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The Evolution of
the EOC

Stress and the 911
Dispatcher



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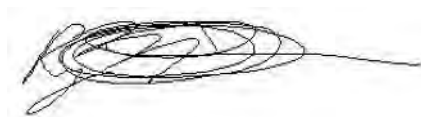
Summer has finally arrived and I want to thank everyone for taking time out of your busy schedules to read this edition of *Wavelength*.

So far, 2012 is shaping up to be one of the busiest years for public safety communications in recent memory. With mission critical public-safety first responder radio systems being implemented in many areas across the country, and the allocation of spectrum for public safety in the 700Mhz being addressed in Canada and the United States, more and more emphasis is being placed on efficiency and interoperability. Add this to the ever-increasing public expectation of cost control and budget adherence and you have a combination that is producing some of the most intricate challenges in our industry's history. I view these challenges as opportunities. We have opportunities to leverage new technologies, engage in new partnerships, develop new processes and create innovative ideas on a grand scale. As APCO Canada members, and leaders within your organizations, we have the opportunity to shape the future of public safety communications in Canada. That is an exciting prospect!

Your APCO Canada Board of Directors has also been busy these past couple of months working on your association's strategic plan, and planning our 25th Anniversary Conference and Exhibition. We have also received some fantastic constructive feedback regarding the APCO Canada website, which we will be addressing at the board face-to-face strategic planning and work session taking place at the end of July. Lastly, we have continued work on preparing our APCO Canada Draft Best Practices for membership review and comment. Once ready, this document will be placed on a secure area of the website for your review and comment. I continue to urge you to visit www.apco.ca as your portal to find out what's happening at APCO Canada, information about the 2012 Conference in Winnipeg, and of course to show off your APCO pride through a link to the APCO Canada online store.

I have also written a report to the membership about the British APCO Conference and Exhibition, that you will find a little further on in this issue of *Wavelength*.

As always, if you ever have any questions about what's happening in your association, please don't hesitate to contact me.



Ryan Lawson
President, APCO
Canada



July 16, 2012 was a beautiful day for a family barbeque. Clowns, face painting, families, children, games and oh yeah – armed gang members that opened fire, killing 2 and wounding 20 others.

On Friday July 20, 2012 what should have been an exciting event to attend a theatre at the 12:01 opening of “The Dark Knight Rises.” In a cinema in Colorado, this event turned out to be a death toll for 12 people with at least 58 others wounded.

Both these events are traumatic in of itself, imagine if you will, being the call takers that had to sift through all the voices of terror on the other end of the lines.

We extend our sympathies to the families and friends of the victims of these incidents. Our thoughts and prayers also go out to the myriad of call takers, dispatchers, first responders, emergency workers who have to deal with the incident and the aftermath

investigations of these events.

In this issue of *Wavelength*, there is an article by Kim Rigden, that provides information on “Stress and the 9-1-1 Dispatcher.” This article provides good information to take care of the mental health of our emergency communications personnel. Our physical health is important, but quite often we forget about our mental health. Dealing day to day with the worst that life can offer someone, it is good to be able to understand and deal with our own personal mental health issues.

In terms of disaster and disaster recovery, this month there is an article entitled “The Evolution of the EOC” by Paul Dixon. This article discusses the beginnings of the emergency operations centre and how it has evolved to today. Another great read for all communications members. This should start some thinking and discussion regarding what would happen in your centre do during a disaster? What policies and procedures are set out for

this type of event? Before you rant and rave about the fact that your communications centre is ill prepared for a disaster, you might want to consider getting involved in preparing your centre for disasters. It could be as simple as creating an evacuation pack, or as complicated as creating an entire “bugging out” procedure. Get involved and be part of the process instead of criticizing what may or may not be there. Not only is getting involved good for your own mental health, your involvement will also help your communications centre and be better prepared for any event.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns or articles about our *Wavelength*, please do not hesitate to contact me at Theresa.virgin@apco.ca.

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Contents

DEPARTMENTS

3 MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Ryan Lawson
President, APCO Canada

4 MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

By Theresa Virgin, Director APCO Canada,
Wavelength Editor-In-Chief

APCO NEWS

6 BRITISH APCO CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION A Report to the Membership about British APCO and the APCO Global Alliance

By Ryan Lawson

FEATURES

9 THE EVOLUTION OF THE EOC

By Paul Dixon

21 THE PUBLIC SECTOR'S DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

By Chris Mayers

15 A NEW WAY OF BECOMING A QUALIFIED 9-1-1 OPERATOR

By Rachel Stevenson

24 STRESS AND THE 9-1-1 DISPATCHER

By Kim Rigden

17 THINKING OF MOVING TO A CLOUD?

By Edward Hamilton



Welcome to



Exhibition

&

Development Sessions



British APCO Conference and Exhibition

A Report to the Membership about British APCO and the APCO Global Alliance

By Ryan Lawson
President, APCO Canada

In April of this year, I had the wonderful opportunity to represent APCO Canada's membership at the 2012 British APCO Conference and Exhibition in Manchester, UK. In the last issue of *Wavelength* I provided you, our membership, with some background information about the APCO Global Alliance. My attendance at this year's British APCO Conference was to further facilitate the key goal of the Global Alliance: knowledge exchange.

In Manchester, the APCO Global Alliance President's Council met to continue our work on the Global Alliance Charter, new corporate and marketing plans for the Alliance, and share the state of public safety communications within our respective regions. We engaged in extensive discussion regarding the ongoing strategies of the Global Alliance and worked to align the goals of all four APCO affiliates. We received a report from APCO International on the progress of the 2012 APCO Global Congress in Dubai, UAE (as the managing partner of the event). We also engaged in meaningful discussions to further strengthen the Global Alliance's partnerships with industry associations.

As for the program, our friends in the





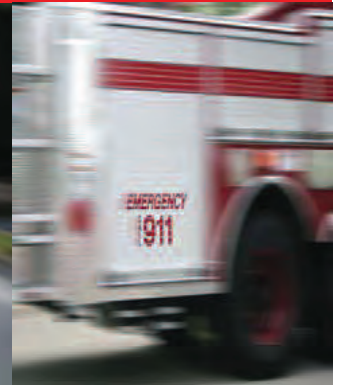
United Kingdom certainly produce an excellent conference and exhibition. The British APCO Conference consisted of a fabulous program of speakers that provided insight on many different topics ranging from communications during public disorder events and terrorist attacks to the implementation and use case for radio, telephony, and software technologies. The trade show floor was packed with a multitude of vendors displaying the latest technologies and advances in mission critical radio infrastructure, telecommunications, GIS & mapping, CAD, facial recognition software, and of course end-user radio hardware. Though a day shorter than our APCO Canada conference, the British APCO conference proved to be jam-packed with amazing content, fabulous vendors, and a multitude of networking opportunities. If anyone would like further information about the specific speakers and content from the British APCO Conference, I would urge you to contact me.

The next order of business for the Global Alliance is to evaluate the success of the APCO Global Congress in Dubai, which will have occurred at the time of this *Wavelength's* publication. In addition, the President's Council will be gearing up for our third set of meetings this year – to take place in August at the APCO International 78th Anniversary Conference and Trade Show in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

It is a privilege to represent you, our membership, on the Global Alliance President's Council, and I look forward to reporting back to you with regards to the activities of the Global Alliance over the rest of 2012.

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The Evolution of the EOC

Story and pictures by Paul Dixon

Green vest at the site. Vancouver Fire/Rescue Deputy Chief wears the green vest as Incident Commander at three-alarm fire, supported by the Operations Chief to his left and Logistics Chief to his right. A large fire but well within the capabilities of a single agency – no EOC activation required.

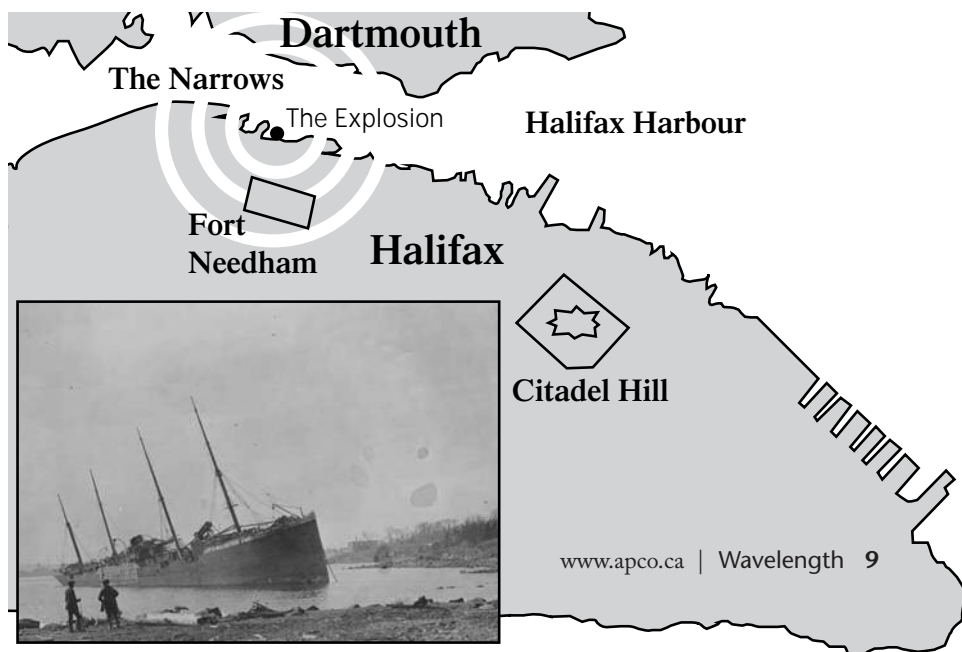
The words “emergency” and “disaster” are often used interchangeably, but within the context of emergency management in Canada there is a distinction. Emergencies are defined as events caused by accidents, fires explosions, system failures, or forces of nature that require prompt action to protect the health, safety, and welfare of persons and/or to limit the damage to property. These are events that police, fire, and ambulance services respond to on a daily basis. Disasters can be seen as the same event or series of events that overwhelms the resources of a single community or is spread across multiple communities or regions simultaneously. Disasters include wildfires threatening communities, extreme winter weather and excessive snowfall, tornadoes, widespread flooding, and more recently, the threat of pandemics such as SARS.

Emergency management in Canada has evolved over the past century. The Halifax explosion of December 6, 1917

was the most devastating an urban area in North America and still offers lessons to planners in today’s world. Two cargo ships collided in the harbour, fire broke out and soon after, 225 tons of high explosives on one of the ships exploded. Much of Halifax was levelled by the blast. Out of population of 50,000 more than 2,000 were killed outright, 6,000 injured and 10,000 more left homeless. To make matters worse, a severe winter storm blanketed the city for days with

driving snow and freezing rain, hindering relief efforts.

During the Second World War civil defense teams were formed under military control across the country to prepare citizens to respond in the wake of potential enemy attacks. The Cold War and threat of nuclear attack during the 1950s led to further development of the civil defense network. As the Cold War fears faded in the 1970s, the





Earthquake Damage



responsibility for emergency management shifted from the federal government to the provinces and the focus shifted from civil defense programs to what is known today as the “all hazards” approach.

At the same time, the ability of the media to cover events on a global scale in real time raised public consciousness to new levels. The 1989 earthquake in San Francisco occurred at the start of a World Series baseball game. This was the first time an earthquake or any disaster had been covered by live television.

In the 1970s the Incident Command System (ICS) was developed in the aftermath of a series of devastating wildfires in southern California. It quickly became apparent that for multiple agencies and different levels of government to work together effectively and efficiently towards a common purpose then they all had to converse in a common language. ICS is that common language, both in terms of terminology and methodology.

Common functionality and common terminology and the ability to scale events and even multiple events from initial response to an international incident make ICS the management tool for emergency management.

As the first fire engine arrives at a call, the senior firefighter or company officer establishes “command” as the incident commander. If the incident is serious, as more units arrive “command” will be passed to a chief officer. More than 95% of emergency incidents in Canada are managed at the incident site. For events which require greater support and guidance, an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) will be activated. The EOC will be activated to meet certain needs as defined in the community’s emergency plan. For instance, the incident commander (IC) may require resources the site that are not available within the community or through existing mutual aid plans. The nature of the incident may require actions to be taken away from the incident site (e.g., evacuation of a large area due to a

chemical spill), or there may be multiple incidents and decisions must be made regarding resource allocation.

As responsibility for emergency planning evolved and shifted from the original federally controlled civil defense programs to the current provincially mandated emergency management programs, each province has enacted its own legislation placing responsibility on local authorities (municipalities, regional districts, etc.) to take responsibility for creating and maintaining an emergency management organization within the community. The local authority is required to be prepared to both respond to emergencies and disasters, as well as recover from the same emergencies and disasters. The local emergency program is created under the authority of a bylaw passed by the local authority. The emergency bylaw will:

- Define emergency management requirements for the municipality
- Establish the emergency management organization within



District of North Vancouver EOC activated for landslide and large-scale evacuation of residences. EOC Director wearing green vest.



Province of BC Regional EOC (PREOC) activated during spring floods to support a number of municipalities that have activated their EOCs. Regional Manager Mike Andrews, wearing green vest, is PREOC Director.

- the community
- Outline the powers of elected officials (mayor and council), including declarations of state of local emergency
 - Set out the terms of reference for the emergency management organization
 - Set out the duties and responsibilities of the emergency management organization which may include, but are not limited to: Hazard, risk and vulnerability analysis; Plans for mitigation, response and recovery; Plans and processes for training and exercises; Resource acquisition; and Procedures for restoration of essential services

Communities will have a pre-established permanent EOC and most will have a secondary site. The EOC supports the IC at the scene by pulling together people and resources that are beyond the capability of a single department. The EOC does not manage the site activities, but rather supports site operations by taking responsibility for issues that are

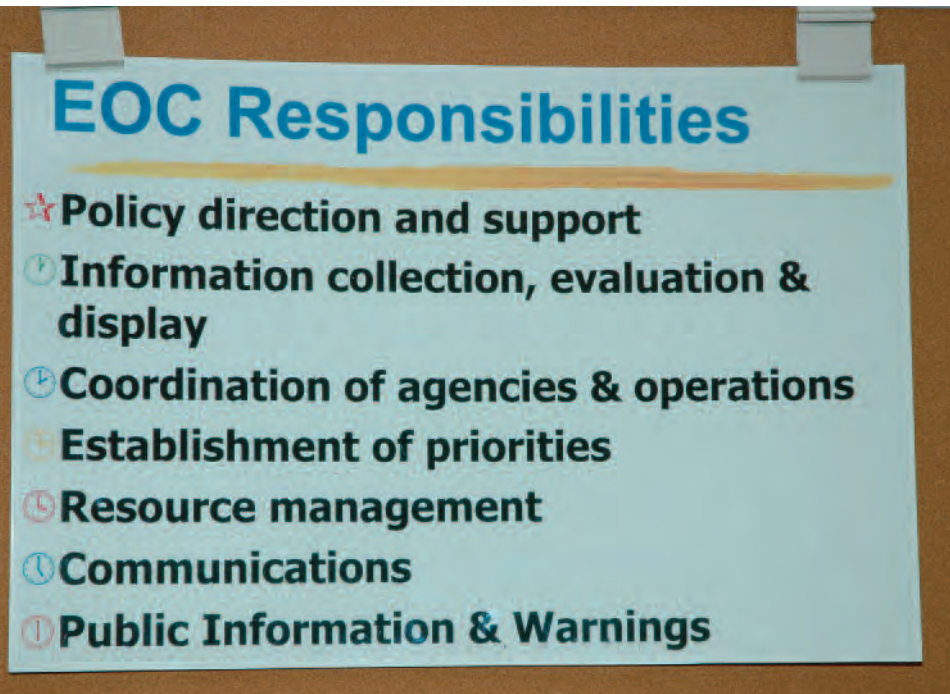
beyond the scope of the site commander, including but not limited to the following:

- Policy issues, direction, and control
- Information, from the site and to the site. Collection and evaluation of information and as a point of contact for public information.
- Coordinating both internal and external resources. Procuring both equipment and personnel beyond the scope of existing agreements from external resources.
- Establishing priorities in situations with multiple site operations and limited resources decisions may have to be made to allocation of scarce resources.
- Resource management. Establishing financial control to track expenditures in material and personnel.

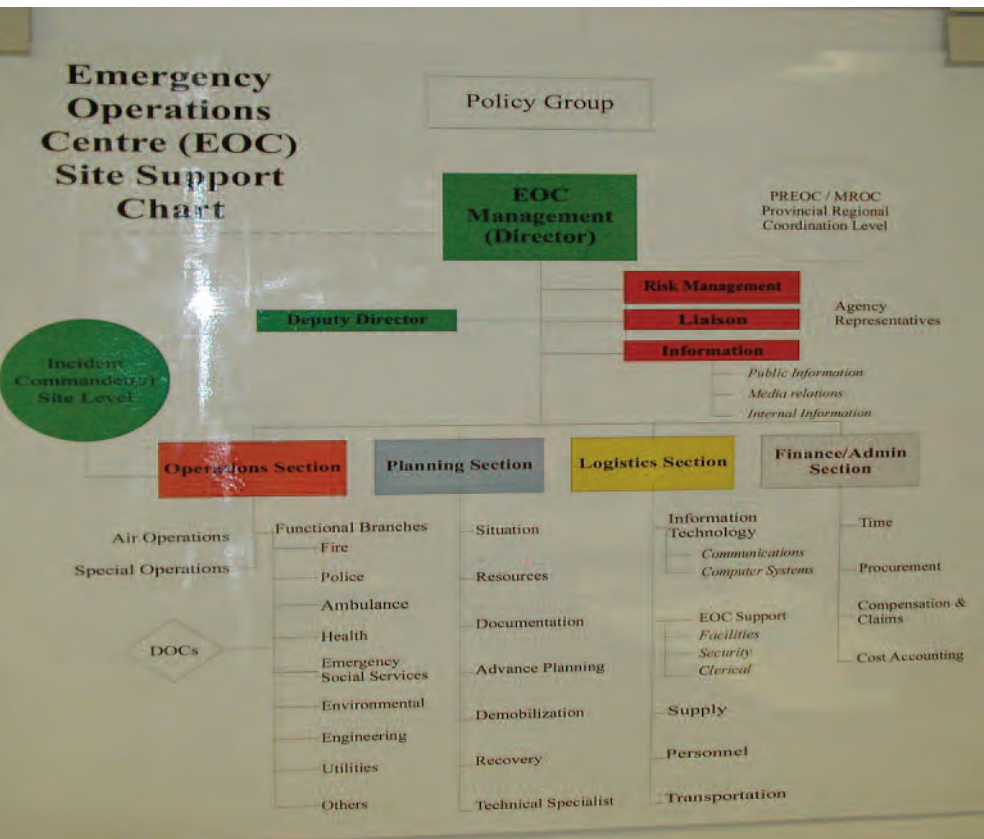
In a municipal level EOC, the primary positions are staffed by senior department managers; people who by virtue of their position are empowered

to make decisions without deferring to department heads. The police representative to the EOC would be an inspector or higher, while the fire department would be an assistant chief or higher rank. The EOC director position will generally be the local authority chief administrative officer (sometimes still known as city manager). Depending on the nature and scope of the event, other departments of the municipality such as engineering and waterworks would be represented. External agencies such as the local hydro, gas and telephone utilities would also participate. This allows senior managers to meet face to face and effectively plan a unified response. Decisions regarding operational priorities made by the ECO working group would then be communicated to site commanders and operational supervisors in the field by the agency representatives in the EOC.

The level of EOC activation is determined by the actual event or anticipated event; its magnitude and



Reminder to those in the EOC what their priorities are.



Basic org chart for EOC – with each branch identified by a different colour.

scope. A Level One activation may be called to support a single incident in a community or even as a precaution based on a potential threat, such as forecasts of severe weather. This would see a minimum staffing level from the local authority. Level Two activation would provide support for multiple events with more than one agency involved or a major scheduled event (e.g., Stanley Cup Game 7) that would require resources beyond the scope of the front-line agencies. Staffing levels would be greater, with representatives from external agencies in the EOC. Level Three activation would be in the wake of a major disaster with multiple sites, possibly across an entire region. Local resources are exhausted and all EOC functions and positions are staffed. Provincial emergency program officials are notified with EOC activation at any level and Level Three activation at the community level will see activation of a provincial EOC in anticipation of support to the local authority.

Elected officials do not take part in the operational control of the EOC, but as the Policy Group, the mayor and council provide the oversight and legislative authority for the actions taken by the EOC and will often become the source of information through the media, working with the communications group within the EOC. A key role of elected officials is the Declaration of a State of Local Emergency. In British Columbia, a State of Local Emergency can be declared if a local authority is satisfied that an emergency exists or is imminent and that their authority under existing legislation will not allow them to provide adequate response. The declaration can only be made by mayor and council or in certain circumstances, unilaterally by the mayor or acting mayor. Once

enacted, the provincial government must be notified immediately and provided with a copy of the order.

In British Columbia, there are nine extraordinary powers that can be enacted under a State of Local Emergency. The declaration must state specifically which power(s) are being activated as all nine are not automatically invoked. Briefly, the extraordinary powers under the state of emergency allow the local authority to:

- Acquire or use any land or personal property considered necessary,
- Require any person to render assistance of a type they are qualified to provide,
- Control or prohibit travel to or from any designated area within the jurisdiction,
- Provide for the restoration of

essential facilities and distribution of essential supplies,

- Cause the evacuation of persons,
- Authorize entry into any building without warrant by any person involved in implementing the emergency plan,
- Cause the demolition or removal of trees or buildings if necessary,
- Construct works considered to be necessary or appropriate,
- Procure, fix prices, or ration food, clothing, fuel, equipment, medical supplies, or other essential items.

The declaration of the state of emergency must be specific in naming the actual threat and also must be specific in identifying the geographical area within the jurisdiction where the emergency exists. The declaration will be in effect for seven days. It must be rescinded as soon as the stated reasons

for implementing state of local emergency are over. After seven days, if necessary, the local authority must obtain provincial approval to extend the order.

Depending on the severity of the emergency or disaster, the EOC may be operational for days or even weeks. At some point it will be determined that the EOC can be scaled down and then closed. The EOC scales down using the same process that was used to scale up in the initial response. Just as a fire department builds its response to a major event as needs dictate using pre-established protocols, the EOC and the emergency management professionals depend on a pre-established plan to provide support to front-line responders in severe circumstances.



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A New Way of Becoming a Qualified 9-1-1 Operator

Using Interactive Multimedia and Virtual Classrooms

By Rachel Stevenson



From a 9-1-1 Dispatcher to a College Instructor

Last year, when I signed off from my 9-1-1 terminal and put away my headset to become a college instructor, I knew I was heading from one gratifying career for another, but I had my doubts if the transition was the right fit for me. Having worked eight years for the busiest PSAP in the province of New Brunswick (Canada), I have to say that I, like most operators and dispatchers of emergency services, loved my job, so I was somewhat skeptical of my decision. Could I really leave behind the thrill of Friday night shifts? The constant buzz in the office? The sense of pride for my work? My career environment was my comfort zone, and my fellow team members were like my second family.

My former mentor, friend, and trainer, a 22-year veteran of the PASP had left our center a few years back to develop and to teach the one-year program the Emergency Services Telecommunications Course at the Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick – Campus de Dieppe. He contacted me a few months prior, asking if I would be interested in working alongside him. The college, along with the PSAPs, was contemplating the possibility of offering a hybrid version of the program to satisfy the ever-growing demand for qualified and mature operators and dispatchers, and was in need of another instructor to head up the project.

A Hybrid Program

The hybrid program allows the students a more flexible schedule. The program contains some on-line do-at-your-own-pace courses such as courses in typing, customer service, medical language, while other courses, like classes in ethics and crisis intervention, which require a more direct contact, are offered throughout the academic year over an eight-week interval. In the context of the program, students must prepare weekly by reading the assigned material, doing interactive multimedia exercises, and participating in virtual classrooms. Likewise, maturity and adequate time management are skills that will not only be imperative to students' success but will also give them the chance to study while maintaining their daily engagements, such as current employment or family obligations.

In the beginning, I found that the daunting task of figuring out how one could teach such grey area material thru a computer or a telephone without face-to-face interactions seemed almost impossible. However, the

college provided a team of skilled computer experts that were able to create exercises that, for example, challenge the students' listening abilities to alpha numeric while simulating noise heard on the side of a highway with traffic, wind and transport trucks passing by. One thing is for sure, using technology to teach the future emergency service employees will give them a greater advantage because they will have learned the skills the way that they will be applied. Moreover, a hands-on training on our CAD system is required at the college, and a practicum in one of the centers is also a pre-requisite to graduate. The regular and hybrid version of the Emergency Services Telecommunications course is offered at the CCNB-Campus de Dieppe. Since New Brunswick is the only

officially bilingual province in Canada, the program caters to the needs of the PSAPs by offering its program in French with some English contents to assure that graduates are meeting the PSAP's bilingual requirement.

Hence, my new adventure begins! A fresh group of students will begin the specialty courses in the fall, but I have managed to keep a few hours of work at the PSAP during college holidays. My objective is to hopefully have the students share my passion and my respect for the work of a dispatcher, the clients and the culture of emergency services.

About the Author

Rachel Stevenson was born in Granby, Quebec. She is a professional emergency communications operator with eight years of experience. She has a background in customer service, worked for Air Canada for eight years and studied at Université de Moncton. Now an instructor and course developer with the Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick – Campus de Dieppe, Rachel is offering an inside perspective to her clientele and strong customer service skills, which she balances between a passion for her work and the respect for the profession. Rachel is presently living in Dieppe, New Brunswick (Canada) with her husband and two children.



Thinking of Moving to a Cloud?

By Edward Hamilton

Edward Hamilton of Analysys Mason questions whether public cloud-based solutions are an appropriate solution for emergency services, coming to the conclusion that on the whole the required security controls are not there.

The move towards cloud services appears to be relentless, and numerous IT organisations are now developing and deploying hosted platforms, infrastructure and applications to provide cloud services. Cloud services are a natural evolution of traditional IT outsourcing and hosted solutions and organisations' desire to further reduce IT costs. They appear to offer all the benefits of outsourcing without the traditional risks of customised IT development or commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) deployment, for the following reasons:

- The services and applications already exist and have been deployed, which minimises the risk of the cost overruns that affect so many IT projects
- Most cloud-based IT services require no capital investment and have only minimal up-front configuration charges, which enables enterprises to budget for these services
- Enterprises require only limited in-house IT skills to use cloud-based

services, and can redeploy valuable IT assets elsewhere

- Services can be deployed quickly, which allows enterprise IT departments to be more responsive to stakeholders.
- Cloud services can be either public or private solutions.

Public cloud solutions are a much more recent development than private solutions and are delivered over the Internet. Clients procure a solution as a service, and can undertake minor adaptations to tailor it for their business. Private cloud solutions are typically more expensive than public services, but have the advantage of permitting greater customisation of the applications, platforms and infrastructure. A third-party supplier provides a tailored IT solution (as a service – Software as a Service or SaaS) that is located in the supplier's data centre and accessed over a wide area network. Private cloud solutions have been in existence since the 1960s when outsourcing started. A

more recent example of private cloud solutions is the UK government's gcloud.

Emergency services are used to procuring private cloud solutions from organisations that provide specialist IT applications and business processing outsourcing (BPO) solutions, typically for human resources, payroll, finance, etc.

When making the transition to cloud services, all organisations will need to manage the additional risks they encounter. Some of these risks relate to security – for example, compliance with legislation and regulations within the relevant country, region and industry, as well as security concerns regarding confidentiality, integrity and data availability. The risks are particularly significant for emergency services, as this is one area of critical national infrastructure where any compromise of confidentiality and integrity or the lack of availability could have a direct impact and potentially cause loss of life.

Examination of recent security breaches shows that few breaches arise due to a compromise within the organisation that is responsible for holding confidential data: many are related to a third-party supplier. As such, it is essential that any supplier has the appropriate technical and security management controls in place and works with its clients to mitigate risks. Can this level of security be provided by public cloud service providers?

To provide assurance that the security risks associated with cloud service provision are being appropriately managed and mitigated cloud service providers have selected to comply with or become certified to a wide range of security standards. When Analysys Mason undertook an assessment of these standards we found that Statement on Auditing Standards No 70 (SAS 70) was

the most-commonly adopted security standard (see Figure 1). SAS 70, Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) and many of the other security standards shown below are only relevant to organisations based or headquartered in the USA. For an emergency service operating elsewhere, these certifications only provide a generic indication of the level of security.

Cloud service providers with a mature attitude to security will maintain a balance between technical security controls and security governance. From our research it appears that the technical security controls provided by cloud service providers are generally appropriate and conform to recognised security practices. However, our assessment revealed that the management of risks associated with client data was generally poor. In particular, the majority of public cloud

service providers have not yet defined how their security governance would integrate with a client's security team. For example, it is unclear how providers would report any data breaches they detect. Waiting to include such news in a monthly status report would clearly be unacceptable security governance for an enterprise, let alone for an essential element of a nation's critical national infrastructure. Cloud service providers need to offer integrated security governance that allows two-way communication to a defined service-level agreement (SLA).

For emergency services, the confidentiality, integrity and availability of their IT systems and data are essential. Emergency services typically have a mature set of technical security controls and governance procedures. When procuring IT services they expect

Are public cloud-based solutions an appropriate solution for emergency services? | 3

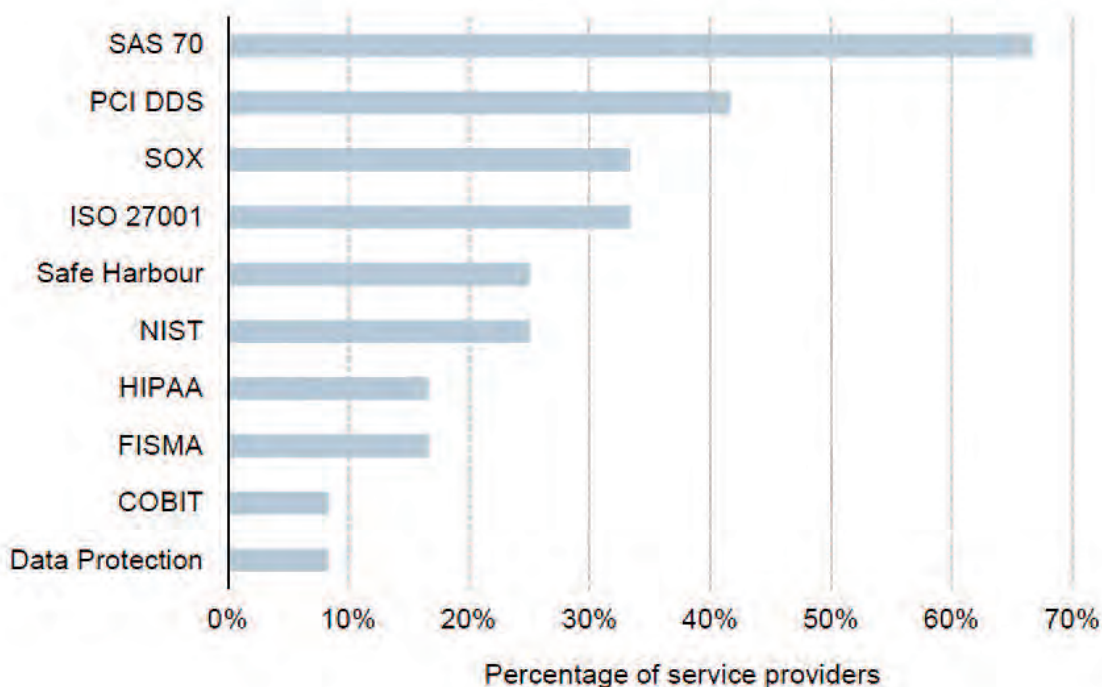


Figure 1. Security standards followed by a selection of cloud service providers (source: Analysys Mason, 2011).

providers to meet their security requirements, but this is something that public cloud service providers are currently unable to demonstrate. A highly revealing way of assessing the level of maturity of a cloud service provider's security is to read its service contract. The typical contract terms offered today might be acceptable for an individual or a small business. However, an emergency service or government body requires robust service levels, regular service meetings, service credits, and the ability to terminate the contract when a service persistently fails to meet the SLA. The majority of contracts offered by cloud service providers today simply do not incorporate appropriate security and other governance controls to meet the requirements of emergency services or government bodies.

In conclusion, we believe that the level of security governance currently offered by public cloud service providers makes

it challenging for emergency services to transfer any core IT services to these providers. Public cloud service providers must refine their security offerings to make their products and services appropriate for emergency services and other organisations in highly regulated industries; otherwise, these organisations will continue to procure dedicated

solutions for hosting at their own location, or private cloud solutions that allow them to specify appropriate governance controls.

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About the Author

Edward Hamilton is the Head of Information Security and Assurance at Analysys Mason. He has 18 years' experience working within IT and telecoms of which the last 14 have been providing information security service to clients in both the public and private sectors

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The Public Sector's Drivers for Change

By Chris Mayers

Chris Mayers, chief security architect, Citrix, believes there is a policy gap in public sector cloud strategy and he identifies a new cloud computing strategy that could help the public sector catch up with the private sector.

Since the 2010 general election, the coalition government has accelerated measures to take control of the public sector deficit and to set a course to begin paying off the national debt by 2014. By not raising taxes significantly, the pressure has fallen on reducing public spending and so for public sector organisations to maximize the efficient use of resources, while minimizing the impact on front-line services

Even before the recession, the government has striven to increase the proportion of shared services across public sector functions. Government departments, arms-length bodies and delivery organisations all have common activities and assets, and this has resulted in unnecessary duplication and costs. A 34 per cent reduction in funding for back office functions is driving major streamlining and collaboration in central government and its arms-length bodies. The infrastructure for these shared services can be substantial. Large ICT infrastructures demand high initial capital investment with long-term

maintenance contracts to secure both a return on investment for suppliers and value for money for users. The UK Government is in no position to make such large investments itself for all its services today – and it is no longer necessary when the private sector has already made the investment. This is what cloud computing offers.

Cloud computing is a proven technology: it reduces costs, speeds up service delivery, and provides a secure base for shared services. In short, it has a vital role to play in satisfying exactly these pressing government needs.

However, differences between organizations mean that they will need to apply cloud computing in their context, to gain those efficiencies. Recognising this, the government has announced recently it will publish a new cloud computing strategy.

Taking a Hybrid Approach

UK and international perspectives show why cloud computing in the public sector

still lags behind the private sector today: there is a policy gap.

The Cloud Industry Forum (CIF), the industry body for cloud computing providers, conducted a survey of end users in early 2011 on adoption trends. The research demonstrated that use of cloud computing has grown rapidly and shows that the technology has now taken hold in the UK. Overall, 49% of private sector organisations use cloud for some of their ICT solutions. However, this figure drops to 38% for the public sector.

Specifically, project management procedures, governance practices, concerns over data security, procurement regulations, and integration with legacy systems; all these inhibit public sector organisations adopting cloud computing. Government cannot sidestep these issues – the new cloud computing strategy must determine how to deal with them,

It is also clear that a single approach to cloud adoption is just not feasible in the public sector. Some services cannot – or

should not – be transferred into the cloud. The cloud computing strategy will need to act more as a framework for public sector adoption, rather than a plan for centralised delivery.

Compare the US government's Federal Cloud Computing Strategy, published in February 2011.

First, the Federal Strategy laid down a 'cloud first' policy. This means that all government agencies are required to evaluate safe, secure, cloud computing options before making any new investments. With the trends in cloud adoption detailed earlier it may appear that considerations of cloud solutions is standard practice. However, the same research discovered that there are still a significant proportion of resellers that do not raise cloud computing as a solution to end user needs (38% of resellers according to the CIF Adoption and Trends 2011). Furthermore, great caution regarding data security in the public sector can lead to unnecessary rejection of cloud as a solution. By insisting on 'cloud first' the US Federal government has ensured that cloud adoption will always be considered, helping to overcome misplaced fears over its use.

The US Cloud Strategy has also established an 'approve once and use often' policy. As in the UK, there are many public sector organisations that have traditionally procured ICT solutions independently of each other, resulting in significant duplication and financial waste.

This 'approve once and use often' policy is a single process for approval of applications based on cloud computing; organisations can then use them without repeating the same procurement process.

The UK government is considering a similar approach, but there have been some concerns that current EU

competition regulations could be obstructive. A suite of framework agreements – similar to those that exist in parts of the public sector for traditional technology and commoditised products or services will need to be outlined in the new cloud strategy.

The US Federal Strategy has also recognised four cloud models that different organisations can adopt as their needs require. This acknowledges that existing ICT systems may have contractual, legacy or other issues that make a full and immediate transition to the cloud impossible. The four models are:

- Private Cloud – the cloud infrastructure is operated solely for an organisation. It may be managed by the organisation or a third party and may exist on or off premise.
- Community Cloud – the cloud infrastructure has shared concerns (eg mission, security requirements, policy, or compliance considerations). It may be managed by the organisations or a third party, and may exist on or off premise.
- Public Cloud – the cloud infrastructure is made available to the general public or a large industry group and is owned by an organisation selling cloud services.
- Hybrid Cloud – the cloud infrastructure is a composition of two or more clouds (private, community or public) that remain distinct, but are linked by technology that secure access between them.

Nevertheless, the applications currently in their data centres could migrate – and this would offer significant, rapid, efficiency savings in its own right. This also maintains data storage within an existing secure data centre, while using the cloud for service delivery. Therefore, this hybrid cloud approach is attractive, given careful planning.

First, some applications depend on other services or data which reside in the on-site data centre. These applications should be decoupled so that they can work in the cloud without migrating or duplicating the shared services.

Second, the in-house data centre and the cloud represent two distinct infrastructure environments. But a common set of processes, tool, and people must be applied, or the efficiency gains will be lost.

Third, network security policies between a cloud provider and the internally managed data centre may not match. Organisations must select a cloud provider that can address this issue.

The hybrid cloud approach shows that the transition to cloud computing can be gradual and systematic, allowing ICT professionals to control the project risk that accompanies any change. Alongside the new cloud computing strategy, this will remove the remaining barriers to efficiency.

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About the Author

Chris Mayers, principal security architect, Citrix, is responsible for promoting security, developing security strategies and advocating the secure enterprise. He works with enterprises and government bodies to explain how Citrix's end-to-end virtualization technologies can help keep resources safe.



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Stress and the 9-1-1 Dispatcher

By Kim Rigden
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No one would answer the below job posting. People are attracted to 9-1-1 dispatching to help people, to be part of the exciting world of the emergency services, to make a difference. Yet, if you have ever worked in a 9-1-1 communications center, you will have witnessed some of these behaviours in other 9-1-1 dispatchers and possibly even in yourself. So what happens to change an empathetic, hardworking 9-1-1 dispatcher into the person described above? Stress!

Stress is an epidemic in our 9-1-1 centres. Not the garden-variety stress of life (though it can be tossed in for good measure), but the stress associated with listening to someone else's worst day—every day—as a routine part of

the job. This is the kind of stress that builds up over time (cumulative stress), and slowly erodes our ability to feel empathy (compassion fatigue) or it the stress that drops in like a sledgehammer when you hear the voice of a frantic mother screaming into the phone that she has found her son hanging in the garage (critical incident stress). As stress increases, the 9-1-1 dispatcher puts up barriers in an effort to protect himself from the “cost of caring.”¹ The frustrations of call taking become the caller's fault (they are “stupid,” they “don't know what a real emergency is,” they are “rude”) or the co-worker's fault (“they don't pick up their share of the 9-1-1 lines,” “the lights are too bright in the dispatch centre”) or the boss's fault (“what does he know about this job? He never even comes in the room!”).

9-1-1 dispatchers carry a heavy load. They must be ready to answer any call, to help unappreciative callers, or callers who abuse the system. But without recognizing the symptoms of stress and focusing on self-care, a good 9-1-1 dispatcher can become frustrated, irritated and stressed-out. He no longer enjoys his job and he is not very effective as an emergency 9-1-1 dispatcher. More and more 9-1-1 tapes are being released to



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frustrations of call taking become the caller's fault (they are “stupid,” they “don't know what a real emergency is,” they are “rude”) or the co-worker's fault (“they don't pick up their share of the 9-1-1 lines,” “the lights are too bright in the dispatch centre”) or the boss's fault (“what does he know about this job? He never even comes in the room!”).

9-1-1 dispatchers carry a heavy load. They must be ready to answer any call, to help unappreciative callers, or callers who abuse the system. But without recognizing the symptoms of stress and focusing on self-care, a good 9-1-1 dispatcher can become frustrated, irritated and stressed-out. He no longer enjoys his job and he is not very effective as an emergency 9-1-1 dispatcher. More and more 9-1-1 tapes are being released to the media. How many of them have recently featured a rude dispatcher? How much would you like to bet that a stressed-out dispatcher is always a stressed-out dispatcher?

How does this happen? What is stress anyway? Stress is insidious and can sneak up on the best of

us with our realizing it. Not surprisingly, there are many forms of stress; everyone is affected by it and deals with it differently. All people experience stress in one form or another. There is the stress that is a normal and healthy part of life and then there is stress that is destructive to mental and physical health. A great deal of stress reduction is being able to identify the signs and symptoms of stress in your life and to take action to reduce that stress and minimize its effect on your body. Picture a tall water glass. Into this glass goes all of the stress we encounter every day—some big drops of stress we encounter every day—some big drops, some little drops. On a day when we encounter normal amounts of stress, this glass never gets full, yet if we experience increased stress in our personal lives and we have a high-stress job, the glass gets fuller. If stress-inducing events are not recognized and dealt with, the glass may get so full that it overflows. Once this happens, the negative effects of stress spill out all over our lives in the form of physical and mental ailments.

General stress is the normal stress of daily life. It is a state of physical and mental arousal, a demand for

Help Wanted:

9-1-1 Dispatcher. Applicants must be easily irritated by 911 callers; phone slamming and swearing an asset. Preference will be given to candidates able to complain about their workload while receiving calls. Must be able to survive on donuts for breakfast, greasy takeout food in the wee hours, and gallons of coffee. Punctuality and good attendance are not required, but working overtime is essential. The successful candidate should expect to be bullied by annoying senior co-workers. Remuneration: not nearly enough to put up with all this st.**

the media. How many of them have recently featured a rude dispatcher? How much would you like to bet that rude dispatcher is always a stressed-out dispatcher?

How does this happen? What is stress anyway? Stress is insidious and can sneak up on the best of us without our realizing it. Not surprisingly, there are many forms of stress; everyone is affected by it and deals with it differently. All people experience stress in one form or another. There is the stress that is a normal and healthy part of life and then there is stress that is destructive to mental and physical health. A great deal of stress reduction is being able to identify the signs and symptoms of stress in your life and to take action to reduce that stress and minimize its effect on your body. Picture a tall water glass. Into this glass goes all of the drops of stress we encounter every day – some big drops, some little drops. On a day when we encounter normal amounts of stress, this glass never gets full, yet if we experience increased stress in our personal lives and we have a high-stress job, the glass gets fuller. If stress-inducing events are not recognized and dealt with, the glass may get so full that it overflows. Once this happens, the negative effects of stress spill out all over our lives in the form of physical and mental ailments.

General stress is the normal stress of daily life. It is a state of physical and mental arousal, a demand for action.² It is a necessary part of life. We would die if we didn't have some stress in our life. Stress helps us make choices; it helps us get out and do the things we need to do; it can help us develop plans, change behaviours and begin new activities. Stress is a routine and normal part of our day. It was the stress of the deadline that helped me write this article! So stress is good when it is controlled. People deal with it, they learn from it, they recover from it, and they may actually grow from it.

Those in the emergency services deal with another form of normal stress – compassion stress. Compassion stress is the natural behavioural and emotional response of wanting to help people. This is why a lot of 9-1-1 dispatchers choose the jobs they do. It feels good to help people. As members of a helping profession that is faced with the suffering of others, 9-1-1 dispatchers empathize with the people they are assisting. They are subject to compassion stress, but in return, they receive compassion satisfaction from their actions. It is compassion satisfaction that keeps many 9-1-1 dispatchers in the hot seat shift after shift.

Believe it or not, even the effects of a Critical Incident Stress (CIS) exposure are normal. Critical Incident Stress is “any Situation faced by emergency service personnel that causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either at the scene or later.” Even for emergency personnel, these events are outside regular emergency workplace experiences. CIS is a normal, but painful response of normal healthy people to an abnormal event.³ When properly diffused and debriefed, CIS is a temporary, albeit painful, form of normal stress. 9-1-1 dispatchers need to be reminded that their normal day at work is actually abnormal. Hearing about people's pain, suffering and fear for twelve hours is challenging and it is OK to have an emotional reaction to your work. But it is imperative that this reaction is not ignored. This can be a challenging thing for 9-1-1 dispatchers who are used to dealing with other people's problems, not their own. 9-1-1 dispatchers can feel that they are not supposed to be affected by critical incident stress.

“I wasn't even there. I just talked to the guy on the phone”

9-1-1 dispatchers may experience Secondary Trauma Exposure: exposure to traumatic events experienced by others as a result of your work (counsellor, emergency room employee, public safety telecommunicator, etc).⁴

9-1-1 dispatchers are removed from the events and only experience them through voice and description; yet they are often present – through the phone call – as the events are happening. She is on the line with the terrified girl as someone is breaking into her home; he is giving CPR instructions and listening as a wife pleads with her husband to wake up; she is telling the trapped people how to put towels in front of the door to keep the smoke from coming in the room as they wait to be rescued. These interactions place 9-1-1 dispatchers squarely in the middle of the crisis. Sometimes the 9-1-1 dispatcher is the last person to talk to the caller alive. Sometimes the caller can't calm down enough to follow the 9-1-1 dispatcher's life-saving instructions. Sometimes the 9-1-1 dispatcher is privileged enough to hear a baby's first cry. These are all stressful events and the 9-1-1 dispatcher needs to be allowed to process them. Sometimes just the simple act of taking a 10 minute break after an intense call to drink a glass of water and walk around the block will do a great deal to relieve workplace stress.

It is when stress is not acknowledged or treated that it becomes destructive. Critical Incident Stress exposure is a work place injury just like a back injury or needle stick. There should be no stigma or shame if a call “gets to you.” Recognition of CIS and CIS management is part of emergency services for police officers, fire fighters, paramedics, and ER staff, but the dispatch personnel are too often forgotten in diffusing and debriefing sessions. Emergency 9-1-1 dispatchers are the first tier of emergency services – the access point – and must not be forgotten.

Cumulative Stress has no obvious trigger and may be harder to recognize. This is the build up of stressors over time. Our minds don't compartmentalize stressors, so when the 9-1-1 dispatcher arrives to begin her shift, that tall water glass may already be half full from personal life stress. It then takes less work stress for it to start to overflow. Without taking steps to manage this build up of stressor, the cumulative effects will start negatively affecting the 9-1-1 dispatcher. Unresolved and untreated stress has a number of negative manifestations, including compassion fatigue, burn out, and in its most serious form, posttraumatic stress disorder.

How can you tell if stress has become destructive? There are a number of red flags (for educational purposes only, they are not intended to be used as a diagnostic tool) that could indicate that stress is having a negative impact on your life. They can manifest in the following six different areas of our lives:

PHYSICAL

Fatigue, headaches, back pain, insomnia, nausea, indigestion, cramps, fainting, constipation, diarrhea, sweatiness, sleeping too much or too little

MENTAL

Forgetfulness, poor concentration, boredom, paranoia, poor teamwork, perfectionism

EMOTIONAL

Irritability, depression, anxiety, anger, fear, mood swings, apathy, increased sensitivity to criticism

RELATIONAL

Loneliness, withdrawal, intolerance, relationship problems

BEHAVIOURAL

Substance abuse, eating problems, risk-taking, hyperactivity, overwork,

procrastination, missed deadlines, anti-social behaviour

SPIRITUAL

Emptiness, loss of beliefs and sense of meaning, cynicism, compassion fatigue⁵

By simply reading this list, it is easy to see how a person who is suffering from the effects of destructive stress could turn into in the perfect candidate for the "help wanted" ad at the beginning of this article. Anyone suffering from any of the above symptoms is encouraged to talk to their health care provider. Being pro-active about your own health – and stress is a health issue – is of the utmost importance. Many Employee Assistance Plans (EAP) have stress management resources such as counselling and educational materials available to employees. It can be hard to take the first step and ask for help, but the benefits of keeping stress in the normal and healthy range will make a profound difference in quality of life.

Self-care is an important part of stress management and should be a routine part of healthy living for every emergency 9-1-1 dispatcher. It is difficult to take care of others when suffering yourself. To avoid becoming like the descriptions in the Help Wanted add, keep that water glass from overflowing! The mnemonic S.T.R.E.S.S can help remind you of how to practice self care every day.

S.T.R.E.S.S Self Care: Make it part of your daily life⁶

SENSIBLE EATING

Do not use alcohol or drugs to cope. Drugs, and particularly alcohol, are powerful reaction suppressers – they numb the pain BUT they don't solve the problem. Talk it out – work through the problem – don't medicate it.

Diet is an important factor in reducing the negative effects of stress. Even though

you may not feel hungry, eat something and make sure it's healthy food. Refined sugars, fats, and excessive salt elevate stress levels. Avoid anything with caffeine in it – caffeine is a stimulant and elevates blood pressure and heart rate and creates an increased need for oxygen, it stimulates the cardiac muscle and central nervous system. It causes nervousness, sleeplessness and irritability.

Drink water! Stress dehydrates and dehydration can increase feelings of anxiety and stress.

TIME TO ENJOY LIFE

You must take care of yourself – that includes doing what you enjoy. Take time for leisure activities. Active hobbies are particularly helpful. If the incident happened at work, and if you are very traumatised by an incident, it may be necessary to take time off from work; working while being emotionally vulnerable puts you at risk for an acute stress reaction. On the other hand, you may be someone who finds that being back on the job is just what is required. Assess your situation carefully. If you feel ready for action, return to work. If you feel vulnerable, request time off but seek professional help.

REST AND RELAXATION

If we don't sleep we can actually develop psychotic symptoms. Everything seems worse when we are not sleeping well – if your sleep is not effective seek advice from your doctor and implement healthy sleeping techniques (having a dark and cool room, white noise, avoiding caffeine, not eating 2 hours before bedtime, keeping the bedroom for sleeping and sex, not working or watching TV).

Most of us breathe from our upper chest and don't breathe deeply; deep breathing is one of the most effective relaxation techniques for emergency personnel. It

can be performed anywhere anytime. Learn some relaxation techniques and visual imagery

EXERCISE AND EDUCATION

Exercise is critical to cleansing the body of the negative consequences of stress. Get some good exercise within 24 hours of the incident. Do not stop with that. Keep up regular activity, whether it's a tennis game, a run, or a brisk walk.

Expect the incident to bother you; take comfort in knowing that the incident will not bother you forever. Though you will never actually totally forget the incident, remembering it does not have to cause extreme emotional distress. Your goal should not be to totally forget the incident. Rather, it should be to heal. You know you are healed when you are able to think of or talk about the incident without profound emotion.

Learn about traumatic stress. You need facts about what you are going through. Get a book on traumatic stress. Through reading you will feel less abnormal and learn way to assist in your recovery.

SOCIAL SUPPORT OF FAMILY, COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS

Many people react to psychological trauma by keeping it inside. Often the trauma may seem so great that life seems meaningless. By withdrawing, you keep yourself in the dark causing the incident to become larger than life. Though you may need some time alone, eventually get talking.

SATISFYING EXPRESSION OF SELF AND SPIRITUALITY

Do the things that you love to do and find ways of fulfilling your feelings of self worth outside of the job. Balance home life, recreation and work. Care for yourself and your family, your spouse, your friends and yourself. Seek your

spiritual centre. Talk to spiritual leaders and seek guidance.

Being an Emergency 9-1-1 dispatcher is more than a job, it is a calling. Those brave and empathetic enough to answer 9-1-1 calls everyday need to be thanked way more often than they are. So I say, thank you for always being there. You make a difference. Be well and stay safe.

Definitions

Burnout: a state of emotional, mental and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. As stress continues, you begin to lose the interest or motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place.⁷

Compassion Fatigue: a state experienced by those helping people in distress; it is an extreme state of tension and pre-occupation with the suffering of those being helped to the degree that it is traumatizing for the helper.⁸

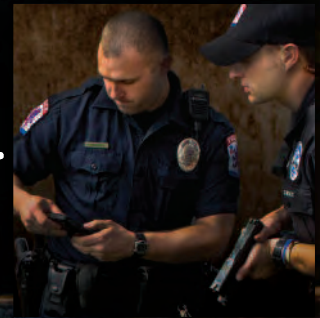
Critical Incident Stress: a natural reaction of a normal person to an extremely abnormal situation. It may manifest itself as physical, cognitive, and emotional response that may be experienced almost immediately or may be delayed by days, weeks or months.⁹

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A debilitating condition that often follows a terrifying physical or emotional event causing the person who survived the event to have persistent, frightening thoughts and memories, or flashbacks of the ordeal. Persons with PTSD often feel chronically, emotionally numb. Once referred to as "shell shock" or "battle fatigue."¹⁰



Resources

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