

DIVISION OF POLICE

Wireless E-911

Description

The Henrico County Emergency Communications Center began answering wireless E-911 calls in June 2000. The State Police had previously answered these calls, however State legislation was enacted, which mandated localities to begin answering the wireless E-911 calls. The Emergency Communications Center answers all emergency and non-emergency calls for service and dispatches the appropriate unit; police, fire, or emergency medical service, to the location of the call. The emergency communications operators spend more time processing a wireless call than they spend processing a wireline E-911 call. Some of the unique problems of a wireless call are a limited ability to determine the exact caller location and the uncertainty of being able to reconnect with the caller if they are disconnected.

Objectives

- To answer the wireless call and collect information from the wireless caller to allow for location identification.
- To dispatch appropriate emergency or non-emergency unit to the location of the call for service.

Budget Highlights

Henrico began receiving funding from the State Wireless Board to pay for the cost of receiving wireless E-911 calls in FY1999-00. The funding is provided from the State E-911 Cellular Tax, \$0.75 per month charged to each cellular phone, and distributed to localities through the State Wireless Board. In 2006, the General Assembly approved a change in the method of distributing the revenue collected. In the approved legislation, 60% of the revenue collected from the \$0.75 monthly fee is distributed to the localities. The distribution from the State Wireless Board to each locality is based on the cost to operate the localities emergency communications center as well as the call load of the center.

As the number of cell phones continues to increase the number of emergency calls being made from cell phones is increasing. Cell phones provide a quick, easy, and efficient means of reporting traffic accidents and other emergencies, which do not always occur near a landline phone. As the performance measures indicate, the number of E-911 calls received from cell phones is increasing at a faster rate than the number of wireline emergency and non-emergency calls received by the emergency communications center.

Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY08 Actual	FY09 Original	FY10 Approved	Change 09 to 10
Personnel	\$ 552,312	\$ 635,791	\$ 798,284	25.6%
Operation	162,434	149,254	149,254	0.0%
Capital	56,593	0	0	0.0%
Total	<u>\$ 771,339</u>	<u>\$ 785,045</u>	<u>\$ 947,538</u>	<u>20.7%</u>
Personnel Complement*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Fourteen Communications Officers are included in the Police General Fund Complement.

Wireless E-911 (cont'd)

	Performance Measures			Change 09 to 10
	FY08	FY09	FY10	
Workload Measures				
Wireless 911 Calls Received	107,475	112,849	118,491	5,642
Percentage Wireless 911 Calls to Total 911 Calls Received	62.52%	65.65%	68.93%	3.28%
Percentage Wireless 911 Calls to Total Calls (Emergency & Non-emergency) Received	21.18%	22.13%	23.12%	0.99%

The Wireless E-911 budget for FY2009-10 totals \$947,538, representing an overall increase of \$162,493 or 20.7 percent from the previous approved budget. This increase is driven solely by the transfer of three Communication Officers from the Division of Police's Communications Division within the General Fund, which impacted the personnel component by \$161,475. This movement reflects the need for additional officers to support the Wireless E-911 effort. The approved budget for FY2009-10 includes funding for personnel and benefits for Communications Officers, maintenance costs for mapping and verbal response software as well as telecommunications costs associated with the emergency communication center's ability to handle wireless calls.

Beginning with the 2005-06 approved budget, the number of communications officers funded with the allocation from the State Wireless Board was increased from three to eleven. The increase was based on the anticipated revenue from the State

Wireless Board and the anticipated stability of the revenue distributions to the localities. Due to the continued stability of this revenue source, three additional Communications Officers are being funded by Wireless E-911 revenues in FY2009-10, which brings the total number of officers funded by this revenue source to fourteen.

As previously stated a new distribution formula was approved in the 2006 General Assembly session. Under this formula, localities receive sixty percent of the revenue after allocations to two State agencies, the Division of Public Safety Communications (DPSC) and Virginia Geographical Information Network (VGIN). These two State agencies directly support wireless E-911. Based on information provided by the Wireless Board, prior to this change, the localities were receiving forty-eight percent of the revenue collected, so the change has been beneficial to localities. Having said this, the County will continue to conservatively project the amount of Wireless E-911 revenues received from the State in FY2009-10.