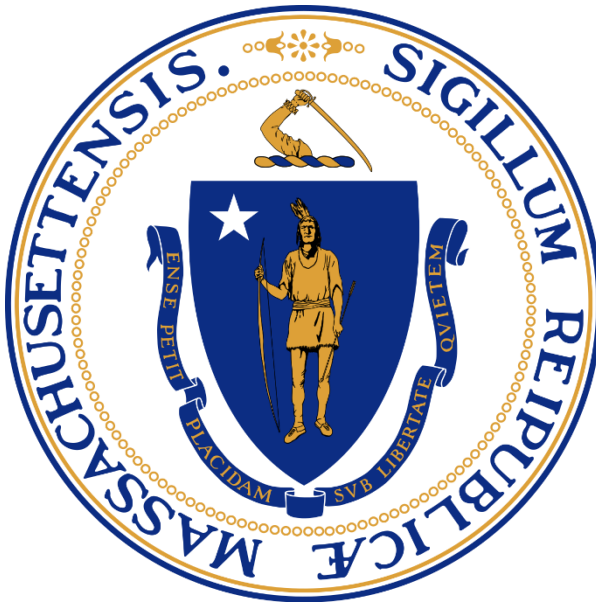


**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
State 911 Department
North Shore Regional 911 Center**



**2023
ANNUAL REPORT**

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings,

As Director of the North Shore Regional 911 Center, I am pleased to present our 2023 Annual Report: a comprehensive review of our accomplishments, challenges, and strategic insights. This report reflects our commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. It is a testament to our team's dedication and hard work, showcasing our collective efforts to make a positive impact in the communities we serve.

Some of the accomplishments you will read in this report center around our operation's quality of service and efficiency, for which NSR911 prides itself. In 2023, we upgraded/replaced our DOR (Daily Observation Report) software used in our training program and ordered new Emergency Medical Dispatch cards. Both tools play an essential role in our dispatchers' day-to-day work. Our commitment to continued feedback and support is also evident in our Quality Assurance and Improvement Program, which reviews compliance with our adopted standards and key performance indicators. In 2023, NSR911 maintained an average of 96.99% protocol compliance. Providing our first responders and communities with the highest level of service will always remain a top priority.

Once again, training courses and conference attendance provided employees with an opportunity for growth and development. NSR911 was represented at conferences such as the APCO Atlantic Regional Conference and the 911 Staffing Crisis Summit held in Virginia. Our center was also fortunate enough to have several employees receive instructor certifications in CPR, APCO PST, and APCO EMD. These certifications enable NSR911 to have in-house instructors who can bolster our training and continuing education program.

NSR911 employees also received external recognition for their exemplary work. Examples include a spotlight and award from the State 911 Department for handling a high-priority 911 call and meritorious service awards from the Topsfield Police Department for outstanding dispatch and communication work during a high-profile incident.

Overarching agency goals were also reached in 2023 with the completion of the transition of dispatch services for Manchester-by-the-Sea over to NSR911. After signing an IMA in July of 2022, NSR911 and its staff were able to assist the Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea and finalize the transition by March of 2023, four months ahead of anticipated schedule. Furthermore, the Town of North Reading officially signed an intermunicipal agreement in December of 2023, making it the 7th community (and second in two years) to join our regional communications center.

2024 is poised to be another year of growth and achievement. We look forward to working with North Reading to build and implement their onboarding plan. We will continue to work towards updating and expanding our radio infrastructure. We also aim to work in tandem with our sister agency (PSAP Operations Division 1 of the State 911 Department) in Milford to support each other's evolving needs for continuity of operations and backup emergency operations plans.

Thank you,

Alyson Dell Isola, Director

MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

Mission Statement

The mission of the North Shore Regional 911 Center is to serve as a communications link between our member communities and their public safety agencies. North Shore Regional 911 Center seeks to be a leader in the Commonwealth and provide superior service to the highest standards to protect life, property, and the environment.

Our Vision

Our vision is to maintain a center of excellence while exceeding national standards and best practices by providing high-tech, up-to-date services when processing and dispatching 911 and non-emergency calls in a prompt, efficient, and professional manner.

Values

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| ❖ Serving | ❖ Professionalism |
| ❖ Supporting | ❖ Integrity |
| ❖ Innovating | ❖ Teamwork |



Image 1: North Shore Regional 911 Center

INTRODUCTION

North Shore Regional 911 Center (also known as North Shore Regional Emergency Communications Center, or NSR911) is located in Middleton, Massachusetts. NSR911 is a dual Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP, or operation that answers and directs 911 calls and requests for emergency assistance), also known as an Emergency Communications Center (ECC). The center is a component of the State 911 Department operating under the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It was formed as a collaborative effort with the communities it serves.

As a wireless PSAP, NSR911 answers and directs approximately 200,000 wireless 9-1-1 calls for a population of about 1.8 million residents originating in Essex County, most of Middlesex County, six towns in Worcester County, and all of Suffolk County, excluding Boston. This division covers over 955 square miles.

On the regional side, the center answers and fully processes 9-1-1 calls for emergency assistance for six communities: Amesbury, Essex, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Middleton, Topsfield, and Wenham, Massachusetts. As of December 28th, 2023, an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) was also signed with North Reading to be dispatched by NSR911 at a date to be determined. This includes radio dispatching units for police, fire, and EMS (emergency medical services) for these communities. NSR911 also receives, directs, and otherwise processes related non-emergency calls for these communities. The member communities have a combined population of 63,270¹ and cover 82 square miles.

Four advisory boards provide oversight of the center by member communities – they include the Police, Fire, Administrative, and Executive Advisory Boards.



¹ Retrieved from U.S. Census <https://www.census.gov> on March 11, 2024. Data based on 2020 US Census.

GOVERNANCE

The North Shore Regional 911 Center is governed by an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA). This agreement is between the State 911 Department and each member community. Through the agreement, there are four governing advisory boards: Police, Fire, Administrative, and Executive.

The Executive Advisory Board is comprised of the Chair of the Administrative Advisory Board, three (3) at-large members from the Administrative Advisory Board, the Chair of the Police Advisory Board, one (1) at-large Member from the Police Advisory Board, the Chair of the Fire Advisory Board, and one (1) at-large Member from the Fire Advisory Board. The Executive Advisory Board advises the State 911 Department on the administration, budget, and operation of the North Shore RECC, including the admittance of new members, approving the annual operating and staffing plans, approving the details of the transition to a shared radio frequency system, and approving operating policies and procedures that govern the operations of the North Shore RECC.

The Police and Fire Advisory Boards consist of the respective chiefs from each department. These boards advise the State 911 Department on operating policies and procedures for the operation of the Regional Emergency Communications Center.

There is also an Administrative Advisory Board that is comprised of either the Mayor, Town Manager, or Town Administrator of each Member community. The Board advises the State 911 Department on the budget and operation of the North Shore RECC.

2023 Board Representatives

Executive Advisory Board

Police Representatives	Chief Paul Francis, PAB Chair Chief Craig Bailey, PAB At-Large Member
Fire Advisory Representative	Chief Jen Collins-Brown, FAB Chair Chief Doug LeColst, FAB At-Large Member
Administrative Representative	Brendhan Zubricki, AAB Chair Steve Poulos, AAB At-Large Member Kassandra Gove, AAB At-Large Member Kevin Harutunian, AAB At-Large Member
State 911 Representatives	Frank Pozniak, Executive Director Norm Fournier, Deputy Executive Director Alyson Dell Isola, NSR911 Director Christopher Ryan, NSR911 Deputy Director

Fire Advisory Board (FAB)

Amesbury	Chief James Nolan
Essex	Chief Ramie Reader
Manchester	Chief James McNeilly
Middleton	Chief Doug LeColst
North Reading	Chief Donald W. Stats, Jr.
Topsfield	Chief Jen Collins-Brown, Chairperson
Wenham	Chief Stephen Kavanaugh
State 911 Representatives	Frank Pozniak, Executive Director Norm Fournier, Deputy Executive Director Alyson Dell Isola, NSR911 Director Christopher Ryan, NSR911 Deputy Director

Police Advisory Board (PAB)

Amesbury	Chief Craig Bailey
Essex	Chief Paul Francis, Chairperson
Manchester	Chief Todd Fitzgerald
Middleton	Chief William Sampson
North Reading	Chief Mark Zimmerman
Topsfield	Chief Neal Hovey
Wenham	Chief Kevin DiNapoli
State 911 Representatives	Frank Pozniak, Executive Director Norm Fournier, Deputy Executive Director Alyson Dell Isola, NSR911 Director Christopher Ryan, NSR911 Deputy Director

Administrative Advisory Board (AAB)

Amesbury	Mayor Kassandra Gove
Essex	Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, Chairperson
Manchester	Town Administrator Greg Federspiel
Middleton	Town Administrator Justin Sultzbach
North Reading	Town Administrator Michael Gilleberto
Topsfield	Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian
Wenham	Town Administrator Steve Poulos
State 911 Representatives	Frank Pozniak, Executive Director Norm Fournier, Deputy Executive Director Alyson Dell Isola, NSR911 Director Christopher Ryan, NSR911 Deputy Director

Agendas for each advisory board are posted on the NSR911's website within the mass.gov site. Also, once approved, meeting minutes are available for past meetings.

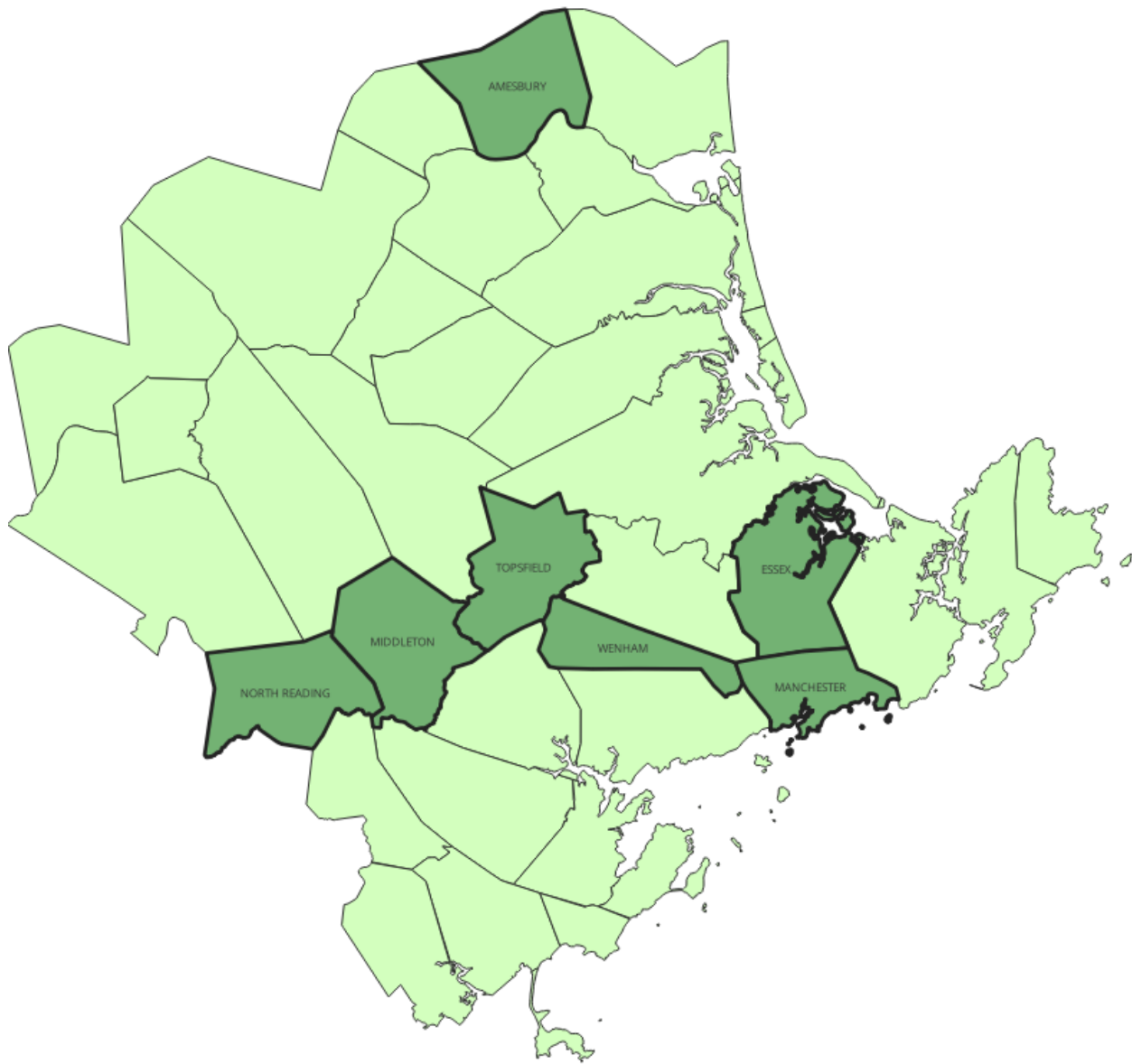


Image 2: Map depicting North Shore RECC Member Communities

HISTORY

The idea for Essex County to establish a regional emergency dispatch center was first discussed among various communities as early as 2005. Initially, 23 communities expressed at least some level of interest in joining a potential regional endeavor. As the discussions progressed, many communities ultimately decided that the center would not serve their interests appropriately and decided to withdraw from the process. In December 2008, a grant application was filed with the state 9-1-1 department to establish a regional emergency communications center, which would later be known as the Essex Regional Emergency Communications Center or ERECC. At the time, 13 communities (Beverly, Danvers, Essex, Hamilton, Ipswich, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marblehead, Methuen, Middleton, North Andover, Swampscott, Topsfield, and Wenham) had filed letters stating their interest in participating. In March 2009, a grant of \$6,800,000.00 was awarded for the establishment of the ERECC.

Ultimately, six communities, Amesbury, Beverly, Essex, Middleton, Topsfield, and Wenham, decided to join the ERECC. Inter-Municipal Agreements (IMAs) were executed between the Sheriff's Department and the participating communities during 2010. Amid much optimism and accolades from local and state officials in attendance, the ground was broken for the new ERECC facility in October 2011. The ERECC was touted as a significant step toward regionalization, which many proponents say increases efficiency, while simultaneously reducing costs. The new state-of-the-art facility, which was outfitted with the latest technology, cost approximately \$12,000,000 to build and outfit. The \$6,980,000 funding for construction was provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as was additional money needed to equip and furnish the facility. Operational control and direction of the new facility were assigned to the Essex County Sheriff's Department (ECSD). The ERECC facility opened for business in June 2013.

In late 2013, after entering into an agreement with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the ERECC began handling 9-1-1 cell phone calls (wireless calls) made throughout Essex County, thirty-two communities in Middlesex County, and three communities in Suffolk County.

In January 2015, the City of Beverly, which had not yet transitioned to the ERECC, announced it was withdrawing. In July 2017, the Amesbury City Council overwhelmingly approved a request by the city's mayor to leave the ERECC and return to locally-based dispatch operations.

Throughout its infancy, member communities expressed concerns about the center's operations, call taking, dispatch times, communications, and miscommunications. Many factors have contributed to ERECC's troubled history. One of the most significant issues was that unrealistic promises were made to every potential participant to try to encourage them to join. As a result, the center is now actively pursuing a more standardized approach to operations. Efforts have been made to streamline policies and procedures across each town and discipline.

Despite the challenges that it has, and continues to face, the ERECC has achieved some very positive distinctions that both current and potential participants should view in a very favorable

way. Most prominent among these positives is that in May 2016, it was announced the ERECC met the minimum training standards for the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International Agency Training Program Certification and was awarded certification. Public safety agencies use the APCO International Agency Training Program Certification as a formal mechanism to ensure their training programs meet the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved standard. The ERECC is the first dispatch center in Massachusetts, and just the second one in New England, to receive the certification, also known as APCO P33. The ERECC also became the second PSAP in Massachusetts to achieve the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) Missing Kids Readiness Project partnership. It also became the first PSAP in Massachusetts to become a National Weather Service Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador.

In 2017, the Sheriff's Department contracted with Municipal Resources Incorporated (MRI) to perform an audit of the operations, management, and finances of the ERECC. This report was finalized in February 2018. Within the report, MRI made 125 recommendations. These recommendations covered various topics like stakeholder perceptions, governance, organizational structure, and management, operations and finances, facility and equipment, benchmarking, and comparative analysis.

NSR911 became the alternate public safety answering point (PSAP) for the State 911 Department's PSAP Operations Division – 1 (POD-1), Framingham on June 15th, 2018. As an alternate PSAP, NSR911 would temporarily receive 911 calls whenever the primary PSAP is unable to do so (e.g., the center is overwhelmed with 911 calls, it has to evacuate, or due to a network failure that impacts connectivity).

On July 1st, 2019, the management and operations of the center transitioned from the Essex County Sheriff's Department to the State 911 Department. Within this transition, the State 911 Department agreed to fully fund the operation and relieve the Sheriff's Department from operational oversight. Additionally, the organization's name officially changed to the "North Shore Regional 911 Center" or NSR911.

NSR911 successfully became an alternate PSAP for the City of Methuen on January 3rd, 2020. As an alternate PSAP, NSR911 would temporarily receive 911 calls whenever the primary PSAP is unable to do so (e.g., the center is overwhelmed with 911 calls, it has to evacuate, or due to a network failure that impacts connectivity).

The last piece of transitioning occurred on July 2nd, 2020, through legislation. Chapter 113 of the Acts of 2020 called for transferring the employees of the North Shore Regional 911 Center from the Essex County Sheriff's Office to the State 911 Department. A Memorandum of Agreement was executed between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Alliance, AFSCME-SEIU Local 888 AFSCME, Council 93, which, amongst other things, changed employees' job titles to Public Safety Dispatcher, reclassified the titles within their job specification, and set forth a salary structure. Both the transfer and reclassification were effective Monday, July 19th, 2020.

In October of 2021, the Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea (MBTS) sent a "Letter of Intent" to NSR911 to explore the feasibility of joining this center. A feasibility study was completed in February 2022 and evaluated if NSR911 could support taking on MBTS and, if so, what the project would entail.

On February 28th, 2022, the Town of North Reading sent a "Letter of Intent" to NSR911 to explore the feasibility of joining this center. A feasibility study was completed in June 2022 and evaluated if NSR911 could support taking on North Reading and, if so, what the project would entail.

An Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) was signed on July 26th, 2022, by Manchester-by-the-Sea officials and the State 911 Department Executive Director for NSR911 to provide dispatching services to the town. The signing of this IMA marked the official start of onboarding MBTS.

Following the signing of the IMA, a comprehensive project plan was developed to onboard MBTS. NSR911 estimated that the process would take approximately 12 months to complete and eyed a July 1st, 2023, cutover date. A project team was established and included representatives from the police department, fire department, town administrator, selectboard liaison, and State 911 / NSR911. The team regularly met and worked through a multitude of tasks.

In early 2023, Manchester faced a staffing shortage at the communications center and asked NSR911 to consider the possibility of an escalated onboarding. On March 1st, 2023, MBTS' 911 and dispatching services successfully transitioned to NSR911.

An IMA was signed on December 28th, 2023, by North Reading officials and the State 911 Department Executive Director for NSR911 to provide dispatching services to the town. The signing of this IMA marked the official start of onboarding North Reading.

ADMINISTRATION

Human Resources

Authorized Strength

Personnel Allocation

	2023 Staffing
Director	1
Deputy Director	1
Operations Manager	1
Training and QA Coordinator (D3)	1
Public Safety Dispatch II (D2) (Supervisor)	7
Public Safety Dispatcher I (D1) (Telecommunicator)	18
Vacant Positions (13- D1 & 2- D2)	15
TOTAL	44

Recruitment

The center has established an extensive hiring and recruitment process. Candidates are required to undergo a multi-tasking test, oral board interview, psychological screening, drug, and hearing tests, and submit to an extensive background investigation. To seek the most qualified candidates, the center regularly advertises vacancies through social media, in industry publications, and on the state's employment website.

Selection

In 2023, the center performed a hiring campaign and hired eight (8) employees.

Promotions

Drew Firestone & Ryan Ingerman were promoted to Public Safety Dispatcher II on July 2nd, 2023.

Service Milestones

The following employees celebrated significant milestones of employment during the calendar year 2023:

Retirements:

There were no retirements during 2023.

5 Years of Service:

Sean Cullen, Supervisor

Robert Drinkwater, Telecommunicator

Howard Muirhead, Telecommunicator



Image 3: Staff Celebrate their 5th Anniversary

10 Years of Service:

Keith Deguio, Supervisor

Lee Delp, Operations Manager

Jenna DiGianvittorio, Supervisor

Thomas Ladd, Supervisor

Alexander McKeon, Supervisor

Todd Owen, Supervisor

Deborah Piraino, Telecommunicator

Christopher Ryan, Deputy Director

Katrina Shamshak, Training/QA Coordinator



Image 4: Staff Celebrate their 10th Anniversary

Employee Turnover

Exit interviews are conducted with employees who voluntarily leave NSR911. This is an essential tool used to fully understand the employee's experience while they worked for NSR911. Data collection and analysis help identify individual problems versus an emerging trend and identify issues systemic to the organization or reflective of a business unit. This information is reported regularly, and appropriate action is taken as needed.

The table below provides a 5-year snapshot of employee turnover at NSR911.

Reason	CY19	CY20	CY21	CY22	CY23
Terminated	11.36%	0.00%	2.27%	0.00%	6.82%
Resigned in Lieu of Termination	4.55%	2.27%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Pursue Other Dispatch Job	0.00%	4.55%	6.82%	4.55%	6.82%
Pursue Law Enforcement Job	0.00%	0.00%	2.27%	0.00%	2.27%
Retirement	4.55%	2.27%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Seek other Employment	4.55%	4.55%	11.36%	20.45%	9.09%
TOTALS	25.00%	13.64%	22.73%	25.00%	25.00%

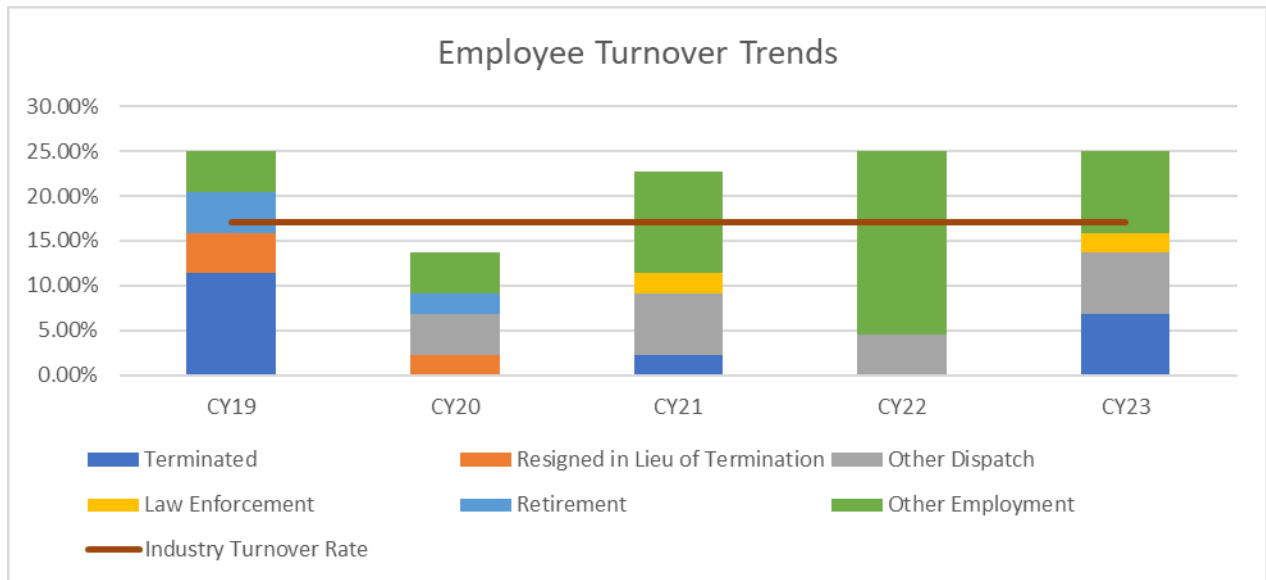
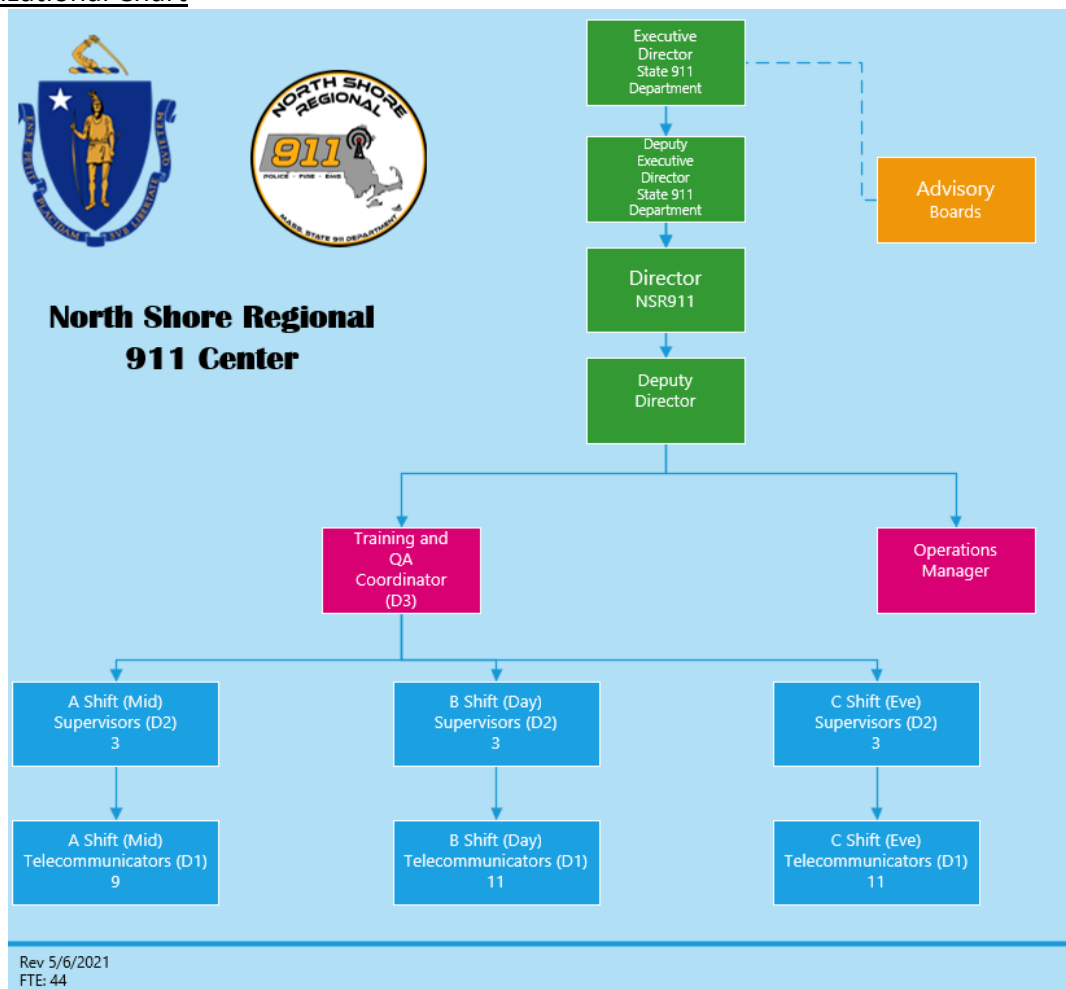


Image 5: Employee Turnover Trends

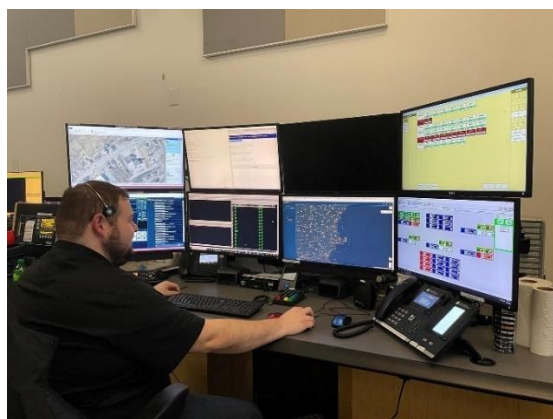
Organizational Chart



OPERATIONS

Staffing

North Shore Regional 911 Center Telecommunicator staff consists of Supervisors, Radio Dispatchers, and Wireless Call Takers. All Supervisors and Telecommunicators work on a 4 and 2 rotating schedule. Telecommunicators (TCs) operate across three shifts: "A" shift from 2345 – 0815 (overnight), "B" Shift from 0745 – 1615 (day), and "C" Shift from 1545 – 0015 (evening). NSR911 Supervisory Telecommunicators also operate across three shifts: "A" shift from 2245 – 0715, "B" shift from 0645-1515, and "C" Shift from 1445-2315.



Management and Scheduling Coordinators determine staffing patterns and levels based on data from several sources, including historical call volume, weather patterns, and organized events. Depending on these factors, the number of TC's per shift can increase or decrease. Often, staffing may be increased during the "peak" summer season, for special events (e.g., 4th of July, New Year's Eve, etc.) or isolated weather events, such as winter snowstorms.

Terminal Agency Coordinator

Supervisor Alexander McKeon serves as the Terminal Agency Coordinator for NSR911, and Supervisor Todd Owen is the Alternate Terminal Agency Coordinator. The Director of NSR911 designates the Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) to serve as a liaison between the agency and the Commonwealth. The TAC assumes the responsibility of ensuring compliance with Commonwealth and NCIC policies and regulations, as well as displaying knowledge about the telecommunications system and the general operation of the terminal equipment.

During the calendar year 2023, the center assisted in the verification of the following records:

	Amesbury	Essex	Manchester	Middleton	Topsfield	Wenham	TOTAL
Stolen Article	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stolen Gun	6	9	15	10	7	5	52
Stolen Plate	13	0	1	2	3	1	20
Stolen Vehicle	3	0	0	3	3	1	10
Missing Person	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Wanted Person	0	0	1	0	4	0	5
TOTAL	22	9	17	16	18	8	

SPECIALIZED ASSIGNMENT REVIEW

Accreditation Manager – The agency designated its Operations Manager as NSR911's accreditation manager. The agency seeks to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The accreditation manager oversees the agency's policies to ensure compliance with CALEA standards. Once NSR911 can meet all CALEA standards, this individual will work with CALEA to undergo a review and pursue accreditation.

CAD Administrator – A supervisor acts as the CAD Administrator for NSR911. This individual is responsible for ensuring that the system is functioning correctly and coordinating/assisting each police and fire department to ensure their systems are also working correctly.

GRIEVANCES

In 2023, no grievances were filed against NSR911.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & PUBLIC EDUCATION

Police and Fire IT User Group – Each police and fire department has delegated an individual to participate in an Informational Technology user group with the NSR911. These groups meet regularly to discuss various topics related to dispatching/records software, mobile data terminals (vehicle computers), and other concerns the departments may have.

911 Center Tours & Speaking Engagements

March 22nd, 2023, an open house was hosted at NSR911 for Manchester-by-the-Sea residents. On May 2nd, 2023, NSR911 hosted the Massachusetts TERT team for their monthly meeting.

Topsfield Public Safety Committee – Members of NSR911 continue to participate in the town of Topsfield's Public Safety Committee. This has proved to be an excellent opportunity to liaise with members of various departments for one of the communities we serve. It has also provided us with information about upcoming events and how they are being planned.

Social Media – NSR911 maintains an active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We strive to keep visitors up to date with notable activity either at our center, in a member community, or in other areas of interest to public safety and 911. As of December 31st, 2023, there were 1,960 followers on the department's Facebook page, 648 followers on Twitter, and 492 on Instagram.

Community Outreach – In 2023, NSR911 participated in multiple outreach events. On Wednesday, August 30th, TC Drinkwater and Supervisors McKeon & Owen participated in Amesbury's National Night Out at Amesbury High School. They had a great time educating the city's residents on 911 procedures and handed out coloring books, stickers, magnets, and other swag.



Critical Incident Stress Management – NSR911 participates in the North Shore / Northeastern



Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council's (NEMLEC) Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team. This team started as the North Shore Police & Dispatchers CISM Team and has since become part of NEMLEC. This team may be called out to provide full incident debriefings or to help defuse a situation. Chief Thomas Griffin from Peabody Police Department is the Control Chief in Charge of the unit. In 2023, NSR911 members participated in 4 (four) callouts.

Tri-Town School Union / Public Safety Committee – Members of NSR911 have formed a great working relationship with the Tri-Town School Union and regularly participate in their quarterly public safety meetings. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for public safety and the schools to work through various school safety capabilities and concerns.

Manchester-Essex Regional School District (MERSD) / Public Safety Committee – Members of NSR911 have formed a great working relationship with MERSD and regularly participate in their quarterly public safety meetings. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for public safety and the schools to work through various school safety capabilities and concerns.

Career Fairs – Members of NSR911 attended a couple of career fairs. On October 25th, TC Drinkwater & Supervisor McKeon traveled to the University of New Hampshire – Manchester to share the opportunities that a career in dispatch can provide. On October 26th, TC Ketcham & Supervisor Ingerman attended the career fair at Merrimack College in Andover to talk to students about the work of 911 dispatchers.



TRAINING & QUALITY ASSURANCE

Initial Training

NSR911 staff is required to undergo certification and continuing education training. Newly hired personnel are required by the Massachusetts State 911 Department to complete 88 hours of certification training, including a Public Safety Telecommunicator Course, Emergency Medical Dispatch certification, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and emergency call answering software certification.

In addition to the certification requirements, new Telecommunicators must also complete an NSR911-specific training program. This program includes 56 hours of classroom courses focusing on Computer-Aided Dispatch software, local geography, police & fire basics, call taking basics, ethics, and incident command system (ICS) training.

Regional dispatchers must then complete on-the-job training, including 160-280 hours of call taking, 80-120 Hours of Police & Fire Training (for each discipline), and 80 hours of mentoring. This includes more in-depth CAD usage, as well as radio and dispatch protocol, policy, and procedure as they relate to the member communities.



Continuing Education



Existing employees are also required to participate in NSR911's continuing education program. To maintain state certification, Telecommunicators must complete a documented 16 hours of continuing education training and an additional 12 hours of EMD continuing education each year. NSR911 Telecommunicators also complete 12 hours of online con-ed training (1 hour per month) as well as 52 hours of weekly scenarios and simulation-style training to maintain essential knowledge and skillsets, as well as operational refresher classes.



In June 2023, TCs Norton, Little, and SPVs McKeon and Owen participated in Amesbury ALERRT Training. The first day of classes was classroom training designed to improve integration between law enforcement, fire, telecommunicators, and emergency medical services (EMS) in active attack/shooter events. The second day of class was scenario-based, with the telecommunicators providing communications.



Training Report 2023

EMD Training

- The Superpower of Data Dashboards
- Put Your SOPs to the Test
- Talking Tech for Disaster Communications
- Find the Phone
- Cyber Threat Prep
- Cyber Hide and Seek
- Staffing Up
- Great Expectations
- Feedback Loop
- How Can We Cope
- PTSD Triggers
- Mother of Necessity
- Inside the Console
- What You Should Know About 9-1-1
- Signs & Symptoms of a Diabetic Emergency
- Severe Eye Injuries
- Pelvic Trauma

- Thermal, Radiation, Chemical, & Electrical Burns
- Whooping Cough
- What is the most appropriate Guide card?
- Active Shooter: EMD & EMS Partnership
- Fentanyl
- TTY and EMD
- Electronics Are Keeping Us Alive

In-service Training

- Paint The Picture
- Manchester-by-the-Sea Onboarding
- 911 Calls for Highway Incidents
- Amesbury Fire Highway Responses
- Attending Court
- Chebacco Terrace Essex
- Citation Numbers in IMC
- CJIS Confidentiality

CJIS Enhancement - DNA Collection
 Alert
 Dispatching Structure Fire Incidents
 Do You Know Your ABCDs
 Echo Procedure
 Essex AEDs
 Essex FD/Manchester FD Automatic
 Mutual Aid
 Everyone is Welcome at NSR911
 Fall Detections on Apple Devices
 Fire Department Staffing Coverage
 Fire Motor Vehicle Accident
 Response
 Highway Exit Numbers
 KQ
 MA NENA EPRC
 Manchester-by-the-Sea Fire Shift
 Training
 Manchester-by-the-Sea Police Desk
 Update
 MBTS Fire Dept Policy Updates
 MBTS Info
 MBTS Shark Procedures
 MedFlight Protocol
 Mutual Aid Ambulance Requests
 Plain Language
 Prepared Advanced
 Radio Reminders
 Silver Alerts
 Telematics
 Walk-ins
 Watercraft Incident v Watercraft
 Enforcement
 Wireless Question Asking

Workshops and Seminars:

911 Center Supervision
 Challenging Callers: Communicating
 with Children, the Elderly and the
 Mentally Impaired
 Crisis Communications
 Missing Persons
 Mental Health & Wellness
 Renovation Time
 The Emotionally Intelligent Comm
 Center
 Dispatch Legal Issues
 Managing Generations
 Active Assailant
 One Mind
 Dispatcher Leadership Academy
 Implicit Bias for Dispatchers & Call
 Takers
 Active Shooter Incidents for Public
 Safety Communications
 Multi-Agency Response to Active
 Shooter and Hostile Events
 Crisis Negotiations
 Suicide Intervention
 Fundamentals of Tactical Dispatch
 Bullying and Negativity in the
 Comms Center
 The Power of Peer Support
 ENP Workshop
 ALERRT

Hours spent training:

Monthly EMD Training:	610
In-Service Training:	2,257
Conferences, Workshops, and Seminars:	2,040
New Hire Academy & On-the-Job Training:	4,176
Total Hours on Training in 2023:	9,083

Conferences:

APCO Atlantic Regional Conference
October 2023 TC Norton and Training & QA Coordinator attended the APCO Atlantic Conference in Albany, NY.



9-1-1 Staffing Crisis Summit

May 17-18, 2023 | Herndon, VA

APCO's Staffing Crisis Summit
May 2023 Director Dell Isola and Operations Manager Delp attended APCO International's Staffing Crisis Summit in Herndon, VA.

In-House Training Instructor

We are fortunate to have employees certified to teach the following courses:

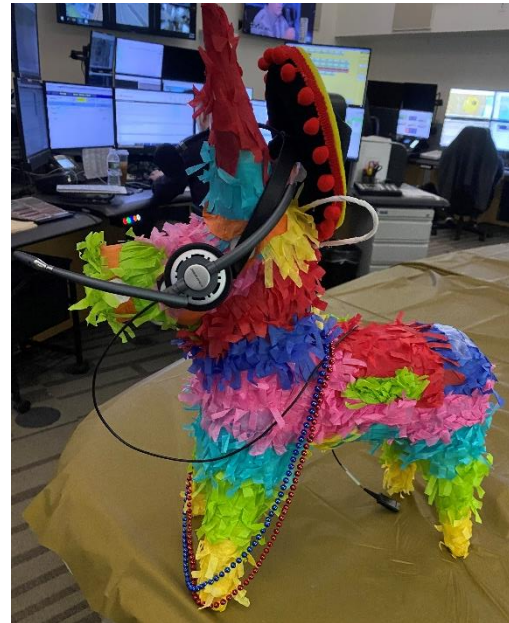
- APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch
- APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator
- APCO Certified Training Officer
- APCO Communications Center Supervisor
- APCO Fire Services
- ALICE Active Shooter
- CPR- 2 Supervisors and 2 TCs Certified

Annual Awards Ceremony

In April 2023, during National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week, NSR911 held its third annual awards ceremony. During the evening, team members were treated to a rodeo dinner, and recognitions and awards were distributed:

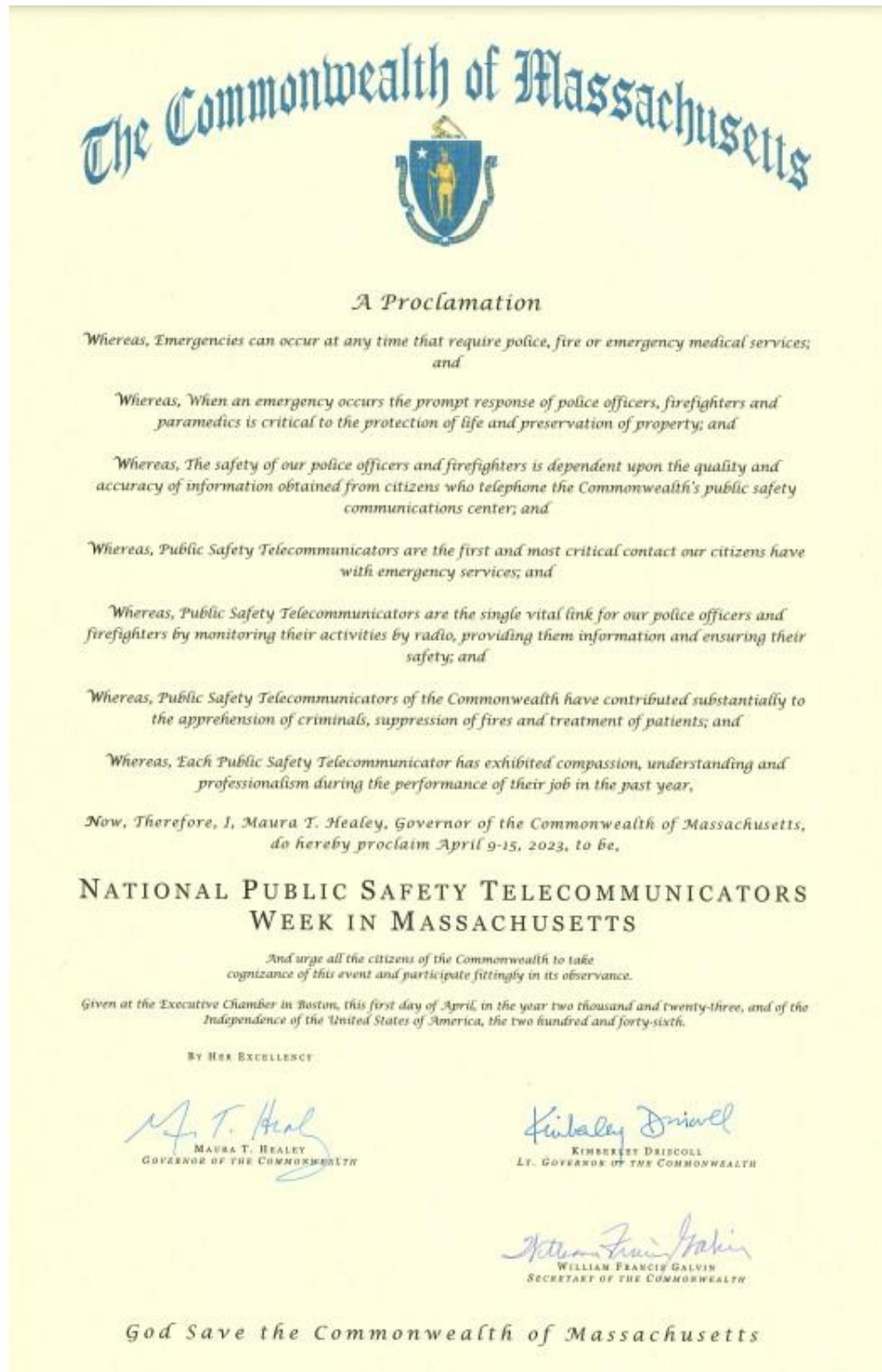
Award	Recipient(s)
Lifesaver Recognition	Brittany Ketcham Steven Klassner Drew Firestone
Needle in the Haystack Recognition	Cynthia Matos Robert Norton
Perfect Attendance	Sean Cullen
Team Player	Brittany Ketcham
Ever Ready – Always Willing Recognition	Dean Little
Regional TC of the Year	Robert Norton
Wireless TC of the Year	James Fernandez
Rookie of the Year	Dean Little

Supervisor of the Year	Jenna DiGianvittorio
Best Team Performance	Robert Drinkwater Steven Klassner Robert Norton Daniel O'Connor Jenna DiGianvittorio



Awards and Certifications

In April 2023, Governor Healey sent a citation to NSR911 acknowledging National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week.



In August of 2023, TC Joshua Graham was featured in the Massachusetts State 911 Newsletter and issued an award for handling a critical incident in July 2023.

In September of 2023, TC Robert Norton received his NENA

Excellence in Dispatch Certificate. There are only four people in Massachusetts who have received this certificate. To receive this certification, you must complete multiple courses, including Advanced Fire Dispatching, Advanced Police Dispatching, Enhanced Caller Management, 9-1-1 Customer Service, and Preventing Telecommunicator Tunnel Vision. These classes go beyond the basics of entry-level training.



In October 2023, TC Dean Little and TC Brittany Ketcham earned their CPR Instructor Certifications.



In November of 2023, Supervisor Sean Cullen received his NENA ENP Certification. To earn this designation, one must have experience in the field, have professional development, and complete a rigorous exam. The exam covers topics such as telecom operations, information systems, operations legislation, management of organization, management of employees, and management legislation. There are only 1,657 ENPs globally, 1,588 ENPs in the United States, and 30 ENPs in Massachusetts (31 now!)

In December 2023, TC Dean Little earned his APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator Agency Instructor Certification.

In December 2023, TC Robert Norton earned his APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch Agency Instructor Certification.

On December 8th, 2023, Topsfield Police held its annual awards ceremony and recognized two NSR Telecommunicators for their efforts on incidents in their community.

Supervisor Ryan Ingerman was presented with an award for his actions that directly changed the course of events on an escalating call. Ryan was unable to accept the award in person as he is currently on deployment with the Massachusetts National Guard, but Deputy Director Ryan accepted it on his behalf.



Supervisor Drew

Firestone was presented with a meritorious service award for his diligent actions on a search and rescue mission.

Both supervisors were presented with plaques from TOPD and recognition citations from the Massachusetts House of Representatives by Kristin Kassner, State Representative 2nd Essex District & Sally Kerans for State Representative, and a citation from the State Senate presented by State Senator Bruce Tarr.



Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement (QA/QI Program)

The Emergency Communications Center operates a Quality Assurance Program that is overseen by Training and Quality Assurance Coordinator Katrina Shamshak. The program is designed to meet the standards recommended by the APCO International Standards Development Committee and approved by the American National Standards Institute. The core principle of the quality assurance program is:

- To provide a quality assurance evaluation that ensures citizens consistently receive the quality of service they expect and deserve from the North Shore Regional 911 Center.
- The QA program addresses three key areas of employee performance:
 - Adherence to procedures, call quality, and job knowledge.
- The principal features of the QA application include:
 - A review of at least 3% of all regional room voice and radio calls, 7% of all Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) calls, and 2% of all wireless room calls.
 - All cases involving catastrophic loss and/or high acuity are reviewed.
- Operational reports will be available to review the overall performance of individuals and the department's performance to develop relevant training.
- Key Performance Indicators are available to track the effectiveness of the QA program.

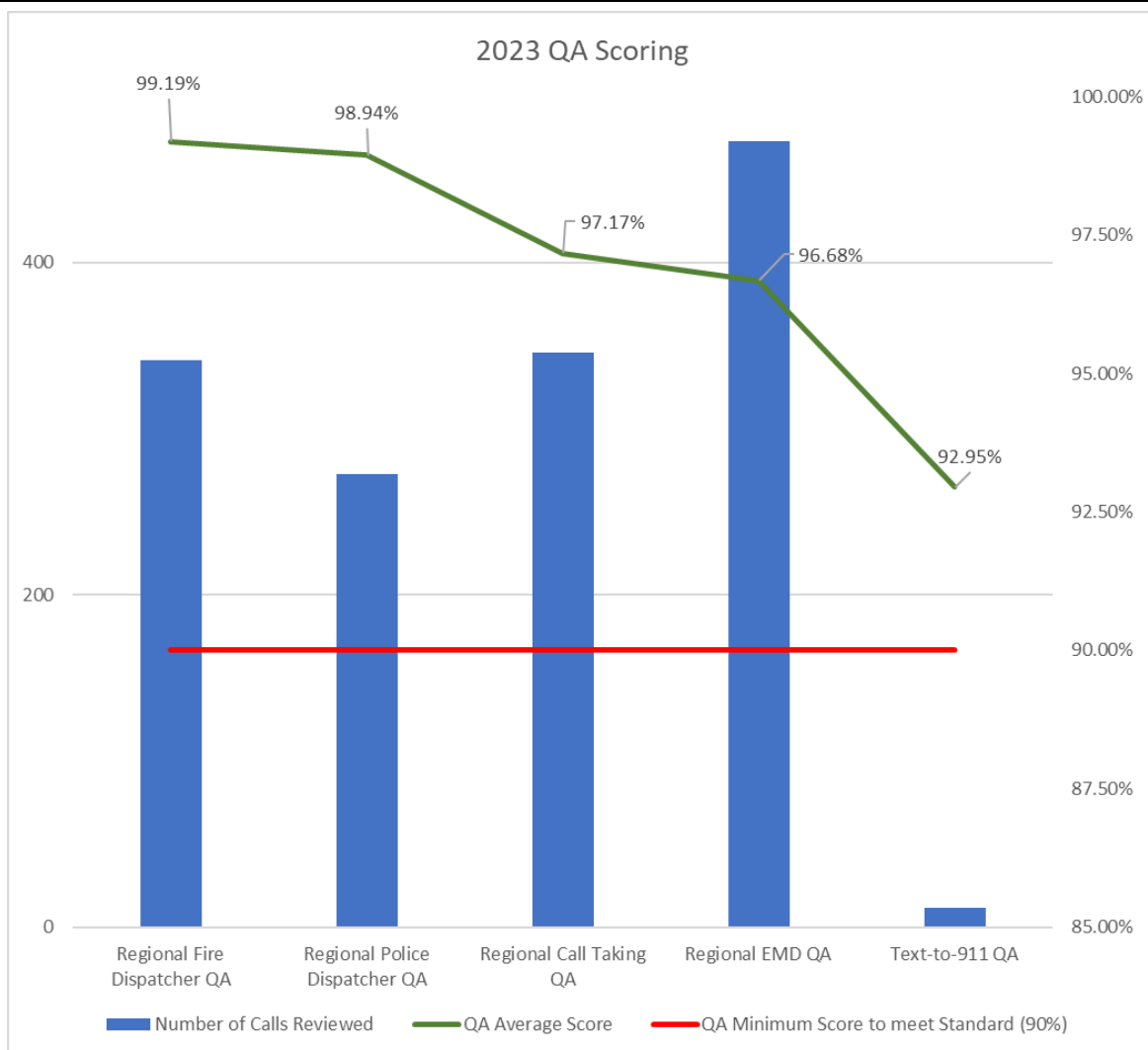
The focus of the Quality Assurance & Quality Improvement (QA/QI) program is evaluating telecommunicator and dispatcher strengths as well as identifying areas for improvement. The QA/QI program is not meant to criticize errors, but to constructively review individual efforts, recognize if complacency is creeping into our work, and find areas in which we can improve. Our comprehensive QA/QI programs include a random review of calls received/processed and

dispatches of police, fire, and EMS resources. All quality assurance checks are reviewed with individual employees. The Training and Quality Assurance Coordinator ensures all appropriate review, training, and remediation is provided when a need is identified.

In 2023, NSR911 maintained an average of **96.99%** protocol compliance. Our goal remains to deliver the best possible service to the citizens and visitors of those agencies we serve.

2023 Calendar Year RECC QA/QI

Type of Call Reviewed	Number of Calls Reviewed	QA Average Score	QA Minimum Score to meet Standard (90%)
Regional Fire Dispatcher QA	341	99.19%	90.00%
Regional Police Dispatcher QA	273	98.94%	90.00%
Regional Call Taking QA	346	97.17%	90.00%
Regional EMD QA	473	96.68%	90.00%
Text-to-911 QA	12	92.95%	90.00%



Benchmarking Standards

NSR911 has strict guidelines on how rapidly calls are to be answered and subsequently dispatched. The guidelines follow applicable national standards, where available. In the event that no national standard exists, the center has created an internal standard that it seeks to comply with. Our most recent benchmarks were approved in September 2021 to align with the latest revisions of applicable national standards.

Compliance is tracked and reported, and any perceived issues are addressed between the telecommunicator and supervisor and during operation and training meetings to discuss overall operational performance.

The standards NSR911 adheres to are as follows:

1. Ring-to-Pickup Time

- a. The National Emergency Number Association revised its standards in 2020 (NENA-STA-020.1-2020) to align with the National Fire Protection Association. This can be found in NFPA 1221 (2019 Edition) §7.4.1. The newly revised standard states that ninety percent (90%) of all 911 calls arriving at the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) shall be answered within fifteen (15), and ninety-five (95%) of all 911 calls should be answered within twenty (20) seconds. NSR911's goal is to answer all 911 calls within ten (10) seconds or less.

2. Pickup-to-Dispatch

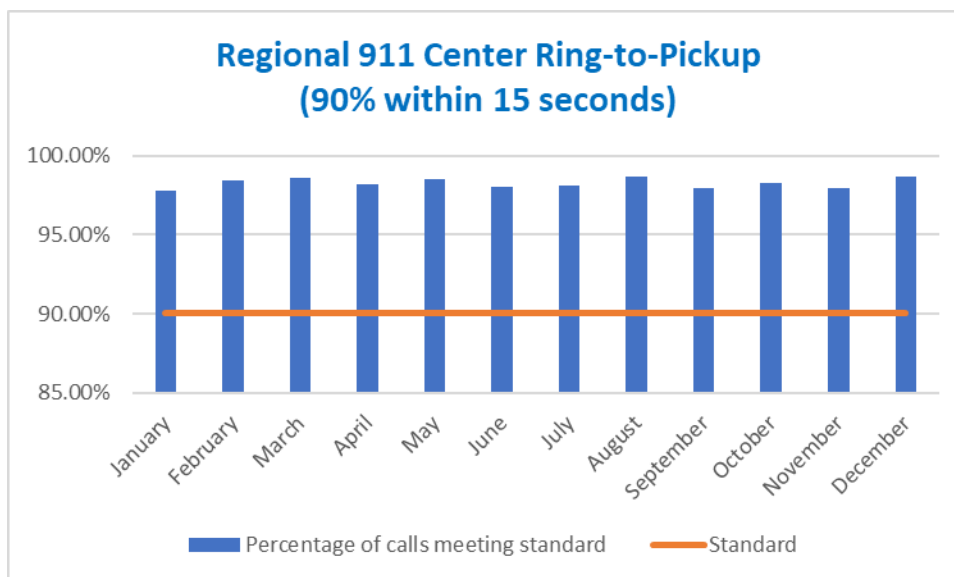
- a. NSR911 adopted the 2019 revision of the NFPA 1221 §7.4 standard for tracking the amount of time it takes to dispatch a call based on when the telecommunicator answers the call. Operating Procedures state that 90 percent of emergency alarm processing shall be completed within 60 seconds for the following high-priority level events: Trauma (i.e., penetrating chest injury, GSW, etc.), Neurologic emergencies (i.e., stroke, seizure), Cardiac-related events, Unconscious/unresponsive patients, Allergic reactions, Patient not breathing, Choking, Fire involving or potentially extending to a structure(s), Explosion, or Other calls as determined by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ). The following types of calls or mitigating circumstances shall be exempted from this pickup-to-dispatch time: Joint responses with law enforcement (involving weapons), Hazardous materials incidents, Technical rescue Language translation, TTY/TDD calls, Incomplete location calls, SMS messages to 9-1-1, Calls received from outside the normal area of responsibility and/or service area, Calls requiring the use of a PSAP registry or similar tool to determine the appropriate PSAP and/or transfer location, or Calls received during a significant disaster that severely and significantly depletes available resources, impacts local infrastructure, and could

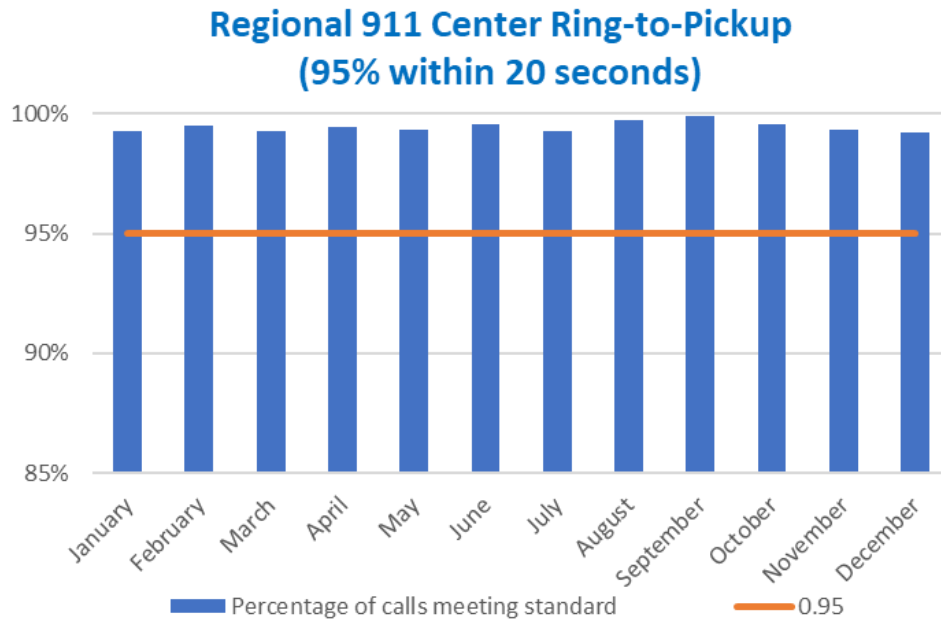
result in changes to normal dispatcher procedures (disaster mode). Based on this standard, NSR911 adopted two (2) objectives:

- i. To process 90% of the following high-priority level events* within 60 seconds: Trauma (i.e., penetrating chest injury, GSW, etc.), Neurologic emergencies (i.e., stroke, seizure), Cardiac-related events, Unconscious/unresponsive patients, Allergic reactions, Patient not breathing, Choking, Fire involving or potentially extending to a structure(s), or Explosions.
- ii. To process 90% of all priority 1- 911 calls* for police, fire, and EMS within 90 seconds and 95% within 120 seconds.

* NOTE: NFPA 1221 (2019 Edition) states the following types of calls or mitigating circumstances shall be exempted from this pickup-to-dispatch time: Joint responses with law enforcement (involving weapons), Hazardous materials incidents, Technical rescue, Language translation, TTY/TDD calls, Incomplete location calls, SMS message to 9-1-1, Calls received from outside the normal area of responsibility and/or service area, Calls requiring the use of a PSAP registry or similar tool to determine the appropriate PSAP and/or transfer location, or Calls received during a significant disaster that severely and significantly depletes available resources, impacts local infrastructure, and could result in changes to normal dispatcher procedures (disaster mode). Due to CAD reporting limitations, we cannot exclude these exceptions. NSR911 will report data on all Priority 1 calls.

Ring-to-Pickup Performance

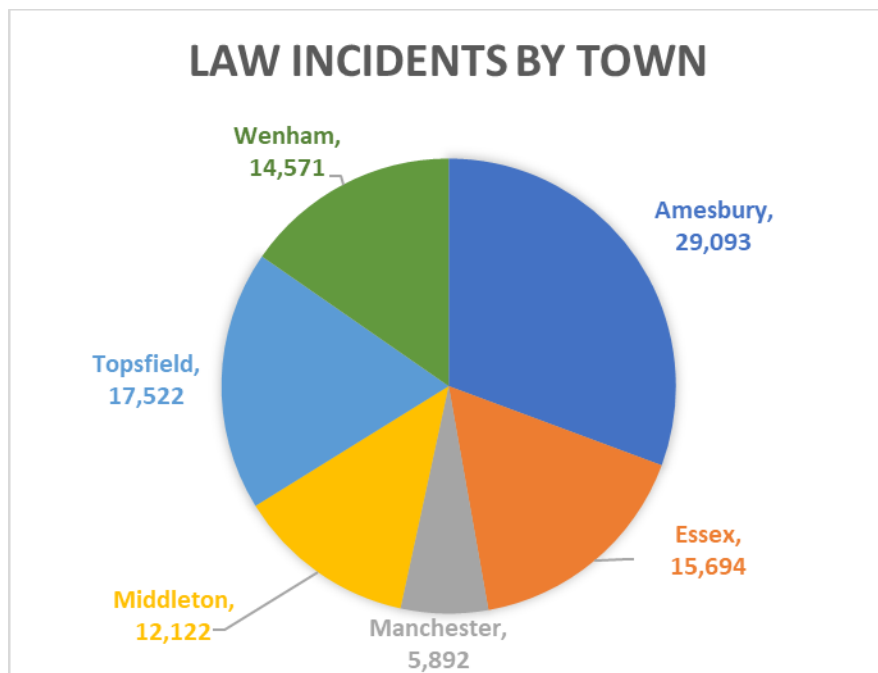




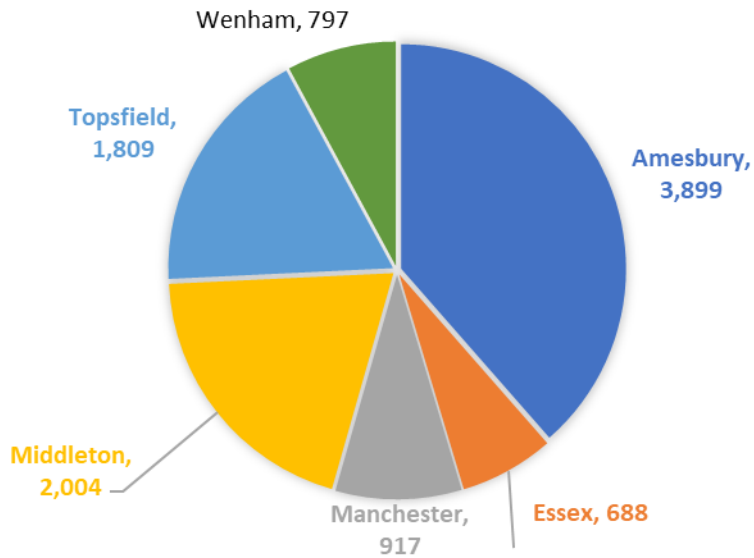
2023 STATISTICS

Calls for Service

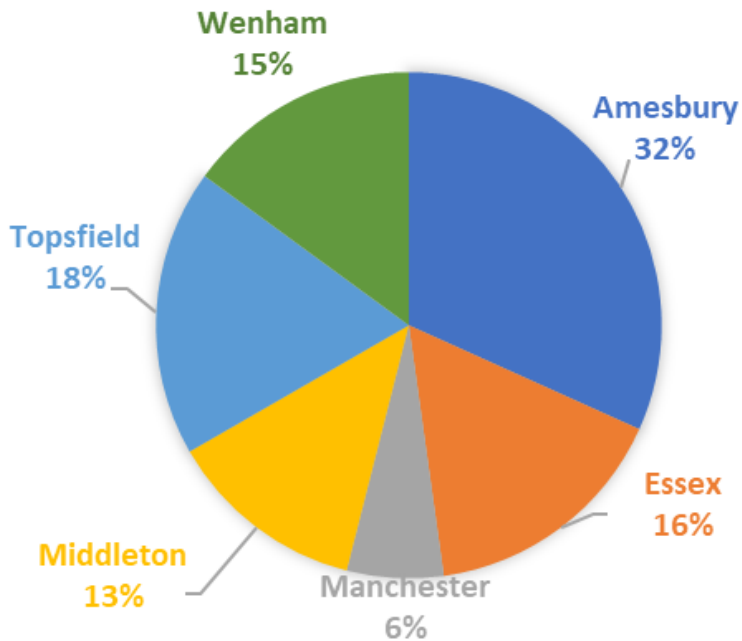
A call for service is generated by NSR911 when a citizen calls in with a need for law enforcement, fire department, or ambulance response. It also includes motor vehicle stops, building checks, and directed patrols.



FIRE INCIDENTS BY TOWN



TOTAL CAD INCIDENTS BY TOWN



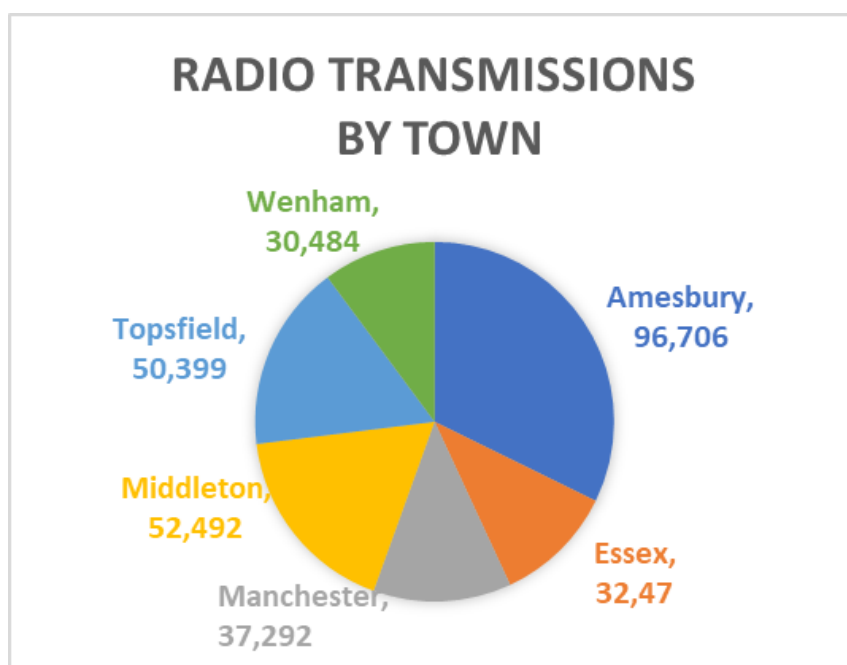
Phone Calls

The table below identifies 911 and emergency telephone calls processed by the Regional Operations Room.

	Answered	Abandoned	Total
Regional 911 Calls	11,862	645	12,507
Regional Text-to-911 Calls	23	N/A	23
Regional 2Way Calls	21,387	561	21,948
Business Calls Inbound	37,360	N/A	37,360
Business Calls Outbound	20,917	N/A	20,917

Radio Transmissions

This metric measures the count of the number of recorded radio transmissions. The current Management Information System (MIS) platform is not able to measure individual push-to-talk requests; however, it is a good gauge of how busy each radio channel is.



After-Action Reviews

After-Action Reviews and Improvement Plans (AAR-IPs) are used to observe and implement lessons learned from incidents and events so the agency can continually seek to improve its operation. Supervisor Thomas Ladd is charged with leading AARs for NSR911.

Department Complaints / Organizational Integrity

It is the policy of NSR911 to courteously receive, document, and investigate all complaints against the agency or our personnel. A statistical summary of those complaints is made available to agency employees and the public through the annual report. These numbers include both internal (i.e., self-reported or generated by a supervisor) and external (i.e., from the public or North Shore Regional 911 Center

outside agencies). A supervisor thoroughly investigated all complaints per agency General Orders. Appropriate action, ranging from training to progressive discipline, was taken in all cases following a final review by the Director.

2023 Agency Concerns*

Agency	Sustained (Partially or Fully)	Mitigating Circumstances Exist	Cleared	Not sustained/ unresolved	Unfounded	Total	Count of CAD Calls	Complaint as Percent
AMESBURY FD	2				3	5	3,899	0.13%
AMESBURY PD	2					2	29,093	0.01%
ESSEX FD						0	688	0.00%
ESSEX PD						0	15,694	0.00%
MANCHESTER FD	1				2	3	917	0.33%
MANCHESTER PD					1	1	5,892	0.02%
MIDDLETON FD						0	2,004	0.00%
MIDDLETON PD						0	12,122	0.00%
TOPSFIELD FD						0	1,809	0.00%
TOPSFIELD PD						0	17,522	0.00%
WENHAM FD	1					1	797	0.13%
WENHAM PD						0	14,571	0.00%

**Please note that this reflects the month that the concern was reported; the concern may have occurred in a different month.*

TECHNICAL SERVICES

Radio

NSR911 has worked to establish direct connectivity between the Essex Police/Fire, Middleton Police/Fire, Topsfield Police/Fire, and Wenham Police/Fire radio systems. This gives the center a direct connection to each of these respective radio systems, eliminating the need for a radio at NSR911 to talk into those repeaters. The center is also in the process of establishing the same level of connectivity with the Amesbury Police/Fire radio systems, and the Manchester-by-the-Sea Police/Fire radio systems. A backup radio for each department is also maintained at NSR911, providing redundancy.

Much of the backup radio equipment at NSR911 has been in service since the center opened in 2013. This equipment has served NSR911 reliably but is reaching the end of its life. In 2022, NSR911 began the process of replacing older radio equipment and upgrading our capabilities by placing an order for 23 Motorola APX Multi-Band Consolette radios. These radios will allow for further redundancy and expanded capability for our telecommunicators as they can be programmed with multiple channels, including our own departments and those in surrounding communities. Due to supply chain issues, it took over 18-months for these radios to be delivered.

Delivery was completed in December 2023, and they are slated to be put into service during the first quarter of 2024.

The center supports a 250' free-standing lattice radio tower located across the street from the facility. The tower has extensive lightning protection. Also, each cable has lightning protection on it before it enters the building and within the building. The radio tower also contains several microwave connections. Two of these connections provide radio backups and redundancy with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS) at the Zone 2 Core in Boston. In the event of an evacuation, the center would be able to utilize any other core site, including our alternate 911 center at Andover PSAP. In 2022, NSR911 started a project to consolidate radio antennas on the tower by using combiners, allowing for less clutter and weight on the tower, without reducing the center's capabilities. Antennas for this project were attached to the tower during the fall of 2023. This project is expected to be completed during the first quarter of 2024.

The NSR911's communications shelter is a 12'x34' prefab building located next to the radio tower on Manning Avenue. It was procured with assistance from the Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC). In 2021, we began outfitting this shelter. Plans have also been underway with various stakeholders to add additional capabilities to the tower/shelter. The Communications shelter will be an indispensable asset for our agency and regional communication efforts in our area for many years to come.

Supervisor Todd Owen serves as NSR911's Communications Unit Technician (COMT), and Deputy Director Christopher Ryan / Training & QA Coordinator Katrina Shamshak are Communication Unit Leaders (COML). TC Robert Norton is a trained Incident Tactical Dispatcher (INTD).



Information Services

Peter Fucci at the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Technology Services & Security (EOTSS) is the Senior Architect assigned to NSR911. Peter provides all levels of IT support and is charged with maintaining and monitoring NSR911's extensive network. In 2023, we achieved the following key deliverables:

- Update and modernization of specialized reports based on CAD/RMS data;
- Stabilization of Zoll/First Due API Interface feed;
- Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Project Technical Assistance;
- Software was written to allow IMC to send pages as SMS messages natively;
- Roll out a software deployment system for desktop management ;
- Roll out new desktops in the operations rooms;
- Created automated processes for desktop management; and
- Updated our network monitoring software.

Internet Redundancy

Internet connectivity is heavily relied upon at the center. Two high-availability Juniper switches are in place to manage a Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN). With this system, the center has combined the usage of Crown Castle fiber, Comcast Cable, Verizon 4G, and FirstNet 4G internet connections. Through the SD-WAN, the center can continue operations even if one or two of the internet service providers lose connectivity.

Internet connectivity provides the following to the center:

- Computer-Aided Dispatch / Records Management System connectivity with member police and fire stations;
- Mobile data terminal connections to member police and fire vehicles;
- Video connectivity to police and fire station lobby cameras;
- Connectivity with the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) and the Federal Bureau of Identification (FBI); and
- Business Telephones.

Server Infrastructure

In 2018, the ERECC went live with a state-of-the-art virtual server. This system replaced and consolidated 24 servers initially installed at the center, which had reached end-of-life. This project was paid for through the State 911 Department's FY16 competitive Development Grant. It allows the center to operate a private, secure cloud for NSR911 and its members. The system was configured with high availability and redundancy. This provides 99.99% uptime on services it provides to NSR911. It is currently operating at 70% of the recommended capacity for failover, with room for future projects.

The virtual server consists of:

- 4 Core Servers
 - 40 CPU each
 - 256 GB RAM
 - 4TB of usable Hard Drive storage

Computer-Aided Dispatch

During the year 2023, the NSR911s CAD system underwent one build upgrade. We started with version 6.11.7, which had been upgraded in May of 2022. Supervisor McKeon and Deputy Director Ryan worked to complete this upgrade, which included major fixes to enhance the end user's functionality within the system. The update was completed on 09/13/2023 with the deployment of version 6.12.

NSR911 continued updating site files, cross streets, and other CAD information with feedback from our employees. This not only helps build a great database, but also lessens the difficulty for end users when information is able to quickly look up with accurate information.

Throughout the year, there were discussions with the dispatchers as well as working groups with each agency to update the current list of CAD natures for calls. This work was performed by our Police/Fire representatives, along with input from all dispatchers. On December 31st, Supervisor McKeon and Operations Manager Delp implemented these changes for the New Year.

Member Agency Support

Member police and fire departments receive regular support from NSR911 on various topics such as Agency Concerns, CAD/RMS, Interfaces, IT/Hardware Issues, Radio Problems, Software Bugs, Statistic Requests, and Terminal Server connectivity concerns.

Fire Alarm Receiving Equipment

The center utilizes equipment from Signal Communications to monitor fire alarms in Middleton and Wenham. Middleton and Wenham maintain backups of their fire alarm systems at each community's fire department. These backups allow each department to be monitored in the event of an equipment failure at the communications center.

Emergency Notification System

NSR911 continues to provide an emergency notification system (ENS) for our agency and member communities. In 2023, we migrated to Rave's Emergency Notification System (ENS). Previously, NSR911 used Swift911, which Rave Mobile Safety Company acquired. The new platform offers a more user-friendly graphical user interface (GUI).

This system combines industry-leading emergency alerting and incident management tools to create a robust and powerful communication tool. NSR911 and member communities can use the tool to send critical emergency notifications such as evacuation notices or shelter-in-place directives. Participating towns can also use the tool for public information dissemination, such as parking ban notices or traffic and transportation notices. The National Weather Service issues watches, warnings, and advisories throughout the year. Citizens can subscribe to various emergency and non-emergency alerts by signing up for NSR911 Alerts [here](#).

FACILITY

Overview

The NSR911 center was built upon redundancy on top of redundancy. The center has multiple telephone, internet, and power sources to run the center. Telephone services are provided by multiple vendors using diverse circuits, as is internet service. Electricity is supplied by the Middleton Electric Light Department (MELD) and backed up by two- 500kW Generators. Each generator is independently capable of powering the facility. Two- 9,900A/225kVA Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) systems are also utilized to provide temporary power when the main electric feed is lost until the generators turn on and can provide power for the center.

Inside the communications center, there are 17 answering position units (APUs). Each position is powered through one of two Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS). These UPSs provide backup battery power in the event of an electrical outage. Each UPS powers half of the positions.

Therefore, In the event of a UPS failure, the center would only lose half of the positions. The communications room is also powered by Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) units. Each of these units is capable of running the entire communications center, and they alternate throughout the week. The HVAC system for the communications center is entirely separate from the units in the server room and a unit in the administration wing of the building. The center also has a robust firewall in place to prevent unauthorized intrusions into its network.

Life-Cycle Forecasting

2024

- Procure & Install Video Wall for Regional Operations Room
- Upgrade Fire Alarm Receiving Equipment (2021 Project)
- HVAC Upgrades (Dehumidification) (2021 Project)
- Replace carpets (Operations Rooms, Hallways, and Training Room) (2022 Project)
- Replace 19- Security Cameras (2022 Project)
- Replace Network Switches (2022 Project)
- Conduct facility security audit (2023 Project)
- Replace Blinds in Conference Room (2023 Project)

2025

- Refresh Antennas & Cable on Tower / Building
- Microwave Refresh
- Conduct Procurement for new CAD/RMS system
- Purchase Communications Vehicle

2026

- Replace all Server Room Power Distribution Units (PDUs)
- Purchase/Implement new CAD/RMS system

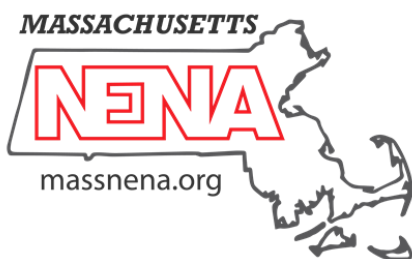
2027

- Replace Database Backup System
- Replace UPS servers

2028

- Replace Dispatch Computers

INDUSTRY REPRESENTATION



INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTIONS

North Shore Regional 911 Center employees participate on various committees and represent the 911 industry on regional and statewide levels. This section highlights some of the various contributions and accomplishments achieved during 2023.

State 911 Department

Representation at 911 Commission Meetings and Participation on its Standards Committee –

Members of NSR911 regularly attend 911 Commission meetings and are active on its standards committee. A TERT program was formally created under the Commonwealth's Communication Unit (COMU). Training & QA Coordinator Katrina Shamshak is now the TERT State Coordinator and oversees a team of 50+ members. This team is fully funded through a special grant administered by the State 911 Department. The team responds statewide to planned and emergency events to support communication centers.

Participation in Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) team – several NSR911 staff participate on the statewide TERT team. Team members are certified and credentialed public safety telecommunicators who respond, relieve, assist, and/or augment PSAPs affected by manmade or natural disasters. The team is made up of ~56 members across the state, divided into four (4) regions. Each region has a team leader and an assistant team leader. Training and QA Coordination Katrina Shamshak was appointed as the TERT State Coordinator. She is tasked with overseeing the entire program across the state.



During 2023, there were three activations to cover department staff so they could attend the wake/funeral services for departmental / line-of-duty deaths. The team has also started to regularly practice "mock" deployment at centers across the state. These deployments allow the team to assess its capabilities and identify any shortcomings. During CY2023 Training & QA Coordinator Katrina Shamshak, Supervisor Alex McKeon, Deputy Director Christopher Ryan, and Operations Manager Lee Delp were active team members.

Essex County Fire Chief's Association (ECFCA)

Participation in ECFCA Mutual Aid Committee – Members of NSR911 regularly participate in ECFCA's mutual aid committee. The primary function of the Mutual Aid Committee is to ensure consistency in the mutual aid system in Essex County. The committee sets the parameters of mutual aid responses as well as the guidelines for apparatus responses. The committee approves all ten-alarm cards before they become operational. In 2023, fire run cards for Fire District 5, or southern Essex County, were updated three times, and EMS cards twice. Meanwhile, District 15, or northern Essex County, updated their respective fire cards on three different occasions and EMS cards twice.

Participation in ECFA Communications Committee – The Communications Committee was established to develop and prioritize short- and long-term objectives for improving the Public Safety Communications System of Essex County. One of the guiding documents for this committee is a Communications Study that was completed in 2018 and outlined numerous areas for improvement. Grant money was awarded for the below projects from the Department of Homeland Security through the Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC):

2023 Projects

- Purchase of GPS Clocks (Time synchronization) (\$25,000)
- Establish a Microwave link between NSR911 and a tower in Topsfield (\$20,000)
- Purchase of Cache Radios to support Field Comm 20 (\$35,000)

2022 Projects

- Conduct a feasibility study for a Topsfield Radio Tower (\$35,000)
 - **STATUS:** Project pending development of a Statement of Work (SOW).
- Purchase and Installation of a VHF Combiner (\$50,000)
 - **STATUS:** Project pending development of a Statement of Work (SOW).
- Convert three fire department's District 5 radios from UHF to VHF (\$70,000)
 - **STATUS:** Statement of Work (SOW) created, pending procurement.

2021 Projects

- Expansion of the ECFA UHF Wide Area Network [furtherance of 2020 project] (\$40,000)
 - **STATUS:** Equipment delivered at the end of 2023, pending installation.
- Radio Recording Capability on the field Comm 20 Vehicle (\$6,500)
 - **STATUS:** Equipment delivered at the end of 2023, pending installation.

Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC)

Deputy Director Christopher Ryan is an appointed NERAC member representing Public Safety Communications. He is also the chairman of NERAC's Interoperability Committee. The Northeast Homeland Security Planning Region contains 85 communities stretching from Ashby in the Northwest to Salisbury on the Northeastern coastal border with New Hampshire and Holliston in the Southwest. It encompasses a population of 1,971,945 people (747,313 households) in 1,310 square miles for an average population density of 1,505 people per square mile.

Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC)

As a NERAC council member, Deputy Director Christopher Ryan has also been appointed as a voting member on the Executive Management Committee of the SIEC representing NERAC. The SIEC was established to advise the State Administrative Agency on priorities and approval of all interoperability expenditures and requests for the expenditure of federal funds. In carrying out this responsibility, consistent with the goals and objectives of the State Homeland Security Strategy, the SIEC will issue objectives and goals, provide guidance for the development of standard operating procedures and best practices when implementing interoperable

communications statewide, and give other advice necessary to achieve statewide interoperability and the objectives of the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan, or SCIP.

Massachusetts Chapter of National Emergency Number Association (MassNENA)

MassNENA is an organization that supports the 911 profession and those engaged in providing emergency communications services in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In 2023, Christopher Ryan completed his term as President and now serves as the Immediate Past President.

APCO International

Training & QA Coordinator Shamshak served on APCOs SDC Core Competencies and Minimum Training Standards for PSTs committee. This standard identifies the core competencies and minimum training requirements for Public Safety Telecommunicators. The committee is tasked with reviewing and updating the standard. APCO International is the world's largest organization of public safety communications professionals. It serves the needs of public safety communications practitioners worldwide - and the welfare of the general public as a whole by providing complete expertise, professional development, technical assistance, advocacy, and outreach.

APCO Atlantic

Operations Manager Lee Delp & Training and QA Coordination Katrina Shamshak serve on the APCO Atlantic Training Committee. Shamshak served as the CO-Chair of the committee. This committee works to bring low/no-cost training to members of APCO Atlantic.



TQA Shamshak served on the APCO Atlantic Scholarship Committee. The program is intended for public safety communications professionals with long-term career goals and who demonstrate a commitment to excellence in their chosen field. Each year, the Chapter Scholarship Committee reviews applications and selects recipients.

TQA Shamshak was appointed to the APCO Atlantic Board at the 2023 Chapter Conference. They serve as a Board Member At Large. Board members are selected and appointed by the president.

Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association (MCSA)

Training and QA Coordination Katrina Shamshak serves on MCSA's training committee. The Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association (MCSA) is comprised of a group of 9-1-1 professionals who aim to facilitate the professional resources needed by Public Safety Communications Centers to deliver quality communications services to the public. Members

have the common goal of effective, high quality, public safety communications services provided to all residents of and visitors to Massachusetts; to assist public safety communications centers facilitate an accurate response within a reasonable time after a call for help; and further to provide all public safety professionals with the support they need in their protection of life and property, to the extent of their training and ability. The training committee is responsible for MCSA's annual March leadership conference and has been working to bring other training to the state as well.



TQA Shamshak served on the PSAP Leadership Scholarship Committee. TQA Shamshak also handles the MCSA's monthly newsletter.

Northeastern Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (NEMLEC)

Several staff from NSR911 participate in NEMLEC's Tactical Dispatch Unit. The Tactical Dispatch Team is on call 24/7 and responds to calls for Missing Person Searches, Active Assailant Incidents, High-Risk Warrant Service, and other serious calls throughout the region.

AGENCY CERTIFICATIONS

APCO Agency Training Program Recertification

The Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, International, or APCO, awards this recognition to agencies that have achieved the highest levels of training concerning the program, management, and administration. It is a formal mechanism to certify NSR911's training program as meeting the APCO American National Standards (ANS). Through this process, NSR911 had to go through an extensive review of policies and procedures, program management, and training methodology, showing that we meet or exceed national standards. We are the first in Massachusetts to achieve this certification, the second in New England, and the third if you include New York and New Jersey. We are part of a very exclusive group! PSAPs are required to reapply every three years. NSR911 has applied for recertification and is in process.



NCMEC Missing Kids Readiness Project

Joining the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in their mission was a natural fit for our agency. NCMEC's Missing Kids Readiness Project (MKRP) involves meeting the highest standards in handling and processing emergency calls involving children in these high-risk situations, as well as being aware of the many indicators that a potential incident is unfolding. NCMEC reviewed our policies



and procedures, our telecommunicators and leadership completed specialized training, and our agency was recognized for meeting or exceeding these standards. We join a small group of NCMEC MKRP partners in Massachusetts. This year, all telecommunicators, supervisors, and members of administration completed the training again to recertify as an NCMEC Agency.

NWS Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador



The National Weather Service (NWS) recognizes public safety and other partners who have demonstrated a commitment to furthering community weather preparedness. As a Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador, NSR911 works with the NWS and, disseminates weather awareness and safety information, and advocates and supports actions that contribute to our communities' weather preparedness.

2023 NOTABLE EVENTS

- January 12th, 2023 – Attending an Active Assailant Tabletop Exercise (TTX)
- March 22nd, 2023 – NSR911 open house for MBTS residents
- April 11th, 2023 – NSR911 Telecommunicator Award Ceremony / Dinner
- April 16th, 2023 – Attended an Active Assailant Functional Exercise
- May 2nd, 2023 – NSR911 hosts TERT Training/Meeting
- May 16-19, 2023 – APCO Staffing Crisis Summit
- August 29th, 2023 – New SMS paging service launched for 1st responders
- June 6th, 2023 – Attended an interstate Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) exercise
- Summer 2023 – Migrated our Emergency Notification System to a new platform
- September 13th, 2023 – IMC Upgraded to version 6.12
- September 14th, 2023 – ECFCA Tabletop Exercise
- September 29-October 9, 2023 – NSR911 Staff work at Topsfield Fair in Tactical Dispatch

2023 PROJECT HIGHLIGHT – MANCHESTER JOINS NSR911

In October of 2021, the Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea (MBTS) sent a "Letter of Intent" to NSR911 to explore the feasibility of joining this center. A feasibility study was completed in February 2022 and evaluated if NSR911 could support taking on MBTS and, if so, what the project would entail.



An Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) was signed on July 26th, 2022, by Manchester-by-the-Sea officials and the State 911 Department Executive Director for NSR911 to provide dispatching services to the town. The signing of this IMA marked the official start of onboarding MBTS. NSR911 estimated that the process would take approximately 12 months to complete, and eyed a July 1st, 2023, cutover date.

A project team was established and included representatives from the police department, fire department, town administrator, selectboard liaison, and State 911 / NSR911. The team regularly met and worked through a multitude of tasks.

This onboarding was successful due to the determination and commitment of all stakeholders. Regular and direct communication played a vital role in ensuring that deliverables were provided according to the project timeline. Police officers and firefighters participated in "sit alongs" at NSR911 so they could observe what the regional telecommunicators did on a daily basis. NSR911 also sent all its staff to Manchester so telecommunicators could learn the town's geography, as well as the police officers and firefighters. On March 1st, 2023, MBTS officially transitioned its 911 and dispatching services to NSR911.



Image 6: NSR911 staff attend a ride along in Manchester

2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

Recap of 2023 Goals and Objectives

Accreditation – NSR911 seeks to obtain Communications Accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). There are five phases in the accreditation process: enrollment, self-assessment, assessment, commission review and decision, and maintaining compliance and reaccreditation. NSR911 has been actively issuing policies with the ultimate goal of obtaining CALEA accreditation. While this goal has been ongoing for a few years, NSR911 seeks to complete its rollout of policies and procedures and begin the self-assessment stage. The self-assessment phase may take up to 24 months to complete and requires the extensive development of NSR911 internal, systematic analysis of agency operations, management, and practices to ensure compliance with applicable standards.

- **ONGOING** – *During CY23, 77 General Orders were reviewed/revised, 12 special orders were issued, no new Executive Orders were issued, and 18 new General Orders were issued.*

Shared Radio Frequencies (Phase 2) – Using connectivity established in Phase 1, NSR911 seeks to begin day-to-day use with patching existing fire departments, excluding Amesbury. If this proves successful, NSR911 seeks to do the same with existing police departments. Consolidation of police and fire frequencies remains a priority for the center and is identified in the Intermunicipal Agreement.

- **IN-PROGRESS** – *radio patching equipment has been procured. NSR911 worked extensively with state radio technicians at CoMIRS to create functionality that will enable us to patch various frequencies at the "system level." At the close of 2023, a few outstanding components of this project remain. Once the technology is tested successfully, we will establish operational procedures with our stakeholders.*

Amesbury Radio Upgrades – NSR911 seeks to upgrade Amesbury Police/Fire's existing radio network, allowing it to connect to an existing backhaul network. This will also provide an ability to monitor satellite receiver sites.

- **IN-PROGRESS** – *NSR911 is working closely with its finance department and Amesbury officials on a new radio system. At the close of 2023, a request for quotation (RFQ) was issued, and responses were being evaluated.*

Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Software – The center seeks to procure EMD software that will tie into the existing computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system.

- **PROJECT INITIATED** – In November 2020, NSR911 submitted a request to the State 911 Department to procure EMD software. As of December 2023, this is pending formal procurement.

Revise/Reprint EMD Guidecards

In tandem with procuring new EMD Software, NSR911 identified a need to update its EMD guidecards. The current guidecards have been in place for many years with little revision. A working group with internal and external stakeholders is being established to identify recommendations to improve the current EMD guidecards.

- **COMPLETED/ONGOING** – In late 2022 / early 2023, NSR911 and several member departments formed a working group to review our EMD guidecards. A draft was finalized, and a purchase order was issued to print these new cards. As of December 2023, we are awaiting the vendor to print and ship our new cards.

Engage New Communities – The center seeks to engage new prospective municipalities that may be interested in joining NSR911.

- **COMPLETED/ONGOING** – In 2023, Manchester-by-the-Sea was successfully onboarded into our operation. An Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) with North Reading was also executed in December 2023.

Identify and Outfit a Backup PSAP

As identified during the October 2020 exercise and subsequent AAR/IP, NSR911 seeks to identify and outfit a location that can be used as the backup PSAP for wireless and regional operations. This process will include identifying a location with sufficient space, internet access, computers, and radio connectivity.

- **IN-PROGRESS** – During calendar year 2023, our sister agency, PSAP Operations Division 1 (POD1), was in the process of finding a new facility in the central part of the state. A building was secured in the town of Milford, and work began to renovate the facility to support multiple state agencies, including State 911 / POD1. We see this new facility as a viable backup PSAP location for our operation. After POD1 goes live at this new facility (early 2024), we will identify the equipment needed and begin the procurement process.

Establish an Alternate Connection to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS)

An alternate connection to CoMIRS is being sought by NSR911. Currently, there is only one microwave path. During CY2020, the center experienced a few occasions where degradation occurred in the system. An alternate path already exists but is not currently configured. NSR911 seeks to configure and activate this alternate path during 2021.

- **IN-PROGRESS** – A request for quotation (RFQ) was solicited in 2023. As of December 2023, responses were being evaluated. We anticipate an award being made in 2024 to complete this project.

Update Daily Observation Reporting Software

NSR911 seeks to procure robust software that can thoroughly track Daily Observation Reports, or DORs, used during the Communication Training Officer process. DOR software tracks a new hire's progress and ensures that all relevant tasks are performed at acceptable levels. The system will allow the Training and Quality Assurance Coordinator to customize the process, track remedial training, and all critiques of those performing the training.

- **COMPLETE** – During the Summer of 2023, NSR911 procured and deployed Frontline's DOR Tracker software. The software allows us to objectively review each trainee and see current reports on each trainee's progress. This software replaced an end-of-life product we were using and has helped fine-tune our training program.

MARTHA VANLOY : APCO STANDARD - DOR FORM

Shift Week CHANNEL

	00004	00005	00001	00002	00003	00007	00008	00009	00012	00015	00016	00017	00018	00021	00022	00023	00025	00026	00027	00028	00029	00030	00031	00032	AVERAGE
APPEARANCE																									
General Appearance	5	2	4	3	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4.07
ATTITUDE																									
Acceptance of Feedback-CTO Program	3	3	3	2	3	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4.86
Attitude toward Telecommunications Work	3	3	4	2	2	4	3	4	6	4	4	4	3	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	5.89
KNOWLEDGE																									
Knowledge of CAD System - Verbal / Written / Simulation Testing	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4.07
Knowledge of Departmental Policies & Procedures - Verbal / Written / Simulation Testing	2	5	4	3	2	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4.21
Knowledge of CAD System - Reflected in Actual Performance	3	3	2	3	2	4	3	5	5	4	3	4	5	5	5	6	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	4.18
Knowledge of Radio/Telephone/Data Transfer System - Verbal / Written / Simulation Testing	3	3	3	4	2	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4.29
Knowledge of Telephone Pre-arrival Protocols - Reflected in Actual Performance	2	2	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	3	6	4	4	4.14

Image 7: Sample Trainee Timeline

2024 OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Accreditation – NSR911 seeks to obtain Communications Accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). NSR911 has been actively issuing policies with the goal of obtaining CALEA accreditation. While this goal has been ongoing for a few years, NSR911 seeks to complete its rollout of policies and procedures and begin the self-assessment stage (typically a 24-month process).

Shared Radio Frequencies (Phase 2) – Using connectivity established in Phase 1, NSR911 seeks to begin day-to-day use with patching existing fire departments, excluding Amesbury. If this proves successful, NSR911 seeks to do the same with existing police departments. Consolidation of police and fire frequencies remains a priority for the center and is identified in the Intermunicipal Agreement.

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Outfit Backup PSAP

Building from our 2023 goals, NSR911 seeks to outfit the State 911 / POD1 facility as its backup PSAP. To achieve this, we will need to establish radio, telephone, and computer connectivity.

Establish an Alternate Connection to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS)

Building from our 2023 goals, we seek to purchase needed equipment to configure and utilize a second existing microwave link.

Transition NSR911's radio dispatch consoles to the new CoMIRS "Core"

The Commonwealth has established a new radio "core." Migrating onto this new core requires NSR911 to upgrade its radio dispatch consoles along with some backend equipment. This goal will also tie directly into the "Outfit Backup PSAP" goal listed above.