



County of Allegheny

Office of the Controller

ALLEGHENY COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES
ANALYSIS OF OVERTIME IN THE
DIVISION OF 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2012 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2013

(Non-Audit Service)

August 15, 2014

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June 30, 2014

Mr. Alvin Henderson, Jr.
Chief of Emergency Services
400 North Lexington Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15208-2521

ALLEGHENY COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES
ANALYSIS OF OVERTIME IN THE
DIVISION OF 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS
FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2012 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2013

Dear Chief Henderson:

We have performed procedures to analyze overtime in the 9-1-1 Communications Division of the Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services (9-1-1 Center). Our procedures covered the period from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013. Our engagement was performed as a non-audit service, and therefore was not conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.

Our analysis revealed that excessive overtime is attributable to a variety of factors. Although Family Medical Leave (FMLA) and sick time contribute to excessive overtime, they are not the main causes. The root cause of the overtime is that there are not enough Telecommunication Officers (TCOs) available to work regular time at the 9-1-1 Center. We concluded that having more TCOs available to work regular time could be achieved by hiring additional staff and by adopting a more aggressive approach to addressing employee turnover and FMLA issues, providing additional cross training, and providing new hire training more than just twice a year.

Chief Henderson
June 30, 2014

We believe that the implementation of our recommendations will help reduce the overtime in the 9-1-1 Center. The results of our procedures are provided in detail in the attached report. We would like to thank the management and staff of the Department of Emergency Services for their courtesy and cooperation during the performance of our procedures.

Kind regards,



Chelsa Wagner
Controller



Lori A. Churilla
Assistant Deputy Controller, Auditing

- cc: Honorable John DeFazio, President, County Council
Honorable Nicholas Futules, Vice President, County Council
Honorable Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Executive
Mr. William McKain, County Manager, Allegheny County
Ms. Jennifer Liptak, Chief of Staff, County Executive
Mr. Warren Finkel, Budget Director, Allegheny County
Mr. Joseph Catanese, Director of Constituent Services, County Council
Mr. Walter Szymanski, Budget Director, County Council

Executive Summary

Purpose of Procedures

The Allegheny County Controller's Office performed procedures to analyze overtime in the 9-1-1 Communications Division of the Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services (9-1-1 Center) for the period January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013.

Background

The 9-1-1 Center operates 24 hours a day / 365 days a year, answers calls from within 120 municipalities, and dispatches calls to approximately 200 fire departments, 111 police departments and 56 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies. The 9-1-1 Center receives approximately 1.25 million calls annually including both emergency and non-emergency calls. The 9-1-1 Center's expenditures were approximately \$21 million in 2012 and \$23 million in 2013. At December 31, 2012 there were 226 Telecommunication Officers in the 9-1-1 Center and at December 31, 2013 there were 220 Telecommunication Officers.

The 9-1-1 Center is divided into four geographic zones which include the North, South (includes West), East, and the Central zone (City of Pittsburgh). The North, East, and South zones are collectively referred to as the County zones. Within each zone there are call takers and dispatchers working three shifts which include the daylight shift, afternoon shift and night shift.

The City zone has their own bank of call takers while the three remaining zones (the County zones) share a call taking bank. Dispatchers are assigned to a zone, but can alternate between police, fire, and EMS duties each day. In addition, each shift has shift commanders that are responsible for supervising the call takers and dispatchers.

The City zone employees are all full time and perform the work of a dispatcher and a call taker. Call takers working in the County zones are part time employees who work 24 hours per week. Dispatchers in the North, South and East zones are full time employees.

Incoming calls are answered by a call taker and tracked in the 9-1-1 Center's Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD System). Call takers talk to callers while typing caller information such as address and reason for the call into the CAD System. While the call taker remains on the line with the caller, a notification is sent to the appropriate dispatcher(s) via the CAD System. The dispatcher contacts fire, police, etc. as needed. Dispatchers are also responsible for listening to a minimum of one police, fire or EMS radio channel in order to respond to requests for service.

The 9-1-1 Center utilizes Kronos payroll software to track employee time and attendance through a fingerprint scanner. Exception reports are also prepared daily for each zone to document which employees are present on each shift, which employees are using benefit time, and which employees are working overtime. All payroll information recorded in Kronos is uploaded into Allegheny County's JDE System. During calendar years 2012 and 2013, \$3.8 million was expensed for overtime in the 9-1-1 fund.

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Results in Brief

Finding #1: Inadequate Staffing Results in Excessive Overtime

Overtime costs for Telecommunication Officers (TCOs) in the 9-1-1 Center has increased over the past four years. While overtime costs only increased 1% from 2010 to 2011, it increased 10% from 2011 to 2012, and 37% from 2012 to 2013. TCO overtime in 2013 totaled approximately \$1.6 million, up from \$1.2 million in 2012.

Dispatcher Staffing Shortages

The 9-1-1 Center operates using minimum staffing requirements defined by the Department of Emergency Services for the dispatchers in the County zones and the dispatchers/call takers in the City zone. If the number of TCOs available after scheduled time off and calls-offs does not meet the minimum required (referred to as a shortage), overtime must be used to fill the shortage.

An exception report details all employees working during each shift in each zone, designates who is off due to vacation days, sick time/leave of absence (LOA), pass days, etc., and shows who is working overtime.

We tested eight pay dates during our engagement period and reviewed the exception reports maintained by the 9-1-1 Center for the associated 14 day pay period. A summary of our testing is shown on Schedule I on pages 24 and 25. For 2012 and 2013 respectively:

- An average of 12% and 14% of the minimum required number of employees was staffed using overtime hours.
- This resulted in an average estimated overtime cost of \$51,104 and \$65,492 per pay period. This estimate is based on one and a half times the year end average dispatcher rate.
- Our testing also found that in a 14 day pay period, on average 11 of the 14 days (79%) had an employee shortage.

Analysis of Dispatcher's Time Off

During our testing of the exception reports, we also recorded the reason each employee was not at work (vacation day, sick/LOA, etc.). The statistics are presented separately for the County zones and the City zone for 2012 and 2013 on page 14 of the report. Based on this information, sick days / leave of absence (which includes sick days, FMLA, military leave, bereavement leave, etc.) appears to be the highest number of days taken by the dispatchers.

County Call Taker Staffing Shortage

The minimum staffing for the County call takers is a suggested minimum determined by the Department of Emergency Services. It is not a required number, and the 9-1-1 Center

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cannot mandate a TCO to work overtime to cover any shortages (TCOs can voluntarily work overtime). Therefore, it was not included in the dispatcher testing above. In 2013 there were approximately 24 part time County call taker positions, nine were filled as of December 31st, and there were 15 recruits in training.

We tested eight pay dates during our engagement period and reviewed the call taker schedules and exception reports maintained by the 9-1-1 Center for the associated 14 day pay period. A summary of our testing is shown on Schedule II on page 26. For 2012 and 2013 respectively:

- An average of 8% and 11% of the suggested minimum number of employees was staffed using overtime hours.
- This resulted in an average estimated overtime cost of \$4,506 and \$6,402 per pay period. This estimate is based on one and a half times the year end average dispatcher rate.
- On average 5% and 10% of staffing for the suggested minimum number of employees was not able to be filled.

Reasons for Excessive Overtime

Based on our discussions with management and our analysis of documentation, there are many causes of the excessive overtime in the 9-1-1 Center including: understaffing of the dispatcher and call taker positions, shortages created by staff call offs and Family Medical Leave (FMLA) use, insufficient cross training, and employee turnover. Overtime costs will continue to increase unless 9-1-1 Center management can achieve and maintain adequate staffing levels. 9-1-1 Center management is currently working with a 3rd party contractor to review the Center's operational efficiency.

Further Analysis of Hiring Full Time Staff versus Overtime

We calculated the cost of hiring a full time employee versus paying an employee overtime and found that the overtime rate is approximately \$5.90 (19%) an hour more than the rate for a full time employee, including benefits. We also obtained the overtime hours in the County's JDE system for TCO positions for 2012 and 2013. Based on this information, the 9-1-1 Center could hire enough full time staff to cover the TCO overtime hours and still save approximately \$50,000 - \$63,000 per year. TCOs are permitted to work 16 hour days for an unlimited number of consecutive days. Another concern to consider when staffing the 9-1-1 Center with overtime is the stress on the TCOs and the physical and emotional strain that accompanies working an extended 16 hour shift. Schedule III on page 27 lists the ten 9-1-1 employees with the highest overtime hours for 2012 and 2013.

Most of the information for employee time off is recorded on the exception reports, but it is not summarized and/or analyzed. Additionally, there is no tracking done for overtime hours not related to the dispatch and call taking functions. The 9-1-1 Center needs to track the specific reasons for all overtime hours, analyze the data, and adjust staffing levels accordingly. Using the newly implemented scheduling software, along with the

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recommendations made by the 3rd party contractor, the 9-1-1 Center should determine how many additional staff need to be hired.

Recommendation #1:

The Controller's Office recommends that the 9-1-1 Center management:

- Properly record and analyze all overtime hours to assist in the determination of staffing levels.
- Hire additional TCOs to help alleviate the excessive overtime.
- Analyze the cost/benefit of changing the County call takers from part time to full time positions in order to reduce turnover.
- Cross train TCO's for both the call taker and dispatcher positions. In addition, dispatchers should be cross trained to work any desk (police, fire, or EMS). Training should be provided more than just twice a year to ensure adequate staffing levels. In addition, several staff should be cross trained as floaters who can work any desk in the County or City zones.
- Make attempts to build anticipated call-offs for sporting events and social engagements into the schedule so that the 9-1-1 Center is adequately staffed and overtime is minimized.
- Review time off policies and procedures and update if necessary. All policies and procedures should be enforced, and disciplinary action should be considered against employees who abuse the system.
- Work with Human Resources and the Law Department to investigate and resolve potential FMLA and sick time misuse/abuse.
- Review and consider instituting recommendations made by its 3rd party contractor relating to minimum staffing and other significant staffing related matters.

Finding #2: Exception Reports Documenting Employee Overtime Appear to be Inaccurate

At the beginning of each shift, shift commanders complete an exception report detailing staffing information such as the reason staff are off (pass days, vacation days, etc.), as well as overtime information such as the hours worked and whether the overtime was voluntary or mandated. If staffing changes occur throughout the day, the shift commander is responsible for updating the exception report.

During our testing of the exception reports we noted that 65 (10%) of the 672 exception reports tested in 2013 and 41 (6%) of the 672 exception reports tested in 2012 contained at least one error. These inaccuracies included improperly documented or lack of documentation for overtime, days off, and desk assignments.

We also compared the overtime hours paid per the County's accounting system (JDE) to the information on the exception reports. Our testing disclosed that some of the overtime entries in JDE were not properly supported by the exception reports. However, 9-1-1 administration was able to provide alternative documentation such as CAD system sign-

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ins, call playbacks, and overtime cards to support the overtime hours that were not listed on the exception reports.

Recommendation #2:

The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 Center management:

- Ensure that the processes and reports which will replace the exception reports in the new system are designed to obtain the information necessary to accurately reflect the staffing of the 9-1-1 operations, especially overtime.
- Train the individuals responsible for working with the new system to properly enter information and use the system to ensure that all staffing information is completed properly and accurately recorded.
- Maintain complete payroll records to provide a detailed audit trail.

Finding #3: Internal Controls Surrounding "Buddy Day" Tracking Need to be Strengthened

Buddy days give employees the opportunity to switch shifts with fellow employees without using a vacation or personal day. Internal policies limit buddy day switches to six switches per employee, per month (3 on the initiating end and 3 on the reciprocating end), and the switch must be completed within the month. In addition, two buddy day switches are allowed per shift, per zone, per day.

The monthly tracking for buddy days began in the middle of 2012 for the County zones and after November 2013 for the City zone. We tested approximately 124 buddy day trades, including both the initiated and reciprocated side of the trade, from the June 2013 buddy day schedule for the North, East and South zones. We compared the buddy day schedule to the shift commander's exception report for each of the zones. Our testing found:

- The buddy day schedule and the exception report do not agree.
 - There were 17 trades not recorded on the buddy day schedule and 11 trades not recorded on the exception report.
 - The employee's name recorded on the schedule did not agree to the exception report for 4 of the 124 (3%) trades.
 - The employee listed on the schedule for a buddy was listed as being off on the exception report for 3 of the 124 (2%) trades.
 - The buddy day schedule and the exception report show different trade dates for 3 of the 124 (2%) trades.
- There was one instance where "Employee A" worked for "Employee B" but "Employee B" did not fulfill the buddy day switch and did not work for "Employee A".
 - This is particularly concerning as employees participating in buddy day switches are paid based on their regularly scheduled shifts, meaning that "Employee B" was paid for a shift even though he did not work, and "Employee A" was required to work two shifts while only getting paid for one.

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- There were 4 instances where the reciprocating side of the trade was not worked until the following month, without documentation of why the extension was approved.
- There were 3 days where the number of switches per shift, per zone, per day exceeded the maximum of two allowed by management, without documentation of why the additional switches were approved.

We were also informed by management that employees have been known to manipulate the buddy day system by scheduling a buddy day to avoid being mandated to work overtime. We were unable to determine the number of occurrences of possible abuse of buddy day policies due to the buddy day schedule being incomplete.

Recommendation #3

The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 Center management:

- Update the buddy day policies and procedures to include internal controls that will prevent abuse of the system.
- Ensure buddy day requests are approved by appropriate personnel and that the buddy day schedule is properly updated for all switches. Management approval should be required when exceptions are made to the policies and procedures.
- Discontinue the practice of approving last minute buddy day requests and institute a written policy regarding the use and approval of buddy days.
- Consider revoking buddy day privileges for employees who continually manipulate the buddy day system in order to avoid mandated overtime or who do not fulfill the buddy day switch.

Finding #4: 9-1-1 Needs to Update and Adhere to its Written Policies and Procedures

During the engagement, we requested copies of the 9-1-1 Center's policies and procedures pertaining to staffing, scheduling, and overtime. We found that management does not maintain a current, comprehensive set of policies and procedures. 9-1-1 administration did provide several different documents dating back to 2002, with the most recent being issued in 2011. None of the documents provided indicated that they had been reviewed or updated since their original issued date. We also noted that not all of the documents were official policies and procedures, as some were as simple as emails from the person in charge of scheduling. However, management indicated these documents are still in use.

Recommendation #4:

The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 management update its written policies and procedures and then take steps to ensure that the updated policies and procedures are properly implemented. A copy of these written policies and procedures should be made available to all employees.

I. Introduction

Allegheny County's 9-1-1 Communications (9-1-1 Center) is a Division of the Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services. The 9-1-1 Center operates 24 hours a day / 365 days a year. It is the public safety answering point (PSAP) for Allegheny County and serves as a connection between the residents and businesses of Allegheny County and the police, firefighters, emergency medical and health personnel, public works, and human and social service agencies who respond to emergencies and disasters. The 9-1-1 Center's goal is to provide immediate, courteous and professional quality service to everyone they serve.

There are 130 municipalities within Allegheny County. The 9-1-1 Center answers calls from within 120 municipalities and dispatches calls to approximately 200 fire departments, 111 police departments and 56 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies. The 9-1-1 Center receives approximately 1.25 million calls annually including both emergency and non-emergency calls. The 9-1-1 Center's expenditures were \$21 million in 2012 and \$23 million in 2013. At December 31, 2012 there were 226 Telecommunication Officers in the 9-1-1 Center of which 22 are part time and at December 31, 2013 there were 220 Telecommunication Officers, 9 of which are part time.

The 9-1-1 Center is divided into four geographic zones which include the North, South (includes West), East, and the Central zone (City of Pittsburgh). The North, East, and South zones are collectively referred to as the County zones. These zones serve Allegheny County communities who do not have their own 9-1-1 system and opted to be part of the Allegheny County 9-1-1 system. Within each zone there are call takers and dispatchers working three shifts which include the daylight shift, afternoon shift and night shift. Dispatchers can alternate between police, fire, and EMS duties each day.

The City zone has their own bank of call takers while the three remaining zones (the County zones) share a call taking bank. City call takers often work within the County call taking bank; however County call takers do not work within the City zone call bank. Dispatchers are each assigned a zone and usually do not work in a different zone unless it's an emergency within the 9-1-1 Center.

Incoming calls are answered by a call taker and tracked in the 9-1-1 Center's Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD System). Only call takers talk to callers while also typing caller information such as address and reason for the call into the CAD System. While the call taker remains on the line with the caller, a notification is sent to the appropriate dispatcher(s) via the CAD System. The dispatcher contacts fire, police, etc. as needed. Dispatchers are also responsible for listening to a minimum of one police, fire or EMS radio channel in order to respond to requests for service.

In addition, each shift has shift commanders responsible for the functions of the County 9-1-1 Center, including the facilities, equipment and personnel. Their duties include managing the operations of the communications center, directing activities of the Telecommunication Officers (TCO's) in call handling, and public safety operations. Shift commanders are also responsible for coordinating major incidents to ensure that

I. Introduction

proper notifications are made. For example, they could notify Duquesne Light of power outages during a storm or notify businesses of a disaster or emergency involving their company or equipment.

The City zone employees are all full time and perform both the function of a dispatcher and call taker. Call takers working in the County zones are part time employees limited to working 24 hours per week. Dispatchers in the North, South and East zones are full time employees and members of SEIU Local 668.

The 9-1-1 Center utilizes Kronos payroll software to track employee time and attendance. Employees punch in at the beginning of their shift and punch out at the end of their shift through a fingerprint scanner. Exception reports are prepared daily for each zone to document which employees are present on each shift, which employees are using benefit time, and which employees are working overtime. Employees are also required to complete overtime cards, which once approved by the shift commander or manager, are maintained in the Payroll Department. The payroll clerk reviews the time cards in Kronos for accuracy and investigates any differences. Overtime will not be paid until any discrepancy is resolved. All payroll information recorded in Kronos is uploaded into Allegheny County's JDE System. During calendar years 2012 and 2013, \$3.8 million was expensed for overtime in the 9-1-1 fund.

Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures for 911 Services for the fiscal years ending December 31, 2013 and December 31, 2012:

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Revenues	20,303,797	18,672,872
Expenditures		
Personnel Compensation		
Salaries	10,575,263	10,282,267
Overtime	2,132,401	1,663,097
Seasonal/Part-time	602,042	917,465
Other Compensation	111,812	115,156
Personnel Compensation	13,421,518	12,977,985
Fringe Benefits		
Health Insurance	2,558,784	2,545,003
County Pension Fund	1,056,796	1,019,724
Other Fringe Benefits	1,033,946	1,037,774
Fringe Benefits	4,649,526	4,602,501
Supplies	37,765	33,349
Repair & Maintenance	1,094,597	795,160
Fixed Assets Cost	37,606	66,574
Services	3,359,747	2,842,351
Expenditures	22,600,759	21,317,920
Operating Transfers		
Deficit funded by General Fund	2,296,962	2,645,048
Operating Transfers	2,296,962	2,645,048
Net loss after Operating Transfer	0	0

II. Scope and Methodology

We performed procedures to analyze overtime at the 9-1-1 Center. Our procedures covered the period January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013.

Specifically, we performed the following procedures:

- Interviewed 9-1-1 Center's management to gain an understanding of the processes and internal controls surrounding the payment of overtime and compensatory time.
- Reviewed the corresponding provisions of the collective bargaining agreement to ensure compliance.
- Gained an understanding of the internal and external circumstances that have resulted in the payment of overtime.
- Reviewed policies and procedures related to scheduling, overtime, and job duties of management, telecommunication officers and staff.
- Performed an analysis of overtime hours and associated costs to identify any trends or concerns within the 9-1-1 Center.
- Applied procedures on a test basis to determine the accuracy of paid overtime through exception reports, payroll records, etc.
- Determined the status of cross training between the County and Central zones.
- Applied procedures on a test basis to determine whether the 9-1-1 Center properly followed its policies and procedures and adequately documented the required information for the award and payment of overtime.
- Identified ways to promote financial efficiency and optimal working conditions.

We performed these procedures during the months of December 2013 through February 2014. We provided a draft copy of this report to the Chief of Allegheny County Emergency Services for response. His response begins on page 28.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Finding #1

Inadequate Staffing Results in Excessive Overtime

Overtime costs for Telecommunication Officers (TCOs) in the 9-1-1 Center has increased over the past four years. While overtime costs only increased 1% from 2010 to 2011, it increased 10% from 2011 to 2012, and 37% from 2012 to 2013. Overtime amounts for TCOs were as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Overtime</u>
2013	\$1,626,153
2012	1,188,093
2011	1,076,452
2010	1,061,024

A large portion of the overtime cost is for employees' time spent working in the dispatcher or call taker functions, but it also includes time for other activities such as training, educational events, and meetings.

Time paid, other than regular wages, during 2012 and 2013 for TCOs is as follows:

<u>Pay Type</u>	<u>2013</u>		<u>2012</u>	
	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Wages</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Wages</u>
Overtime	50,652	\$1,626,153	38,067	\$1,188,093
Holiday	24,461	609,488	22,970	556,963
Vacation	21,685	457,093	21,441	444,034
Sick	14,051	294,381	13,872	286,944
Compensable Time Taken	10,569	222,812	9,480	196,110
Personal	4,589	96,042	4,607	95,210
Bereavement	816	17,310	768	15,753
Military Pay	160	3,316	120	2,444
Jury	80	1,245	48	1,303
Training	56	1,172	180	5,122
FMLA Unpaid	5,319	0	4,282	0
Absent - No Pay	1,327	0	48	0
Unexcused Absence	1,119	0	905	0
Suspended Unpaid	1,040	0	399	0
Medical LOA Unpaid	918	0	3,424	0
Military Leave Unpaid	176	0	248	0
	<u>137,018</u>	<u>\$3,329,012</u>	<u>120,859</u>	<u>\$2,791,976</u>

Note 1: Holiday Pay includes holidays worked at time and a half.

Note 2: Regular hours worked for 2013 and 2012 were approximately 380,510 and 400,435 hours, resulting in regular time paid of \$7,567,074 and \$7,649,333 respectively.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Dispatcher Staffing Shortages

The 9-1-1 Center operates using minimum staffing requirements defined by the Department of Emergency Services for the dispatchers in the County zones and the dispatchers/call takers in the City zone. The number of dispatchers is driven by the number of radio channels that need to be staffed. There is an assigned number of TCOs to work each shift in each zone. Internal policy allows for two people to be scheduled off per shift per zone. Additionally, call-offs frequently occur. The number of radio channels by zone are as follows:

Zone	Police	Fire	EMS	Radio Relief	Total
North	5	2	1	1	9
East	7	2	1	1	11
South	4	2	2	1	9
Central	4	2	1	1	8
Total	20	8	5	4	37

If the number of TCOs available after scheduled time off and calls-offs does not meet the minimum required (referred to as a shortage), overtime must be used to fill the shortage. TCOs may volunteer to work an overtime shift, however, if there are not enough volunteers for a shift, TCOs will be mandated to work overtime. On occasion, shortages may not be able to be filled. TCOs are permitted to work 16 hours a day, including their regularly scheduled shift and overtime.

There are two employees who prepare the advanced schedule for the 9-1-1 Center, including employee pass days and scheduled time off. They determine if overtime will be needed, and call employees for either voluntary or mandatory overtime. In addition, the shift commanders maintain an exception report which details all employees working during each shift in each zone. The exception report includes the desk number the employee is assigned to, and designates who is off due to vacation days, compensatory time, sick time/leave of absence (LOA), pass days, etc. The exception report also shows who is working overtime on each shift and the desk they are assigned to work.

We selected and tested eight pay dates during our engagement period (four pay periods in each 2012 and 2013), and reviewed the exception reports (for each shift in each zone) maintained by the 9-1-1 Center for the associated 14 day pay period. Based on these exception reports, we calculated the number of TCO's that were short per shift, the number of these shortages that were filled through employee overtime, and the estimated overtime cost. A summary of our testing is shown on Schedule I on pages 24 and 25.

Our testing shows the extent to which overtime is needed and used in the 9-1-1 Center. For 2012 and 2013 respectively:

- An average of 12% and 14% of the minimum required number of employees was staffed using overtime hours.

III. Findings and Recommendations

- This resulted in an average estimated overtime cost of \$51,104 and \$65,492 per pay period. This estimate is based on one and a half times the year end average dispatcher rate.
- Our testing also found that in a 14 day pay period, on average 11 of the 14 days (79%) had an employee shortage.

Analysis of Dispatcher's Time Off

During our testing of the exception reports, we also recorded the reason each employee was not at work (vacation day, sick/LOA, etc.). The statistics are presented separately for the County zones and the City zone for 2012 and 2013.

County Zones	2013	2012
Sick Days/Leave of Absence	380	363
Vacation Days	312	289
Compensatory Time Days	224	191
Position Switch Days	209	207
Training Days	169	68
Vacant Position Days	61	103
Personal Days	51	58
Holiday Pass Days	21	37

City Zones	2013	2012
Sick Days/Leave of Absence	285	244
Vacation Days	113	130
Compensatory Time Days	101	76
Position Switch Days	3	1
Training Days	33	106
Vacant Position Days	14	0
Personal Days	24	35
Holiday Pass Days	5	11

Additionally, we obtained from the County's payroll system, JDEdwards, total overtime, shift time, and compensatory time paid as well as hours and wages paid for time not at work for 2012 and 2013. See the chart on page 12.

Based on the information above, sick days / leave of absence (which includes sick days, FMLA, military leave, bereavement leave, etc.) is the highest number of days taken by the dispatchers. Following sick time/LOA, vacation, compensatory time, as well as dispatchers working other positions (usually as a call taker) are also major factors. Some of these days off, such as vacation time, are prescheduled while others such as personal and sick time can be a last minute call-off. If there is a shortage on a shift, the limited notice only gives management some additional time to find staff to fill the position. In either scenario, unstaffed positions must be filled.

III. Findings and Recommendations

County Call Taker Staffing Shortage

The minimum staffing for the County call takers is not included in the minimum requirement for the dispatcher testing above (however, call takers for the City are included above). The call taker minimums are suggested figures determined by the Department of Emergency Services, they are not actually required. These positions are staffed with part time employees who typically work 24 hours a week and answer calls for all three County zones. Since the minimum staffing is only suggested, the 9-1-1 Center cannot mandate a TCO to work overtime to cover any shortages (TCOs can voluntarily work overtime). In 2013 there were approximately 24 County call taker positions, nine were filled as of December 31st, and there were 15 recruits in training.

We selected and tested eight pay dates during our engagement period (four in each 2012 and 2013), and reviewed the call taker schedules and exception reports maintained by the 9-1-1 Center for the associated 14 day pay period. Based on these exception reports, we calculated the number of call takers that were short per shift, the number of these shortages that were filled through employee overtime, the estimated overtime cost, and the remaining shortage that still exists after overtime. A summary of our testing is shown on Schedule II on page 26.

Our testing shows the extent to which overtime is needed and used to staff County call takers in the 9-1-1 Center. For 2012 and 2013 respectively:

- An average of 8% and 11% of the suggested minimum number of employees was staffed using overtime hours.
- This resulted in an average estimated overtime cost of \$4,506 and \$6,402 per pay period. This estimate is based on one and a half times the year end average dispatcher rate.
- On average 5% and 10% of staffing for the suggested minimum number of employees was not able to be filled.

Our testing also disclosed instances where the staffing for the County call takers exceeded the suggested minimum. Based on documentation reviewed for the eight pay periods that were tested, we found approximately 18 hours per day where the staffing exceeded the suggested minimum (including dispatchers working as call takers). Some of these instances occurred on days where dispatchers were paid overtime to work in County call taking. We cannot determine if these 'overages' were necessary. Management can increase the number of staff whenever necessary to ensure public safety. However, the records we reviewed never documented the reasons for any staff adjustments.

Reasons for Excessive Overtime

Based on our discussions with management and our analysis of documentation, there are many causes of this excessive overtime:

- The 9-1-1 Center appears to be understaffed.

III. Findings and Recommendations

- For public safety, the operations are required to be staffed at the minimum required level. Employee call-offs often lead to staff shortages, which typically have to be filled with overtime.
- The 9-1-1 Center already needs overtime to cover the minimum required staffing levels. In addition, TCOs participate in activities outside of the call center such as presentations at school or community events, trainings, and meetings. These extra events require additional overtime.
- According to 9-1-1 staff, there were approximately 220 employees in the 9-1-1 Center as of December 31, 2013, and there were approximately 35 staff (16%) on Family Medical Leave (FMLA). This includes individuals who are off for a period of time, individuals who can take intermittent leave on an as needed basis, and those on limited hours (usually they cannot be mandated to work overtime).
- 9-1-1 administration has concerns that sick day call-offs and FMLA are being abused. The center operates 24/7, and all of the staff cannot take off at one time. Therefore, call-offs can occur during various sporting events, social engagements, etc. According to the Union agreement, employees are required to submit a doctor's excuse if they are on sick leave for more than three consecutive work days. A department head may also require a doctor's excuse if an employee's sick leave use shows a pattern of abuse. However, according to administration, it is very difficult to prove a pattern of abuse, and they cannot always require doctor's excuses for all call-offs.
- The staff are not adequately cross trained. We were told by administration that they would like to cross train personnel. However, this would result in additional overtime. In order to cross train, staff would need to be pulled from their call taker or dispatcher duties. If these shifts are already short, any additional reduction in staff will lead to increased overtime.
- Employee turnover is difficult to manage. According to management, turnover can reach 20% to 30% a year. Most of the turnover is from the part time call takers who have left the 9-1-1 Center to obtain full time employment elsewhere. The new hire training program is only offered twice per year.
- Overtime costs will increase as the base salary for the TCOs increases.

Overtime costs will continue to increase unless 9-1-1 Center management can achieve and maintain adequate staffing levels. 9-1-1 Center management is currently working with a 3rd party contractor to review the Center's operational efficiency. Part of this review includes exploration of staffing and assignments, including the use of full-time and part-time staff, as well as the analysis of staff availability and utilization rates to ensure the 9-1-1 Center is appropriately staffed for current call volume.

Further Analysis of Hiring Full Time Staff versus Overtime

The 9-1-1 Center administration recognizes the general reasons for overtime in the 9-1-1 Center. Employee time off can lead to staffing shortages, events occur that required additional staffing above the minimum levels (major storms, social events such as the super bowl or certain concerts), employees need training or work educational events, etc. Most of the information for employee time off is recorded on the exception reports, but it

III. Findings and Recommendations

is not summarized and/or analyzed. Additionally, there is no tracking done for overtime hours not related to the dispatch and call taking functions.

We calculated the cost of hiring a full time employee versus paying an employee overtime and found that the overtime rate is approximately \$5.90 (19%) an hour more than the rate for a full time employee, including benefits.

	Regular Rate (1)	Overtime Rate (2)	Difference
Hourly Rate	\$ 21.34	\$ 32.01	\$ 10.67
Estimated Benefits (3)	\$ 9.78	\$ 5.01	(\$ 4.77)
Total	\$ 31.12	\$ 37.02	\$ 5.90

(1) Estimate based on an average full time TCO pay rate as of the final pay in 2013.

(2) Estimate based on 1.5 times regular rate.

(3) Retirement and employment taxes are included in both rates, and an average for the medical and dental plans, worker's compensation, and life insurance are included in the Regular Rate.

We obtained the overtime hours in the County's JDE system for TCO positions for 2012 and 2013. Based on the hourly rates calculated above, we calculated the following:

	2013	2012
TCO Overtime Hours	50,652	38,067
Est. Available Hours Per Employee (1)	1,856	1,856
Number of Full Time TCOs Needed to Cover Overtime Hours (2)	28	21
Estimated Overtime Cost (3)	\$1,875,137	\$1,409,240
Cost to Hire Additional Staff (4)	\$1,812,429	\$1,359,322
Difference	\$62,708	\$49,919

(1) Total annual work hours are 2,080. Adjusting for vacation, personal, sick, and training time etc. results in estimated available annual hours of 1,856.

(2) This number is calculated based on the TCO overtime hours for the year. It is not an indication of the number of staff that should be hired.

(3) Based on the TCO overtime hours and a \$37.02 hourly rate (including benefits).

(4) Based the number of full time staff needed to cover the overtime hours and at an annual amount of \$64,730 (includes salary and estimated benefits).

We recognize that the 9-1-1 Center cannot eliminate all overtime. However, it appears to be more cost effective to hire additional staff than pay overtime, and, through proper staffing, overall cost can be reduced. The 9-1-1 Center needs to track the specific reasons for all overtime hours, analyze the data, and adjust staffing levels accordingly. Using the newly implemented scheduling software, along with the recommendations made by the 3rd party contractor, the 9-1-1 Center should determine how many additional staff need to be hired.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Equally important is for the 911 Center to manage unexpected employee call offs. Consequences should result for employees who habitually call off. Paid overtime hours increased by 12,585 from 2012 to 2013, representing a 33% increase.

Also, as part of the process, 9-1-1 needs to explore the option of training several staff to be floaters who can work any desk in the County or City zones. TCOs are permitted to work 16 hour days for an unlimited number of consecutive days. Another concern to consider when staffing the 9-1-1 Center with overtime is the stress on the TCOs and the physical and emotional strain that accompanies working an extended 16 hour shift. We analyzed the overtime for 2012 and 2013 and documented the ten employees with highest number of overtime hours in each year. See Schedule III on page 27.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Controller's Office recommends that the 9-1-1 Center management:

- Properly record and analyze all overtime hours to assist in the determination of staffing levels.
- Hire additional TCOs to help alleviate the excessive overtime.
- Analyze the cost/benefit of changing the County call takers from part time to full time positions in order to reduce turnover.
- Cross train TCO's for both the call taker and dispatcher positions. In addition, dispatchers should be cross trained to work any desk (police, fire, or EMS). Training should be provided more than just twice a year to ensure adequate staffing levels. In addition, several staff should be cross trained as floaters who can work any desk in the County or City zones.
- Make attempts to build anticipated call-offs for sporting events and social engagements into the schedule so that the 9-1-1 Center is adequately staffed and overtime is minimized.
- Review time off policies and procedures and update if necessary. All policies and procedures should be enforced, and disciplinary action should be considered against employees who abuse the system.
- Work with Human Resources and the Law Department to investigate and resolve potential FMLA and sick time misuse/abuse.
- Review and consider instituting recommendations made by its 3rd party contractor relating to minimum staffing and other significant staffing related matters.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Finding #2

Exception Reports Documenting Employee Overtime Appear to be Inaccurate

Shift commanders are responsible for supervising the daily functions of the 9-1-1 Center, including the management of the facilities, equipment, staff, and media communications. Among numerous other duties, shift commanders are responsible for completing daily exception reports which detail staff attendance, and are utilized to provide an accurate depiction of staffing for each shift by zone. Exception reports include the reason staff are off, such as pass days, vacation days, etc. Overtime is also recorded on the exception reports, including the name of the employee, the hours and the desk worked at, and whether the overtime was voluntary or mandated. At the beginning of each shift, shift commanders complete the exception report detailing which desks are occupied by which TCOs. If staffing changes occur throughout the day, the shift commander is responsible for updating the exception report.

We selected eight pay dates during our engagement period (four in each 2012 and 2013), and reviewed the exception reports maintained by the 9-1-1 Center for the associated 14 day pay periods for each of the 4 zones. Our testing of four pay periods in 2013 revealed that 65 (10%) of the exception reports out of 672 sampled contained at least one error. Our testing of four pay period in 2012 revealed that 41 (6%) of the exception reports out of 672 sampled contained at least one error. These inaccuracies included improperly documented or lack of documentation for overtime, days off, and desk assignments.

We also reviewed one pay period in 2012 and two pay periods in 2013 to verify that overtime hours paid per the County's accounting system (JDE) were properly supported by the overtime recorded on the exception reports. Our testing disclosed that some of the overtime entries in JDE were not properly supported by the exception reports. However, 9-1-1 administration was able to provide alternative documentation such as CAD system sign-ins, call playbacks, and overtime cards to support the overtime hours that were not listed on the exception reports. According to 9-1-1 administration, the Shift commanders are more concerned with ensuring that the room is properly staffed with personnel available to address public emergencies, rather than with ensuring paperwork is completely accurate.

When the exception reports are incorrect, the payroll clerks must review additional supporting documentation to verify overtime hours worked. These additional steps delay the standard payroll process. However, according to 9-1-1 administration, they are in the process of implementing a new electronic scheduling system which will eliminate the need for the exception reports.

III. Findings and Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 Center management:

- Ensure that the processes and reports which will replace the exception reports in the new system are designed to obtain the information necessary to accurately reflect the staffing of the 9-1-1 operations, especially overtime.
- Train the individuals responsible for working with the new system to properly enter information and use the system to ensure that all staffing information is completed properly and accurately recorded.
- Maintain complete payroll records to provide a detailed audit trail.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Finding #3

Internal Controls Surrounding “Buddy Day” Tracking Need to be Strengthened

Buddy days were instituted as a way to help the 9-1-1 Center employees effectively manage time off. Because the Center operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, it is expected that occasionally employees will need to have a day off outside of their normally scheduled time off. Buddy days give employees the opportunity to switch shifts with fellow employees without using a vacation or personal day. Internal policies limit buddy day switches to six switches per employee, per month (3 on the initiating end and 3 on the reciprocating end). For scheduling purposes, two buddy day switches are allowed per shift, per zone, per day.

The monthly tracking for buddy days began sometime in the middle of 2012 for the County zones and after November 2013 for the City zone. We tested approximately 124 buddy day trades, including both the initiated and reciprocated side of the trade, from the June 2013 buddy day schedule for the North, East and South zones. We compared the buddy day schedule to the shift commander’s exception report for each of the zones. Our testing found numerous instances in which the buddy schedule did not accurately reflect the switches made for the month. Specifically, we noted the following:

- The buddy day schedule and the exception report do not agree.
 - There were 17 trades not recorded on the buddy day schedule and 11 trades not recorded on the exception report.
 - The employee’s name recorded on the schedule did not agree to the exception report for 4 of the 124 (3%) trades.
 - The employee listed on the schedule for a buddy was listed as being off on the exception report for 3 of the 124 (2%) trades.
 - The buddy day schedule and the exception report show different trade dates for 3 of the 124 (2%) trades.
- There was one instance where “Employee A” worked for “Employee B” but “Employee B” did not fulfill the buddy day switch and did not work for “Employee A”.
 - This is particularly concerning as employees participating in buddy day switches are paid based on their regularly scheduled shifts, meaning that “Employee B” was paid for a shift even though he did not work, and “Employee A” was required to work two shifts while only getting paid for one.
- There were 4 instances where the reciprocating side of the trade was not worked until the following month, without documentation of why the extension was approved.
- There were 3 days where the number of switches per shift, per zone, per day exceeded the maximum of two allowed by management, without documentation of why the additional switches were approved.

III. Findings and Recommendations

We were also informed by management that employees have been known to manipulate the buddy day system by scheduling a buddy day to avoid being mandated to work overtime. We were unable to determine the number of occurrences of possible abuse of buddy day policies due to the buddy day schedule being incomplete.

Changes to the buddy day schedule are not always made and/or saved, and it is possible that last minute switches could be left off of the schedule entirely. An incomplete buddy day schedule allows employees to take advantage of the system by scheduling more buddy days than allowed or manipulating the system so that employees can avoid mandated overtime. An incomplete buddy day schedule also provides for an inadequate audit trail and cannot be relied upon by the payroll department as supporting documentation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 Center management:

- Update the buddy day policies and procedures to include internal controls that will prevent abuse of the system.
- Ensure buddy day requests are approved by appropriate personnel and that the buddy day schedule is properly updated for all switches. Management approval should be required when exceptions are made to the policies and procedures.
- Discontinue the practice of approving last minute buddy day requests and institute a written policy regarding the use and approval of buddy days.
- Consider revoking buddy day privileges for employees who continually manipulate the buddy day system in order to avoid mandated overtime or who do not fulfill the buddy day switch.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Finding #4

9-1-1 Needs to Update and Adhere to its Written Policies and Procedures

During the engagement, we requested copies of the 9-1-1 Center's policies and procedures pertaining to staffing, scheduling, and overtime. We found that management does not maintain a current, comprehensive set of policies and procedures. 9-1-1 administration did provide several different documents, including scheduling guidelines, two official directives, a memorandum, an internal email, and an email request from the union. These documents dated back to 2002, with the most recent being issued in 2011.

None of the documents provided indicated that they had been reviewed or updated since their original issued date. As mentioned above, we noted that not all of the documents were official policies and procedures, as some were as simple as emails from the person in charge of scheduling. However, management indicated these documents are still in use.

A complete, comprehensive set of authorized policies should be maintained by 9-1-1 management. Policies and procedures should be reviewed annually with sign-offs noting they were reviewed. Without up to date written policies and procedures, it is more difficult to hold employees accountable when they do not perform job functions in the prescribed manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 management update its written policies and procedures and then take steps to ensure that the updated policies and procedures are properly implemented. A copy of these written policies and procedures should be made available to all employees.

SCHEDULE I

Estimate of Overtime Cost for County Dispatchers and City Dispatchers / Call Takers By Pay Period

Pay Period Tested 2013	COUNTY ZONES (Dispatchers Only)				CITY ZONE (Dispatchers and Call Takers)				COUNTY & CITY TOTAL			
	Totals Per Pay Period				Totals Per Pay Period				Totals Per Pay Period			
	<u># of Employees</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>	<u># of Employees</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>	<u># of Employees</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>
	Min. Required	Employee Overtime	Overtime Cost Estimate	Emp. OT/ Minimum	Min. Required	Employee Overtime	Overtime Cost Estimate	Emp. OT/ Minimum	Min. Required	Employee Overtime	Overtime Cost Estimate	Emp. OT/ Minimum
12/16/12-12/29/12 (Pay Date 1/4/13)	1,162	123	\$31,498	11%	602	77	\$19,718	13%	1,764	200	\$51,216	11%
6/2/13-6/15/13 (Pay Date 6/21/13)	1,162	168	\$43,021	14%	602	127	\$32,522	21%	1,764	295	\$75,543	17%
6/16/13-6/29/13 (Pay Date 7/5/13)	1,162	191	\$48,911	16%	602	141	\$36,107	23%	1,764	332	\$85,018	19%
11/3/13-11/16/13 (Pay Date 11/22/13)	1,191	140	\$35,851	12%	602	56	\$14,340	9%	1,793	196	\$50,191	11%
TOTAL	4,677	622	\$159,281	13%	2,408	401	\$102,687	17%	7,085	1,023	\$261,968	14%
Average	1,169	156	\$39,820	13%	602	100	\$25,672	17%	1,771	256	\$65,492	14%

SCHEDULE I

Estimate of Overtime Cost for County Dispatchers and City Dispatchers / Call Takers
By Pay Period

Pay Period Tested 2012	COUNTY ZONES (Dispatchers Only)				CITY ZONE (Dispatchers and Call Takers)				COUNTY & CITY TOTAL			
	Totals Per Pay Period				Totals Per Pay Period				Totals Per Pay Period			
	<u># of Employees</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>	<u># of Employees</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>	<u># of Employees</u>		<u>\$</u>	<u>%</u>
	Min. Required	Employee Overtime	Overtime Cost Estimate	Emp. OT/ Minimum	Min. Required	Employee Overtime	Overtime Cost Estimate	Emp. OT/ Minimum	Min. Required	Employee Overtime	Overtime Cost Estimate	Emp. OT/ Minimum
2/26/12 – 3/10/12 (Pay Date 3/16/12)	1,162	89	\$21,972	8%	602	105	\$25,922	17%	1,764	194	\$47,894	11%
5/20/12-6/2/12 (Pay Date 6/8/12)	1,162	154	\$38,020	13%	602	70	\$17,282	12%	1,764	224	\$55,302	13%
6/17/12–6/30/12 (Pay Date 7/6/12)	1,162	148	\$36,538	13%	602	76	\$18,763	13%	1,764	224	\$55,301	13%
11/18/12-12/1/12 (Pay Date 12/7/12)	1,162	111	\$27,404	10%	602	75	\$18,516	12%	1,764	186	\$45,920	11%
TOTAL	4,648	502	\$123,934	11%	2,408	326	\$80,483	14%	7,056	828	\$204,417	12%
Average	1,162	126	\$30,984	11%	602	82	\$20,121	14%	1,764	207	\$51,104	12%

SCHEDULE II

Estimate of Overtime Cost for County Call Takers By Pay Period

Pay Period Tested 2013	Suggested Minimum # Employees	Employee Overtime	OT/ Min.	Overtime Hours	Overtime Cost Estimate	Remaining Shortage After Overtime	Shortage/ Min.
12/16/12-12/29/12 (Pay Date 1/4/13)	224	24	11%	192	\$6,146	27	12%
6/2/13-6/15/13 (Pay Date 6/21/13)	224	7	3%	56	\$1,793	14	6%
6/16/13-6/29/13 (Pay Date 7/5/13)	224	11	5%	88	\$2,817	30	13%
11/3/13-11/16/13 (Pay Date 11/22/13)	224	58	26%	464	\$14,853	21	9%
Total	896	100	11%	800	\$25,609	92	10%
Average	224	25	11%	200	\$6,402	23	10%
Pay Period Tested 2012	Suggested Minimum	Employee Overtime	OT/ Min.	Overtime Hours	Overtime Cost Estimate	Remaining Shortage After Overtime	Shortage/ Min.
2/26/12 – 3/10/12 (Pay Date 3/16/12)	224	16	7%	128	\$3,950	19	8%
5/20/12-6/2/12 (Pay Date 6/8/12)	224	25	11%	200	\$6,172	10	4%
6/17/12–6/30/12 (Pay Date 7/6/12)	224	9	4%	72	\$2,222	10	4%
11/18/12-12/1/12 (Pay Date 12/7/12)	224	23	10%	184	\$5,678	7	3%
Total	896	73	8%	584	\$18,022	46	5%
Average	224	18	8%	146	\$4,506	12	5%

SCHEDULE III

Top Ten 9-1-1 Employees with the Highest Overtime Hours In 2013

Employee Name	Position	Overtime Hours	Overtime Pay	Annual Salary	Total	OT Pay as a % of Salary
Doris Gehry	Telecommunication Officer	2,137	\$67,276	\$44,262	\$111,538	152%
Stephanie Broadus	Telecommunication Officer	1,559	\$48,165	\$43,520	\$91,685	111%
Jessica Coles	Telecommunication Officer	852	\$28,430	\$48,491	\$76,921	59%
Paul Colberg	Emergency 911 CAD Tech	809	\$27,885	\$48,273	\$76,158	58%
Donna King	Telecommunication Officer	798	\$25,316	\$44,262	\$69,578	57%
Richard Rowic	Telecommunication Officer	774	\$24,734	\$44,262	\$68,996	56%
Nicole Williams	Telecommunication Officer	727	\$22,920	\$44,262	\$67,182	52%
Kent Kerrigan	Telecommunication Officer	717	\$22,711	\$44,262	\$66,973	51%
Paul Yuretich	Telecommunication Officer	692	\$24,286	\$49,015	\$73,301	50%
Pat Conte	Telecommunication Officer	691	\$24,022	\$49,015	\$73,037	49%

Top Ten 9-1-1 Employees with the Highest Overtime Hours In 2012

Employee Name	Position	Overtime Hours	Overtime Pay	Annual Salary	Total	OT Pay as a % of Salary
Doris Gehry	Telecommunication Officer	1,875	\$57,353	\$42,353	\$99,706	135%
Kevin Hogan	Telecommunication Officer	765	\$23,469	\$42,353	\$65,822	55%
Paul Colberg	Emergency 911 CAD Tech	745	\$25,180	\$47,014	\$72,194	54%
Richard Rowic	Telecommunication Officer	741	\$22,678	\$42,353	\$65,031	54%
Carol Ingram	Telecommunication Officer	651	\$20,448	\$43,170	\$63,618	47%
Janice Cavanaugh	Telecommunication Officer	647	\$20,123	\$42,353	\$62,476	48%
Nicole Williams	Telecommunication Officer	631	\$19,312	\$42,353	\$61,665	46%
Henry Caparelli	Shift Commander	578	\$22,101	\$53,046	\$75,147	42%
Donna King	Telecommunication Officer	573	\$17,621	\$42,353	\$59,974	42%
Jonathan Hamburger	Telecommunication Officer	549	\$17,073	\$42,353	\$59,426	40%

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

RICH FITZGERALD
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

August 14, 2014

Ms. Lori Churilla
Assistant Deputy Controller, Auditing
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Ms. Churilla,

Enclosed for your review are my responses to the recommendations on pages 18, 20, 22, and 23 of the report entitled *Allegheny County Emergency Services Analysis of Overtime in the Division of 9-1-1 Communications for the Period January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013*.

If you have any questions or comments, please email to Alvin.Henderson@AlleghenyCounty.us or call me at 412-473-2621.

Sincerely,

Alvin Henderson Jr.
Chief

ALVIN HENDERSON JR., CHIEF

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

911 COMMUNICATIONS • EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT • EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES • FIRE ACADEMY • FIRE MARSHAL
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Finding #1 Inadequate Staffing Results in Excessive Overtime

- Properly record and analyze all overtime hours to assist in the determination of staffing levels.
 - *With the purchase of the Telestaff software, deployed January 26 2014, overtime hours are tracked more accurately including the reasons for overtime. Future build out and technology advances of the Telestaff software, along with CAD or the Patriot could help determine need for overtime based on call volume.*

- Hire additional TCO's to help alleviate the excessive overtime
 - *County Manager approved the hiring of 12 additional full time personnel. Those 12 were hired in May 2014. This decision was based on a variety of factors including an examination of call volume, taking on additional agencies and analysis of overtime. Note that we also had 12 existing full time TCO's resign or retire in the past 3 months. So this has lowered out part time staff from 30 to 6. A current new hire class of 8 part time TCO's are in class now, they started on July 28, 2014. It is anticipated that they will have completed their classroom and OJT training by November. Those 8 should begin to help with filling shifts in the 911 center at that time. They will be trained through the new curriculum which will have them released as Call-Takers and Dispatchers.*

- Cross train TCO's for both calltaker and dispatcher positions.
 - *Already in place for the new hire class that started on July 28, 2014. This is an ongoing process. In order to train a full time TCO in another discipline, we are shorting the staffing of the room. We continue to cross train all employees in an effort to have them work all disciplines but also need to maintain the staffing of the 9-1-1 center so that calls are answered and processed in a timely manner. Cross training on County calltaking positions and Central Zone calltaking positions is set to occur for all employees beginning August 25, 2014 and continue into September. This is being completed in conjunction with the CML patriot upgrade.*

- Make attempts to build anticipated call offs for sporting events and social engagements into the schedule so that the 9-1-1 center is adequately staffed and overtime is minimized.
 - *Attempts have always been made to handle this in this manner. Last minute call offs using sick time or emergency personal time then result in overtime needing to be offered.*

- Review time off policies and procedures and update if necessary. All policies and procedures should be enforced and disciplinary action should be considered against employees who abuse the system.
 - ***This is the current practice. Most time off policies are in the CBA or in MOU format with the employee union. All sick abuse, time off abuse, buddy day abuse or AWOL is strictly enforced by the Assistant Chief of Administration in conjunction with the County Law Department and Human Resources.***

- Work with Human Resources and the Law Department to investigate and resolve potential FMLA and sick time misuse/abuse.
 - ***This is also current practice. All suspected abuse and misuse is coordinated and discussed with Human Resources and the County Law Department. It is anticipated that UPMC Work Partners assuming the role of administering all types of Leaves of Absence, this should strengthen the controls over FMLA and sick time misuse/abuse policies.***

- Review and consider instituting recommendations made by its 3rd party contractor relating to minimum staffing and other significant staffing related matters.
 - ***This is a work in progress. A consultant shall provide their report once complete.***

Finding # 2 Exception Reporting Documenting Employee Overtime Appear to be Inaccurate

- Ensure that the processes and reports which will replace the exception reports in the new system are designed to obtain the information necessary to accurately reflect the staffing of the 9-1-1 operations, especially overtime.
 - *This is reflected in the Telestaff Software, deployed January 26, 2014, much for accurately and efficiently. Prior exception reports were done in 4 different Excel spreadsheets. Reports are available via the Telestaff software that were never available before. All spreadsheets have been consolidated into this staffing software now ensuring ease and accuracy. Staffing is all compiled, logged and viewable via one method of software.*

- Train the individuals responsible for working with the new system to properly enter information and use the system to ensure that all staffing information is completed properly and accurately recorded.
 - *Training on the new software has occurred multiple times throughout the configuration phase. ACES deployed into the live environment January 26, 2014. Training and advance configuration continue as we moved to automate more staffing duties.*
 - *Administrative personnel having staffing abilities and authority has also been condensed by one person to help eliminate any confusion between staffers.*

- Maintain complete payroll records to provide a detailed audit trail.
 - *This is accomplished much easier with all staffing schedules, rosters, overtimes hours, needs, call outs lists, overtime sign up books, etc. being condensed into one staffing software solution, Telestaff deployed January 26, 2014.*

Finding # 3 Internal Controls Surrounding “Buddy Day” Tracking Need to be Strengthened

- Update the buddy day policies and procedures to include internal controls that will prevent abuse of the system.
 - ***Policies and Procedures were updated August 1, 2014. This reduced the amount each person is permitted to use by 40 % from 6 per month to 4 per month. In addition, all buddy days need to be in 4 hour or 8 hour intervals. Early reliefs and late reliefs are no longer permitted.***

- Ensure buddy day requests are approved by appropriate personnel and that the buddy day schedule is properly updated for all switches. Management approval should be required when exceptions are made to the policies and procedure.
 - ***All buddy day requests are entered, requested and tracked in Telestaff. It also displays when one person owes time to another. Special requests for exceptions are now only approved by the shift manager or Chief.***

- Discontinue the practice of approving last minute buddy day requests and institute a written policy regarding the use and approval of buddy days.
 - ***The directive for buddy day use was updated and issued to all employees July 30, 2014.***

- Consider revoking buddy day privileges for employees who continually manipulate the buddy day system in order to avoid mandated overtime or who not fulfill the buddy day switch.
 - ***This is and has always been the case. Both employees receive a suspension from buddy day privileges and the offending buddy day will also receive additional discipline for AWOL.***

Finding #4 9-1-1 Needs to Update and Adhere to its Written Policies and procedures

- The Controller's Office recommends that 9-1-1 management update its written policies and procedures and then take steps to ensure that the updated policies and procedures are properly implemented. A copy of these written policies and procedures should be made available to all employees.
 - *Update of the rules and procedures are in progress, started in January 2014.*