

**Nashoba Valley Regional Dispatch District
Operations Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2022**

Meeting called to order at 14:01 by Chief Gammel at the NVRDD, Barnum Road, Devens, MA.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Berlin Police, Chief Eric Schartner
Berlin Fire, Chief Ken Clark
Bolton Fire, Chief Jeff Legendre
Devens Fire, Chief Tim Kelley (Vice-Chairman)
Devens Fire, Deputy Jamie Desautels
Harvard Police, Chief James Babu
Harvard Fire, Chief Rick Sicard
Harvard Fire/Ambulance, Lieutenant Andrew Perry
Lancaster Fire, Chief Mike Hanson
Lancaster Police, Acting Chief Everett Moody
Lunenburg Fire, Chief Pat Sullivan
Lunenburg Police, Chief Tom Gammel (Chairman)
NVRDD, Executive Director Anne Camaro
NVRDD, Supervisor Peter Kinnas

PUBLIC COMMENT

- PUBLIC
 - None
- BOARD/COMMITTEES
 - None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- A motion was made by Chief Sullivan and seconded by Chief Hanson to accept the meeting minutes presented for the Operations Committee Meeting on February 22, 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

- For the month of February, NVRDD staff made 1,589 entries into IMC (Does not include self-initiated calls from officers or pre-programmed/recurring calls). They processed a total of 1,433 phone calls.
- The monthly QA average was 93.7%, which is .74% increase from last month, and a 3.3% increase from last February.
- The NVRDD Staff will be completing a total of 390 hours of training by the end of the fiscal year. Which includes the Geography Training/Ride-alongs we are conducting with Lunenburg Police and Fire. We hope to have the staff rotate through all of our towns in FY23.
- We have hired a new Administrative Coordinator: Stephannie Coronel, and a new Treasurer: Kristen Noel. They both have vast experience in their fields and came highly recommended. They have started working with us this week.
- We have applied for the State 911 Development Grant, for three different projects: Security Card Access for the building, Replacing the dispatch desks for fully ergonomic consoles, and a full review and cataloging of our FCC Licenses by our Radio Vendor. I have not heard back yet, but hope to hear back within the next month or so.

- I will be applying for the remaining FY23 State 911 Grants once our staff has completed their annual mandated 16-hours of training.
- I have reposted the dispatcher opening. I currently have two open positions, and expect another one this upcoming month. Currently we have only had one applicant.
- We have partnered up with Mass Development and Mass General for a Blood Drive. It will be on April 20, at 9am at the Devens Community Center.
- The week of April 10-April 16 is National Telecommunications Week. We will be honoring and celebrating our staff and their work during that week. I am planning on having "open house" hours that week, so our responders and town officials can come in and visit, see the center and meet the staff.
- A motion was made by Chief Sullivan and seconded by Chief Hanson to accept the Directors Report as presented. The motion carried unanimous.

911 POLICY REVIEW

- The policies were sent out last week to all the police chiefs. They included the new policies for 911 call processing, Abandon 911 calls and TTY 911. See attached for each policy.
- A motion was made by Chief Kelley and seconded by Chief Sullivan to accept these policies. The motion carried unanimous.

NEW POLICY TEMPLATE

- Director Camaro sent out a proposed new Policies template for all policies in the district.
- A motion was made by Chief Sullivan and seconded by Chief Moody to accept the new template. The motion carried unanimous.
- The following section was asked to be added to Section 300.14 – Motor Vehicle Accidents:
 - *14.1.5 – Any crash involving railroad equipment (bridge, crossing, signage, etc.) regardless of crash severity, dispatchers will contact the appropriate railroad company. Such notification will be noted in the log.*
- A motion was made by Chief Kelly and seconded by Chief Hanson to accept this addition. The motion carried unanimous.

IMC SECURITY UPDATES

- There was a discussion on why the default printer seems to continually be reset each time you log into IMC. NVRDD IT representative Paul McKenzie will send an email out on what to do to stop this from happening.
- The police chiefs requested a new call type that would cover the training/administrative duties for part time police officers. This is to help track their times for the bridge academy.
- A motion was made by Chief Kelly and seconded by Chief Moody to create a call type "PD & FD Training". The motion carried unanimous.

RMS (record management system) COMMITTEE REPORT (Director Camaro, Supervisor Kinnas, Chief Legendre, Chief Schartner)

- On April 13th the committee will be attending the Annual MA Police Chiefs Show to reach out to other possible vendors for this.
- It was suggested that a list of functions be put together for the police, fire and dispatchers so we can thoroughly evaluate each product without forgetting about some functionality we are looking for. The committee will meet to discuss this.

LIAISON TO THE COMMITTEE FROM DISPATCH (Supervisor Peter Kinnas)

- At the last meeting it was suggested that a promotional pamphlet be created to help promote the district (e.g. why it would be good for a town to join NVRDD). Supervisor Kinnas is working with Director Camaro on this. They will send out an email looking for bullet points anyone thinks should be included in it.

- IAR pages for Devens Fire was discussed. Supervisor Kinnas showed Chief Kelly how the dispatchers put a page out. They hope to be moving more towards using IAR for all call backs. Chief Kelly believes the issue with the pages maybe a carrier problem for some pages don't get received for hours later. They will continue to work on this.
- Chief Hanson stated he believes the Ztron at Lancaster Fire Station is not working. The dispatcher on duty tested as we were meeting and it is working.
- A motion was made by Chief Hanson and seconded by Chief Kelly to accept the Liaisons report as presented. The motion carried unanimous.

SOP'S

- POLICE
 - No Report
- FIRE
 - No Report

DISCUSS THE DISTRICT AGREEMENT/IMA AGREEMENT DISCREPANCIES

- Proposed changes to the District Agreements were sent out to everyone on March 9, 2022. There was discussion about the changes and then voted on.
- A motion was made by Chief Kelly and seconded by Chief Hanson to accept the new changes in the district agreements. The motion carried unanimous.
- Chief Gammel will submit these changes to the Admin Board for their approval.
- See the attached for the changes.

OLD BUSINESS

- none

NEW BUSINESS

- Chief Babu stated that a couple residents called saying they enjoyed past NVRDD Facebook posts but they do not happen anymore. The reason for this is the potential public records violation with posting people's names in the posts. It was decided to leave it as status quo, NVRDD not posting, and to leave it up to each town to post their own stuff.
- Director Camaro asked about continuing to post the press log information on the NVRDD web page. No one had an issue with continuing to do this.

SET NEXT MEETING

- April 19, 2022, 14:00 at NVRDD.

MEETING ADJOURNED

- A motion was made by Chief Hanson and seconded by Chief Kelly to adjourn at 14:43. The motion carried unanimous.



Nashoba Valley Regional Dispatch District

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Anne Camaro
Executive Director
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POLICY & PROCEDURES		No.
Subject/Title: 911 Call Processing		
Issuing Authority: _____	Issue Date:	
Operations Committee Chair	Effective Date:	
 _____	Review Date:	
Executive Director	Last Review Date:	
References/ Attachments:	Accreditation Standards:	

Table of Contents

1. General Description.....	2
2. Policy.....	2
3. Procedure.....	2
4. Questions	3

1. General Description

The Massachusetts State 911 Department has established a network for emergency telephone calls using “911” as the single emergency number. The Nashoba Valley Regional Dispatch District (NVRDD) is the primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for the following communities:

- Berlin
- Bolton
- Devens
- Harvard
- Lancaster
- Lunenburg
- Townsend

Nashoba Valley Telecommunicators process all 911 calls originated within the above jurisdictional boundaries to provide a coordinated response for police, fire, and medical emergencies as well as quality of life reports. Calls are routed by the State 911 Department’s NG-911 System and delivered to the NG-911 equipment at NVRDD.

2. Policy

All Telecommunicators working at NVRDD shall be trained and certified in the Massachusetts State 911 Department Next Generation 911 Equipment Class, APCO PST1 Class or equivalent and EMD Class as determined by State 911 Department Certification Requirements prior to being allowed to answer 911 calls.

All calls received through the 911 Equipment shall be answered and processed in uniform fashion according to the below procedure and operational SOPs.

3. Procedure

Greeting and Caller Questioning

All 911 calls shall be answered with the following greeting:

“9-1-1, this call is recorded, where is your emergency?”

All 7-digit lines on the 911 system shall be answered with the following greeting:

“Nashoba Valley Dispatch, this call is recorded, do you have an emergency?”

The NG-911 System has a Greeting Recording feature. Employees are encouraged to record the above - mentioned greetings to ensure all calls are answered with the same greeting.

Once the caller states the address of the emergency, the dispatcher shall proceed with questioning utilizing the PowerPhone Total Response Software when necessary.

Address Verification

The data provided by the Automatic Location Identification (ALI) and Automatic Number Identification (ANI) features assist the Dispatcher in answering questions about the call. The Dispatcher must use ALI to support any information provided by the caller.

Dispatchers may utilize the ANI and ALI provided by the 911 system to confirm the phone number and address given by the caller.

ANI/ALI Discrepancy

If a Dispatcher encounters a discrepancy in the ANI/ALI information displayed, the Dispatcher shall complete an ALI Discrepancy Form and submit it electronically through the NG-911 system.

Hold and Transfers

If the dispatcher must place a caller on hold, he/she must announce the brief hold period by saying “please stay on the line, I’m going to place you on a brief hold”. The Dispatcher must return to the caller in a timely manner and shall not place the caller in any unnecessary holds.

If the Dispatcher must transfer the caller to another jurisdiction, or department, the Dispatcher must announce the transfer by saying “please stay on the line while I transfer you to...”.

Silent Monitoring and Playback

The use of the silent monitoring feature on the 911 phone lines is allowed only in the following situations:

- Supervisor monitoring the call
- Dispatcher monitoring the call for live dispatch
- Communication Training Officer (CTO), monitoring a trainee assigned to him or her.

Dispatchers shall not use the playback feature of the 911 system to playback a call without a reason. The use of any personal recording devices is prohibited in the dispatch center.

Dispatchers, are allowed to playback their own calls by using the NG-911 Equipment, immediately following a call if they believe they missed something the caller said during the call. Furthermore, dispatchers must not rely on the playback feature for information gathering and will only be allowed to playback their call for verification if time as call volume allows. All information must be gathered from the caller while the dispatcher is on the phone with them.

4. Questions

All employees are strongly encouraged to forward all questions, comments, and suggestions concerning the above policy to their immediate Supervisor or Department Union Representative.



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POLICY & PROCEDURES		No.
Subject/Title: Abandoned, Hang-up, Silent and TTY Call Processing		
Issuing Authority: _____	Issue Date:	
Operations Committee Chair	Effective Date:	
 _____	Review Date:	
Executive Director	Last Review Date:	
References/ Attachments:	Accreditation Standards:	

Table of Contents

1. General Description.....	2
2. Policy.....	2
3. Procedure.....	2
4. Questions	3

1. General Description

Abandoned calls, are calls that are disconnected prior to any interaction between the caller and the dispatcher.

Hang-up calls are calls that are dropped after the dispatcher has answered the call and made contact with the caller.

A silent call is an open line, where no one is speaking or responding to the dispatcher's voice, and the call is not disconnected. There are a variety of reasons for silent calls, including physical disabilities, TTY users, scared callers, medical emergencies/conditions, language barriers, pocket dials or even children playing with the phone.

Deaf and hard of hearing callers at times still use a teletypewriter (TTY) text telephone device to contact 911. The 911 System is equipped with a TTY feature that allows dispatchers and callers to communicate seamlessly.

2. Policy

When an Abandoned or Hang-up Call is received with a callback number, the dispatcher must attempt to connect with the caller by calling back using the phone number provided on the ANI/ALI screen.

Every received silent call must be checked for TTY and be processed with the Silent Call Procedure before being released.

3. Procedure

Abandoned and Hang-up Calls

For abandoned and hang-up calls the dispatcher will attempt to determine if there is an emergency, and if emergency services are needed. If emergency services are needed the dispatcher will send the appropriate response.

The dispatcher will attempt to verify that the call was accidental, or unintentional, the dispatcher will confirm the caller's name, address, phone number, and location the call is originating from. The dispatcher will send a patrol unit to verify the accidental or unintentional call.

If the dispatcher is unable to speak with the caller, they will attempt to determine the name of the caller, the address the call originated from, and/ or a precise location that the call is coming from. The dispatcher will send a patrol unit to the address or mapped location to determine if an emergency exists.

Silent and TTY Calls

The following is the procedure that must be followed by every dispatcher when faced with a silent 911 call:

CT: 911 This call is recorded, where is your emergency?

Caller: Silent

CT: 911 This call is recorded, where is your emergency?

Caller: Silent

CT: Please stay on the line while I check for TTY. Do not hang up.

If there is no answer to the above, continue with the TTY Challenge:

- ➔ On the Event tab, click on the TTY Challenge button. It will automatically generate the tweedle signal to the caller's device and issue a predefined TTY message "9-1-1 what is ur emergency q ga".
- ➔ Once the TTY Challenge is activated, the Telecom tab on the far-right hand-side of the screen will become active. Wait for the caller response.

- ➔ If still no response, send the appropriate predefined greeting message from the TTY Auto drop-down list a second time.

If no TTY communications are received from the caller after sending the predefined greeting twice, adhere to the following Silent Call Procedure:

Verbally advise caller:

“If you need POLICE, press 1”

“If you need FIRE, press 2”

“If you need AMBULANCE, press 3”

If the caller responds with a number pressed. Ask questions in a yes/no format telling the caller each time to:

“Press 4 for YES”

“Press 5 for NO”

If there is no response from the caller, initiate the response of emergency services and remain on the line listening for any potential clues as to what may be occurring at the scene.

Note: The 911 System WILL NOT automatically switch from the Telecom tab to the Event tab to display the DTMF responses. You must manually select the Event tab, which turns red, to see the responses.

Response

The dispatcher must initiate a response to the address provided in the ALI screen for wireline calls, or the area of the mapped location for wireless calls for all abandoned, hang-up, and silent calls.

If no identifying information or precise location can be determined the dispatcher will log the incident for the appropriate community.

The on-duty dispatcher must perform a history check on all abandoned or hang-up 9-1-1 calls.

Testing

Monthly, the State 911 Department will conduct silent call and TTY tests. Dispatchers must be available and respond to the testing accordingly.

4. Questions

All employees are strongly encouraged to forward all questions, comments, and suggestions concerning the above policy to their immediate Supervisor or Department Union Representative.



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POLICY & PROCEDURES		No. 202
Subject/Title: Text to 911		
Issuing Authority: _____ Operations Committee Chair	Issue Date:	
	Effective Date:	
Executive Director	Review Date:	
	Last Review Date:	
References/ Attachments:	Accreditation Standards:	

Table of Contents

1.	General Description.....	2
2.	Policy.....	2
3.	Procedure.....	2
6.	Questions	5

1. General Description

The State 911 Department has upgraded the E-911 system to a Next Generation 9-1-1 system, by changing the 9-1-1 service infrastructure to improve public emergency communications services in a growingly wireless mobile society.

Text-to-9-1-1 service allows wireless subscribers to send SMS text messages to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) by using the single code “911” as the destination address of the text message.

The subscribers will receive text replies from PSAPs in SMS format. There are some limitations when texting to 911; SMS only allows for one recipient of the text message, and does not currently support photos, videos, or multiple recipients.

2. Policy

Incoming text messages delivered to NVRDD dispatchers on the NG-911 equipment shall be processed as emergency calls for service, and all appropriate actions shall be taken for the reported incident.

When a text-to-9-1-1 session is received, the dispatcher must answer the text session within 30 seconds of the first ring and greet the texter with the pre-programmed message.

3. Procedure

The dispatcher must:

1. Process the message using the same emergency handling procedures as voice calls.
2. Determine the location of the emergency and retransmit for updated location as needed.
3. To the extent practical, ensure that the texter is provided appropriate emergency service, which may include relaying the request for assistance to another jurisdiction.
4. To the extent practical, ensure that the session remains connected until appropriate determination of the nature of the incident and dispatchable location of the caller is ascertained.
5. To the extent practical, ensure that the session remains connected until emergency services are confirmed to have reached the texter and/or the location of the incident.

Out of Jurisdiction Texts

If the incident reported is outside of the PSAP’s jurisdiction, the dispatcher will establish voice communication with the local PSAP of the appropriate jurisdiction and operate as a “relay service” between the texter and the PSAP regarding all matters related to the emergency incident. This is due to system limitations, and text messages cannot be transferred.

Note: If you are on an active text session and need to contact another PSAP from your 9-1-1 workstation you must dial the 10-digit number for that PSAP. Using the soft buttons or the directory buttons will attempt to transfer the text session which is not currently a supported feature.

To dial using the PSAP’s 10-digit number click on the dial pad on the Call Station screen or use the Genovation keypad to enter the number, click the dial button then pick up your Polycom handset. If you are using a headset the call will start to ring after the dial button is pressed.

Text Processing

The DISPATCHER shall greet the texter by sending the pre-recorded message “9-1-1, this session is recorded. What is the address and town of your emergency?”.

At no time should a dispatcher use 'texting' lingo, shortcuts, or acronyms. All correspondence from the dispatcher will be in full simple words, using either predefined text messages or through typing within the texting interface.

To process the text message, the dispatcher must:

Verify the phone number and address of the emergency provided by the texter, compared to the incident tile and ALI display, to determine a dispatchable location.

Ascertain the nature of the emergency and enter the information into CAD, as to not delay dispatch.

Process reports of medical emergencies by using Total Response or the EMD cards, similarly, to when processing TTY calls that require medical assistance.

To avoid any response delays, if the caller is reporting a medical emergency, the call taker shall enter a medical call into CAD as unknown medical until better information is obtained.

Process all other emergency reports by asking pertinent questions for emergency call processing.

Maintain two-way communications with the texter to collect pertinent information regarding the incident.

Once call handling procedures have been completed and all instructions given to the texter, the dispatcher may end the text session. Every text session must be closed out by sending the texter the standard message below and then releasing the session:

“Ending text session, if you need more help contact 9-1-1”

Silent Text Messages

Handling of a non-responsive texter will depend upon the initial message received or if there is no response from the texter once the session is connected. If any of the following silent text/no response scenarios occur, the dispatcher shall handle the message as a silent text/no response:

- Initial need for emergency assistance - If there is language within the initial SMS messages indicating the need for emergency assistance.
- Misdialed or accidental text - If the language within the text is garbled and/or might indicate a “misdialed or accidental text”.
- Inactive or “gone dark” - If the texter was actively communicating, but has now “gone dark”, meaning the texter is no longer actively sending text messages or responding to the efforts of the dispatcher.

The following procedures shall be followed in the case of a silent text/no response:

1. If, after receiving one of the scenarios outlined above, the standard message below will be sent TWICE:

“Do you need Police Fire or Ambulance?”

2. If there is still no response, the standard message below will be sent:

“Text to 911 is available. Call if you can - Text if you can’t”

3. The dispatcher must afford the texter the opportunity to make a positive response to the requests. Dispatchers shall wait a minimum of ten (10) seconds without receiving a response before sending subsequent messages or proceeding to additional steps.
4. After 10 seconds, the dispatcher shall enter a CAD incident for 911 Text Call.
5. If the location of the emergency is available and confirmed, the dispatcher will retransmit the location as needed, and dispatch a police unit to verify. The Dispatcher should advise units that it is a silent 911 text, in the area of _____.
6. If the location information available indicates that this text session/incident may be located outside of the PSAP's jurisdiction, the dispatcher will use any available location information to contact the PSAP of jurisdiction and advise them of the open text line.
7. If the dispatcher believes this session to be an exigent circumstance at any time, the procedures outlined in the Exigent Circumstance and Trace Procedures will be followed.
8. If the text messages indicate that the text was an Unintentional Text or otherwise states there is no emergency and based on the totality of the circumstances the dispatcher has also determined that this is a non-emergency text session, and may release the session after the necessary actions of this procedure have been completed.
9. After 15 minutes of no response from the texter, the dispatcher may release the session. Please remember that the carrier will also terminate the call when the message idle timer limit is reached.
10. Due to the limitations of service plans for some deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired individuals, as well as the safety of the texter or others involved in the incident, a voice callback to a texter should not be attempted until all other resources for communicating have been exhausted.

Trace Procedures

If the dispatcher believes this text session to be an exigent circumstance or requiring swift action to prevent imminent danger to life or property, the dispatcher shall initiate a Trace. To the extent possible, a second dispatcher or Supervisor may assist with completing the Trace.

- Call the appropriate carrier to request the subscriber billing information and, if necessary, an active "ping" of the device.
- If displayed, the carrier/Telco ID and contact information received on the ALI Display may be used during a trace. This carrier may NOT be the subscriber's actual cellular carrier. However, contact information for many carriers can be found under the Special Services Directory of the NG9-1-1 application.
- If the carrier is unknown, the PSAP may contact the Number Portability Administration Center (NPAC) through the FCC's Local Number Portability Administrator (LNPA) by calling 877-416-6551 and providing NVRDD's IVR Pin number (XXXXXXX).

The procedure for obtaining tower or subscriber information differs for each wireless carrier. Carriers may require written documentation to accompany the request. However, not all wireless carriers require this documentation. Please follow the policies of the carrier as advised and seek assistance from the Supervisor.

Response

The dispatcher must initiate a response to the area of the mapped location for wireless calls for all text-to-911 calls within NVRDD's jurisdiction.

If no identifying information or precise location can be determined the dispatcher will log the incident for the appropriate community.

The on-duty dispatcher must perform a history check on all abandoned or silent text to 9-1-1 calls.

Testing

Monthly, NVRDD Supervisors will conduct Text-to-911 tests. Dispatchers must be available and respond to the testing accordingly.

6. Questions

All employees are strongly encouraged to forward all questions, comments, and suggestions concerning the above policy to their immediate Supervisor or Department Union Representative.

NVRDD District Agreement Proposed Changes

District Agreement Proposed Changes:

4. Governance

Proposed changes to subsection (2):

The Chief Administrative Officer for each participating community shall appoint the Police Chief and Fire Chief, or a Public Safety Director as its' representative on the Operations Committee. An alternative representative may also be appointed who is of similar qualifications of a Police Chief, Fire Chief or Public Safety Director.

The representatives on the Committee shall each have vote on the Operations Committee to act upon such matters that are before the Committee. Votes shall only be cast in accordance with paragraph 4(E) below.

Proposed changes to subsection (F):

Add Secretary to list of Officers.

The selection of a Secretary shall be voted on by ballot by the respective Board or Committee. The Secretary shall be responsible for recording the minutes for each meeting. The Secretary will reduce the minutes to a report that will be presented to the respective Board or Committee for approval.