



CUMBERLAND
COUNTY

public safety

TASK
FORCE

**Report to
County & Municipal
Governing Bodies**

Presented February 16, 2010

Final Report

Public Safety Task Force

Communications-EMS-Fire

Report to Governing Bodies
February 16, 2010

Stakeholder Representatives

- County: Ed Melvin, Commissioner; James Martin, Manager; Kenny Currie, Director, Emergency Services
- Cumberland Fire Chief Association: Freddy Johnson , Chief, Stoney Point
- City of Fayetteville: Dale Iman, Manager; Benny Nichols, Chief
- CFVHS: Mike Nagowski; Dr. William Cross; Michael Roye, Chief, CFV EMS
- Town of Hope Mills: Randy Beeman, Manager; Chuck Hodges, Fire Chief
- Town of Spring Lake: Michael Uskiewicz, Manager; Robert Doberstein, Fire Chief
- Eastover Fire District: Mark McLaurin, Chief
- Wade Community Fire Department: Mike Hill, Chief

Task Force Members

- County: Kenny Currie, Director, Emergency Services
- Fire Chiefs' Association: Freddy Johnson, CFO, Fire Chief, Stoney Point
- City of Fayetteville: Benny Nichols, EFO, Fire Chief
- Cape Fear Valley Hospital System: Michael Roye, RN, BSN, MPH, EMT-P, Chief, CFV EMS
- Town of Hope Mills: Chuck Hodges, Fire Chief
- Eastover Fire Department: Mark McLaurin, Fire Chief
- Town of Spring Lake: Robert Doberstein, Fire Chief
- Wade Community Fire Department – Mike Hill, Fire Chief

Combined years of service: 222

Overview

Introduction - Freddy Johnson

- Task Force Mission
- Committee Activities – Timeline and Final Report

Functional Areas

- Communications: Findings & Recommendations – Kenny Currie
- EMS: Findings & Recommendations - Michael Roye
- Fire: Findings & Recommendations - Benny Nichols


Funding Options and Wrap-up - Benny Nichols



Communications

Kenny Currie

Director, Cumberland County Emergency Services



Communication Systems & Operations Findings & Recommendations

➤ Consolidate all Communication Centers

- County 911 and Sheriff's Office dispatch merged October 2008
- County 911 and Spring Lake dispatch merged November 2009
- County 911 and Hope Mills in talks, could be completed by July 2010
- County 911 and City 911 merger will require new facility
- The task force is currently reviewing several models of Consolidated Centers: Johnston County, Guilford County, Charleston, S.C.
- The state 911 board has committees working on making recommendations in changing 911 legislation to allow flexible spending within the 911 center. If this passes, grants may be available for building new consolidated 911 centers.

Communication Systems & Operations Findings & Recommendations

➤ 800 Systems

- City 800 versus State Viper 800
- Motorola completed County Survey in October 2008 that showed State Viper System had better countywide coverage.
- October 2009 County ordered equipment to move to State Viper by June 30, 2010
- Hope Mills Police currently on State Viper 800
- Spring Lake will be moving to State Viper 800 along with County
- City of Fayetteville is migrating to Viper when the system is digital compliant
- County fire service needs \$150,000 to upgrade 395 radios to digital

Communication Systems & Operations Findings & Recommendations

- Boundaries and jurisdictions cause delays in response to emergencies
 - Blind dispatch. Where are the units really located?
 - Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVLs) should be placed in all public safety vehicles so closest public safety unit can be sent to emergencies, regardless of jurisdiction.
 - Cape Fear Valley EMS division installed AVLs and will be activated with new computer-aided dispatch system.
 - Closest public safety agency should always be sent to stabilize emergencies.

Communication Systems & Operations Findings & Recommendations

- Standard dispatch protocols and training guidelines between communication centers.
 - National Academy of Emergency Dispatch
 - Each protocol has a quality performance measurement tool
 - Emergency medical dispatch protocol: Follow State Office of Emergency Medical Services regarding emergency medical dispatch guidelines
 - Police dispatch protocol: Follow Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agency Inc. (CALEA)
 - Fire dispatch protocol: Meet National Fire Protection Association 1221 Standards which give criteria to meet Fire Dispatch standards.
 - Follow Association of Public Safety Communications Officials training and staffing requirements

Communication Systems & Operations Findings & Recommendations

- Outdated Computer Aided Dispatch Systems
 - Unable to share data from these systems
 - All agencies in process of switching to OSSI SunGard Dispatch and record management software.
 - Tentative date to go online is March 2010
 - County and City will be able to flash calls from center to center therefore 911 callers will not be transferred. (This is a temporary fix until we consolidate centers.)
 - We can save 2 ½ minutes in processing calls if we handle a call one time.



EMS Systems & Operations

Michael Roye

Chief, Cape Fear Valley Health Services EMS



EMS Systems & Operations

Findings

- EMS System requires additional resources to meet current system demands.
 - Ambulance to population ratio is excessive
 - Response times exceed the state average for urban areas by 4 minutes
- Current funding source not able to support current system demand.
 - Currently no municipality, township or citizen in Cumberland County pays for advanced life support availability
 - Users only pay for treatment provided

EMS Systems & Operations Recommendations:

- New model that is data driven and contracted for performance
- Seek and obtain accreditation
- Increase unit availability and decrease response times
- Contracted Response Standards: All stakeholders must expect a National Standard (NFPA)
- Migration Plan/Timeframe: Use a five-year plan
- Find and establish funding sources to sustain availability
 - Cost - \$8.2 million annually

EMS Systems & Operations Recommendations:


Continue to:

- Reduce system insufficiencies: Ongoing
- Communications standardization: Nearly complete
- Recommendation-
 - Implement contracting negotiations for response criteria and performance indicators based on agreed upon national standards.
 - Required subsidy - \$8.2 million



Fire Systems & Operations

Benny Nichols
Fire Chief, City of Fayetteville



Fire Systems & Operations Findings (Current Issues)

- Disparate Service Delivery –
 - ❖ Presence of inconsistent levels of service throughout County
 - ❖ Station location
 - ❖ Population density
 - ❖ Inadequate staffing/limited volunteers especially during the daytime
 - ❖ Jurisdictional boundaries prohibit closest unit dispatch

Fire Systems & Operations Findings (Current Issues)

- Limited accountability of service
 - No standard minimum personnel qualifications established
 - No standard minimum training levels established
 - Fire departments function from different operational guidelines
 - No performance benchmarks established
 - Limited accountability of expenditures/funds allocation

Fire Systems & Operations Findings (Current Issues)

- External Burdens
 - Communications – call transfer delays
 - EMS Calls – nearly 80 percent of call demand
 - Governmental mandates
 - Inadequate funding
 - Not funded by majority of system users

Fire Systems & Operations

Future Issues

➤ ISO Changes

- Based on NFPA Standards
- Require more services to be provided (prevention, public education)
- Performance based
- Effects on Insurance Ratings
- Accreditation – Process defines a credible fire agency

Fire Systems & Operations

Future Issues

- BRAC
 - Increased population
 - Increased traffic
 - Increased development
 - Increased call volumes/service demands

Fire Systems & Operations Recommendations

- Immediately increase low-wealth departments' funding to a minimum of \$250,000
- Consolidation of all communications centers (PSAPs)
- Establish Public Safety Commission
 - Oversee funding allocations
 - Verify performance benchmarks are achieved
 - Ensures accountability of established service delivery

Fire Systems & Operations Recommendations

- Initiate closest unit dispatch protocol regardless of jurisdictional boundaries
- Establish minimum service level objectives
- Establish minimum performance criteria based on NFPA standards
- Establish minimum qualifications for personnel
- Use Fire House RMS/Report to NFIRS
- Establish minimum standard operating guidelines countywide

Fire Systems & Operations Recommendations

- Eliminate duplicated efforts
(EMS, communications, code enforcement,
emergency management)
- Establish new funding mechanism

Funding Options

- Short Term – Immediate relief for low-wealth departments
 - Increase *Special Fire District Tax by .75 cent (from .50 cent to 1.25 cents)*
 - *Personnel, MDTs, AVLs*
 - *800 MHz upgrades, Fire house Upgrades*
 - Fund from General Fund
 - Increase Fire Tax District Rate to 15 cents per \$100 valuation (Not Recommended)
 - Assist departments with SAFER Grants

Funding Options

- Long-term
 - Increase current Fire Tax rate from 10 cents to 35 cents
 - Establish alternate funding mechanism

Funding Options

- Public Safety Sales Tax Model –
 - Becomes a systems-users tax
 - Will generate enough to fund fire, communications, EMS
 - Should provide significant relief for County and municipal property owners
 - Current expenses for all three services - \$45 million
 - To meet recommended goals - \$65 million
 - Best method to get there – a Public Safety Sales Tax

Fire Funding

Property Tax Impact:

- City of Fayetteville 16.50 cents = \$20,887,715
- Hope Mills 16.41 cents = \$1,415,444
- Spring Lake 20.84 cents = \$844,245
- Cumberland County 10.5 cents = \$5,926,965
- **TOTAL - \$29,074,369** – potential savings to current property tax payers

What's Next?

- Future direction of the Public Safety Task Force
- What quality of service do you expect?
- What quality of service does the public expect?
- What quality of service does the public deserve?

To see a copy of the full report go to
www.co.cumberland.nc.us