to the press that APD did not advise them how to access 3-1-1. This assertion was in response to AT&T customer complaints that they were not able to access the service. The Emergency Communication Manager was able to refute the assertion by producing the certified letter that had been sent to AT&T during the implementation phase of the project. He used this media inquiry to encourage other phone carriers to realize that 3-1-1 was a service that customers desired.

In addition, 3-1-1 was featured in a story about a rash of flag thefts. With the rise in demonstrations of patriotism, American flags were being stolen from houses and busi-

nesses. Victims were calling 3-1-1 to report the thefts. The news stations covered the story and reminded viewers to contact 3-1-1, not 9-1-1, in the event of a flag theft.

Aside from the news coverage, APD staff distributed printed brochures, quizzes and other marketing materials following the official kick-off date. All supplies were exhausted by mid-December. As an ongoing marketing effort, APD and GACC developed a web-based version of the brochure. The web site is located at <http://www.austincrime.org/311/index.html>.

Based upon initial assessments, it appeared that APD's multi-pronged marketing strategy succeeded in shifting citizen perceptions. 9-1-1 call loads appeared to have decreased, in spite of heightened concerns over terrorism. Six months after the announcement, the marketing team was investigating ways to continue its campaign and spread the word about the service. APD officers assisted in posting flyers in downtown businesses as part of this follow-up outreach effort.

## INTRODUCTION

# System Maintenance

## Chapter XI

Once a 3-1-1 system is implemented, procedures must be put into place to maintain it. System maintenance includes developing provisions for anticipated problems with the equipment and operational levels. Specifically, we discuss how APD's 3-1-1 call center handled peaks in demand and temporary staff shortages. These issues are examined from the point of view of equipment performance and staffing options. We also look at how staff were incorporated into the call center. We address how information was diffused to new call takers and to rotating call takers.

## QUESTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

### Questions about How 3-1-1 Handles Peaks in Demand:

- What is the average number of abandoned calls during a shift?
- What happens to callers when they can't reach an operator?
- When messages are left, what is the response?
- What redundancies are built into the systems?

### Questions about How New Call Takers are Brought On Board:

- What training is provided to new call takers for 3-1-1?
- How do rotations between divisions function?
- How are policies and procedures translated to new staff?



for the phone equipment and computer hardware.

**New Employees.** Even though APD has reduced call taker turnover drastically (from 47 percent per year to 5 percent per year), new call takers are hired occasionally. APD offers orientation classes for new call takers. These individuals participate in a two-week course to certify them as 9-1-1 call takers and to explain how Austin's Emergency Communications Division functions. They learn about the policies and procedures that apply to all call takers. They also learn about specific issues for 9-1-1 call takers, 3-1-1 call takers and teletype call takers. Generally, call takers start their assignments as 9-1-1 call takers.

Managers developed a single policy and procedures manual for all call takers when 3-1-1 was introduced. Managers for each of the units, (9-1-1, 3-1-1 and dispatch) participated in multiple work sessions to revise and update the manual to reflect current operating procedures. They identified which were not being followed, the reasons they were not, and whether they needed to be included or deleted. They also identified practices that had not previously been documented. Working together, they established standard ways of handling situations. This intense effort was aimed at easing the transition for call takers when rotating within shifts and across units, and to ensure consistent responses to customers by all units.

When call takers started in the 3-1-1 unit or were rotated to 3-1-1 from another unit, they sat with an experienced call taker for two weeks. During the first week, they listened to how calls were answered and resolved. Using a remote headset, they linked into the phone system of the trainer. They learned about the reporting systems on the desktops. During the second week, new call takers began to answer calls while the experienced call taker listened. When the experienced call taker certified that the new call taker can handle calls solo, on-

the-job training, was complete. Generally, the trainer remained available to the new call taker to answer questions and assist with problem calls as they arose. Leads and supervisors also worked with the new call taker.

APD created flexibility among its emergency communications units by:

- standardizing call taker responsibilities
- creating uniform policies and procedures
- instituting systematic on-the-job training.

Based on these operating principles, APD was able to offer overtime and rotation opportunities among units to meet unit-based staffing shortages. This helped maintain workload distribution. They also created a quasi-career track for call takers. Call takers could learn all the functions of emergency communications and apply for management positions.

By expanding the breadth of the job, management made the call taker position more interesting. Call takers faced very different experiences based on whether they were focused on responding to emergencies in the fastest possible manner (9-1-1), or resolving citizen information and reporting issues (3-1-1). To ensure that call takers were exposed to these different experiences, positions were rotated every six months. Call takers switched shifts and/or units. Rotations ensured that information was distributed throughout the unit and that call takers were cross-trained.

**Summary.** Appropriate levels of redundancy existed in the 3-1-1 equipment and in staff knowledge. Expectations derived from existing data and operating knowledge were used to design the system. Redundancy ensured that the call center operated in a supportive and continuous manner. The systems were built to function with limited down-time (four hours) and to allow for limited growth over time. Support and maintenance agreements provided for software updates on a regular basis, to ensure that they did not become obsolete.

Performance of both equipment and staff was tracked and monitored daily. If issues were identified, such as too many “dropped” calls they were researched and addressed in a timely manner.

Staff were cross-trained on a regular basis through standardized policies and procedures and rotations among units. When the 3-1-1 call center reaches peak operating capacity, resources can be added in an appropriate time frame.



## INTRODUCTION

# System Performance

## Chapter XII

A major issue for 3-1-1 call centers nationwide is convincing the public to dial 3-1-1. Theoretically, 3-1-1 service provides key information about city services, meeting an anticipated public need. However, if the public does not know about the service or does not demand the service at a sufficient level to justify expenses, questions about proper resource allocation arise.

As city budgets tighten, all cost centers must demonstrate that they are providing a public good in an effective and cost-efficient manner. The 3-1-1 core team was aware of this requirement. They designed the system and procured software capable of tracking the performance of the system and of the call takers operating the system.

This section provides information about how to APD uses 3-1-1 system to measure performance. For example, managers and supervisors use the system to track the volume of phone calls received overall, how quickly calls are answered, how long call takers remain on the line, and how many calls are abandoned. This section does not provide findings regarding the overall effectiveness of 3-1-1 or describe whether calls to 9-1-1 increased or decreased over time. Those issues are addressed in the formal evaluation conducted by 21st Century Solutions, Inc. (forthcoming).

During the visioning process for the 3-1-1 system, management established four measures of success:

1. Reduce the number of non-emergency calls on the 9-1-1 system by 35 percent.
2. Handle non-emergency calls in an efficient manner, i.e., low average call times.
3. Handle calls without overwhelming the 3-1-1 system, i.e., avoid hang-ups due to customer waiting times.
4. Receive few to no complaints from community members using 3-1-1.

Management uses tracking systems to guide call takers in improving their performance. Management evaluates call taker performance, develops constructive criticisms, and establishes benchmarks for improvement using individual statistics from the tracking systems. To motivate call takers, individuals who exceed benchmark performance levels and improve system operations are recognized frequently.

## QUESTIONS IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE:

### Questions about How APD Assesses Its Performance with 3-1-1:

- How are 3-1-1 calls tracked?
- How often do Emergency Communications managers report on 3-1-1 statistics?
- What performance indicators do they use?

### Questions about How Call Tracking Statistics Are Used to Manage Employees:

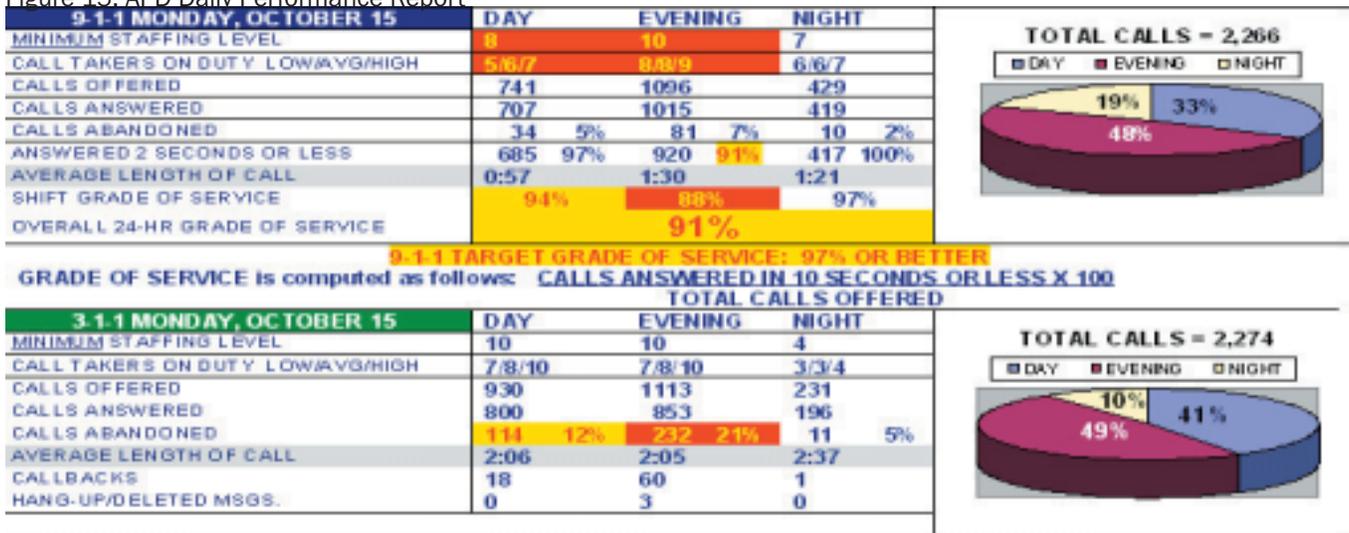
- How can managers use statistics from the 3-1-1 system?
- How can call takers use statistics from the 3-1-1 system?

**APD Performance.** Emergency communications Technical Services Supervisors track call volume daily. The Supervisor prepares a report highlighting the number of call takers, as well as calls received, answered and abandoned for the 9-1-1 and the 3-1-1 systems. This report is forwarded to all emergency communications managers daily.

types of call data to estimate how many 3-1-1 calls are being received above and beyond normal Teleserve and PBX call loads.

As noted, this chapter on performance measures provides information about how APD uses the 3-1-1 system to measure performance. The chapter does not provide findings regarding the overall effectiveness of 3-1-1

Figure 15: APD Daily Performance Report



Each month, this report is summarized. Managers discuss trends and problem areas. They implement changes, as needed. Based on these discussions, the Emergency Communication Manager prepares monthly reports for the Assistant Chief of Operations and the Chief. His report outlines key successes, areas of improvement and planned activities for the coming month.

Maintaining this consistent reporting allows managers and executives to stay aware of changes in emergency communication requirements. The information about 9-1-1 calls helps managers forecast the potential impact of a 3-1-1 system.

The call tracking software for Austin’s 3-1-1 system allows managers to track data by the source of the call; a direct 3-1-1 call, a Teleserve number call, a general number call or an internal transfer call. Managers disaggregate

or describe whether calls to 9-1-1 increased or decreased over time. Those issues are addressed in the formal evaluation conducted by 21st Century Solutions, Inc. (2003). We offer the following examples only to demonstrate how Austin managers are using performance data from their tracking system to address internal reporting needs.

For 3-1-1, the Emergency Communication Manager made performance presentations to the command staff of APD and the City Manager at major milestone dates. After the system had been in place for approximately a month, he reported on 3-1-1 activity.

In this presentation, the Emergency Communication Manager stated that “3-1-1 resulted in a reduction of 16 percent of calls into the 9-1-1 call center.... Prior to 3-1-1, the 9-1-1 call center averaged 2,586 calls a day. 9-1-1 now handles an average of 2,179 calls a day.” He presented

charts showing call load for 9-1-1 and 3-1-1 by day. These charts clearly demonstrated how 3-1-1 was reducing 9-1-1 call loads on a daily basis.

He made follow-up presentations at the three-month and six-month marks. In each time period, statistics demonstrated how 3-1-1 was achieving the first performance goal, reducing the 9-1-1 call loads. Even in light of the national tragedies of September 11, 2001, 9-1-1 call loads appeared to have been reduced in Austin.

To track customer satisfaction with 3-1-1, assistant managers employ two performance tools. First, an assistant manager listens to recordings (about 20 minutes) of a select number of calls each quarter. The assistant manager assesses how call takers handled callers and callers' reactions and notes how customer service might be improved. The training coordinator also calls a random number of callers and conducts a customer satisfaction survey.

When the system was first implemented, the Emergency Communication Manager also responded to any customer comments that were received by the Chief's Office. 3-1-1 received early press coverage because AT&T cellular customers could not reach 3-1-1 from their phones. Initially, AT&T had stated that the APD had not informed them about the need to offer the service. However, the APD was able to produce a copy of the certified letter with receipts to document its delivery, and thus deflected the negative press. Aside from that incident, 3-1-1 has received accolades in editorials in the press.

**Call Taker Performance.** Management tracks the performance of call takers in real time during daily shifts. [Tracking systems performance is discussed in Chapter XIII: System Maintenance.]

The software installed with the phone system allows management to monitor how long call takers are with callers, how long they spend completing follow-up reports, and how long they take for breaks. It also documents how many calls are taken per shift, per call taker, and the source of the calls received. The system stores this information for up to 5 years. Management listens to tapes of calls quarterly.

The CRM system tracks resolutions by call type. Using this data, managers can quickly identify when incorrect information is being provided and who is disseminating that information. This allows them to contact the call taker(s) and advise them of the correct information quickly -- and discretely.

Using these data, APD management developed benchmarks for performance plans, provided constructive criticism to improve call taker techniques, and identified solutions to recurrent problems faced by callers. As an example, management developed internet-based fact sheets to answer common caller questions and provided city contact phone and address lists.

Management also uses individual performance data to commend call takers on their performance. Because of the precise accounting in the systems, call takers can distinguish themselves more easily. Not only can they demonstrate the quantity of calls they are handling, but the system documents the depth and quality of their services to Austin citizens.

**Summary.** Access to real-time information in an information service center is critical. Austin's 3-1-1 center tracks how and what information is requested and disseminated. APD quickly demonstrated to their executives how 3-1-1 appears to aid in the delivery of services by their department using call volume statistics. Using the tracking software, managers encourage individual call takers to improve their performance in terms of the quantity of calls they are handling and the quality of services they are providing.

## INTRODUCTION

# Lessons Learned

## Chapter XIII

Austin implemented 3-1-1 to provide citizens with an alternative to calling 9-1-1. The Chief believed that citizens should have a way to seek assistance from APD about issues that were not emergencies. He wanted to encourage citizens to become “eyes and ears” for the Department. Citizen involvement is fundamental under the Chief’s philosophy of neighborhood-based policing. 3-1-1 is a method of encouraging and allowing for a broader range of citizens to become involved.

APD staff responsible for Emergency Communications sought to ensure that citizens could reach 9-1-1. The growing call volumes overtaxed the 9-1-1 system in crisis situations. APD knew that 40-60 percent of 9-1-1 calls were non-emergency calls. 3-1-1 provided a viable solution for removing these calls from the 9-1-1 queue.

The 3-1-1 team understood that 3-1-1 reinforced the overall department philosophy. They also viewed it as a solution to a potential crisis with 9-1-1. Understanding where 3-1-1 fit into the big picture for this goal-oriented Department served as a powerful underlying motivator throughout the process of creating the service. Those responsible for developing the plan and securing funding framed issues around how 3-1-1 would positively affect public safety. Once implementation began, IT managers responsible for designing and for procuring the technology defined appropriate project scopes and functional needs using this framework. Managers led call takers to accept new job responsibilities by explaining how the call takers would be important contributors within APD’s overall mission. Clearly placing 3-1-1 within the context of overall agency goals eased the implementation process at each stage.

In this chapter, we discuss what lessons were learned at each stage of the implementation process. In some cases, APD anticipated what needed to be done; time proved them correct. In other cases, managers wished they had known how to resolve issues more easily. As external observers, we saw two overall key lessons emerge. One, as discussed above, is that 3-1-1 should be proposed within the context of wider agency goals. If the mission of the new service is clear, everyone at every level will have an easier time contribut-

ing to successful implementation throughout the process. Second, anointing a champion to reinforce this mission is critical. In Austin, the Emergency Communications Manager served as the project champion. While many people were involved, he was the point person responsible for making decisions, clarifying expectations and keeping 3-1-1 on the priority list of Department activities.

## SUMMARY OF LESSONS BY CHAPTER:

**Need.** Before implementing 3-1-1, understand the needs of the community, the 9-1-1 call volume and the types of calls received at 9-1-1. If an excessive number of non-emergency calls are being received by 9-1-1, investigate the reasons citizens are calling 9-1-1 rather than another number.

**Choosing the Model.** Determine which 3-1-1 model – the basic police model, the basic city model or the comprehensive model – will meet the needs based on the desired outcome, political realities of the community and available resources.

**Partnerships.** Look for partners at each step of the process and be flexible about what these partners can provide. Once partnerships are established, be clear about roles and expectations. Also ensure that everyone knows and understands who makes the final decisions.

**Equipment/Technology: Call Routing and Call Tracking.** Think through different scenarios in the development phase. Observe call takers over an extended period and track the types of calls they receive. Develop a baseline of 9-1-1 calls prior to the implementation of 3-1-1.

**Equipment/Technology: Procurement Process.** Partner with the purchasing department experts to determine what options are available for procurement. If there is an easy way to procure the technology, use it. Currently, the marketplace for 3-1-1 solutions is limited. Only a few companies are providing products focused on government needs. Finally, make sure that your 3-1-1 technical team includes a GIS expert at the design stages.

**Staffing.** Realize that staff is half of the focal relationship between callers and the police department. It is critical that staff fully understand and accept the 3-1-1 concept prior to implementation. Focus on morale issues and rumor control.

## SUMMARY OF LESSONS BY CHAPTER:

**Training.** Use the train-the-trainer model to build acceptance. Provide training, especially refresher training, at multiple points during the implementation process. When conducting computer training, use live systems in a hands-on setting. Hold vendors accountable for documentation.

**Logistics.** Recognize the impacts of physical space on morale and on system operations. Ensure that you have the organizational clout to make announcement of 3-1-1 an important event for the organization.

**Timeline.** Establish and distribute a formal timeline. Be detailed about what tasks must be completed, who will be completing them, when they are due and what other tasks are dependent on their completion. Have a project manager focused on tracking progress according to the timeline. Maintain momentum with frequent meetings that require action, not just discussion.

**Public Education/Marketing.** Recognize that changing public perceptions about 9-1-1 is the key to success of a basic police model. When developing a public education strategy and budget, be creative and set your financial goals high. Rely on key stakeholders such as the Public Information Office to assist you with the effort. Take advantage of unexpected situations.

**System Maintenance.** Plan for limited redundancy.

**System Performance.** Track 3-1-1 performance daily. Use measures that provide in-depth information about what the system is accomplishing and how call takers are performing.

**Need.** Before implementing 3-1-1, understand the community, the 9-1-1 call volume and the types of calls received at 9-1-1. If an excessive number of non-emergency calls are being received by 9-1-1, investigate the reasons citizens are calling 9-1-1 rather than another number.

APD understood that they were serving a relatively sophisticated citizenry with high expectations for government and police services. Executives saw that the 9-1-1 call volume was growing faster than the population. They recognized that 40-60 percent of their 9-1-1 calls were non-emergency calls, many about civil matters. Citizens were calling 9-1-1 because they knew they could reach the police department and there was not a viable alternative. 3-1-1 made sense under these conditions.

**Choosing the Model.** Determine which 3-1-1 model-- the basic police model, the basic city model or the comprehensive model-- will meet the needs based on the desired outcome, political realities of the community and available resources.

APD used 3-1-1 in its most basic form to remove non-emergency police calls from 9-1-1. When calling 9-1-1, citizens were seeking police intervention. The basic police model ensured that 3-1-1 callers would know they were contacting the police and would be discouraged from reverting to 9-1-1 as the preferred police contact.

Further, APD understood that developing a centralized city call center involved extensive coordination and management efforts. As one of the smallest call centers of the 22 operating in the city, the police department did not choose to assume leadership of this enterprise operation. Establishing the basic police model allowed them to pilot test implementation strategies and new call management technologies. It also allowed them to build a system within available financial and personal resources in a timely fashion.

**Partnerships.** Look for partners at each step of the process and be flexible about what these partners can provide. Once partnerships are established, be clear about roles and expectations.

APD partnered with other city organizations (the Information Systems Department, the Purchasing Division and the Public Information Office), private telephony and software vendors, 9-1-1 regulators (CAPCO), community leaders (Greater Austin Crime Commission) and media during implementation. Each partner provided unique expertise vital to the successful implementation of 3-1-1.

Because City officials anticipated building an enterprise-wide call center based on APD's 3-1-1 experience, the Information Systems Department assumed a significant role in the development process. Early in the process, the Emergency Communication Manager worked with ISD executives to clarify who would make decisions about APD's 3-1-1 effort - APD. This early clarification was critical to keeping the project focused and the lines of communication clear.

**Equipment/Technology: Call Routing and Call Tracking.** Think through different scenarios in the development phase. Observe call takers over an extended period and track the types of calls they receive. Develop a baseline of 9-1-1 calls prior to the implementation of 3-1-1. These data will enable you to differentiate between the call load that would have been generated through the standard non-emergency number(s) and the part of the call load that is new to the operation.

APD relied on the experience of management to define how calls would be received and how they would be routed and tracked. Initially, APD struggled with how to identify competitive local exchange carriers (CLEC) operating cellular services and pay phones. The first alternative would have denied citizens using these services

access to 3-1-1. However, APD officials realized that allowing some citizens access while denying it to others would jeopardize the success of the effort. They redoubled their efforts and reached out to their partner, CAPCO, to assist in identifying these companies.

ISD staff observed call takers in order to devise specifications for how to route and track calls. They watched what kinds of calls were received and how these calls were resolved. These observations served as the basis for the functional specifications of the telephony and call management software.

#### **Equipment/Technology: Procurement Process.**

Partner with purchasing department experts to determine what options are available for procurement. If there is an easy way to procure the technology, use it. Currently, the marketplace for 3-1-1 solutions is limited. Only a few companies are providing products focused on government needs. Finally, make sure that your 3-1-1 technical team includes a GIS expert during the design stage.

APD avoided months of difficult procurement tasks by building a partnership with the experts in Austin's Purchasing Department. They learned of a special umbrella rule allowing direct procurement of products and services that improve the public safety. This rule allowed them to avoid the request-for-proposal process and to jump-start technology procurement. They also used modifications of existing contracts wherever possible.

ISD staff involved with the project spent extensive time attempting to identify vendors for 3-1-1 solutions. What they learned is that few exist, especially with proven solutions for public agencies.

One lesson that APD learned the hard way is the importance of involving a GIS expert throughout the 3-1-1 implementation process. Address data are key components when link-

ing 3-1-1 data to other enterprise data systems such as CAD and reporting systems. GIS technology is a complex and specialized field. APD did not involve GIS staff until the construction phase. During this hectic time, they learned that the specifications and formats of APD's GIS data did not meet CRM or SWB system specifications. It took extensive communication, data reformatting and time to address this issue. In the end, APD was not able to fully incorporate the GIS address data into the CRM system. This has limited the usefulness of the CRM software.

**Staffing.** Realize that staff is half of the focal relationship between callers and the police department. It is critical that staff fully understand and accept the 3-1-1 concept prior to implementation. Focus on morale issues and rumor control. Resolving these issues requires that you address root problems first, such as staffing shortages and pay issues.

When implementing a new system, weigh the benefits of refocusing existing staff against those of hiring new staff. Change presents serious challenges that may outweigh any potential savings in training costs. In either case, empower and trust your employees to solve problems.

APD understood that the success of 3-1-1 depended on changing citizens' use of 9-1-1. To be encouraged to use 3-1-1, callers needed to have positive experiences with 3-1-1 call takers. Beyond the technological tools, call takers needed knowledge and customer service skills to address caller needs in an effective and efficient manner.

To implement 3-1-1 with existing Teleserve and PBX staff, APD managers had to redefine the call taker position, address intra-unit communication and morale issues, and realign expectations. All tasks required excellent change management skills. Managers created a single call taker performance plan, developed a career track for call takers and addressed rumors

proactively. Executives met with command staff and divisions relying on Teleserve staff to realign expectations and build support for the new 3-1-1 operation.

**Training.** Use the train-the-trainer model to build acceptance. Provide training, especially refresher training, at multiple points during the implementation process. When conducting computer training, use live systems in a hands-on setting. Hold vendors accountable for documentation.

APD started training on the new 3-1-1 system three months prior to the kick-off date with vendor train-the-trainer sessions. Using this method allowed them to expose recognized leaders to the concepts and to learn about potential concerns of staff. Leaders built excitement and positive feedback about the new tools within their respective shifts. One lesson learned for the leaders during these sessions is that it is important for managers to provide as much information as possible about the new system, as soon as possible. Resistance to 3-1-1 developed from a lack of understanding of the vision and of the changes that were planned.

Participants learned the new software in a hands-on environment. They were able to see how the system reacted under different scenarios. APD also allowed enough time for their staff to learn the new tools at their own paces. This eased fears and tensions about the new job.

With respect to vendors, ISD staff made sure that vendors provided the necessary technology documentation to support and maintain the hardware and software. Initially, Motorola did not have this documentation available.

**Logistics.** Recognize the impacts of physical space on morale and on system operations. Ensure that you have the organizational clout to make the announcement of 3-1-1 an important event for the organization.

Physical space at APD headquarters was limited. Emergency Communication units were spread throughout the building. The space provided was not ideal for a call center. These physical space constraints affected the call takers' morale and communication. Managers recognized these issues and took steps to address them. They also demonstrated that the situation would improve by posting pictures of the construction of the new communication center.

Within the organization, the Emergency Communication Manager promoted the activities of the Emergency Communication staff. He ensured that executives were aware of staff contributions to the operation of the Department. The kick-off of 3-1-1 was no exception. His marketing team coordinated a media event involving the Mayor, City Manager and Chief. When the cameras appeared in the call center, call takers proudly showed off their new tools and were recognized for their contributions to the Police Department.

**Timeline.** Establish and distribute a formal timeline. Be detailed about what tasks must be completed, who will be completing them, when they are due and what other tasks are dependent on their completion. Have a project manager focused on tracking progress according to the timeline. Maintain momentum with frequent meetings that require action, not just discussion.

The ISD Project Manager created a multi-page timeline. Working with the Emergency Communication Manager, she built in sufficient time to allow for inevitable problems. This timeline detailed each phase of implementation, including the training and marketing phases. Under her direction, the team relentlessly tracked, reported and most importantly, completed tasks as documented in the timeline during weekly meetings.

The marketing and training team leaders developed timelines, but not to the same level of specificity. They also held frequent team meetings. Although they accomplished all of their goals, at some meetings, focus seemed to drift

and frustration developed. A more specific task timeline might have avoided these issues.

Overall, all involved in the APD 3-1-1 effort felt that their timeline worked splendidly. The project was completed on schedule.

**Public Education/Marketing.** Recognize that changing public perceptions about 9-1-1 is the key to success of a basic police model. When developing a public education strategy and budget, be creative and set your financial goals high. Rely on key stakeholders such as the Public Information Office to assist you with the effort. Take advantage of unexpected situations.

APD managers asserted that the success of 3-1-1 depended on public re-education about 9-1-1. Public education was perhaps the most critical aspect of this effort.

APD sought the assistance of community leaders with this important aspect. APD leveraged the clout of community leaders involved with the Greater Austin Crime Commission to gain media and corporate support. GACC leaders also enlisted the support of a well-known graphics firm to brand Austin's 3-1-1 effort. APD relied on the communication experts in the Public Information office to access the marketing outlets with the greatest potential for citizen contact.

Brainstorming from the perspective of the various team members played a significant role in the planning for marketing and fundraising. One area that proved very difficult was identifying sufficient personnel to actually contact corporations and businesses for financial support. GACC members found that securing corporate donations was a labor-intensive undertaking. The unexpected events of September 11 changed the landscape for the 3-1-1 marketing effort. APD and GACC officials quickly adjusted their materials and proceeded according to plan. They were able to use these unfortunate

circumstances to demonstrate the value of 3-1-1 to the community's public safety needs. The media quickly accepted and promoted this message.

**System Maintenance.** Plan for limited redundancy. In general, the 3-1-1 operation is relatively stable. However, hardware and software glitches do occur. Work with technical staff to develop acceptable levels of downtime.

In addition, some staff turnover should be anticipated. APD developed a cross-training method for incorporating new staff in a positive manner.

**System Performance.** Track 3-1-1 performance daily. Use measures that provide in-depth information about what the system is accomplishing and how call takers are performing.

APD tracks 3-1-1 calls and call resolution daily. Using this information, they provided success stories with data within the first two months of operation. Frequent reports allowed the Department to maintain interest in and attention on 3-1-1.

Detailed performance data allowed managers to work with call takers to improve their performance. Managers were able to identify potential areas of concern and to discuss them with the call takers before significant problems could occur. Most importantly, performance measures allowed call takers to demonstrate their achievements. Feedback on performance measures served as a motivator for positive job performance.

## Endnotes

### Sources

<sup>1</sup> Austin City Source: Austin, Texas Basic Facts. Available on the web at [www.ci.austin.tx.us/citymgr/basicfac.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/citymgr/basicfac.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> FY 2001-02 City of Austin Budget, Police Department Section. Available on the web at [www.ci.austin.tx.us/budget/01-02/downloads/pb02\\_police.pdf](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/budget/01-02/downloads/pb02_police.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Craig D. Uchida, Shellie E. Solomon and Edward R. Maguire. "Neighborhood-Based Policing, Austin Style, An Assessment." Washington, DC: 21st Century Solutions, Inc., September 2000

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> APD's call prioritization and dispatch policies did not change as a result of the new 3-1-1 system.

<sup>13</sup> FY 2001-02 City of Austin Budget, Police Department Section. See note 5.

<sup>14</sup> COPS MORE is a program funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Since 1995, COPS MORE has provided funding to law enforcement agencies for technology, civilians, and overtime in an effort to redeploy officers and deputies into community policing activities.

<sup>15</sup> Rana Sampson, "Misuse and Abuse of 911," Problem-Oriented Guide Police Series, U.S. Department of Justice, COPS Office, 2002.

## Endnotes

### Sources

<sup>16</sup> While this city-wide route has been the method of other 3-1-1 efforts, the Chief has identified specific reasons for maintaining 3-1-1 as a police non-emergency number and for not taking on the responsibilities to be the headquarters for Austin's single number. These issues will be discussed in the next chapter about choosing the 3-1-1 model.

<sup>17</sup> Emulation software allows communication with a mainframe application by a personal computer.

<sup>18</sup> While the COPS Office understands APD's rationale for making a sole source procurement of the 3-1-1 hardware and software, they encourage other jurisdictions to follow the standard competitive RFP process as outlined in "The Law Enforcement Tech Guide: How to plan, purchase and manage technology" SEARCH Group, COPS Office. 2002. See "Part IV: Acquiring the Technology" for specific steps.

<sup>19</sup> Texas State privacy laws prohibit forwarding of address information for non-emergency uses.

## Listed Alphabetically

# Glossary of Terms

## Abbreviations

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 3-1-1                           | Phone number reserved with the Federal Communications Commission for non-emergency calls   |
| 9-1-1                           | Phone number reserved with the Federal Communications Commission for emergency calls.  |
| ALI                             | Automatic Location Identification. When a person makes a 911 call using a traditional phone with ground wires, the call is routed to the nearest public safety answering point (PSAP) that then distributes the emergency call to the proper services. The PSAP receives the caller's phone number and the exact location of the phone from which the call was made.   |
| ANI                             | Automatic Number Identification. A telephone network feature that passes the number of the phone the caller is using to the call center in real-time.  |
| APD                             | Austin Police Department   |
| Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) | An automatic vehicle locator is a device that makes use of the Global Positioning System to enable a business or agency to remotely track the location of its vehicle fleet by using the Internet. These devices combine GPS technology, cellular communications, street-level mapping, and an intuitive user interface. AVL systems generally include a network of vehicles that are equipped with a mobile radio receiver, a GPS receiver, a GPS modem and a GPS antenna. This network connects with a base radio consisting of a computer station as well as a GPS receiver and interface. GPS uses interactive maps rather than static map images on the Web. This means users can perform conventional GPS functions such as zoom, pan, identify and queries. |
| AVAYA                           | Telephony vendor selected by Austin to support the 3-1-1 system.   |
| blue pages                      | The section of the phone book dedicated to listing government phone and location information.  |
| CAD                             | Computer Aided Dispatch. A CAD system allows emergency operations and communications to be augmented, assisted, or partially controlled by an automated system. It can include, among other capabilities, computer controlled emergency vehicle dispatching, vehicle status, incident reporting and management information.  |
| call center                     | An umbrella term that refers to reservations centers, help desks, information lines or customer service centers, regardless of how they are organized or what types of transactions they handle.   |

## Listed Alphabetically

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| call taker      | A person who handles incoming or outgoing calls. Within emergency call centers, this person is a trained civilian or officer responsible for handling emergency and non-emergency situations.  |
| call volume     | Number of calls received in a given time period.   |
| calls abandoned | Number of calls where the caller hangs up before reaching a call taker.  |
| calls answered  | Number of calls received and handled by call takers or peripheral equipment. Answered calls do not include calls that are abandoned or receive busy signals.   |
| calls offered   | All of the attempts callers make to reach the call center. There are three possibilities for offered calls: 1) they can get busy signals, 2) they can be answered by the system, but hang up before reaching a call taker, 3) they can be answered by a rep.   |
| calls received  | Number of calls detected and seized by a trunk or private business exchange. Received calls are either abandoned or answered by a call taker or peripheral equipment such as an answering machine.   |
| CAPCO           | Capital Area Planning Council. A regional planning council organized in 1970 to serve local governments in its 10-county region in and around Austin. The primary focus of CAPCO is to serve as advocate, planner and coordinator of initiatives that, when undertaken on a regional basis, can be more effective and efficient. These include emergency services, elderly assistance, law enforcement training, criminal justice planning, solid waste reduction, infrastructure development, and housing and economic development. |
| Central Office  | Can refer to either a telephone company switching center or the type of telephone switch used in a telephone company switching center. The local central office receives calls from within the local area and either routes them locally or passes them to an inter-exchange carrier (IXC). On the receiving end, the local central office receives calls that originate in other areas, from the IXC.   |
| CIO             | Chief Information Officer  |
| CLEC            | Competitive Local Exchange Carriers. Telephone companies responsible for providing local connections and services in addition to the primary local exchange carrier.   |
| COA             | City of Austin   |

## Glossary of Terms

### Abbreviations

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|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| COPS MORE                     | Grant program of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services entitled “Making Officer Redeployment Effective.” Since 1995, COPS MORE has provided funding to law enforcement agencies for technology, civilians and overtime in an effort to redeploy officers and deputies into community policing activities. |
| COPS Office                   | Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice   |
| CRM                           | Customer Relations Management software. Computer software packages are created by a number of vendors using database tools and business rules to manage customer information.  |
| DEORS                         | Austin Police Department Records Management System   |
| dispatcher                    | A trained civilian responsible for distributing calls for service to officers in a designated sector of a community.   |
| District Representatives (DR) | Sworn Austin Police Officers whose primary job responsibilities are to serve as liaisons between patrol officers and neighborhood members. District Representatives engage in extensive problem-solving activities and are relieved of handling calls for service.   |
| DPS                           | Texas Department of Public Safety  |
| emergency call                | A call received where there is a threat to life or injury to a person.   |
| EMS                           | Emergency Medical Services   |
| emulation software            | Software that allows communication with a mainframe application by a personal computer.  |
| GACC                          | Greater Austin Crime Commission. Organization formed in Austin in 1997 to support law enforcement, raise public awareness about crime prevention programs and promote a cooperative and coordinated anti-crime effort in the community.  |
| gb                            | Gigabyte. One billion data bits on a computer.   |
| GIS                           | Geographic Information System. Computer software that allow users to visualize, explore, query and analyze data geographically.  |
| ISD                           | Information Systems Department.  |
| MDT                           | Mobile Data Terminal. Ruggedized wireless computing devices to send and receive information over a wireless data network.  |

## Listed Alphabetically

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| MHz                    | Megahertz. One million cycles per second, used especially as a radio-frequency unit.  |
| Motorola               | Customer Relations Management software vendor selected by Austin.   |
| network ready          | A personal computer that includes a component which, when connected, allows the computer to access a network made up of circuits and computers for the exclusive use of an organization or group of affiliated organizations.   |
| non-emergency call     | A call received by police which involves no threat to life or injury to a person and there is no retrievable evidence.  |
| observing capabilities | A phone system that allows supervisors to hear and track phone conversations in real time.  |
| ODBC                   | Open database connectivity. An open standard application programming interface (API) for accessing a database. By using ODBC statements in a program, users can access files in a number of different databases, including Access, dBase, Excel, and Text.  |
| PBX                    | Private Branch Exchange. An in-house telephone switching system that interconnects telephone extensions, as well as to the outside telephone network.   |
| PIO                    | Public Information Office   |
| RMS                    | Record Management System. RMS is an agency-wide system that considers the reasons, the processes and the means necessary for a document to exist and be used. RMS must cover the entire life span of the document, from its generation to its destruction. It provides for the effective storage, retrieval, retention, manipulation, archiving and viewing of information, records, documents or files that are related to a single subject. Records related to law enforcement issues could include crime reports, law enforcement personnel records, criminal records, and crime analysis. |
| rule of 9's            | The system should operate 99.99999 percent of the time not 99.9999999999999 of the time. This rule allows for technicians to establish the level of certainty regarding impacts of system failures. In this situation, a rare system failure is allowable without creating a public safety emergency.   |
| softphones             | A phone that allows users to easily make and receive calls by using a simple graphical user interface on a PC or laptop computer screen.  |
| Southwestern Bell      | Local Exchange Carrier in the Austin Area   |

## Glossary of Terms

### Abbreviations

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|  |   |
|--|---|
| Street Response Officers                           | Sworn Austin Police Officers whose primary job responsibilities are to conduct proactive intervention, intelligence and interdiction operations. Street Response Unit officers engage in extensive problem-solving activities and are relived of handling calls for service.  |
| T-1 Switch   | A T1 switch is a telephone line which is a 1.544 megabit T-carrier channel. A T-carrier channel is a digital transmission service from a common carrier. Data can be transmitted rapidly using a T-carrier such as a T-1 because a T-carrier service has multiplexors (a device that merges several low-speed transmissions into one high-speed transmission and vice versa) at both ends that merge the various signals together for transmission and then splits them at the destination. A T1 can handle 24 voice or data channels at 64 Kbits/sec. 8,000 frames are transmitted per second. |
| telephony  | The technology and manufacture of telephone equipment.  |
| teleserve  | Call center that is established within police departments where trained civilians take police reports over the phone from citizens for non-emergency police-related situations and police officers are not dispatched to the scene, in general.   |
| Texas Commission on State Emergency Communications | The appointed regulatory board responsible for overseeing emergency communication operations in the State of Texas. The Commission helps cities implement and maintain enhanced 9-1-1 emergency communications.   |
| touchscreen monitors                               | Computer monitors that cause system operations via electric charges or signals when system call takers touch the screen with a finger or pointed object.  |

## Listed Alphabetically

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| trunked voice radio system | A trunked radio system automatically selects from a pool of available channels when a radio user presses the push-to-talk button on a mobile or portable unit. As soon as one transmission ends, the system can use the channel for another. Trunking permits a large number of users to share a relatively small number of communication paths - or trunks. This sharing of communication paths is managed automatically by a computer. Channel selections and other decisions normally made by the radio user are made by the central controller, a computerized switch. Channel assignment is automatic and completely transparent to the individual users. |
| voice recording station    | Multiple channel automatic audio recording software. Typical applications include telephone line recording (call recording), radio communication recording, control room voice recording and remote conferencing.  |

## Glossary of Terms

### Abbreviations

## About the Authors

### Biographies

**Shellie E. Solomon** is the former senior financial manager with the Census Bureau, and senior manager at the Justice Department. Ms. Solomon has over 12 years experience in operations and management, budgets, strategic planning, criminal justice evaluation, and technology. She oversaw budget operations for Census 2000 and managed the annual budget of \$1.3 billion for the COPS Office Grants Division for four years.

With 21st Century Solutions Inc., Ms. Solomon has served as the on-site project director for the community policing evaluations in Fort Lauderdale, FL and Miami, FL as well as for the school-based evaluation in Miami, FL. She serves as the research associate for the 3-1-1 evaluation in Austin, TX, iris scanning as emerging school technology evaluation in New Egypt, NJ, the lethality review in Colorado Spring, CO and National Assessment of School Based Partnership Program. She is working with U.S. Attorney's offices on gun tracking and safe zone implementation. She has assisted with projects involving performance measurement, resource allocation, system implementation, and internet applications.

Ms. Solomon holds degrees from the University of Oklahoma and Rochester University and is the recipient of the JustWorks award from the U.S. Department of Justice for innovation in government.

**Craig D Uchida** is a former senior executive at the U.S. Department of Justice and professor of criminology at the University of Maryland. He has over 23 years of experience in criminal justice research, planning, and administration. During his years at the Justice Department he served as the Director of Criminal Justice Research at the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and as the Assistant Director of Grants Administration at the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). He was responsible for developing and implementing the grant making process, making grant awards, and monitoring. When he left the COPS Office he had provided \$3.4 billion to over 9,000 law enforcement agencies for hiring over 65,000 officers. His efforts at the COPS Office resulted in two major U.S. Department of Justice Awards – the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award in 1995 and the JustWorks Award for innovation in government in 1997. He has published numerous articles and book chapters in criminology and is the editor of two books on drug enforcement and police innovation.

Dr. Uchida holds a doctorate in criminal justice and two Master's degrees. He is currently President of Justice and Security Strategies, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in crime and public policy and homeland securities policies and an adjunct professor at George Mason University's Administration of Justice Program.