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A Study of Dispatchers' Perceptions of
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**CONTEXTUAL DISEQUILIBRIUM:
A STUDY OF DISPATCHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
JOB RELATED TRAINING FACTORS**

by

Dennis Michael Payne

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
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ABSTRACT

CONTEXTUAL DISEQUILIBRIUM: A STUDY OF DISPATCHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF JOB RELATED TRAINING FACTORS

by

Dennis Michael Payne

The primary purpose of this study was to identify and describe job relevant training factors that emergency dispatchers in Michigan perceive as necessary for doing their work effectively. The first objective was to provide a list job related training elements for a Michigan State Police training program.

A secondary purpose of this study was to identify personality, skill and ability, and attitudinal variables that effective dispatchers possess. The objective was to provide the Michigan State Police with job related selection criteria and a revised dispatcher position description based on the results of this study.

Data collection involved four distinct components: a review of American and British literature, a considerable number of personal interviews with Michigan dispatchers, a mailed self-report critical incident technique to State Police dispatchers, and a mailed survey instrument. The survey instrument was administered to the population of state police dispatchers, a sample of state police troopers and sergeants, and a sample from the all other Michigan dispatchers.

An overall response rate of 68% was obtained with the survey instrument. Univariate and bivariate techniques were used in the analysis portion of the study. Numerous training variables were identified based on the survey data. The survey instrument was an outgrowth of the results from the critical incident technique.

Several personality, attitudinal, and skill and ability variables were identified. Organizational issues were also identified that may be useful to administrators in reducing dispatcher dysfunctions due to perceptions of role conflicts between dispatchers and sworn personnel.

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DEDICATION

**To my wife of thirty years, Jan -- for her patience,
support, encouragement, and constant challenge to move forward.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A great many people have assisted me with the completion of this research. The efforts of some of these people deserve special mention. I wish to thank Colonel Ritchie T. Davis and the men and women of the Michigan State Police whose support and cooperation made this this work possible. I wish to thank in particular the dispatchers of the state police and the two hundred and five other law enforcement agencies who took the time and effort to assist in this endeavor.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Research Problem

This research is undertaken to assist the Michigan Department of State Police in 1) the development of a dispatcher training program, 2) to clarify selection criteria for dispatchers, and 3) to aid them in constructing a job relevant position description. Several months ago members of the state police contacted the Director of the School of Criminal Justice and the researcher and asked for assistance in the development of a training program for their dispatchers. Those officials felt that training of their dispatchers was a central issue in Michigan, and for several reasons they wanted to have a program that was job relevant.

Primary Concerns for Research

Act 32 of the Public Acts of 1986 , The Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act, was passed by the legislature on March 16, 1986. That act provides for the expansion of the 911 systems in Michigan. The officials anticipated that their department, as well as other law enforcement agencies, will experience a demand for new dispatchers. They wished to be ready with appropriate training. They also indicated that they were not comfortable proceeding in the hiring process until they had a clearer

understanding of the job of the dispatcher, assurances that the selection procedure was in line with the job requirements, and that a job-relevant position description was in place.

In the past dispatcher training was a hit or miss situation and training was provided based on grants being provided or when funds were made available internally. The position of dispatcher has evolved over the years and they felt that the dispatcher of today works in a far more complex environment than former dispatchers.

In addition to the estimated growth in the dispatcher roles, the study is timely for other reasons. For the past several months the state police have been studying the feasibility of placing their desk sergeants on the road as shift supervisors. Currently the sergeants are assigned to the various post as desk officers and dispatchers. As such they are considered shift supervisors. If a dispatcher has a problem he or she can turn to the sergeant who is working in the post for guidance, clarification, or assistance. Once the sergeants are assigned to road patrol duties as shift supervisors of the troopers, the dispatcher will have to be more independent. Though a dispatcher can still reach a sergeant by telephone or radio, for practical purposes, the dispatcher will have to be more knowledgeable and self-sufficient.

In the more remote areas of the state where there are no dispatch supervisors, self-sufficiency will be more critical. The requirements for greater dispatcher effectiveness has become crucial to the overall mission of the department.

The State Police have expressed other concerns. They felt that the

current position description for dispatchers that is used by civil service is not an accurate description of the job in that it does not reflect the responsibility or complexity of the job. The current position description is that of a Communications Clerk IV. The State Police feel that the inaccurate position descriptions cause additional problems in the selection process. Prior to this time, the training of dispatchers has not been based on a valid assessment of the job itself, but was based on what most people thought was necessary.

Other concerns expressed included the possibility of civil liabilities arising from the charges of negligent hiring and negligent training. The overall concern may be viewed as a desire to have their dispatchers trained to be as effective as possible. This perceived ineffectiveness is seen as having negative impacts on citizen safety, officer safety, and overall organizational effectiveness. If a dispatcher misinterprets incoming information from a calling citizen because of a lack of awareness, an officer's or a citizen's safety could be compromised.

At this time, when the state police call civil service for a list of candidates, they are given a list of names that appear on the current Communications Clerk IV list. The criterion for being on that list is primarily two years of typing experience. This poses many problems for those in the selection process.

According to the officials, if any change is to take place in the classification of the dispatchers, civil service staff must be convinced that the police dispatcher is something more than a person with two years of typing experience. To address these problems the study will examine dispatching in

Michigan in general and specifically determine the training needs of the Michigan State Police dispatchers. Because there is utility in developing training programs for other agencies, a secondary purpose of the study is to determine the training needs of other agency dispatchers, and determine whether those needs are the same or different as those of the state police.

The state police have taken a leadership role in training other dispatchers. As part of this overall determination, an attempt will be made to discover whether certain environmental factors contribute to or hinder effective dispatching. Examples of such factors include organizational training programs, perceptions of dispatchers toward officers and supervisors and vice versa. The overall goal of the state police in regard to dispatching is to obtain dispatcher effectiveness. In this regard, attention will be given to the discovery of the personality traits, attitudes, skills, abilities, knowledge bases, and organizational issues that dispatchers identify as related to effective dispatching.

Anticipated Outcome of the Research

The state police have requested three products. First, they wish to know what training elements will be required to develop effective dispatchers and, after the identification of those elements, they have requested the development of a job relevant training program. The findings of the research will dictate the form of the training. Such a training program may be pre-service, in-service, or a combination of both.

Second, they have requested the identification of appropriate selection criteria to be used in the selection of new dispatchers. Third, they request

the development of a position description which is based on the job as it is being performed by effective dispatchers.

Purpose of the Study

Theoretical and Political Concerns

In addition to the practical and organizational concerns within the state police, there are other concerns that motivate the research that can be identified according to five broad categories. Those categories are concerns that are legal, ethical, labor oriented, political, and community oriented.

Legal Concerns

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, has been described by some as the nation's grievance procedure. Title 42 of the U.S. Code, Section 1983 provides a means for a citizen to obtain remedy when wronged by employees of governmental agencies. Under this act, if a person is wronged and deprived of some constitutionally guaranteed right or privilege, and if it can be shown that the act or omission of a government employee was a result of a lack of training, the citizen may sue for damages. Under the principle of negligent training an officer, a dispatcher, a supervisor, or the agency may be held liable for certain acts or for failing to act.

Dispatchers must make decisions that affect the public safety on a daily basis. Placing a person in such a position without proper training could place the person and the agency in a legally vulnerable position.

Ethical Concerns

A police department 's ability to respond the public's demand for services, particularly emergency services, is dependent upon an effective communications capability. Dispatchers are key players in the communications operation of any law enforcement agency. To knowingly allow a dispatcher, without appropriate training, to work in such a critical position may cause them and the public harm. Accepting a person into a job on the basis of an erroneous job description can cause undue stress upon that individual. Such conditions may also increase anxiety, add to job stress, and are unfair to the person in that job. To knowingly cause harm is egregiously unethical. Providing proper training programs for dispatchers, based on accurate assessments of the job and realistic position descriptions, ensures that the calling public receives the best possible service in regards to police response. To do otherwise is unethical. When a department states an expressed goal to obtain effectiveness, such as dispatching, then certain rights and duties of the parties involved derive from that goal statement. These derived rights and duties are in the realm of applied ethics.

Labor Relations Concerns

Discipline and employee performance ratings are of key interest to union officials and management. A supervisor is hard pressed to insure accountability of subordinates unless there are accurate position descriptions to guide employees and their supervisors. Under such conditions the written performance ratings and other administrative actions become ambiguous.

Should the Department of Civil Service decide to create a new job

classification as a result of this work, it is conceivable that those in the new classification may not be represented by their current union.

Communications Clerks IV are now represented by the United Auto Workers. Such a reclassification could require the removal of newly classified dispatchers from that bargaining unit. The union, as a political institution, would undoubtedly resist such a move and fight for retention of its membership.

Political Concerns

It is a reasonable assumption that enhanced dispatcher training and recognition could lead to a demand from within the dispatcher ranks for some form of state certification. Some states are now beginning to require such certification with minimum training standards. Michigan does not have such minimum standards. Certification is a common topic at dispatcher meetings and is frequently highlighted in their national publications.

State police staff report that the Michigan Law Enforcement Officers Training Council (MLEOTC) has discussed certification or licensing for radio operators and dispatchers in the past. If licensing or certification does take place it can be anticipated that there will be a demand for higher salaries in line with an enhanced image. Under such conditions enabling jurisdictions could be faced with realignment of their budgets. Such competition for scarce resources is a political issue.

Dispatcher training is immersed in the issue of 911 dispatching. There is always the possibility of political turf battles between different departments because each agency in a county can make its own determination of what

role it wishes to play in dispatching. Some agencies may discover budgetary efficiencies by belonging to a county-wide system. Other departments may find it more efficient to have their own dispatchers and choose not to join the county-wide 911 plan.

Community Concerns

A major area of concern among police administrators across the country is the topic of police community relations. Generally, the dispatcher is the person who makes the first contact with the public calling the police. A dispatcher who may be ineffective for any number of reasons could seriously damage the state of existing community relations.

Summary of Concerns

Any strategy to upgrade the quality of telephone and radio operator relations with the public must focus on the operator's sensitivity and professionalism. It has been suggested elsewhere that the minimum elements necessary for such include 1) better selection procedures, 2) improved training, and 3) the restructuring of the job to enhance the pay, status, and productive contribution of the radio dispatcher to police operations.

Other Issues

If the results of this study indicate that there is a training void in dispatching, other organizational problems could surface. A person not

properly trained or not qualified, in a decision making position such as dispatching, could lead to liability for the agency when harm comes to someone as a result of their work. Organizations that select and accept persons for such a job based on an inaccurate job descriptions frequently find that the incumbent suffers stress. This condition often leads to frequent turnover and it is inefficient.

If physical or psychological harm occurs with the knowledge of such deficiencies, the action is unethical. Because the concepts of goals, individual rights, and duties of dispatchers, citizens, and officers are also interwoven into this research, the research takes on an ethical dimension.

Basic Assumptions

An underlying assumption of this study, determined after several conversations with dispatchers, is that the world in which the police and the police dispatcher work and interact is one system.

The system works most effectively when the officers and the dispatchers perceive things, conditions, problems, police incidents, and proper responses in similar ways. Another assumption is that there is a misunderstanding and lack of appreciation of each others' role among dispatchers and the police officers they dispatch. It is proposed that police officers view the internal organizational environment of dispatching differently from those who work in that role.

It is also assumed that the dispatchers may not see the external environment of street police work in the same way as the officer views his or her work world. If there is a contextual disequilibrium among

dispatchers then it is possible for dispatchers to misinterpret demands for service from the public, fail to identify critical propositions in a caller's message, and assign officers to calls that do not accurately portray the problem being reported. If such conditions exist the results are not only ineffective, but could lead to dangerous situations for the officer and the citizen alike.

A training program based on the real world of dispatching and policing, as determined from the effective handling of critical incidents, appears to be a means of bridging the gap, if one exists, between perception and fact for dispatchers. Knowing more of what a police officer's duties entail and what their responses are, as well as an awareness of the knowledge and concepts officers use to make decisions, should improve contextual understandings.

If changes are warranted, those changes should provide for better informed decision making by the dispatchers. If the results of this study indicate that there is a training void, other organizational problems could be present. A person not properly trained or not qualified, who is placed in such a decision making position, could lead to liability for the agency. Organizations that select persons based on inaccurate job descriptions frequently find that the incumbents suffer from stress and such conditions can account for absence or an increase in turnover. Turnover is costly and inefficient. When organizationally derived, physical or psychological harm to such incumbents is unethical.

Definition of Effectiveness in Dispatching

Effectiveness is described as producing an intended or expected result.

Effectiveness may also refer to producing a striking impression. The concept of effectiveness is a complex phenomena that implies the skillful use of energy or industry to accomplish a desired result. It is efficient when it is done with little waste or effort.

A major factor, in determining dispatcher effectiveness, must refer to the nature of the work. Included within this definition, is the capacity to prevent injury or reduce injury to the officers that are dispatched, and the citizens who have made the demands for police services. Matching the response to the nature of the demand for service is also descriptive of effectiveness.

The primary purpose of using the critical incident technique was to identify the variables that would be used to operationalize effectiveness as perceived by those who are performing the job of dispatching. The context used is the reported critical incident. Those incidents were determined by the dispatchers and reflect their own experiences.

The operationalization is the process of determining what the specific empirical observations are ascribed to as indicators of the attributes contained in the concept of effectiveness. This complex term is believed to contain demonstrations of certain attributes and possession of certain skills and abilities. Among those that were observed in conversations with dispatchers were:

- 1. Preparedness to do the job without negative impacts on the system.**
- 2. Ability to work in a high pressure environment without negative reactions.**

3. **Ability to receive and obtain critical information and prepare the appropriate police response.**
4. **Ability to discern critical and dangerous elements in a caller's message.**
5. **Ability to remain calm in the face of excited callers and transmit this calmness and objectivity to the caller in order to obtain maximum information.**
6. **Ability to discern propositions in the call content in order to be able to determine when safety is an issue.**
7. **Possession of technical skills on the radio, the computer, and other equipment.**
8. **Ability to know when and how to take control of complex situations.**
9. **Ability to make logical decisions based on the information obtained.**

Meaning of Variable Groups

The survey instrument included three primary groups of variables that have been characterized as 1) training variables, 2) personality variables, and 3) organizational issue variables.

Training variables describe specific knowledge of police related subjects that respondents felt were descriptive of effective dispatchers. They may be related to a specific subject such as "Effective dispatchers understand criminal law" or they may be related to an awareness of a particular procedure such as "Effective dispatchers understand the Michigan blockade procedure".

Personality variables describe personality characteristics, personal

skills, or abilities that respondents felt were descriptive of effective dispatchers. They may be related to a specific skill such as " Effective dispatchers have good interpersonal skills" or personality characteristics like " Effective dispatchers are compassionate to callers".

Organizational issue variables describe the respondent's relationships with others within the organization and the strength and meaning of such relationships between organizational members or between the dispatcher and the organization. The variables include role perception and relative position within the organization. They may be related to the organization such as "A dispatcher's position description is an accurate picture of what a dispatcher does" or they may be related to persons such as "Police officers understand the dispatcher's role".

In addition to these primary variables demographic variables were also included in the survey instrument for purposes of analysis.

Hypotheses

1. Null

There is no significant difference in perceptions between sworn and civilian respondents of the training requirements for effective dispatchers.

Alternate

There is a significant difference in perceptions between sworn and civilian respondents of the training requirements for effective dispatchers.

2. **Null**

There is no significant difference in perceptions between sworn and civilian respondents of the necessary personal characteristics possessed by effective dispatchers.

Alternate

There is a significant difference in perceptions between sworn and civilian respondents of the necessary personal characteristics possessed by effective dispatchers.

3. **Null**

There is no significant difference in perceptions between sworn and civilian respondents of organizational issues related to dispatching.

Alternate

There is a significant difference in perceptions between sworn and civilian respondents of organizational issues related to dispatching.

Research Questions

In addition to the hypotheses being tested the data also indicate other broad questions. The answers to these questions may have an impact on improving overall dispatcher effectiveness by identifying appropriate subject matter for a training program and identifying organizational issues that can be addressed by management in order to reduce role conflicts or structural problems that may be present.

1. **What variables do respondents identify as the appropriate training requirements for effective dispatchers?**

2. **What skills, abilities, and knowledge do respondents identify as indicative of effective dispatchers?**
3. **What personality variables do respondents identify as descriptive of effective dispatchers?**
4. **What organizational variables do respondents identify as related to effective dispatching?**
5. **Do the position descriptions of dispatchers accurately reflect the job that dispatchers perform?**
6. **What organizational changes could be made to improve dispatcher effectiveness?**
7. **Are there differences in role perceptions between the dispatcher and officer respondents of the police agencies studied?**
8. **Are there differences in perceptions between the dispatcher and officer respondents in regard to the personality attributes of effective dispatchers?**
9. **Do dispatcher and officer respondents differ in their perceptions regarding organizational and environmental issues?**
10. **Do dispatcher respondents, regardless of their department of assignment, tend to agree or disagree regarding training factors, personality factors, and organizational issues?**
11. **Are there significant differences in the perceptions of respondents that can be attributed to demographic variables?**
12. **What is the training profile of the samples of dispatchers?**
13. **If disequilibrium exists, what organizational changes should be made to address the problem?**

State Police Concerns that Drive the Research

There are four other concerns that drive the research. 1) the passage of Act 32 of 1986, 2) conflicts with dispatcher selection policy, 3) the potential for implementation of the state police shift commander study, and 4) the issue of whether or not dispatchers are supervisors due to the nature of their job.

Public Act 32 of 1986

This study is not focused on 911 or Central Dispatching, but on the dispatchers themselves. Some of those dispatchers may work in a 911 system. Because new legislation has been passed that may result in an increase of the number of dispatchers in Michigan, the concept of 911 becomes relevant. The State Police request for a dispatcher training program was predicated, in part, on the passage of this new legislation.

Act 32 of the Public Acts of 1986, the Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act, became law on March 16, 1986. That act established the procedures for the establishment of county-wide 911 emergency telephone services. It also allows for funding for the restructuring of the telephone system to be passed on to the consumer. Funding for upgrading current dispatch centers is not included in the act. Those costs must be borne by the agencies that are involved in 911 services.

A Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) must be approved by the County Board of Commissioners. The PSAP may be a city or township police

department, a sheriff department, or a state police post. Departments may also combine in a county to form one PSAP. The PSAP refers to a communications facility operated or answered on a twenty-four hour basis that is assigned the responsibility by a public agency or county to receive 911 calls, and to directly dispatch emergency response services, or to transfer or relay 911 calls to other public service agencies.

A PSAP is the first point of reception for a 911 call and may serve its jurisdiction or other participating jurisdictions. Police officials anticipate that a statewide growth of the dispatching function may occur as a result of the enactment and implementation of this act.

The Director of the Michigan State Police has indicated that he is willing to have his department be a PSAP in any county. He has indicated his willingness to house the facility and staff it with dispatchers and supervisory personnel in areas outside cities, villages, and townships. The Director has also agreed to consider cities, villages and townships, if they choose to combine, and if they have the support of their public safety officials, as an option to be included in the county-wide PSAP.

This system is designed for emergency calls. Administrative calls to the police agencies are to be handled by the agencies directly. The calls for emergency services will be handled using the closest car concept. The laying of new telephone lines and maintenance costs are to be borne in part by the users and will cause an increase in telephone bills.

If the legislature feels that the State Police have a role in dispatching statewide, on a county by county basis, then a strong demand will exist for new state police dispatchers. If this demand does not surface, a need for

training of state police and other dispatchers still exists. The staff in charge of the state police dispatchers are of the opinion that the dispatchers currently employed may not be appropriately trained. Under a grant from the Office of Criminal Justice the State Police have trained about 500 dispatchers statewide. That is one third of the total.

Political battles over funding, recognition, and power are nothing new in government. The concept of 911 provides an opportunity for recognition and visibility. To avoid jurisdictional in-fighting each central dispatch center that is formed will be required to come under the umbrella of a governing board on the county level. The legislation requires that the "closest car concept" be used by those agencies involved in 911. Several safeguards have been included in the legislation to avoid improper implementation. The implementation procedure includes the development of a Tentative 911 Service Plan, a County Board Review, Public Hearings, Notification to Agencies Involved, and Final Adoption Procedures. A copy of a tentative 911 service plan and a copy of Act 32 is included in the appendix.

Selection Conflicts

State police officials also report that the hiring process for their department is further complicated because civil service requires that the department use the current Communications Clerk IV list from which to draw applicants for the dispatcher job. The classification of communications clerk refers to persons with two years of typing experience. It is the feeling of the state police officials that the job of dispatcher is more complicated

than that of communications clerks and requires more than just two years of typing experience.

State officials requested this study of the dispatching function on the basis of complexity of the job and the critical nature of the job in order to obtain realistic selection criteria, a job relevant position description, and recommendations for training programs based on the needs of the job.

Those in the supervisory position over the dispatchers feel that the state can provide uniform training for dispatchers once it has learned the training needs of the dispatcher position. There may be political concerns on the local, county, or state level for recognition in regards to 911 and central dispatching. Those political entities with the designation of PSAP will no doubt require a greater number of dispatchers. It is suggested by officials that in those counties where there are several answering points, the likelihood is that the county will choose a central dispatch configuration. It is conceivable that in some of the smaller departments that some dispatcher positions will be disposed of. Those who have the training and necessary skills could possibly be absorbed into the larger departments. Those who do not have the skills and training may not.

State Police Shift Commander Study

During the time that this study was being discussed and formulated, state police officials performed a study on the role of the state police shift commander. That position is that of a sergeant in the state police. A final combined report was submitted to the Commanding Officer of the State Police Uniform Division on August 31, 1987. It was the combined report of

the Shift Commander Position Review Advisory Committee and the Sergeant's Role Implementation Task Force. The work of that joint group evolved from a Sergeant's Role Quality Circle that was organized to offer recommendations that would make the shift commander's position more personally satisfying and challenging while attaining departmental objectives.

There are several interesting insights in that report in regards to the role of shift commanders, however they will not be taken up in this study. There are also many elements in that study which impact on the role of the dispatchers and emphasize the need for taking a closer look at the dispatchers and their training. It should be noted that the supervision of the officers on the road by the sergeants is only one of several initiatives that have been implemented. A result of a survey instituted by the state police reveals that the Michigan State Police is the only state police organization in the country that does not assign at least a portion of the supervisor's time to field supervision.

Impact of the Study on Dispatching

Among the changes that impact on the dispatcher are several recommendations to expand the role of the shift supervisor by including supervision of field personnel. On the recommendations of those committees and task forces, sergeants at two selected state police posts are currently piloting this method of road supervision by sergeants. Several action steps in the study have a direct impact on the role and training of dispatchers.

Action Step 3A is designed as a provision for support to ensure shift

commander effectiveness. This step recommends redefining the Communications Clerk IV job description to create a position capable of relieving the shift commander of dispatching, clerical, routine administrative duties, and capable of staffing the desk in the absence of an enlisted officer. In order to relieve the shift commander of dispatching and clerical duties, he or she must be replaced by a well qualified person capable of performing these tasks in an acceptable manner. The authors of the report recommend that where the work load allows, the communications clerk could fulfill the need for a secretary and dispatcher, thus eliminating the need for part-time secretarial staff. An example of this is found in the smaller or medium size posts. At the busier posts work loads may demand that these functions remain separate.

Action Step 3B recommends providing in-service training to current communications clerks which would provide knowledge, skills, and abilities to broaden their job duties. It states that in order to work independently of direct supervision, the communications clerks must have general knowledge of criminal and civil laws, the motor vehicle code, sufficient knowledge of standard police procedures to respond to emergencies involving life threatening situations, and requests for emergency responses. The dispatchers must possess skills in screening calls, obtaining appropriate information about incidents, determining action to be taken, and dispatching necessary personnel. Such persons will also receive the incoming calls. The recommendation notes that the communications clerk described within the proposal must possess a higher level of knowledge and skill than is presently required of departmental radio operators.

Action Step 3D recommends designing secure work sites where communicators will be required to work alone. Another recommendation is that the position of shift commander be expanded to include mandatory field supervision of officers assigned to patrol and or investigative duties. The committee felt strongly that the supervisors must be in a position to interact with their troopers on a daily basis.

Among several alternative options available to the state police, should they adopt the concept of road supervision entirely, are limited hours of post operation and remoting calls to larger posts, transfer of calls to 911 centers where they exist, and to analyze and redeploy current full time employee positions such as secretaries and radio operators. These FTE positions would replace the uniform sergeant on the desk on either a part time or full time basis , MSP Combined Report (1987).

A person in the job of communications clerk (dispatcher) without the necessary training and skills cannot provide an appropriate response or evaluate the scope or nature of a police problem. In the absence of proper training such conditions could lead to no response, an improper response, or an untimely response by the police. The state police recognize the need to determine the proper role and proper training to avoid such situations.

The focus on dispatcher training within the state police may lead to a demand for a classification change and salary increases. This emphasis on dispatchers may lead to a demand from the dispatchers for certification. Enabling political decision makers may be faced with a restructuring of financial resources within their communities and the competition for scarce

resources among their community agencies, if they should follow suit of the state police in this endeavor.

Historical Positions

Traditionally the troopers have been on the road on patrol and the sergeants, formerly corporals, have been stationed at the posts as desk officers. The terms desk officer and shift supervisor are synonymous. Those positions involved answering the phone, handling walk-in traffic, dispatching cars, and monitoring and supervising the patrol force from that distance. Over the past several years several administrative tasks have been added to the job of sergeant.

For several years, troopers in the state police on general patrol have received their supervision in an "after the fact" manner. Once assigned to their patrol area and once assigned complaints to investigate, the officer left the post and performed their duties with very little oversight. The sergeants remained at the posts to handle the radio, phone traffic and other duties. When a trooper's shift ended the officer made out the necessary reports and left. The sergeants reviewed their written work after the fact. Under conditions of a most serious nature sergeants did, from time to time, go to the scene to provide a level of supervision. This practice was an exception and not the rule. For several years most of the metropolitan police agencies have had sergeants on the road assigned to beat or patrol areas. Though that was not one on one supervision, none the less, they were out there and available to their officers to provide supervision when required.

At posts where dispatchers are assigned, the sergeant is available to those handling the function of call reception or dispatcher for advise and

guidance. At first the sergeants handled the phone calls and gave the proper information to the dispatcher. Over time and in the face of added duties the sergeants did less telephone answering and the job was relegated to the dispatcher. If a decision is made to assign the sergeants to the road on a regular basis the dispatchers at the posts will require greater self sufficiency and will no doubt be making more decisions in the absence of the sergeant. Though the sergeant will be available by radio or telephone, in practice many decisions that are currently turned over to the sergeant will be made independently. If the shift commanders are assigned to the road function in posts that do not have dispatchers, that change will require hiring of new dispatchers to fill the void. This planned change in staffing pattern of state police posts is another reason to insure that the dispatchers have the proper job relevant training.

Propositions from Shift Commander Study

1. Relevant training, when identified through job analysis, can provide a more uniform level of service to the public and the dispatched officer by reducing the opportunity for misinterpretation of calls and their importance.
2. Dispatchers, who are in a primary control position, require an understanding of the knowledge bases of the police context.
3. Dispatchers who are not appropriately trained learn the details of the police context and police operation second hand and through job exposure.

Formal Dispatcher Training in Other States

Moylan (1983) contacted seven other states that were reasonable comparisons to Michigan. The criteria for determining the comparison states were not reported. The role of the dispatcher in each of those states was essentially the same as Michigan. The general job description included computer terminal operation, telephone complaint handling, and operation of the radio system.

The states that were queried were Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York, Wisconsin, Utah, and California. Other than Ohio, Utah, and Michigan all of the states provide their dispatchers with a training program varying from twenty-four to forty hours in length. None of the reporting states had training standards for dispatchers. It was concluded that all of the states were beginning to look at the overall effectiveness of training based on their perceptions of the future needs of dispatching work.

Are Dispatchers Supervisors?

Dispatchers when asked to describe their duties in the contexts of critical incidents frequently refer to controlling the conversation between them and the callers. This control is used so that the dispatcher can be sure to obtain case-critical information, to be able to calm those that are excited, and to be assured that the information they need is obtained in the event of a disconnect with the caller.

Dispatchers, after making decisions regarding the type of call and the type of response that is required, dispatch cars and then assist by obtaining further information relative to the incident or procure other support services

for the responding police officer. This process often gets very complex. It may require other cars being assigned as back up, forwarding information on serious matters to supervisors, calling other departments for assistance, and as cited in the critical incidents, keeping persons on the line and obtaining information regarding what the person is doing or where a gunman is hiding and so forth.

In the years prior to the prevalent use of civilian dispatchers police officers were the dispatchers. In the state police, the desk corporal was the dispatcher, and as a person operating the radio and dispatching cars to calls, was also the shift supervisor. The command and control philosophy of that department stated that when the "desk man" spoke it was the voice of the department. Cars could be assigned, disengaged, reassigned and given direction by the police dispatcher. From time to time, in the absence of the corporal, seasoned officers were assigned to the radio position. In the East Lansing Headquarters of the state police, the Operations Desk operated as the voice of the commissioner. The supervision of operations was staffed with a sergeant, but the dispatching to the posts was done by civilian radio operators. To ensure consistency, it was made clear to the entire agency that operations was a command and control center for the entire department, regardless of who was doing the talking on the radio.

There was an organizational mind set in police agencies that if one were dispatched to a crime scene or a call for service, that this was tantamount to an order from a superior officer. If that dispatcher was in fact an officer of equal or lesser rank to the responder, the fact that he was on the desk negated the differences because he was acting in a supervisory capacity.

In many other police agencies police officer dispatchers were also common. The change from police officer to civilian dispatchers came about because of several conditions. Cost considerations and increased demand for police services were chief among the reasons for the switch from police to civilian dispatchers. While not commonly public, there was some resistance from officers in being dispatched by civilians. This was undoubtedly a carry over from their previous experiences and the mind set of earlier years as stated by V.A. Leonard (1938).

Police officers from the Detroit Police department for example, took issue with the use of civilians to dispatch officers. The officer's felt that if they were to be properly protected, they needed an experienced police officer to interpret the calls properly. The key issue was whether or not the civilians were in fact in a supervisory position over the officers.

The Taft-Hartley Act definition of supervisors was used to settle the matter. The prevailing viewpoint is that it matters little if a civilian dispatcher is doing the job as long as there is a police supervisor present to guide them in police matters. Personal presence is not necessary but what matters is that a police supervisor is readily available. That availability may be by radio or by telephone. The Taft-Hartley Act definition for a supervisor is found in the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 as amended by the Labor Management Reporting Disclosure Act of 1959. Section 2 (II) states:

The term "supervisor" means any individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay-off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward or discipline other employees, or responsibility to direct them or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing exercise

of such authority is not a merely routine or clerical nature, but requires the use of independent judgment."

According to the Taft-Hartley definition dispatchers are not in fact supervisors. One who is not familiar with the police structure, after reviewing what dispatchers do in the course of handling critical incidents, could conclude that many of their tasks are close to directing. They do exercise a good deal of independent judgment. Controlling and taking control of situations does not mean that they have supervisory control over the officer's that are dispatched. Functional supervision, decision making, and use of discretion is not the same as supervision in the sense of Taft-Hartley.

Independent judgments are made by dispatchers. The dispatcher receiving a call from the public must effectively listen and understand the concepts being reported. They must often calm the caller and they must also establish the credibility of the caller. After gathering case-relevant information they must determine if further information is needed to make an informed decision on the nature of the call as well as the proper response that is appropriate. In those cases where, in the opinion of the dispatcher, a police response is not necessary, the dispatcher must advise the caller of other resources available to handle their problem.

If a decision is made to send a car, the dispatcher must decide what car to send, how many to send, if a back-up car is required, if a supervisor should be called, and what,if any, other resources are necessary. Those resources may be ambulances, fire trucks, wreckers, other agencies, or special services such as crime lab personnel, detectives, or special weapons teams.

Dispatchers are not supervisors. Some of the work that they do often resembles supervision, but in fact they speak for the agency or the on-duty shift supervisor. They may transmit guidance from the supervisor, but do not initiate such orders. They may transmit policy or procedures when appropriate, but they do not possess the authority to censure.

Confusion over whether dispatchers are supervisors may evolve from the historical position of dispatcher. Those positions were in fact supervisory when the position was held by the sergeant or officer acting as supervisor in the sergeant's absence. As long as a supervisor is available there should be no confusion over the issue. A more precise definition of the position of dispatcher might be team member.

Historically, only seasoned officers dispatched the patrols on their assignments. As members of quasi-military organizations, police officers may have problems in relating to dispatchers because of their organizational mind set on the formal chain of command and the functional positions occupied by dispatchers. Dysfunctional interpretations such as these can be overcome by involving the dispatchers in meetings with officers and clarifying the dispatcher's role in police training programs. Part of the problem may be that dispatchers were originally hired to reduce costs by replacing officers in order to have more officers on the street. Placing additional duties on the sergeants has also complicated the issue.

CHAPTER 2

Conceptual Framework

Disequilibrium between Contexts

Over a period of several months dispatchers were asked to comment on their work environment, their perceptions related to their work, the problems they encountered, the training necessary to be effective, and in a general way, where they felt they fit into the police system. Many were asked in free flowing discussions at their training sessions to comment on what they believed made a dispatcher effective or ineffective. In addition to this exposure, several hours of tapes from a state police dispatch center were reviewed. The feedback from these sources was noted and evaluated in order to get a sense of dispatching and to discover a logical way of looking at the phenomenon of emergency dispatching. This was done to determine what training was appropriate for dispatchers.

It was concluded that dissatisfaction, frustration and concern existed among dispatchers and a good deal of the problem evolved from a lack of preparation for the job, a lack of training in police subject matter, and a perception of negative status within the police system. This dysfunction is viewed as contextual disequilibrium.

It is theorized that a dispatcher has a certain view of how the police world is structured, particularly in terms of what an officer does in responding to and handling police matters and what the role of the dispatcher is in support of that function.

The police also have a view of how the dispatcher's role is structured,

particularly in terms of what they do and how they should do it in support of the police response. The police officer's role is based on training and experience in doing the job, but the dispatcher, who generally lacks that experience, must depend on training to obtain a clear view of how the parts of police response function should fit together. It is concluded that the dispatcher's view of policing is not the same as the police officer's view and conversely. It is hypothesized that there is disequilibrium between these two contexts as perceived by the two parties- the dispatcher and the police officer. It is important that they both understand each other's working context and expectations in order to have a smooth working system.

A dispatcher's view of policing based on their encounters with the telephoning public, associations with officers in the radio rooms and dispatch centers, and from what they have learned over the years from on-the-job training may not include important concepts and procedures that officers use on a day to day basis. In this important linkage between caller, dispatcher, and officer, it is critical that the dispatcher and the responding officer are reaching conclusions and making decisions from similar sets of assumptions.

It is difficult to imagine any consistency of operation if the dispatchers are not provided much of the same information that police officers use to guide their thinking in these matters. Operational and organizational effectiveness is bound to be lessened if these two parties of the process are not operating from similar bases of information.

Every decision a dispatcher makes relating to a crime, a civil matter, handling of information or the host of other issues must be based on their view of the police world. When that view differs substantially from the way

the officer views the same situation, communications can be viewed as in a state of disequilibrium. The system, which includes the receipt of a call, interpretation of a call, determination of the need, classification of the call, and dispatch of an officer becomes dysfunctional.

For example, a dispatcher may receive a demand for some form of police response. The demand may be crime related, service related or misdirected to the police. A caller may report several propositions in their demand. It is up to the dispatcher to determine which propositions are important and how they are related, define the information in terms of legitimacy and jurisdiction, formulate it into a police call for service, and dispatch the officer. If critical propositions, that could affect officer or public safety are omitted or misinterpreted, due to a lack of knowledge or understanding of the police context, serious consequences could occur.

Dispatchers have reported during several interviews that some officers hold them in contempt. Several felt that the police supervisors do not understand them. Many admit that they do not know enough about the police job. Several suggested that it would be useful to be exposed to patrol in order to get a better feel for the problems encountered by the officers.

A common suggestion from dispatchers is that the officers spend some time working the dispatcher's job and vice versa in order to improve mutual understanding. When such contextual disequilibrium exists, training in matters relative to the source of the disequilibrium can alleviate this condition and improve overall effectiveness of the dispatching process.

Training is not proposed in an attempt to make police officers out of dispatchers, but to bridge a perceived gap by the introduction of job relevant

training. Many of the reported dysfunctions could be alleviated with mutual understanding of roles supported by role relevant training. One way of doing this is to inform dispatchers on many of the subject areas that are necessary for a responding police officer.

A problem that surfaced early in this formative stage of the research was that the dispatchers felt a strong need to provide an effective service to the citizens and felt a duty to do their best to protect officers. It was clear that they were not sure of the basic concepts and foundations that officers used in making their determinations of the appropriate action to take, yet officers and dispatchers work in the same police context.

Disequilibrium and Cognitive Dissonance

Disequilibrium may be viewed as a form of dissonance. A lack of reciprocity may be viewed as part of the cause of the dissonance. Festinger's (1960) views of dissonance have some application in formulating the conceptual view of this work. Festinger (1960) states that an individual strives towards consistency within himself or herself. Opinions and attitudes of individuals tend to exist in clusters that are internally consistent. There is a consistency between what a person knows or believes and what a person does. This is generally true in political and social attitudes.

When individuals have behaviors or attitudes that appear inconsistent a person will usually rationalize the inconsistencies to himself. When such inconsistency continues to exist, a psychological discomfort will appear. This kind of inconsistency is often replaced with dissonance. Consistency is replaced with consonance. Festinger (1960) feels that the existence of

dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, motivates a person to try to reduce the dissonance in order to achieve a state of consonance. In addition, persons will actively avoid situations and information that would increase dissonance. Dissonance in this sense has been described as hunger, frustration, or disequilibrium. It is proposed that the existence of non-fitting cognitions is a motivating factor in itself. Cognition, in this sense, refers to a belief about one's environment, oneself, behavior, knowledge, or precision. Cognitive dissonance could be descriptive of the dispatchers' reported problems in the sense that there may be non-fitting relations among their cognitions. Their beliefs about their environment, the police communications system, and its operation may be a cognition that is non-fitting. Cognitive dissonance then may be conceived as a belief about the environment that is in a state of disequilibrium.

It is proposed that the dispatcher may attempt to know the police world and the concepts and theories that make sense to the police, but due to a lack of police-specific training, they do not accurately understand it. The dispatcher's lack of understanding, lack of exposure, and lack of training is reflected in their frustrations, stresses, and concerns.

Reduction of Disequilibrium

Disequilibrium, in this conceptual overview of dispatching, is similar to dissonance. New informing information may be expected to reduce such disequilibrium or dissonance. Critically relevant information can be delivered through a thoughtful training program that is designed to inform dispatchers of the idiosyncracies of policing and basic information used by

the police in response to calls and general patrol issues.

Exposure to appropriate police theory and relevant police training can change a dispatcher's knowledge base and provide a broader base of information. Supported with a broader base of information a dispatcher should be able to make a decision that is more in line with how an officer would react to the same incoming information from the citizen.

Historically, police officers and police supervisors were the dispatchers for the police. Both the dispatcher and the dispatched worked from the same background. Regardless of the reasons that led to the use of civilian dispatchers, those who were involved in the changeover failed to take into account the differences in cognitions. This oversight is due in part because the change has been gradual and in many cases dispatchers were supported by uniformed officers they could turn to for advice. With the expected expansion of the 911 systems and the planned relocation of state police sergeants from the office to the field, these differences become critical. A common remark from officers was "police officers make better dispatchers because they understand what the police do" or "I would rather have an officer watching out for my safety than some person who does not understand". Such options are not realistic in the current cost conscious environment. If dispatchers are properly selected and trained that option should not be desirable.

Festinger (1960) states that if two elements are relevant the relation between them is either consonant or dissonant. Each increases as the importance of the element increases. When the dissonance under consideration is between an element corresponding to some knowledge

concerning the environment (police response) and behavior is relevant (dispatcher interpretation and handling of calls) this dissonance can be eliminated by changing the behavior cognition element in such a way that the behavior is consonant with the environmental element.

The observed need is for more police task information. If that task information is not immediately available to the dispatcher because the sergeant is no longer physically present, the dispatcher must become more self-sufficient. Current practice is to place the caller on hold and ask for clarification or interpretation of reported propositions. This system is not efficient, effective, or practical.

Festinger (1960) also reports that it is possible to change environmental elements that are social environments and more difficult to change physical environments. It is not possible to eliminate all of the stresses of dispatching nor is it desirable to do so. In addressing contextual disequilibrium, in the relationship between dispatcher and police, it may be possible to reduce the dissonance or disequilibrium by adding new cognitive elements. This is the purpose of the training program.

A dispatcher's work environment can be described as psychologically uncomfortable, stressful, or lacking in reciprocity. A recurrent theme that surfaced during the interviews and discussions with dispatchers was "the officers and management do not understand us".

Though a training program is designed to change their knowledge base and impact on the dispatcher's cognition, there are and will be circumstances that will make it difficult for a person to change their behavior:

1. the changes may be painful or involve loss,

2. present behavior may be satisfying to some or
3. making the change may not be possible for some due to emotional reasons or inability to practice the new behavior.

Lewin (1951) states that people interpret information to fit what they already believe. This generally arises from involuntary exposure to information. The desired change is to change what dispatchers believe about policing by introducing training subject matter that the police use as a base for their decision making. Such a transfer of information should provide for contextual equilibrium.

Lewin (1951) also points out that people who accept a certain role, or position respond to the expectations which others have of that role, and they are influenced by the persons or associates while occupying a given role.

Disequilibrium and Reciprocity

Dispatchers work at key points in the police system. They receive inputs to the system, but they are not necessarily assimilated into the system. They are often seen as civilian operators and thus outside of the policing process or inner circle. They are often not really accepted as part of the "police work theme". When such people are so separated and are not provided reciprocity, they will live and work in dissonance in their surroundings. Conditions such as these can result in frustration, stress, anxiety, and anger. Such results can affect the manner and substance of the messages they relay and that in turn can affect the officer and the public. When such conditions exist, the dispatchers may create their own perceptions of the police world. If their perceptions are not in harmony with

the officers they dispatch, a condition of contextual disequilibrium can develop. An absence of reciprocity among dispatchers, the police, and their administrators may account for part of the disequilibrium. Training for the dispatcher, the officers, and a heightened awareness for administrators could assist in bridging this gap.

Conversations with several dispatchers have revealed that the patterns of dispatcher and officer relations are not stable. A common observation is that there is an unequal exchange between the two groups. Gouldner (1960) hypothesizes that the norm of reciprocity is one of the universal principal components of moral codes.

Simmel (1950) states that social equilibrium and cohesion could not exist without the reciprocity of service and return service and that "all contracts among men rest on the schema of giving and returning the equivalence". The combined efforts of dispatching and police responses are viewed as an internal social system and this is the context of this study. Without reciprocity a condition of instability can arise in the social relationship.

Gouldner (1960) states that Merton's paradigm of functionalism stresses that analysis must begin with the identification of some problematic pattern of human behavior, some institution, some role, or a shared pattern of belief. The problematic pattern of this study is a perceived lack of effectiveness. Reciprocity may be viewed as a transaction. Gouldner (1960) notes that the principle of reciprocity is involved in functional analysis. He said that the demonstration that A is functional for B helps account for A's persistence and stability only on two assumptions: 1) that B reciprocates A's service, and 2) that B's service to A is contingent upon A's performance of

positive functions for B.

He goes on to say that although reciprocal relations may stabilize patterns, it does not necessarily follow that a lack of reciprocity is socially impossible or always disruptive of the pattern involved. Relations with no reciprocity can occur where power disparity allows one party to coerce others. The police officer's relations with the arrested citizen or the dispatcher who is low in the organizational hierarchy are such examples.

Tensions can arise in the event of a breakdown in reciprocity. Some groups may display the ideal of unconditional generosity which Gouldner (1960) calls "walking the second mile". A important point that Gouldner makes is that if empirical analysis fails to detect the existence of functional reciprocity it is necessary to search and analyze compensatory arrangements that may provide a means of controlling the resultant tensions thus enabling the problematic pattern to remain stable.

Reciprocity, as used in the context of the dispatcher-officer relations at work is not an all or nothing matter. It may, as Gouldner points out, be variable. It may be that compensatory mechanisms have substituted for reciprocity or that power disparities maintain the functionalist holding of "survival" despite the lack of reciprocity, Gouldner (1960).

Application of Concepts

After several conversations with and observations of dispatchers over a three month period, preliminary conclusions were reached that a good deal of dissatisfaction, frustration, and concern existed among dispatchers in Michigan. The informal interviews and conversations with these

dispatchers led to a preliminary hypothesis that the majority of the problems were work related, and may have evolved from a lack of preparation for the job, a lack of appropriate job related training in police subject matter, and a perception of negative status or isolation within the police subsystem of emergency response processing.

These conditions were perceived as dysfunctional and further examination led to the conclusion that dispatchers, though an integral part of the police operation, were not fully accepted or integrated into the police system. This overall condition has been described as contextual disequilibrium. The context referred to is narrowly confined to the police response process. That process may be viewed as a system. The **input** is the call that is received from the citizen, the **process or throughput** is the processing of the call by the dispatcher. This process includes obtaining critical information, investigation, consoling, calming, and interpretation. The entire process requires decision making by the dispatcher, who then transmits the interpreted and coded call to the police. The third part of the system is the **output**. This element of the system includes the officer's response to the call and the handling of the incident until the incident is stabilized. The bounds of the system include the call to the police by the citizen on the one end and the handling of the incident by the police on the other.

The disequilibrium referred to emanates from two sources. It is a state of being. Disequilibrium can have effects on the overall system of delivery in the police response process. The first source is the lack of recognition, lack of training, and negative perceptions of status held by dispatchers.

Much of the problem is perceptual. These deficits can lead to other problems that could in turn lead to operational dysfunctions in the system. A discontented dispatcher, who may harbor feelings of animosity or anger, is less effective than one who is satisfied. The disequilibrium is not meant to be descriptive of the whole problem, but is a concept used to describe resultant conditions that develop from many factors present in the system. These forces may be social, cultural, organizational, or perceptual.

It was hypothesized that dispatchers had a certain view of the police world in which they worked. That view was limited by their training, socialization, and acceptance by their police counterparts. The police also have a view of how the dispatchers' role was structured and how the dispatchers functioned in the subsystem of police dispatching. It was hypothesized that the dispatchers' view of the police process was not accurate and the police view of the dispatchers' process was not accurate. A problem with this situation is that both the dispatcher and the police officer are working in the same subsystem and are mutually dependent and interrelated. Effectiveness in such a situation requires mutual understandings and similar bases of information for equilibrium to exist. Both of these functions are viewed as being in tandem. When each position is operating from a different perception of fact a condition of contextual disequilibrium is considered to exist.

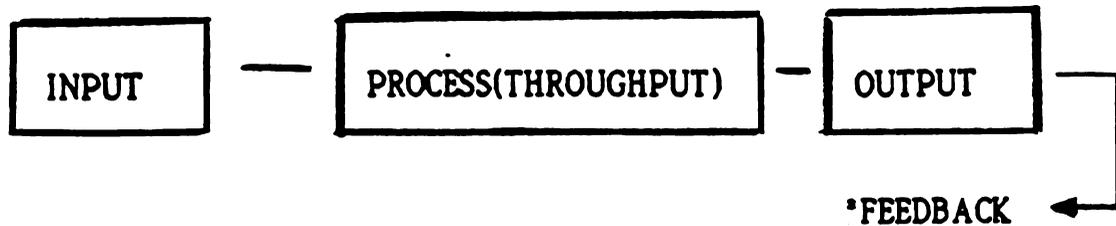
In order to clarify this disequilibrium condition other concepts are used to describe certain forces that may be operating within this system that either contribute to the disequilibrium or reduce it.

One purpose of the research was to determine if such disequilibrium

existed. If the perceptions of the uniformed officers and the dispatchers on such matters as training, personal characteristics, and organizational issues were in agreement, there would be no evident disequilibrium. If on the other hand, the perceptions were significantly different in these three areas one could conclude that a degree of disequilibrium did exist. Total equilibrium in this narrow field of policing is probably not possible. If proper training is instituted to inform dispatchers of the police thinking, and organizational steps are taken to provide for mutual respect and understanding of each other's role, then at least the observed disequilibrium could be reduced. At best, an improvement in the conditions between dispatcher and officer is all that can be expected. Overall effectiveness of the emergency communications process should also be improved.

The other concepts used in this conceptual overview include reciprocity, cognitive dissonance, and functional autonomy. All of these concepts are related in some way. Some may be causes of the observed disequilibrium and others may reduce it. No one concept is designed to describe the situation. Cumulatively, these concepts are employed in an attempt to understand the forces that may be operating that impact the system. To be sure, others are there.

The system operates and these concepts have an impact on the overall operation of the process of emergency dispatching. It will be noted below that the process element of the system has an impact on the output from the system.



CALL FOR SERVICE

**Dispatcher receives information,
investigates, queries, clarifies, recodes,
makes decisions, transmits information**

**Police Receive Information
Police Respond to Call
Police Apply Services**

* Note: If service is poor or inappropriate, the citizen provides feedback to the agency and the process can be changed. If officers receive inaccurate information the dispatchers can be advised and changes can be made. If officers' services are not appropriate feedback is given to agency heads by citizens.

In order for the dispatcher to properly process a demand for service from the citizen, certain knowledges, skills, and abilities, and personal characteristics are required. Viewing the simple open system on the previous page, one can see that if things are not right with the processing element of the system, the output may not be appropriate to the input side of the model.

Relation of Concepts to Overall Theoretical Framework

Festinger (1960) felt that the existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, motivates a person to try to reduce the dissonance in order to achieve consonance. People tend to avoid situations and information that would increase their dissonance. Dispatchers, who may be alienated in their jobs and confused with conflicting roles, may have such dissonance. This type of dissonance is likened to disequilibrium. While dissonance is quite different from disequilibrium, there are similarities that

provide a basis to view them as related in some sense.

Cognition is used in this framework to describe one's belief about one's environment, oneself, behavior, knowledge, or precision. Cognitive dissonance in this sense, may be descriptive of the dispatchers' reported problems because it relates to non-fitting relations among their cognitions about their environment, self, behavior, and knowledge. It is this condition that led to the view that a form of cognitive dissonance existed among the frustrated, ill-trained, isolated, and low status workers. When these conditions are present the condition of disequilibrium can be conceived as existing. Such disequilibrium is on a scale. Conditions may exist because of a lack of proper cognitions about their work world. This condition is compounded by a lack of reciprocity. It can be further compounded by the existence of functional autonomy among officers, and lead to a condition of contextual disequilibrium. The training program that was developed from this research, the selection criteria that was suggested, and the implementation of a new position description for dispatchers are all viewed as having a positive impact on the system and may be able to reduce disequilibrium. This statement will only hold true if the training status, lack of recognition, and confusion over role are the causes of the condition of disequilibrium. This remains to be seen.

Festinger (1960) states that new informing information may be expected to reduce the dissonance. In the sense that dissonance and disequilibrium are similar, new informing information may be expected to aid in establishing system equilibrium. Thoughtful training programs and organizational initiatives can provide knowledge about the police context

and reduce frustrations and stresses that dispatchers currently have regarding knowledge gaps in police matters.

Status, prestige, and acceptance into the police circle on the other hand may not be effected by the addition of new information by way of training. Lack of personal recognition for dispatchers by their officer counterparts, as integral parts of the police process may be psychologically uncomfortable. These stressful perceptions of the dispatchers may result from a lack of reciprocity. A lack of reciprocity in the dispatcher's job may arise when officers fail to reciprocate for extended services provided to them by the dispatchers. It may not be because officers are indifferent. Officers may not understand the dispatchers' job any more than dispatchers understand their jobs. Interviews tend to support the idea that dispatchers are in fact viewed as outsiders by officers in some cases. When such persons are so separated and are not provided expected reciprocity, they work in surroundings that contribute to dissonance. Extended over time, such conditions can lead to anxiety, anger, and high stress. At worst it could lead to withholding of services. Such conditions in turn can have a negative impact on the response process. Messages to the public can be inaccurate. Critical elements of the messages to officers may also be omitted.

Simmel (1950) states that social equilibrium and cohesion could not exist without reciprocity of service and return service, and that " all contracts among men rest on the schema of giving and returning the equivalence." The concept of reciprocity, as used in this framework, refers to services performed by dispatchers and return services by officers. It may be viewed as a barter of service for return of respect and acceptance for that

service and no more than that.

The rationale for including reciprocity in this work is the work of Simmel (1950) and Gouldner (1960). Both indicated that without reciprocity a condition of instability can arise. In the broadest sense, disequilibrium, dissonance, and the instability that arises from a lack of reciprocity are all viewed as connective. The researcher views this process of emergency dispatching as a loosely coupled open system. It should be recognized that the open system model can only work smoothly when factors that disrupt the throughput process are absent. Dissonance, disequilibrium, negative reciprocity, or active functional autonomy of officers all have negative effects on the processing of emergency responses (throughput).

In other words, unless the causes of the disequilibrium are addressed the throughput element of the system will be inhibited and have impacts on the output of the process. The feedback loop of the system is generally neglected in practice. There is generally no feedback provided by the officer to the dispatcher unless a major incident occurs. The research itself is considered a form of feedback to the agency.

Festinger (1957) notes that this theory of cognitive dissonance is based on the idea that persons attempt to establish internal harmony or consistency among their opinions, attitudes, knowledge, or values. He refers to this as a drive to consonance among cognitions. Radelet (1986) describes Festinger's views on dissonance as a strain or tension between two items of knowledge, two attitudes, opinions or values. Radelet (1986) also reports that the presence of dissonance gives rise to pressures to reduce the dissonance. This calls for changing one of the dissonant elements of

knowledge, opinions or values. The purpose of using these concepts is to obtain a better understanding of what is taking place perceptually and behaviorally.

If there are not some mutually agreed upon foundations from which to operate, the system has a tendency to become disequilibriumous. The reference is to similar ideas of what an effective dispatcher is all about, some agreements on proper training of dispatchers, and agreement on the desirable characteristics of good dispatchers. Radelet (1986) also used this theory of cognitive dissonance to help the reader understand the wide communications gap that existed between white police officers and minority residents of the inner city. The communications gaps may be an oversight or it may be as Brown (1981) described the officers' protection of their occupational culture. The dispatchers may in fact be perceived as outsiders or as the arms of the administration of an agency. If this is so, this perception among officers could lead to a desire to remain secretive about their work. Such a condition only compounds the problem of dispatching. Because officers and dispatchers work in tandem, it is important that there be clear and open communications between them. This is particularly so in relation to the transfer of information. There must be some agreement on what is important and what is not when handling critical incidents.

In discussing disequilibrium it is helpful to examine what many have referred to as functional autonomy. This examination may assist in determining if disequilibrium exists. The organization in this research is the subsystem of dispatching. It is viewed as a natural system model. Limitations of the natural system model come from some of the assumptions

of that model. One such assumption deals with the interdependence of the parts. Gouldner (1959) refers to the organizational group structure or roles and to the socialized individuals who are its members. The natural system tends to focus on the organization as a whole and does not explore systematically the significance of variations in the degrees of interdependence, Merton (1957).

By functional autonomy Gouldner (1959) refers to the degree to which any one part of the system is dependent on others for satisfaction of their needs. He states that the systems in which the parts (persons or groups) have high functional autonomy are regarded as having a low degree of system interdependence. Those systems in which the parts have a low functional autonomy have a high degree of system interdependence. He also stated that some parts may survive separation from others and that their interdependence is not necessarily symmetrical.

According to Parsons (1956), organizations are social systems which are oriented toward attainment of specific goals. This statement, according to Gouldner (1959), refers to goals that are the goals of the administrators such as effectiveness. A better formulation might require some specification of the ends of the various people within the organization. These ends may vary and may not be identical. They may even be contradictory.

Assuming that the organizational parts operate to maintain boundaries and to remain in equilibrium, the parts may be expected to defend their functional autonomy from encroachments. An example of this might be officers defending their functional autonomy from dispatchers, who wish to be included in the police system. The basic source of organizational tension

in those departments studied may come from a tendency of people or groups to resist encroachment of their functional autonomy.

There are also several cultural and social structures that act to maintain functional autonomy of the parts of the organization. For purposes of this analysis, the parts are the officers and the dispatchers. Culturally, it could be the norm of privacy. This is quite common and is evident when examining the critical incidents. A norm of confidentiality does seem to exist. Gouldner(1959) refers to these things as guarding of officer secrets. The attempt to establish social or cultural equilibrium between dispatcher and officer is in conflict with functional autonomy. A natural system theorist might assume that the equilibrium of groups depends on conforming behavior of its group members.

According to Parsons (1959), group equilibrium is a function of the extent to which its members ,who he calls ego and alter, conform to each others expectations. The equilibrium model also has assumptions. One assumption is that each act of conforming behavior will cause a similar degree of of appreciation or cause a similar reward. This is somewhat akin to my view of reciprocity. The rewards are not equal nor is there reason to think that they should be. What is important is that there needs to be some greater degree of reciprocity than currently exists.

Homans (1963) makes the point that reciprocity or the lack of it may account for stability or instability in social systems. Bennis (1966) states that reciprocity is maintaining the internal systems and coordinating the human side of enterprise. He sees it as a process of mutual compliance. Katz and Kahn (1966) refer to equilibrium as a steady state of being.

Assuming that disequilibrium does exist, be it social, cultural or functional, the question is how to reduce it to a more tolerable level and improve the effectiveness of the system. Disequilibrium may also be viewed as a conflict. It may be a conflict of values or simply a lack of communication. It can also be more allusive. It may be more psychological and thus appear as cognitive dissonance. It may be perceptual and be due to a perceived lack of reciprocity between the role holders.

Rose (1965) speaks of reducing group conflict. This was alluded to in the research as enhancing reciprocity between the parties, training dispatchers in police related matters, and improving the organizational climate to accept dispatchers as professional police persons. Rose in 1965 noted that the technique for reducing conflict does not always have to be directed at its cause, but merely that constructive efforts to reduce conflict must take cognizance of the goals of the group that are engaged in the conflict. The conflict here is conceptual.

Control of the phenomenon does not require an attack at its source. Rose (1965) felt that it might just as well be directed at its symptoms. He recommended mediation between groups to settle the conflict and resolve perception issues. This research indicates that there are differences in values and interests. In fact, it may be that the interests of the two parties are similar, but that the values are not. Overt conflict between dispatcher and officer should be regarded as destructive when it is destructive to the group as a whole. The processing of inaccurate information, due to a lack of preparedness or training, and the resultant danger to officers from this practice, is such an example. The best one can hope for is a tentative

accommodation. Open conflicts are amenable to mediation, but perceptual problems are somewhat harder to address. Using Parsons (1951) view, what is desired is a stable equilibrium of the interactive process between dispatcher and officer. Parsons (1951) said in empirical fact no social system is perfectly equilibrated and integrated. Deviant motivational factors are always present and operating. They become established and thus are not eliminated from the motivational systems of the persons involved in the system.

Reciprocity as used in this dissertation may also be conceived as a lack of cooperation. Barnard (1966) states that the survival of cooperation in the system depends on two interrelated and independent classes of processes, 1) those which are related to the creation of or distribution of satisfaction among individuals, and 2) those which are related to the system of cooperation as a whole in relation to the environment. His first point relates to the reciprocity that is discussed in this research. The vitality of the organization lies in the willingness of the individuals to contribute to the cooperative system. The continuation of the cooperation or willingness also depends on the satisfactions that are secured by the individual contributors in the process of carrying out the purpose. If the satisfactions do not exceed the sacrifices required, willingness disappears and a condition of organizational inefficiency exists. This condition is the contextual disequilibrium. Survival of the organization as a subsystem depends on the maintenance of equilibrium of the system. This type of equilibrium is primarily internal and a matter of proportions between the elements, but it is ultimately and basically an equilibrium between the system and the total

situation external to it. This external equilibrium has two terms in it. It is the effectiveness of the organization and its efficiency which comprises the interchange between the organization and the individual. March and Simon (1961) also speak of a theory of equilibrium. The contributions a worker makes to the organization may be labor from the worker, fees, or other payments. In this case, for purposes of explaining the theoretical background of this dissertation, the payment is viewed as the output from the worker.

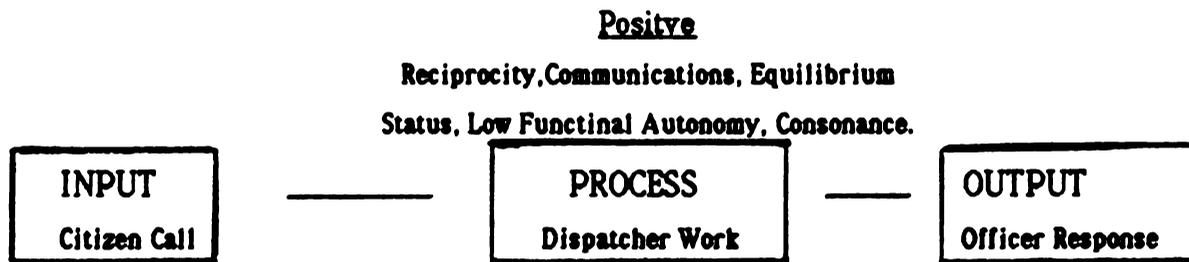
Blau (1961) in discussing the dynamics of organizations said that peer relationships rest on reciprocity in the social exchange. Unilateral services engender obligations which destroy equality of status and erect barriers to the free flow of information and communication. This interference is dysfunctional for work groups. Social cohesion depends on basic equality of status. Cooperation is a major source of cohesion in work groups because it unites members in the voluntary exchange of valued assistance. Cohesion is not a stable condition and requires constant effort to renew the fundamental equality that makes the members of the group accessible to each other.

Simon (1976) referred to a system in equilibrium. He said that individuals are willing to accept organizational membership when their activity in the organization contributes directly or indirectly to their own personal goals. The contribution is direct if the goals set for them have direct personal value for the individual. The contribution is indirect if the organization offers personal rewards to the individual in return for his willingness to contribute activity to the organization. Other inducements may include intangible egoistic values like status, prestige, or enjoyment of

associations. Bennis (1966) said that reciprocity has to do primarily with the processes which can mediate conflict between the goals of management and the individual goals of the worker.

Management has decided that dispatcher effectiveness is a goal. The dispatcher has a goal of prestige, status, and quid pro quo for his or her service to the officer. The dispatcher wants acceptance as a team member.

Viewing the conditions as a system it must be noted that this is a very loosely coupled system. Below are some ideas of the forces that either contribute to or inhibit the smooth processing of the subsystem of police emergency response.



Negative
 Lack of Reciprocity, Dissonance
 High Functional Autonomy, Disequilibrium
 Poor Communications

Theoretical Framework of Dispatching

Three theoretical frameworks were examined with which to view the training of dispatchers. Those three ethical frameworks were examined in an attempt to find a fit that explains the relationships involved and the demands placed upon the actors in this process. The purpose of using an ethical framework is to obtain a systematic response to ethical issues

involved in this endeavor of dispatcher training. At the onset of this work state police officials said that they desired effectiveness in dispatching and they felt that their dispatchers ought to be better trained.

In discussing this ethical framework with which to view dispatcher training it is informative to identify the parties included in the framework. The moral agent is the Director of the Michigan State Police. The moral agent is that person who will ultimately make the decision to implement the recommended training. The moral agent in fact may be a deputy director or a division head that has been authorized by the director to make such program decisions that involve the expenditure of funds. The dispatchers are part of this framework as they have relationships with the citizens that call for the services and the officers they dispatch to provide those services. They may possess certain rights and duties. The officers, citizens, and supervisors are also included in this framework because they too may have rights or duties connected with the implementation of a goal of effectiveness.

Each theoretical framework has three elements. Those elements are overall goals, individual duties, and individual rights. Rights and duties in ethical frameworks may be basic or derivative.

Goal Based Frameworks

Goals may be viewed as states of affairs that are considered good in themselves and thus ought to be maximized. Such a goal could be dispatcher effectiveness. Actions taken can be evaluated in terms of how they either support or hinder the maximization of the goals. A framework that holds that the maximization of the goal overrides all other considerations in

determining what, all things considered, ought to be done, is said to be a goal based framework.

Duty Based Frameworks

Duties apply to individuals. A person is said to have a duty to carry out or refrain from certain acts, if and only if, the framework includes a rule or principle requiring or forbidding that type of action. Police officers have a duty based framework because their framework includes rules of law and legal principles that both forbid and require certain actions. Such a framework is a duty based framework if it includes duties that ought to be done even if certain overall goals adopted by the system are not furthered. For example a police officer strives to reach goals of his agency in response to goals of the criminal justice system which may be viewed as arresting a person who has violated a law. This duty based framework includes rules and principles to preserve constitutional rights of individual citizens and that duty must be carried out even if it does not further the adopted overall goal of arresting a suspected criminal.

Rights Based Frameworks

Rights in this framework refer to claims or entitlements that a person has which require that others not interfere with the exercise of those rights. A right may also be a positive right such that it requires that someone provide the right holder with something that he or she needs or desires. A person has a right within this particular framework, if and only if, the framework includes rules or principles specifying those rights.

In the larger context of police dispatching one might conceive a duty based framework when examining the officer's position, a rights based framework when examining the citizen's position, or a goal based framework when examining the dispatcher's position in regard to dispatcher training that is designed to achieve the goal of dispatcher effectiveness.

Benjamin and Curtis (1986) make the point that it is not the elements of the framework that distinguishes them because all of the frameworks include goals, duties, and rights, but the way in which these elements are ordered. What must be determined in order to decide which ethical framework is appropriate is whether the goals, duties, or rights are basic, derivative or subordinate. In a goal based framework rights and duties of the parties have no independent standing, but are derived from principles of utility. A goal based framework is employed to view the phenomenon of dispatcher training. The definitions of duty based and rights based frameworks do not apply here because this context does not include elements of rules or principles that specify certain rights or duties. It does make sense because the maximization of the goal overrides all other considerations in determining what, all things considered, ought to be done. The goal in this case is set by the moral agent and that goal is to obtain effectiveness for dispatchers. In applying the goal based framework to the training of dispatchers one must view the Director as the moral agent. The overall goal or objectives of the organization is best served when there is attainment of organizational objectives. Those objectives are served in part by the operation of the dispatching process. Dispatcher effectiveness is the focal goal in this framework. This goal of dispatcher effectiveness may be

stated as a desire to maximize the effectiveness of the dispatching system given that the resources are available, with the minimum amount of friction, in order to maximize the crime control and service function of the police.

This goal also creates derivative rights and duties. 1) A right of the officers to have the best trained dispatchers handle their calls, 2) a right of the dispatcher to have the best training available to do their job effectively, 3) a right of the dispatcher for training that will enable them to work effectively in a complex environment, 4) a right of the citizen to receive the best possible service from the police, and 5) a right of the dispatcher to be treated fairly and equitably.

The goal also creates derivative duties. A duty on the part of the dispatcher to apply the training that is offered, a duty to adhere to the concepts that are taught, a duty on the part of the agency participants to train the dispatchers, a duty of the supervisor to insure that dispatchers act within the scope of their job specifications and according to the principles used in the training, a duty on the part of the dispatcher to provide maximum safety for the citizen and the officer, a duty of the officer to reciprocate with the dispatcher,

Considering these rights of the parties there are corresponding duties for others to provide the right holder his or her rights. Those that receive the rights have corresponding responsibilities. For example, if a dispatcher obtains a right to be trained, that same dispatcher now has a responsibility to use that training effectively. A graphic representation of such a goal based framework depicts how the rights and duties are derived from the goal.

Goal Based Framework

BASIC:

1. Goal (maximum effectiveness)

DERIVATIVE:

2. Rights

2. Duties

Evolution from Goal to Duty Based Framework

Though not particularly germane at this time, once the training program has been implemented and the rights and duties have been specified, the job relevant position description and the job selection criteria that will be developed in conjunction with the training program may be viewed as those rules or principles that are included in the duty based framework. For those in the future, the ethical framework can be viewed as a duty based framework. In the current goal based framework, the derivative rights and duties of the parties flow from the basic goal of the framework.

In a duty based framework, the duties will be basic and rights will be derivative of those basic duties. In addition, subordinate goals will evolve which in turn will have their own derivative rights and duties. A graphic view of such a duty based framework is explanatory. Certain basic duties will give rise to certain rights. Provided a person does not violate these duties and rights at level 1 and 2 that person pursues certain goals, such as the maximization of effectiveness, at level 3. The dotted line between denotes that the goals at level 3 cannot be rightfully pursued by violationg

the duties and rights at levels 1 and 2 which function as moral constraints on the pursuit of goals at level 3. From the goals at level 3 a person can derive nonbasic rights and duties at level 4. Any conflict between the duties and rights of level 1 and 2 and the duties and rights of level 4 are to be resolved in favor of level 1 and 2 because these are more basic to the overall framework, Benjamin and Curtis (1986).

Duty Based Framework

BASIC:	1. <u>Duties</u>
DERIVATIVE:	2. <u>Rights</u>

SUBORDINATE:	3. <u>Goals</u>
DERIVATIVE:	4. <u>Rights</u> 4. <u>Duties</u>

Summary

Alternative frameworks exist for a variety of reasons. Assuming these represent a standard framework of ethics, the alternatives become plausible. For example, dispatchers within such a framework either directly claim such rights as central or the fundamental rights are derived. In either case, it is impossible to have an ethical framework, in which there are duties people are obliged to perform, unless there are corresponding rights held by someone else. This is so regardless of the ethical framework.

Accepting the goal based ethical framework, dispatchers have to be accorded certain fundamental rights. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right to be treated with respect, to be treated as peers in the response process, and a right to be properly trained in order to reach a goal of effectiveness. The agent, the Director or his designee acting on his behalf, has a corresponding duty to provide the training and insure that other rights are accorded to the right holder. In considering this goal based ethical framework, rights are either a starting point or they are derived from the goal. Whenever there are duties there are corresponding rights.

CHAPTER 3

Review of Related Literature

Brief History of Police Communications

The demands for police services in the United States have increased over the years. In the early days of policing few demands were made of the police, and those that were had to be made in person. Cultural and sociological changes over the years have accounted for many of the increased demands for services that exist today. The public was not only more self-sufficient in handling many of their problems, but they could not have reached the police if they had wanted to. The mission of the police was also very different and social problems were not as complex as they are today. Changes in the scope of policing, modern technology, the public life style, and personal and community values have had much to do with the increased demands for services.

The earliest police organizations in the United States used very simple methods of communicating. One early method of communicating was the sentry to sentry method. Quite simply one officer in close proximity to another just hollered to the other. The demands during the previous century and the earlier part of this century were quite low. Those demands remained rather low until the introduction of the automobile and its expanded use by society in general.

In a rather short period of time police communications changed from very rudimentary system to a technologically advanced system. The telegraph, the telephone, the teletype, the radio, and computers all

contributed to the advances in police communications. In the last 120 years, police communications evolved from officers calling each other by voice to the modern computerized systems of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Enhanced 911 systems (E911).

In 1845, New York City adapted the electric telegraph to police communications. When first utilized in New York City, telegraph operators were employed at the headquarters to send and receive Morse code signals. In 1858, a dial telegraph was installed in New York City. It allowed officers to send specific uncoded telegraphic messages over the wires. The telegraph was used for communications between precincts and their headquarters but those on the beat received little help until the 1880's.

Patrol officers were on their own and had to use their own resources on the streets. Except for the occasional rounds by the patrol sergeants, officers were virtually alone. The first police call boxes used the telegraph. That one-way communication from officer to the station allowed the officer to set a pointer in the box for one of the few available calls. The officer pulled a release mechanism and the telegraph transmitted a coded message for wagon calls, ambulances, or calls for help. Headquarters could not communicate with the officer nor was the public able to reach the police station. The public made demands for service by personal contact with an officer or by stopping at the police precinct station house. On April 11, 1878, the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department ordered fifteen telephones for police use. By 1880, the New York City police had two precincts with telephones. The use of the telephone grew and by 1893, New York city police installed the first police switchboard in the United States.

possible. The telephone quickly replaced the teletype and telegraph for general use and it increased the capability of officers for communication with headquarters. A workable recall system was not developed until the early part of this century. The first police recall system that was recorded was in 1905. When someone in headquarters had a message for an officer a red light, which was installed by the call box, was activated. That system was only useful if the beat officer was near the box.

The automobile was in general use long before police departments had the capability of reaching officers cruising the streets in patrol cars.

The first police radio station license was issued to the New York City Police Department on June 11, 1920 as station KUVS. Receiver sets were installed in the police cars in 1921, but several technical problems prevented their wide scale use and they were ineffective. Police radio advocates of the time had many adversaries.

A more common and workable means of contacting officers on patrol was to use the commercial radio stations. Messages were put out blindly. Anyone with a radio receiver heard the broadcasts. That system only worked if the officer was near a commercial radio. The Detroit Police Department began using radio in police work soon after the beginning of commercial radio with call letters of KOPS.

By 1933, licensed state police radio stations were in operation in Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Texas. The bank robbery era, use of police radio, and development of police blockade systems all evolved during this period. By 1929, Michigan provided by law for a state owned and operated police radio station. All state police cars were equipped with one-way radios and receiving sets were installed in the

offices of sheriffs and police chiefs statewide, Leonard (1938).

By 1941, two-way police radio was a reality in Michigan. Soon after this period, improvements were made. The advent of the police computer in Michigan in the 1960's advanced the police into the age of micro chips.

As the societal changes took place, the capabilities of the police changed; and as the demands for service grew, the capability of the police to handle those demands grew. It is interesting to speculate whether the demand created the technological advances or whether the technological advances created the demand.

V.A. Leonard (1938) commented on the role of the police radio operator and his view of the importance of that position, whether the position is occupied by civilians or sworn officers, points out the criticality of dispatching in police agencies. "Because of the control by communications of the movements of the force, the operator in many organizations is virtually the director of their operations, dispatching and concentrating officers at one point and then another, as the usual procession of emergencies come to the attention of the police." Leonard (1938).

It is interesting to note that V.A. Leonard recommended that the position of radio operator be used as a training ground for officers. He noted that ordinarily the duties of the radio operator gave him a perspective of the general operation of the organization, not afforded by any other position in the department. That philosophy was carried over to later periods. The desk or radio operator position at a state police post was manned by corporals and later by sergeants as shift supervisors. When relief was necessary due to vacations and days off, a senior and experienced officer was chosen to fill in. This practice, based on the nature of the role of

dispatcher, has significance when viewed in the context of the change from sworn personnel to civilians. A return to the use of experienced police officers on the desk is not efficient or cost-effective.

Dispatching in The Michigan State Police

Early dispatching in the Michigan State Police was done by uniformed enlisted officers of the department. Other police departments as well used officers in the role of dispatcher. The position of a civilian dispatcher of today evolved through a series of changes that took place over the past several years. Many of those changes occurred as a result of technological improvements. Others were of organizational necessity motivated by cost effective considerations or cyclical restrictions of funds. Most can be conceived as a result of technology coupled with increased demands for police services.

The role of state police dispatcher is closely associated with the development of the state police. The state police began as the Michigan State Troops on April 17, 1917 and was organized to replace the Michigan National Guard, which had been called to duty in Europe in World War I. The absence of the guard left the citizens of Michigan without any home guard force. Political forces favoring and opposing the formation of the State Troops were equally active and the formation of the agency was not without conflict.

On March 21, 1919, Governor Albert E. Sleeper signed a bill into law creating the Michigan State Police or Constabulary, as it was commonly called. Political forces were divided on this issue, but those issues are not germane to this study. In the 1920's, the Federal Radio Commission (FRC)

had authorized small local radio systems for police departments in Michigan of 500 watt capacity. In the mid 1920's the state police proposed a statewide radio system, but this proposal met with severe resistance by the FRC. The FRC was later renamed the Federal Communications Commissions (FCC). The Commissioner of the State Police at the time, Oscar G. Olander, lobbied vigorously, and with the cooperation of members of the legislature, House Bill 466 was introduced providing for funds to establish a 5000 watt communications system for the state police. The State's request for a 5000 watt station was denied and in its place the FRC authorized several smaller stations to be strategically located statewide. That configuration would have required relay of messages from post to post. Despite the FRC denial, Governor Fred Green told the FRC that Michigan would in fact go on the air with its 5000 watt radio. In 1930, the legislature subsequently funded the building of the radio station, but private electronic firms refused to provide the necessary tubes and equipment to build the station in recognition of the FRC ruling. It is interesting to note that the federal resistance to police radio was not limited to the state police. Michigan police departments were restricted by the FRC to limit their broadcasts to two minutes out of every thirty minutes, Moylan (1983).

The Detroit Police Department was the first department in the nation to have radio dispatched cars and they responded to this ruling through the Detroit Free Press in an article of April 10, 1930 entitled "Curtailling Police Broadcasting". The Detroit Police spokesman made it clear to the readers of the Detroit Free Press that the police needed the opportunity to use the police radio:

The Federal Radio Commission's order limiting municipal police broadcasting to not more than two minutes in each half hour of the day is a serious threat to the usefulness of the radio in apprehending criminals. The police will have the air for four minutes out of every sixty. Gangdom will have the other fifty-six minutes in which to do what it pleases with the lives and property of the citizenry. The radio commission again leans heavily toward the underworld.

Public support, support from police departments, political support, and media interest led to a change in the position of the FRC. On May 16, 1930 the FRC approved the license for a 5000 watt State Police Radio Station known as WRDS. Four months later the station went into service. That station transmitted to state police posts, sheriff departments, and local departments at eighty receivers. State police cars had a total of forty-four receivers.

The radio network to the cars was a one way system. The police dispatcher could send out a message to a car equipped with a radio, but did not know if the call was received. In practice, officers would stop and call the station for further details and to confirm receipt of the calls. Prior to that time, messages had been sent blind over commercial radio frequencies for officers to call for messages. An officer located near a radio in a gas station or other location could listen for calls. It was not uncommon for officers to stop by their favorite spot and check for messages with owners of radios. This system allowed everyone to know what the police were doing and security was non existent. In 1934, communications were extended to twenty-one of the other forty-seven states utilizing two-way radio. Michigan was the first state to implement a statewide police radio system

and the first to implement an FM two-way radio network in 1941. That system allowed radio traffic to be broadcasted between the posts, to the car and, from car to car. By the summer of 1941 all state police cars were equipped with two-way radios. This advancement required more dispatching functions.

Moylan (1983) reports that the evolutionary process that resulted in the separation of roles between officers on the desk and civilian dispatchers was set in motion by the advent of two-way radio and the increase in radio traffic as a result of that change. During the early 1950's a microwave system was installed and this "pipe line" as it was called, provided an important link between the dispatchers in East Lansing and Detroit. Major relay stations were established in the 1950's at Detroit, Paw Paw, Houghton Lake, and Marquette. Those relay stations were staffed by civilian operators who were licensed as radiotelegraphers. The purpose of that system was to relay warrant and vehicle checks from the outposts to the East Lansing headquarters. East Lansing headquarters radio housed the necessary data on warrants, records, and other police related information. In addition to this system, select posts had teletypewriters and could communicate on regional systems. One such system was the Wayne County Teletype System.

The East Lansing headquarters could also communicate by teletype to those posts within that system. These systems seemed advanced at the time, but by today's computerized standards it was antiquated and extremely slow.

In 1967, the department moved into the computer age with the installation of the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN). The first computer could store vast amounts of information that formerly required manual searches and wasted valuable hours. Prior to the installation of LEIN

it was common during peak periods for an officer on the road to wait up to thirty minutes with a motorist awaiting a report on the motorist's driving status or criminal record. Many citizens were taken to the post to wait for the results of the record check. This process often took hours to complete. Such ordeals for the citizen led to a general reluctance on the part of officers to check someone out thoroughly. The implementation of LEIN, the National Crime Information System (NCIC) in Washington, D.C., and the National Law Enforcement Teletype System (NLETS) not only revolutionized police communications, but has led to many changes in the role of the dispatcher of today. NCIC accesses police data in Washington, D.C. and is maintained by the FBI. NLETS is a communications link between agencies. The number of dispatchers over the years has fluctuated due to economic reasons. In 1967, there were fifty-two state police dispatchers. In 1983, there were eighty-seven dispatchers. An all time high was one hundred. Today there are seventy-six FTE's for dispatchers. Three of the seventy-six dispatchers left their jobs during the course of this research. It is anticipated by officials that changes that are now taking place in Michigan will have a major impact on the number of dispatchers, not only within the state police, but among many other departments. Within the state police the role definition of the shift commanders and its eventual implementation will require additional dispatchers.

Act 32 of 1986 will create a need for additional dispatchers in other agencies as well as the state police. In developing the sampling frame for this work, it was learned that there are fourteen hundred and ninety-five dispatchers statewide. The majority of dispatchers are located in local and county police departments.

People are directly or indirectly affected by police service delivery on a regular and recurring basis. People are monitored by the police on their way to work and when traveling for pleasure. Accidents occur and the police are expected to respond, tend to the injured, and restore order to the roadway. At all major gatherings it is likely the police will be on hand to control crowds as well as traffic. While we sleep, there are patrols working to respond to reports from citizens. In the myriad of emergencies that occur citizens expect the police to respond and provide the appropriate help. In addition to these critical duties, the police are also called upon to facilitate a broad range of other services such as assistance in finding lost children, missing persons, non-criminal matters, and all forms of conflict resolutions. When a citizen is victimized, the police are called upon to investigate and apprehend those responsible.

Public order depends on the existence and application of police services. Those services are basic to the community order. It is the dispatcher, the call receiver, call taker or gatekeeper that is the first contact that the citizen has with the police department. The level of training of these dispatching personnel has an impact on just how these basic and necessary public services are provided.

The variation of calls that the police receive are innumerable. Crime fighting is only a small portion of those calls. None the less, in those cases, which have been estimated to be no more than 15% of police work, the critical nature of the incidents require that those receiving and responding to the calls are properly trained in order to maximize the effectiveness of the response.

The Critical Incident

The starting point of this study and the primary focal point is the critical incident (CIT). These incidents are not restricted to incidents of crimes. A husband choking to death at a dinner table or a child trapped in a burning home is no less important than the report of serious crime. In some cases, such as property crimes, those non-crime critical incidents may be more critical.

The critical incidents used in this research are defined by the sample of dispatchers themselves. As such, this is a perceptual study based on the job as it is actually performed by those that are either receiving calls for service or dispatching those that must respond to calls for service. Many of the dispatchers perform both functions and others interchange between the roles. Levin et al (1980) found that CIT's yielded job analyses reports which appear to engender relatively higher quality examination plans than other job analysis methods. It must be noted that the CIT's themselves must be abstracted and categorized to form a composite picture of the job essentials, Sistrunk and Smith (1982).

The CIT yields behaviorial information from which more traditional elements of personnel requirements and specifications like knowledge, skills, abilities, aptitude, must be inferred. The CIT was among the highest rating in the survey of job analysts for purposes of performance appraisal, working, training, and safety, Levin, Ash and Bennett (1980).

A critical incident is a behavior which demarcates, in specific and comprehensive terms, what constitutes successful job performance and unsuccessful job performance. In gathering these incidents one might ask incumbents to record specific incidents of effective and ineffective behavior.

This method focuses on job behavior rather than poorly defined traits. It is well suited for establishing objective training programs to overcome employee performance deficits., Levin, Ash, and Bennett (1980).

Importance of Dispatching

In a discussion of the nationwide expansion of the calls for service and crime Sumrall, Roberts, and Farmer (1981) said that in consideration of the cycles of limited resources, administrators have initiated several measures to reduce cost in a growing demand for police services in an environment with less financial support. Many of those initiatives led to the institution of 911 Systems and E911 Systems to simplify and expedite access to the police. Dispatchers have replaced officers due to cost containment necessities. The resources continue to dwindle and the calls for diverse services continue to expand. As the calls for service workload have burgeoned, departments have come to replace the sergeants as the real supervisors of patrol activity. Even with the state of the art technology one ought to consider the level of information and demands.

Even if resources were not an issue, the need for appropriate training for dispatchers is evident. If for no other reason, the criticality of the information they manage can have an impact on the citizen and officer safety as well as the overall performance of the police.

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) in one of their studies noted that if alleviation of the problems of traditional response are devised, the dispatch/operator role is still in a critical position due to the decision making process that takes place, Sumrall, Roberts, and Farmer (1981).

The complaint operator or dispatcher has the first contact with the citizen. The dispatcher has the opportunity to provide a myriad of services to the citizens. Better informed dispatchers could make better informed decisions and by so doing provide the most appropriate response.

A dispatcher's role is very important. Decisions by these police employees often dictate the type of response an officer makes because they communicate their own sense of the nature and urgency of the call.

Sumrall et al (1981) report that unfortunately such operators and dispatchers receive inadequate preparation and support in many agencies. In that PERF study, the dispatchers that responded to the survey reported that they had received rudimentary training and have to elicit information to make rational response decisions. Further compounding this condition the authors note that there is no formal supervision of dispatchers, no standard set of questions for a dispatcher to ask to determine the nature of a call and, no standard procedures for operators or dispatchers to use to match resources with types of incidents.

Pepinsky (1976) feels that the dispatchers' decisions have a critical effect on the patrol officers' responses. If a dispatcher named no particular offense, it was unlikely a police report was made. In the majority of cases where the dispatcher was specific on an offense, the officers reported the offenses.

Dispatchers in police departments have suffered from the fact that their role has been largely misunderstood or underplayed. The demands made on dispatchers are unrealistic if proper training is not initiated. All police administrators are not ambivalent about the dispatching function. Much has been written about the discretion of the police officer, but little attention has

been paid to the discretion of dispatchers and the impact of their decisions on the overall police service to the citizens they serve.

One finding of the PERF study, that reflects the importance in training for dispatchers, was that although information gathered during call intake is important in determining the response, police agencies have failed to pay adequate attention to the training, supervision, or guidance of call operators and dispatchers, Sumrall et al (1981). To train the dispatcher to deal with their job more effectively is to improve the capacity of the police to discharge their responsibility effectively.

The American Bar Association in its document, Standards for Criminal Justice, (1973) defines the responsibilities of the police by selecting eleven specific objectives of policing. It is interesting to think of those responsibilities in view of the role of the dispatcher. The responsibilities of the police outlined include responsibilities:

1. To identify criminal offenders and criminal activity and where appropriate to apprehend offenders,
2. To reduce opportunities for the commission of some crimes through preventive patrol,
3. To aid people who are in danger of physical harm,
4. To protect constitutional guarantees,
5. To facilitate movement of people and vehicles,
6. To assist those who cannot care for themselves,
7. To resolve conflict,
8. To identify problems that are potentially serious law enforcement and governmental problems,

9. To create and maintain a feeling of security in the community,
10. To promote and preserve civil order and
11. To provide other services on an emergency basis.

It is the receiver of the phone call from the citizen and the decision making dispatcher who determines, in many cases, which of these responsibilities apply. In fact, few of these responsibilities can be carried out successfully unless the initial information, determinations, and transmissions are correct.

It would appear to be good sense, considering the importance of the dispatching role in a police department, that a highly trained professional be employed. Historically this was not an issue because the person on the telephone and the radio was a sworn police officer and possessed the training and experience necessary for correctly coding the calls.

Dispatcher Independence

A study in England on dispatching and communications showed that on the typical call one can expect 35% of the information presented by the caller to be accurately represented on the log. Radio operators use a good deal of individual subjectivity. Hulbert (1981), stated that there are several factors affecting the message process.

The changes that take place in semantics range from the caller, to the radio operator's log, to the officer. Terminological changes may take place so that the words can be given a "police flavor". The same event can be described in different words.

The content of the call may pose a problem for dispatchers. When there are two or more propositions presented to the call receiver they may be

reduced to the most serious one in the mind of the operator. The second or subsequent propositions however, could be more important to the police officer in his context. Meanings can be changed in the transmission of the call content from the operator to the dispatcher to the officer or from the operator directly to the officer. When meanings are changed, distortion of the incident could occur. It is important for the dispatcher to be attentive and to understand the meanings police attribute to propositions, and the context in which they work in general, Hulbert (1981).

Processing Demands for Service

Percy and Scott (1985) refer to the tasks of telephone call receiving as Gatekeeping and dispatching as a Response Coordinating Function. Those gatekeepers may also be viewed as boundary spanners who perform boundary spanning activities within their agencies. Boundary spanning is described as how organizations seek to adapt to uncertain environments. In the case of dispatching those uncertain external environments refer to the diverse calls for service. Most of the previous works on the subject were descriptive of the types of calls, the numbers of calls, and whether the calls were for crime related work or calls for service.

Gatekeeper's Behavior and Critical Incidents

This study focuses on the behavior of the gatekeeping dispatchers to determine, according to their perceptions, what an effective and ineffective dispatcher is. It is a study of the content of their tasks and the determinants of their decision making processes in order to discover the training that is required for such a position based on the complexities of the task content.

This perceptual study examines the self-reported critical incident to determine just exactly what the gatekeeper or dispatcher does.

Consumer Demands for Service

Percy and Scott (1985) use the concept of consumer demands in their work which relate to calls for service from the public to the police. It is conceptualized as citizen-agency contact aimed at affecting general policies and procedures at the broadest level. Measures of such demands include voting, complaints received from citizens regarding service, or other measures that influence the operation of the agency. This is a broad view.

At another level, one more closely aligned with the purpose of this study, the concept of demand represents individual requests for services of the agency by its constituent citizens. A service demand, in this narrow sense, may be thought of as a signal communicated to the agency personnel expressing a need for services or resources of that the agency.

These kinds of demands are often stimulated by the occurrence of a crime, a disorder, a need for system information, or general assistance that could fall into a host of broad categories. Frequently, the demand is misdirected to the police and must be routed to another public service agency. In some cases the gatekeeper must provide information to the caller regarding more appropriate agencies to handle their demands. The determinants of such demands will not be explored in this study, but it is instructive to provide an overview, for purposes of general understanding, of the subject matter.

Calls for Service as Demands

Citizen calls for police service represent direct demands on government. The job of the police phone operators, who are often interchangeable with dispatchers, is to translate the citizen's demand into official, bureaucratically recognized inputs. The operators enjoy considerable discretion in how the call is received, processed, and how information is transmitted. The police dispatcher screens calls, categorizes the citizen's problem, and thus determines much of the initial police response, Antunes and Scott (1981).

In their study the authors analyzed 26,000 telephone calls from 21 jurisdictions in 3 metropolitan jurisdictions. The data of that study indicate that most citizen calls to the police involve requests for information, request for assistance, abatement of nuisances, traffic related problems, or interpersonal disputes. Only 20% of the calls involve predatory crime.

The initial decisions of police dispatchers determines much of what happens in the police department on a day to day basis. The style of the operator is important and can have a negative affect on police community relations. Citizens who are under emotional pressure are not models of clarity, concision, or coherence. Their information may be ambiguous or incomplete and perhaps even incoherent. This fact places an added burden on those answering and deciphering calls for service.

Characteristics of Demands

Demands are characterized according to their intensity, immediacy, and specificity by Percy and Scott,(1985). These factors may vary widely. Intensity of a demand to the police may vary from a simple request for information regarding an incident that has occurred to a report of a life

threatening incident. The determination of the intensity of the call is the task of the person receiving and interpreting the call from the public. That person is the dispatcher.

The characteristic of immediacy refers to the speed to which the needs must be attended. Some calls may require an immediate police response such as a child choking or a report of a person suffering from a heart attack. Other calls for service may be less immediate in nature such as a report of a larceny that occurred several days before. Percy and Scott (1985) report that immediacy is often correlated to intensity.

A third characteristic that the authors describe is specificity of the individual need of the caller. Some are clearly communicated such as a need for an ambulance at the scene of a major accident. Others may be less obvious and require investigative communication skills and knowledge.

Call Interpretation

Manning (1988) states that several propositions are transmitted to the call receiver and it is the task of the dispatcher to determine which of those propositions are most critical and bear on the nature of the call for service. Misinterpretation of propositions could lead to an improper response by the police. Erroneous determinations could have serious consequences for the citizen, the police, or both. The dispatcher must be able to understand all of the propositions and be able to prioritize them correctly as well as determine how they might be related. This kind of interpretive ability is based on knowledge of police matters, law, etc. It is important that the responding officer receives information that accurately reflects the real circumstances of the incident.

Manning (1988) stated that calls for police service are considered by many to be a critical point in policing, perhaps the most critical in the criminal justice system. Manning contends that the exercise of discretion in receiving and responding to calls for service is not yet well understood. If dispatchers and call takers are to exercise discretion then how much discretion are they to utilize? More importantly to this research are those critical decisions, and the relationship of those decisions to the training, skills, and abilities of the person.

Logical questions that arise include such questions as, Are they effective? How are we to know what an effective dispatcher is? How are they to be trained? How extensive is the dispatcher's training? Is the training consistent with what is needed in order to make the critical decisions they are called upon to make ?

The call for service is a critical period in overall police response. At this stage the public may receive help in the form of needed information to resolve some anxiety or receive a rapid police response to a life threatening incident. It is not uncommon for a dispatcher to give verbal directions for conducting cardiac pulmonary resuscitation over the phone after dispatching an ambulance and a police car to the scene.

The call to a police dispatcher sets a process in motion that may traverse the full spectrum of the criminal justice system. The call is received, interpreted, and encoded to the responding officer in the form of a dispatch. This action may lead to a response and investigation that may lead to an arrest, prosecution, conviction, and imprisonment Manning (1988).

In the interim, many of the other facets of the criminal justice system may be set into motion. These other facets include bonding, releases on one's own recognizance, procurement or assignment of defense counsel, plea bargaining, probation etc.

Qualifications of a Dispatcher

Controlling the exercise of discretion by dispatchers begins with the selection of persons who are qualified to deal with the rigors of the job. Effective call takers or dispatchers are people who have good people skills with an ability to listen and draw out salient information from the caller. They are those who have the toughness and good judgment to deal effectively under pressure and adapt quickly and effectively to different situations. Such persons have aptitude for juggling available resources in light of competing demands. Experts have suggested prosiac skills, such as typing ability and computer literacy. Scott and Percy (1983) report that people actually selected for these positions are often ill-suited to the tasks. Departments often assign disabled or disciplined police officers to the most sensitive task of answering calls or as dispatchers.

Types of Calls Received

Reiss (1971) estimates that dispatches in response to calls for service account for 14% of the patrol time of officers. McEwen, Connors and Cohen (1986) state that 50% of the calls to communications centers are for information. Manning (1988) states that the dispatch function itself is largely an administrative one. The use of the critical incident technique in this research and the results of that technique indicates that the dispatcher is a

decision maker, a controller of call conditions, and a resource specialist to the police responders. The term administrative, as a descriptor of the dispatching process, does not account for the complexity and scale of human skills necessary to be an effective dispatcher. There are also others who hold that the role of the dispatcher is administrative in nature. Such administrative work includes recording information on calls received, sending officers to calls, assigning units, noting times of assignments, and recording information from officers on arrival and departure, Whitaker, Mastropski, Ostrom, Parks, and Percy (1982).

This view leaves out the critical nature of the work and the serious consequences of the decision making process which reflects a more consequential role than administrative. Because of the differences among people in a job, and in light of the complex nature of the host of calls received by dispatchers, different dispatchers are likely to handle similar calls differently. After years of experience and inputs from the police, as well as training, there are certain responses from a dispatcher on a given type call that are acceptable and other responses that are not acceptable to the responding officers.

As a group, the police have a general consensus on a right and a wrong way to handle most situations. There are several acceptable alternatives as well. Each method of handling a police matter varies somewhat due to the specific nature of circumstances. Most effective dispatchers have a mental laundry list of what should be done at a minimum, what is ideal, and what is unacceptable. There have been no studies outlining these expectations that police officers or dispatchers have in this regard.

There are certain questions that must be asked of every caller in order to optimize the police response and to insure officer and citizen safety. Even though some suggest that the job is primarily administrative, and anyone with proper procedures in hand could function effectively, there is evidence that this is not workable. Examples abound in case reports from dispatchers that show that just getting the name, time, date, and telephone number of the caller and the nature of the call is not sufficient for a proper and safe response. Unless a dispatcher is familiar with police subject matter, laws, and people problems in general, and specifically aware of excitement of the caller and other tell tale signs of stress, the dispatcher could miss critical cues in receiving the call. The outcome of such administratively handled matters could be disastrous.

A case in point from a personal experience highlights this viewpoint. Several years ago, prior to the widespread use of civilians for dispatching, as a state trooper, this researcher was working at night with another officer in one of the more heavily populated counties of Michigan. The dispatching desk officer had over fifteen years of police experience. That officer viewed dispatching as an administrative task. A call was received from a business person who said "I am having trouble out here with a drunk" The shift supervisor obtained the caller's name and location of his business and hung up without further inquiry. The call was encoded and transmitted as a man having trouble with a drunk. That message was transmitted as a routine call and there was nothing in the dispatcher's voice that gave any indication of urgency or that there was anything other than a usual drunk call. Quite to the contrary the dispatcher sounded rather casual. The two officers

responded to the call without any particular haste. Upon arrival at the intersection, the caller ran up to the patrol car and said "Look at the hole that guy shot through my jacket!" He was asked what happened and said that a car came around the corner and spun around in the gravel. He went out and asked the driver if everything was ok. The driver got out of the car, pointed a hand gun at him, and fired a shot. He was asked why he didn't tell the desk man that and he said that he never asked. He was just told that a car would be sent and he could explain it to the officers. After locating the person, he was arrested while attempting to steal a car at gunpoint from two elderly persons. Subsequent investigation revealed that he had assaulted twelve persons that evening with a firearm.

The point of this example is that viewing the job of dispatching as one that is primarily administrative overlooks the need for a dispatcher to get investigative information to pass on to the responding patrol car. The incident described above turned out without major injury to anyone, but it had the potential to be disastrous. Had the dispatching officer obtained relevant information an entirely different method of approach would have been used and injuries that were sustained by some people could have been avoided.

There are certain things that dispatchers are expected to ask callers on such incidents in order to optimize the police response and insure the greatest safety to all involved. If someone reports that a person is seriously assaulted in a home, in addition to the name, number and type of incident the dispatcher must find out if the person is still in the house, if the person is armed, if there are other weapons in the vicinity, where they are located, if the person has been arrested before, what the person's mental state is at

this time, the condition of the person assaulted, whether an ambulance is needed, location of other innocent persons in the home, and on and on.

After learning the critical information a car is dispatched, back up cars are sent to support, and the caller is frequently kept on the line for reports of further developments as the incident unfolds. An effective dispatcher will often run a record check on the assaulter if the name is known and this information will be passed on to the responding cars. These are not uncommon incidents. If there is a person barricaded in a house the information necessary for a proper police response becomes more complex and other resources will be needed. These tasks are hardly limited to administrative work.

Because of differences among people in any job, and in light of the complexity of many calls for service, different call takers and dispatchers are likely to handle similar calls differently. The dispatcher must listen to and effectively read and often calm the caller; assess caller eligibility, encode the call into one of several agency categories; determine what additional information is needed to make a properly informed decision; provide feedback to the caller; and mediate as appropriate.

In addition, the dispatcher must decide what response is appropriate and what action is to be taken in the borderline cases. When a decision is made to send a unit the dispatcher must coordinate the response and make decisions on what other information to give the officers. All of these duties have implications for the eventual outcome of an individual incident or episode Manning (1988).

Dispatchers must also decide when advice to the caller over the phone is more appropriate. If dispatchers do not send a car when one is needed

the citizens will not be served and they may fail to call the police in the future when police help is needed. The appropriateness of the response has to do with what the dispatcher says regardless of the action taken, Manning (1988).

Obviously a rude response by a dispatcher will reflect that the police are rude. Public impressions are important to the police. Improvements in the police dispatch function are likely to entail not only what call takers and dispatchers do, but what they say and how they say it.

Language barriers present yet another problem for dispatcher reception and response. There is no guarantee of an appropriate police response if the dispatcher does not understand the caller or their needs.

Manning (1988) says that very little systematic evidence exists on how operators are trained to draw out such information, policies for sending units in response to calls, or how those policies are carried out.

Rationale for Dispatcher Training

Central to the focus of this study is the identification of the required skills and abilities of dispatchers, the desirable attitudes of dispatchers, the personality attributes of dispatchers, and the organizational perceptions of dispatchers. Training of dispatchers is most important in regards to call interpretation, proposition prioritization, discernment, and assignment of the right resources to the specific problem. A call to the police department may be classified as a report of a disturbance. Such a general category may include loud children playing in someone's yard or a murder. Unless the dispatcher is trained in the concepts of policing and possesses a similar knowledge base as the police, it is doubtful that they will have the the

ability to determine from the caller what the more complex disturbances are all about. It would be difficult to determine intensity, immediacy, or specificity. Under such conditions no accurate assessment can be made until the police arrive and investigate. This condition could be dangerous to all involved. Some police departments have taken the position that the dispatcher's job is to send a car to all calls. This is not efficient or effective and often emanates from a mind set that the dispatchers are civilians and know nothing of police work, nor should they.

The person who performs the demand processing task of call receiving and dispatching must be able to screen calls for legitimacy in terms of the organizational domain. Once it is established that the demand for service is within the domain of the agency a second phase of screening takes place. The second phase involves the previously mentioned concepts of intensity, immediacy, and specificity as described by Percy and Scott (1985).

In addition to these decisions, a dispatcher must know what resources may be needed to effectively handle the matter. In some jurisdictions, that have a high volume of calls for service, mechanisms for rationing services are implemented. Calls may be shuffled so that those with higher priority are serviced before those that are less immediate. The gatekeeping dispatcher exercises a considerable amount of discretionary decision making.

Radio dispatchers must possess the ability of telephone operators, but they must make sound decisions in a very short period of time. They must also possess a thorough knowledge of police strategy, theory, and operations. It is important for them to know the local geography and be aware of unusual local location situations. Specific training recommended includes training in voice and diction, interview techniques, simulation training on

incidents, interpersonal relations, and decision making, Sannes (1976).

Percy and Scott (1985) reported that persons who perform demand processing functions are usually considered to be low level bureaucrats, but unlike their counterparts in traditional bureaucracies, they do exercise latitude in activating the provision of service. Their conclusions on this matter are not inconsistent with the findings of this study. Widespread discretion among dispatchers makes the evaluation of their performance difficult. It is difficult to have a clear set of procedures and behaviors in such a complex context. A dispatcher must decide to send a car, determine who to send, describe the type of problem to the officers, initiate the dispatch of other needed resources based on the nature of the problem, and monitor the officers' actions for further developments. It seems basic that such decision making processes require a broad range of knowledge of the context of policing as well as personal skills of communication.. In reaching decisions regarding the eligibility of the caller for services the dispatcher requires a degree of insight and knowledge regarding that service. A broad range of services require a broad base of knowledge.

Consequence of Errors in Dispatching

Personal and organizational factors are at work in the complex pattern of gatekeeping (dispatching). The consequence of errors by dispatchers can have far reaching organizational impacts on the officer and citizen. A caller who is rudely treated will talk to other citizens and this practice can have a negative impact on agency reputation and citizen support. General goodwill, police image, and police community relations can be positively or negatively affected by the demeanor of the dispatcher who answers the call for service.

Failing to understand the messages from the public could result in the wrong resource or no resource being applied. Consequences of such situations can be serious.

A tape recording of such an incident was reviewed and that incident, while not commonplace, is an example of such serious consequences.

A woman called the Detroit central dispatcher center and reported to a telephone call receiver that she and her husband had just returned home and found that someone had shot their dog. She said that something was wrong. There was a long silence on the receiving end and the operator did not ask any questions. The tape revealed that the dispatcher heard several loud reports that were shots being fired in the caller's home. No action was taken, but the dispatcher just listened. The citizen who called had been shot several times by intruders. A few moments later the caller's husband came in the back door and one can hear the words " Oh, no." followed by a series of shots. The call taker just remained on the line and listened. After a few more minutes of taping, the intruders returned to the home and fired several shots around the house. The line remained open for eleven minutes before the dispatcher heard what had happened. Once this was discovered by the dispatcher cars were dispatched. The woman and her husband were found shot to death in their home. It was later concluded that the immediate recognition of what was occurring would not have saved the woman, but the husband may have been saved had appropriate action been taken immediately.

Failure of a dispatcher or call taker to understand the circumstances that commonly lead the police to become interested in social situations and a lack of knowledge and awareness of concepts that guide police thinking may

lead to such improper conclusions regarding immediacy, intensity, and specificity.

In their description of the process of dispatching, Percy and Scott (1985) state that each dispatcher must be able to accurately interpret the demand that is being made by the caller, and be able to code it in such a way that the responding officers have a feel for the factual nature of the call. What the officers do and how they respond depends on an accurate assessment of facts presented to the dispatcher.

Complexity of Calls

It is not uncommon for those not intimately familiar with dispatching to think that call receivers or dispatchers merely have to determine the name of the caller, the address, the telephone number, and a brief description of the incident. Such an assumption presumes that the caller has specific detail and also understands all of the relevant concepts of policing. This position also presumes that the caller has prepared a factual, precise, and accurate message before calling the police. More often than not the police dispatcher must clarify the demand, obtain other relevant information to make a sound decision regarding the nature of the call, and ensure that a proper response is made. Dispatchers must be able to do this frequently with an emotionally charged citizen who just wants help quickly and may be irritated by questions. Demand messages are frequently complex and can be influenced by the caller's language, perspective, attitude, and involvement in the incident that they are attempting to report.

Percy and Scott (1985) found that most of the larger police agencies establish sets of terms, codes, and categories to assist the dispatchers in

reducing the complex to the simple. Such coding and categorization can increase error or distort the original message content. The Michigan State Police do not use such codes or categories for calls.

Dispatchers may not only use codes to simplify messages, but as Mennerick (1974) suggests, they may devise information typologies to characterize those served. Five typological dimensions suggested by Mennerick are: 1) facilitation of work, 2) control, 3) gain, 4) danger, and 5) moral acceptability.

Examples of such typologies are found in the classification process used with prisoners or parolees by corrections officials to determine how much trouble those persons may cause. Such codes or typologies can influence both the dispatcher and the responding officer. They can also affect their interpretation of facts and thus affect the way the officer prepares to encounter the caller, McCleary (1978).

In some of the larger dispatch centers, telephone operators transmit the coded information to the dispatcher. Agencies have developed standardized systems to carry out this process. In smaller agencies the call receiver and the dispatcher are the same person. In addition to taking and coding calls the dispatcher may frequently be requested to give immediate assistance to the caller. Examples that are common are instructions on CPR for a family member, what to do in poisoning cases, how to protect the crime scene until officers arrive, and in some cases remaining on the phone to give minute by minute observations of a gunman who has barricaded himself. Call takers are assisted in eligibility determination by criteria established by current laws, departmental tradition and administrative guidelines.

Interpretation of the demand is somewhat more difficult. People who call for police service articulate them in their own words and from their own point of reference with a multitude of expectations about what should be done. It is up to the dispatcher to make sense of this and to process this demand in such a way that the responding officer is aware of the facts of the case as best as they can be determined. This process requires the dispatcher to probe for more facts and deeper understanding. By utilizing interpersonal skills, the dispatcher is able to determine quickly what has occurred. Few departments have established basic or in-service training programs that provide the basic skills in probing for information. Most call takers and dispatchers learn from observation and some learn from on the job training programs, Percy and Scott (1985).

Communicating the Message to the Street Officer

Dispatchers perform several tasks after the receipt and interpretation of the caller's message. They assign personnel to respond. In some cases in which the dispatcher is also a police supervisor, they may stipulate specific actions that are to take place. In cases of civilian dispatchers, specific instructions may also be given such as "He is in the garage with a rifle on the east side of the house so only approach from the west side". The street officer's discretion has been well documented, but the dispatcher is not without discretionary responsibilities. The dispatcher may transmit the service demand to provide the officer with information about the situation and enable them to respond accordingly, " He has a gun". "He is a former mental patient and is intoxicated" Such information allows the officer to mentally prepare for such encounters, request special back up resources, and

to take protective actions. Demand information also allows the field personnel to make faster determinations of problems.

Discretion

A recurring theme in the process of dispatching is the level of discretion at all levels. It is difficult to restrict discretion. There are too many variations in the calls and responses to prepare a programmed response in every case. Discretion is not without its organizational problems for management control. Without clear rules of behavior, the dispatcher can introduce personal judgments when making decisions and taking action. Such actions may not be consistent with the objectives of the agency. In order to decrease discretion, an organization must increase supervision. One major force in the introduction of civilian dispatching in police work was the cost effectiveness of having a lower paid civilian replace the higher paid and greater trained police officer. Such moves freed up officers to work the street.

Criticality of Calls for Police Service

A dispatcher receives hundreds of calls on a daily basis. To the citizen though, who may be the victim of a crime, that call to the police dispatcher is of critical importance and of the highest priority. A citizen may not have need for the police for several years, but when they do it is most important to them. This is true whether they are the victim of a crime directly or have family member who is a victim. It may be their first call to the police. It matters very little to the citizen whether the person on the other end of the line is a sworn member or a civilian. To the caller that contact is the police,

and their expectations are the same regardless of who answers the phone.

The police may appear to accept such calls as routine, but the dispatcher cannot afford to transmit that attitude to the caller or to the responding officers. The emotional needs of the calling citizen must be kept in mind as well as the functions and limitations of the particular police agency.

In this research, there are no distinctions made between call taker and dispatcher. Dispatchers are treated as one whether they are from a small police agency and work alone on the radio desk, or whether they are one of many dispatchers at a central dispatch center.

This study is not focused on the calls for service, but rather on the dispatchers themselves and particularly on the variables that tend to describe both effective and ineffective dispatchers in receiving, interpreting, and dispatching officers.

Dispatching and Performance

Most studies of the police focus on the activities of the police officers on the street. Percy and Scott (1985) note that there are significant linkages between the dispatching function and organizational performance. They note that dispatchers affect performance by determining eligibility. A decision is made on who does or does not obtain police resources and this is defined within a scope of rules. Dispatchers translate the complex message from callers into agency-relevant terms and codes. Such information has an impact on the structure of the response by officers. They also note that the method selected for response by the dispatcher has an impact on the process. If the response is inappropriate the organization may not be effective. Citizens also evaluate the information dimension of the dispatcher's

job. This can result in satisfaction or hostility by the consumer of services. The manner in which the dispatcher transmits the call also has an effect on the officer's reception of the message.

Information Transmission

The exchange of information and the transmission of meaning is an important aspect of the dispatcher's function and in the organization's effectiveness. Information relative to demands for service to a police department is generated by a call to the police or is initiated by officers on patrol in direct contact with citizens. Only the former is examined in this research. Dispatchers are key people because it is they who receive and interpret. The dispatcher must make decisions on the meaning and value of particular facts. Their evaluations are affected by factors such as communication mode, message duration, message authority, coding, characteristics of the demand, and the demand volume, Percy and Scott (1985).

View On Training

In reviewing the literature on the subject of dispatchers, training is often mentioned as a postscript. Most of the time the comment is limited to the fact that very little training is provided. Only after determining what effective and ineffective dispatching is can a comprehensive training program be developed for dispatchers that is job relevant. Training and personal make up will influence orientations of a dispatcher in determining who should be served and how they should be served. Everything that the dispatcher brings to the job influences his or her decisions. Those things that

occur on the job as well as their perception of their place in the organization also will have an affect on their decision making process. Those decisions in turn influence the officers that are dispatched and the way the way in which the entire process of dispatching is handled can influence the final outcome or service.

Criticality of Training

One premise of this dissertation is that the catalyst that provides for accuracy and effectiveness in this regard is the level of training. Training may have been accumulated over years from on the job observations, but the criticality of the nature of the work and its consequences requires that such training be provided up front.

The focus of this study on training of dispatchers is premised on the belief that training and awareness of the police context is a major if not a critical factor in determining just how well the response and final outcome turns out. If the dispatcher has a different set of values and an information base than the responding police officers then there may be contextual disequilibrium.

The police may view a particular set of facts one way and a dispatcher, not sufficiently schooled in policing concepts, may view the same set of facts another way. Unless the dispatcher and the dispatched officers are operating from the same bases of information, interpretation of facts will be different and disequilibrium will exist. It seems imperative that dispatchers view critical propositions of a call in ways that are similar to the way that police officers would view it.

This argument was presented on many occasions over the past twenty years by officers who were concerned that civilians could not think like officers, and therefore could not dispatch cars as well as seasoned officers.

On the job training, utilizing feedback loops to correct misinterpretation by dispatchers, is acceptable for the training environment. In the real world of policing however, the feedback from the field on actual calls is not consistent with effectiveness or safety. The critical nature of police work and its relationship to citizen and officer safety is such, that basic knowledge on such incidents is necessary up front for dispatchers. While there is a close correspondence between the focus of this study and information theory, only those elements related to the training or lack of training will be addressed.

Percy and Scott (1985) also report that because of the volume of calls received, the police administrators are searching for an efficient means of managing demand. The demand for police services is high. The introduction of new technology has done much to increase the efficiency of police response to overload calls. Central Dispatch centers, 911 and Enhanced 911 centers have become common. The passage of a new law in Michigan has prompted those in charge of state police dispatching to be concerned with the level of dispatcher training that exist now, and to be concerned that the most appropriate training be instituted in the future.

A lack of ongoing training is frequently listed by many dispatchers as a problem in their agencies. Training is considered a low priority for police dispatchers, Guthery and Guthery (1988).

Diversity of Calls

The police respond to citizens calls for help and are held accountable for their disposition in many cases. Many and perhaps most citizen calls are neither crime or law related, but represent various kinds of public and private troubles about which the individual citizen can do little or nothing, Manning (1977).

Despite the ideal held by many police officers that they are primarily crime fighters and enforcers of the law, several studies have shown that services to the public account for the majority of citizen inputs to the police. The complexity of the calls for services and their diversity adds to the complexity of the dispatcher's job and heightens the opportunity for error in the information exchange cycle between citizen and dispatcher and between dispatcher and officer.

Barcal (1970) mentions that traditionally police see themselves as quasi-military organizations that "enforce the law". He views the police as service agencies which are involved in dispensing a wide variety of services to the individual and to society. In his study of metropolitan police departments, he found that the vast majority of calls made to the police were for services. He classifies Service I calls as those calls that are handled by dispatchers without sending a car. Service II calls are those calls that were handled by dispatching a car. His summaries lend support to his position. Those summaries are on the following page.

<u>Detroit</u>	<u>New York</u>	<u>St. Louis</u>
<u>Total calls</u>		
1,027,000	5,200,000	461,000
<u>Service I</u>		
370,000 (36%)	2,080,000 (40%)	98,000 (21%)
<u>Service II</u>		
657,000 (64%)	3,120,000 (60%)	363,000 (79%)

The service calls he refers to are those in 1968 that were transmitted to the police departments via the emergency phone numbers. After a call is received, the operator or dispatcher must decide whether or not a car is to be sent as a response or how to respond to those callers when a car is not dispatched. Barcal (1970) feels that emphasis on the crime problem and social problems have hidden the majority of police work from the public's eye.

In Detroit, in reference to those calls for service, when a car was not sent, 195,000 (52.6%) were resolved by the dispatcher without resorting to referral. Eight thousand four hundred calls (2.2%) were referred to private agencies, and 131,000 calls (35.5%) were referred to other police bureaus. Thirty-five thousand five hundred calls (9.6%) were referred to other governmental agencies.

Others refer to the police as the street level bureaucrats. These bureaucrats are often expected to be more than benign passive gatekeepers. They are also expected to be advocates, to use their knowledge, use their

skills, and to secure for the citizens the best treatment consistent with the constraints on service Lipsky (1981).

While that author, in describing the street level bureaucrat, is describing the police officer, the relationship between officer and dispatcher in terms of the information upon which to base appropriate action is not that remote. If the officer must use knowledge and skills and be an advocate, a dispatcher must also do the same because the input for the action is the same. Such information comes from the caller and is interpreted by the dispatcher.

Effectiveness of Codes

Human beings and their problems are of an infinite variety. No matter how comprehensive the codes devised, some demands will be lumped into a general category. Even the more specific codes that are used to put a call into a category are broad, such as "Threatening physical injury" .

Dispatchers can provide citizens with information on response, which allows them to understand what will be done about their problem. This information may calm the person or infuriate them depending on their expectations of the police. There are other pieces of information that are provided that will help the caller such as "Turn on the light", "Watch for the police", "Direct the car into the farm" and so on.

Training Level of Dispatchers

Operators are taught to use the equipment and become proficient in the use of demand processing equipment such as radio, computers, and law enforcement information networks. Dispatchers however have very little

training in the proper techniques of effective interpersonal communication. The lack of formal training of dispatchers is explained as existing from a long-held police perception of the role of call takers. Civilian dispatchers are frequently held in low esteem. They have little status in the organization and have lower pay than the officers. This is true even though they have a wide latitude in discretion in their decision making and many of their decisions bear upon the safety of the officer. Some departments treat call takers and dispatchers as clerical staff, and they tend to be treated as such by officers imbued with their own sense of professionalism, Percy and Scott (1985).

Another factor contributing to the lack of training for dispatchers is that many call takers, as well as dispatchers, are civilian and female. 64 % of sampled departments employed only civilians as call takers and another 26% used both uniformed and civilian operators, Sumrall, Roberts and Farmer (1981).

A thirty-two city study showed that 75% of the sampled agencies used civilians exclusively as call takers, Colton, Brandeau and Tien (1980)

Because they are civilians, others report that many officers feel that the civilians have limited knowledge of police work. A lack of professional image enhanced by low status and low pay has much to do with the nature of the job. The chances for advancement for civilians are limited, and even in the large centers, there is usually only one center director and a few shift supervisors. Those who are only call takers could get elevated to dispatcher status in locales where those positions are separated, but the same dead end awaits them. For practical purposes upward mobility is non-existent.

Regardless of these inconsistencies whether it is the dispatch room of a 911 center or the single small department operation, a dispatcher working alone is the nerve center of the police department and the only link between the citizen in need and the responding police.

Dispatchers are in a unique and frustrating position within the police agency. They may have low pay and low status, but they usually act in the name of the chief, sheriff or director. This is particularly so in the absence of other police supervisors in the building. A common characteristic of dispatchers is their caring attitude toward the officers they dispatch.

In many departments the dispatchers are given the role of coordinating the activities of patrol personnel in one or more geographic areas. This monitoring activity of the patrols is a command and control function. Dispatchers also have authority to implement radio silence, maintain radio discipline, and request locations of officers. They also are responsible for maintaining the status of the officers and must document how long they are out on assignment or lunch.

Percy and Scott (1985) feel that the importance of dispatchers has been largely overlooked in analyses of the police performance.

The tasks of the dispatcher does directly affect the decisions, actions, work tasks, and responses of the officers who handle calls. A conclusion reached by Antunes and Scott (1981) in their study of 26,000 calls for service to metropolitan police departments was that any strategy to upgrade the quality of phone operator relations with citizens must focus on increasing the dispatcher's sensitivity and professionalism through:

1. better selection procedures;
2. improved training emphasizing professional norms; and

3. restructuring the job to enhance the pay, status, and productive contribution of the operators.

In 1983 Robert Moylan, then assigned to the state police operations division, administered a questionnaire to the state police dispatchers to determine the perceptions the dispatchers had of their needs and to determine how they acquired their job skills. The purpose of that questionnaire was to be the basis for a training program to be initiated by the Operations Division of the State Police. The opening statement of that report indicates that most state police dispatchers have had little or no formal training. Fifty-two responded to the questionnaire for a response rate of 60%. The results of the survey revealed that 64% of the respondents had no formal training and 36% had three to five days of LEIN training. The data indicate that 48% of the respondents felt competent after six months on the job while 10% felt competent at nine months and 15% felt that competency existed after one year on the job. Another 27% indicated that it took anywhere from three months to a year and one half to become competent. Many of the respondents qualified their responses by stating that the competency level referred to routine work. Many still felt uncomfortable handling emergency situations.

Over one quarter (26%) of the respondents reported that supervision was not adequate. The remainder either felt it was adequate or had no opinion. In-service training was seen as most desirable with 83% indicating that this form of training was necessary. Twelve percent felt it was not and 5% of them were uncertain. The conclusions reached by the state police at that time were that training was needed and that many of the dispatchers

experienced morale problems in varying degrees.

The general feeling among the state police dispatchers was that the job was very different from that of clerk, and they resented being classified as communications clerks. In 1983, when that questionnaire was administered, the Department of Civil Service allowed secretaries to move into the dispatcher communications clerk position, but did not allow the dispatchers to move laterally to the secretary position. Other factors noted by the author contributing to job dissatisfaction were stress, job complexity, lack of training, lack of appreciation by officers, and lack of upward mobility.

One way to improve the dispatcher's ability to deal with the stress of the job is to train them properly. In the view of Scott and Percy (1980) these people have been poorly paid and undertrained. They conclude that they are frequently thrown into the job with insufficient interpersonal communications skills and with no training in making crucial decisions in the pressure situations that arise in police dispatching.

Design of Training

Training should be designed, both in content and format, so that the knowledge conveyed and the skills that are developed relate directly to the knowledge and skills that are required of a dispatcher on the job. Training is viewed as a systematic, intentional process of influencing behavior of certain organizational members such that the resultant behavior contributes to organizational effectiveness. The term behavior in this context includes any aspect of human activity, cognition, or feeling directed toward the accomplishment of work tasks, Sistrunk and Smith (1982).

Effective training programs include both pre-service and in-service training. McEwen, Connors, and Cohen (1986) felt that the most successful training programs include the use of easy to use manuals, flip charts, various simulations, and role playing techniques. A test of a dispatcher's knowledge is no indicator of their ability to utilize that knowledge properly. Because their behavior in handling critical incidents is so important it appears necessary to provide dispatchers with scenarios from known critical incidents and then test their ability by role playing to determine if they can make the correct decisions.

Importance of Information

Some police administrators believe that the more information that can be disseminated to the responding officer the better prepared they will be. Departments that share this view have call takers and dispatchers that attempt to get as much relevant information as possible.

Others like Rubinstein (1973) feel that minimal information should be provided to responding officers. He argued that the dispatcher has no way of knowing whether he has been told the truth and must therefore leave that determination up to the officer. He felt that the complaint will be repeated by the complainant anyway on the officer's arrival so don't bother to put it out as such.

Both Rubinstein (1973) and Manning (1980) indicate that incoming information is ambiguous and can be misleading and thus transmitting details to officers compounds the distortion. Others, including this researcher, disagree with the negative assessment of incoming information. That position may be true to the degree that the dispatcher is untrained.

Properly trained and supervised, the dispatcher can and has been most useful to the officer, and as such they can be perceived as a team members. Trained and experienced police dispatchers have dispatched for years, and there are countless cases of the value of their work. Their investigative inquiries have had an impact on the outcome of the cases as well as providing for the safety of the officers who responded.

Stress in Dispatching

A great deal has been written about police officer stress and among those writings, giving limited attention to police dispatcher stress, the job has been linked to that of the air traffic controller. An interesting question to pose is whether the reported stresses of dispatching are from the job of dispatching or from organizational factors, perceptual factors, or a combination of these and a lack of training resulting in a condition of contextual disequilibrium.

Terry (1985) reports that stress in policing is usually divided into four categories. The first, external stress, emanates from perceived problems in the criminal justice system. The second, internal stress, derives from the organization, often due to inadequate training , poor pay or equipment, paper work, and poor career development. The third, task relevant stress, develops from too many calls, not enough help to do the job, shiftwork, boredom, fear, or role conflicts. The last, individual stress, evolves from personal fears regarding job competence or individual success.

French's work (1975) examined stress for the police as well as a number of other occupations. He discovered that responsibility for others, complexity of the work, low salary, and lack of participation in decision

making were chief stressors among the police. There is little reason to believe that dispatch work within the police department would be any different.

Others focused on the police work itself and concluded that the chief stressor was a lack of support from the administration of the department, Krues, Margolis, and Hurrell (1974). While there has been a dearth of research on police officer stress, little attention has been paid to the stresses of the police support system such as dispatchers, complaint clerks, clerical personnel and others who are so critical in the success of the law enforcement mission. The primary stressors which affect the communications environment include the perception of second-class citizenship, insufficient training, the handling of multiple calls, decision making, anticipation, low control over the working environment, confinement, stress caused by dealing with the citizen, and inadequate interpersonal communications, Sewell and Crew (1984).

Weaver (1985) states that the key to ensuring optimal performance of all dispatch personnel is intensive training. He reports that the responsibilities of the intake operator and radio dispatcher have risen dramatically even though calls for service management programs have been introduced. These management programs include alternative response strategies, call stacking, call prioritization and others. A comprehensive training program is viewed as a mechanism that can reward high performance dispatchers, identify those who need additional training, and identify personnel, both present and prospective, who do not possess the skills necessary to perform effectively, Weaver (1985).

In discussing the forgotten victim, Sewell and Crew (1984) state that the occupational stress of dispatching parallels that of air traffic controllers. In a circumstance of significant pressure of time, the dispatcher must direct the activities of many police units, receive and assimilate a variety of information from a variety of sources, and effectively communicate with officers and citizens. The nine categories of problems were:

- 1. Perception problems that others within the agency saw them as second class citizens and supervisors viewed them as lacking knowledge of their role. They worked without benefit of formal training and without such training the maximum safety for officers is not assured.**

- 2. Decision problems with potentially life threatening consequences. The urgency of handling people's problems is magnified by the number of calls in such a short time frame.**

- 3. Anticipation problems to endure the stress of anticipation or vicarious fear. The dispatchers want to nurture and determine officer status to confirm safety of the officer.**

- 4. System problems noted when the equipment is deficient or out of date which only amplifies their fears.**

- 5. Control problems under conditions in which they had little control over their working environment. Officers had more discretion with responses and dispatchers felt they were not as free and thus had very**

little flexibility in handling the public demands.

6. Confinement problems included a lack of opportunity for breaks.

7. Interpersonal problems were displayed by the limited communication with field officers. Their communications skills were reserved for the public. Dispatchers indicated that they had no outlets to discuss conflicts with officers.

8. Citizen contact problems required facing callers that suffered from hysteria to anger and yet they were required to provide a professional response. Other examples included dealing with persons who were inaccurate or unfamiliar with the area.

9. Professional development problems included a lack of opportunity for growth, limited career paths, and too few supervisory positions.

Among the recommendations to reduce these stressors were diet, training in role situations, field training in patrol and investigative procedures to insure mutual understanding, and rap sessions with patrols.

Most studies of stress in policing are confined to sworn personnel even though dispatchers are the hub of police activity and provide an integral ancillary function Doerner, (1987). Herringer and Urbanek (1983) note that this neglect is perplexing in light of the movement toward civilianization.

In a study performed in Tallahassee, Florida, Doerner (1987) notes that no published empirical studies investigating police dispatcher stress were

found. That study was limited to one agency and a small sample size. He found that male dispatchers were more apt to suffer from stress than the female dispatchers and that the helping theme was prevalent among those studied. Recommendations from that study include better selection, better training, and better career structure for dispatchers, Doerner (1987).

Dispatchers must collect information from people who are in distress while controlling their own emotions. Six occupational factors have been identified as stress producing in the job of dispatching. Decision making as a producer of stress deals with those decisions that must be made while receiving simultaneous demands in an uncertain context. Fragmented information from callers requires dispatchers to utilize decision making skills to the limit of their training.

Call prioritizing frequently causes stress. A dispatcher must evaluate the relative importance of each call though many dispatchers reportedly lack adequate training in information collection. Anticipatory stress can describe the dispatcher's environment. The work may be slow one moment and in a matter of seconds escalate into a series of highly stressful events.

Working conditions can produce job stress. A dispatcher may suffer stress from low pay, poor status in the organization, and continued shift work. Environmental isolation can exist. Due to security reasons, dispatch centers are often away from windows and located in secured central parts of a facility. Such indoor locations often use fluorescent lighting which can cause headaches and fatigue, Moriarity and Fields (1988). Both of the authors recommend psychological screening for dispatchers as a part of the selection process. A logical extension of liability related to negligent hiring or negligent training extends to dispatching.

Both Moriarity and Fields (1988) recommend five qualities that dispatchers should possess. Those qualities were 1) poise under pressure, 2) the ability to take control of a crisis situation, 3) personal integrity, 4) intelligence capacity to deal with expectations of the dispatch position, and 5) excellent interpersonal relations skills.

There are ample tests available to test for psychological preparedness for stressful work. Two such tests are the Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI) and the Minnesota Personnel Interpretive Report (MMPI). A natural caution is to assure that such tests are administered and interpreted by qualified professionals.

Several suggestions have been made by experienced dispatchers to relieve job stress. The suggestions include proper diet, exercise, leaving personal problems at home, focusing on understanding rather than being understood, and viewing the incident through the eyes of the caller or the officer. Most dispatchers recommend meetings with supervisors and officers to air their feelings and to facilitate mutual understanding. Organizational constraints frequently prevent this avenue from being utilized by the dispatchers, Wilson (1988). Stress can be positive as well as negative. Training is recommended as an adjustment to dispatcher stress. Once dispatchers have control over their environment readjustments can be made and reactions can be second nature. This method is called Stress Response. Role demands may be classified as either role conflict or role ambiguity. Role conflict exists when a dispatcher is given conflicting directions from management or others. Role ambiguity exists when a dispatcher is told to demonstrate different behaviors by two different managers, Bruns (1988).

A Dispatcher's Perspective

Burton, (1986) reports that a great number of dispatchers are hired today in the United States without any regard for their mental or technical ability to do the job. Burton (1986) also reports that women dispatchers report problems with male officers, ranging from subtle sexual insults, intentional profanity, to outright sexual harrassment. The relationship between dispatchers and street officers is reported as precarious at best.

Summary of Review of Literature

Demands for police services as reflected in increased calls are increasing. The majority of calls to the police are for services and a much smaller percentage of calls are for crime related matters. Service calls are no less important than crime related calls. Such calls for services deal with matters up to and including life threatening situations.

The dispatching function is a very critical part of the overall police response process. Much of the appropriateness of the police response is predicated on the dispatcher's ability to obtain factual information and perform accurate assessment of the demands, thus translating the demand into a proper response. The fulfillment of many responsibilities of the police are often stimulated by the interpretive skills of the dispatcher. A dispatcher spends a good deal of time in discretionary decision making. Those decisions affect the citizens and the officers and have effects on overall police performance. The demands for services are varied and complex and many are received under stressful conditions in less than comfortable environments.

The role of dispatcher has been given insufficient attention over the years despite the growing complexity and importance of the job. Job relevant training is viewed as important for effective utilization of dispatchers in law enforcement agencies, but training has been under utilized. The consequence of errors in dispatching can be extreme.

In recognition of the nature of dispatching, current practices, and lack of relevant training, it is suggested that changes in selection criteria, accurate position descriptions, and institution of job related training are important requisites to improving the dispatching process. Departments who fail to address these issues and implement changes place their dispatchers in an untenable position and increase the opportunity for job burnout, costly turnover, and vicarious liability.

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

Preliminary Investigation

An overall feel for the perceptions of dispatchers was a necessary starting point. During the months of June, August, and October of 1987 visits were made to three separate training programs held in three Michigan cities. These visits provided an opportunity for discussions with 180 dispatchers representing many departments. After a short presentation on the general purpose of the study, the dispatchers were asked to freely express their viewpoints, concerns, and wishes regarding training deficits or perceptions of role conflicts, if any, in their jobs. The majority of those in attendance were not from the state police, but from other police agencies from across the state.

Over a period of several hours at each of the three training sessions, those in attendance spoke freely of problems and perceptions of problems. The issues ranged from individual training deficiencies to organizational issues. In order to accommodate the free flow of information several informal conversations were held with these dispatchers in the evenings.

Though the original request was made to develop a training program for state police dispatchers it was deemed appropriate to investigate the relevance of such a training program for all dispatchers on the premise that dispatchers' duties and training needs may not be significantly different from one agency to the next.

Because the focal agency of this study was the state police it was decided to use their dispatchers as the base for information for the critical incident technique that was employed. In order to obtain the widest possible variations of critical incidents and to obtain as rich a source as possible, it was decided to utilize the entire population of state police dispatchers. An early assumption was that uniformed officer may have a different view of what a dispatcher should be and how a dispatcher should be trained. All of the troopers and sergeants stationed in the same areas as the state police dispatchers were identified as populations from which to draw samples of officers for comparison purposes.

A sample frame of statewide dispatchers from all other agencies was obtained by polling every police department within the state. A LEIN message was developed which explained the purpose of the study and requests were made for the names of the dispatchers from all the police agencies in Michigan by the state police operations office.

Critical Incident Technique (CIT)

Each state police dispatcher was sent an explanatory letter from the Director of the State Police outlining the purpose of the study, the purpose of the CIT, and instructions for completing the CIT forms that were developed for this purpose. The dispatchers were asked to think of three critical incidents in the past year in which they were involved or personally aware of and 1) describe the incident in their own words, 2) specify what the dispatcher did to handle the incident, and 3) give their views on why the incident was handled effectively. That is, what was it that the dispatcher did

that made the handling of the incident effective or ineffective. These reports were received and analyzed over a period of several weeks. A process of analytic induction was used to determine what factors explained effective and ineffective dispatching. It should be noted that this is a perceptual study and the dispatchers themselves were left to define effective and ineffective in the context of the reported critical incidents.

After all of the descriptions of skills, abilities, attitudes, personality, and knowledge were extracted from the CIT's, a questionnaire was developed based on the information from the CIT's. That questionnaire was pilot-tested on the thirty-four dispatchers of the Lansing, Michigan Police Department dispatch center. Recommended changes were made and after several revisions a final survey instrument was prepared.

The instrument was administered to 1) the population of state police dispatchers as a retest of their critical incident submissions, 2) to a sample of 86 State Police sergeants, 3) to a sample of 227 State Police troopers, and 4) to a sample of 312 dispatchers from other agencies.

In order to develop a feel for the nature of the problem, to determine a way of looking at dispatcher effectiveness, and to develop research questions, 180 dispatchers were engaged in dialogue during and after three training sessions held in the spring, summer, and fall of 1987. Several loosely structured interviews were conducted at that time. Later, twelve hours of tapes of dispatching were obtained from Genesee County Central Dispatch and were reviewed. Site visits were made to two dispatch centers and dispatchers and supervisors were engaged in discussions relative to the subject of dispatcher training and related issues. It was determined that a

critical incident technique (CIT) would best serve as a means of obtaining foundation data for the later development of a survey instrument. Because the state police have asked for a job relevant training program for their dispatchers, those dispatchers were chosen to complete the CIT's.

Macey (1982) recommended the use of the critical incident technique data for designing behaviorally based instructional programs. In his groups, meetings were held to provide examples of effective and ineffective performances.

Instrumentation

The entire population of seventy-six state police dispatchers were chosen as respondents for the CIT. Prior to the administration of the survey instrument three dispatchers had left the state police. Transmittal letters, and an explanation of the purpose of the research and detailed instructions accompanied the forms that were developed to obtain the CIT's. Transmittal letters and CIT forms may be found in the appendix. The format for the critical incident reports included three open-ended questions asking the respondents to describe in their own words three critical incidents that were examples of effective dispatching and three that were exemplary of ineffective dispatching. The respondents were asked to explain why they felt the examples were effective or ineffective, and to explain fully what it was that the dispatchers did that made them effective or ineffective.

Those variables that were identified as important in defining effectiveness were used to construct the questionnaire. The questionnaire included training variables, skills and ability variables, personality and attitudinal variables, organizational variables, and demographic variables.

In order to obtain a profile on dispatcher training the last section of the questionnaire included a training profile. Only dispatcher respondents received the training profile questions.

The survey instrument was pilot tested on eight dispatchers of the East Lansing Police Department prior to a second pilot test at the Lansing Police Department. Suggestions on the questionnaire were received and changes were made in the questions and format for the responses. The responses were changed from dichotomous yes and no format to a Likert Scale format. Responses ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The second pilot test was administered to 34 dispatchers at the Lansing Police Department Dispatch Center. Eighteen of the 34 dispatchers responded for a response rate of 51%. That agency was selected because after the random sample was chosen from the sampling frame, which included the Lansing Police dispatchers, they were not among those chosen in the sample. After additional revisions, the final questionnaire was developed and transmittal letters and letters of explanation were prepared to accompany the mailed questionnaires.

In order to maximize the response rate and to improve communications with department heads, the executive directors of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police and the Michigan Sheriff's Association were contacted and agreed to place prepared announcements in their monthly publication. Announcements were made of the research project to police officials and dispatchers alike.

Utilizing the the list of all state police dispatchers and the three sampling frames, the questionnaire was administered simultaneously to all the state police dispatchers as a retest of the CIT, to a sample of state

troopers working in the same geographical area as the dispatchers, to a sample of state police sergeants also working in the same areas, and to a sample of dispatchers from other police agencies in Michigan.

Survey Design

The survey design can be conceptualized as a three-tiered perceptual study of dispatchers. It is cross sectional because it was administered at one time. Though there were weeks between the administration of the CIT and the administration of the questionnaires it is considered one time frame as opposed to a planned timed sequence. There was no interest in changes of perception over time, so a trend design was not chosen.

Because the questionnaire was administered to the state police dispatchers and a sample of dispatchers from other police agencies, the responses from the state police dispatchers was compared with those from the other agencies. This variation approximates parallel samples.

If there were no significant differences between state police dispatcher responses and other departmental dispatcher responses inferences could be drawn of similarity. This design allowed for inferences from the state police dispatcher population and the other agency sample to the general population of dispatchers statewide. Inferences were limited to job description, training needs, and selection criteria. Interest in organizational dysfunctions was limited to the state police because only their sworn personnel were sampled.

This research is also descriptive because it is designed to discover and identify factors relevant to training needs and selection criteria. The training and selection variables were based on the perceptions of those doing the job, those supervising dispatchers, and those being dispatched.

The survey design is intended to produce a list of job relevant training factors that will have practical applications in the police communications field. Because the research includes questions with organizational variables it may also be defined as exploratory.

Population

The primary population in this study consisted of all law enforcement dispatchers in Michigan. These dispatchers may be located in central dispatch centers, individual police departments, sheriff departments, township police departments, or any of the several other agencies designated as departments of public safety. The jurisdictions of these departments may be federal, state, county, or local governmental entities. Jurisdictions may also include state, regional, or county parks and university departments of public safety.

The term dispatcher is used synonymously with radio operator, call receiver, police operator, or other designations that departments may use to describe those persons who receive and dispatch calls to the law enforcement agencies for information and services of an emergency and non-emergency nature.

The population of dispatchers was divided into two groups. The state police dispatchers, a limited subgroup of the population, as the focal point of the research, were the only respondents used for the Critical Incident reports. The broader group included all other dispatchers in Michigan. The sum of the two groups made up the total population of Michigan's police dispatchers. Two other populations were utilized to determine whether other organizational members within the state police had similar or different views on dispatcher training, and the personality attributes of effective

dispatchers. Those two populations were state police sergeants and state police troopers. State police sergeants are those officers who function as shift supervisors and are assigned to any one of the twenty-four locations throughout the state where state police dispatchers are assigned. State police troopers are those officers who perform general patrol duties and are assigned to any one of the twenty-four locations throughout the state where state police dispatchers are assigned.

Sampling Design

Because of the nature of the methodology used in this research, the focus of the study is four groups which have been treated as four separate samples. The state police dispatchers comprise the entire population of that group and are not a sample.

Group I is the population of all state police dispatchers.

Group II consisted of a sample of the dispatchers from other agencies.

Group III consisted of a sample of state police sergeants.

Group IV consisted of a sample of state police troopers.

The samples drawn from the populations of sergeants and troopers were sampled to determine if there were perceptual differences that may exist between sworn officers and dispatchers within the state police. If as suspected, sworn officers and dispatchers had significant disagreements on what an effective dispatcher was then support would be added to the hypothesis that contextual disequilibrium existed.

The sample from the population of all other dispatchers in Michigan was chosen because it was suspected that dispatchers were very similar in terms of role perception, duties, and training needs. If they were similar, as

suspected, the training program that was developed from the results of the study might be useful to dispatchers statewide.

A simple random sample was used to choose the samples from groups II, III, and IV. The entire population of state police dispatchers, comprising group I, was surveyed. This form of probability sample is defined by Babbie (1973). This method for selection of the sample should adequately reflect variations that exist in the population.

Sampling Frames

A sampling frame of the state police dispatchers was obtained from the state police which listed 76 sampling units by name, work location, and address. No samples were drawn because the entire list was used.

Sampling frames of the state police sergeants and troopers were assembled using the state police personnel manual. That manual listed those officers by location of assignment, rank, and name. The state police facilities having dispatchers was compared with this frame. The sampling frame for sergeants identified 110 sampling units stationed at locations where dispatchers were assigned. The sampling frame for troopers identified 525 sampling units stationed at dispatcher locations.

The sampling frame for all other dispatchers was prepared by polling each public safety agency in the state. State police operations personnel sent a prepared message by LEIN, that was signed by the Director, to obtain the sampling frame.

An explanation of the purpose of the request was included. Follow up phone calls were made to agencies and a second message was sent two weeks later in order to obtain the maximum number for the sampling frame.

This sampling frame identified 1415 sampling units by name, department, and address. This work is not a stratified sample. Identical surveys were administered simultaneously to three separate groups. For purposes of this explanation the dispatchers are viewed as one group that is subdivided.

The jobs of troopers, sergeants, and dispatchers are distinctively different jobs. The sampling units in each of the samples should know something about dispatching and should have perceptions of what kind of training is needed for dispatchers in order to maximize their effectiveness.

Rationale For Sampling

The reason for administering the critical incident technique to the entire population of state police dispatchers was to obtain the maximum number of descriptors of effective dispatching. The variables identified from that process were used to construct the survey instrument. The reason for administering the survey instrument to the entire population of those dispatchers was to retest their responses from the critical incidents. Dispatchers, whether in the state police or other organizations, were believed to be very similar. The analysis of the responses should confirm or disconfirm this belief.

The reason for sampling the entire body of other statewide dispatchers was for practical purposes. As indicated, if there was agreement among dispatchers statewide on what constitutes an effective dispatcher and what training elements are important in being effective, then the training program for state police dispatchers could be useful for other dispatchers as well. This is the justification for the sample that was drawn from those other agencies.

Sampling Error

Dispatchers were believed to be similar across police departments therefore it was felt that the sampling error would be small. Such a sample could provide the necessary information. The survey was confined to the subject of the dispatcher's job about which they have valued perceptions. To avoid non-sampling errors of response bias the following procedures were adopted.

The Director of the Michigan State Police sent a prepared letter to all state police district and post commanders. The letter explained the purpose of the study and the process that was being used. The procedures to be used for the critical incident technique and the survey instrument were also explained in detail. Specifics such as not using formal channels for these measures were included. In the past, when some study initiatives were undertaken, under the auspices of headquarters, if the district and post commanders were not informed of the processes those conducting such studies met with political resistance.

For both the critical incident technique and the administration of the survey instruments, explanatory letters accompanied the transmittal letters.

Separate packages were prepared for the sergeants, troopers and the dispatchers. Those letters explained the rationale for the research and the reasoning behind choosing those samples. All transmittal letters included detailed instructions for the respondents.

In order to avoid problems with the individual administrators and to improve overall response rates, articles were placed in the monthly publications of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police (MACP) and the Michigan Sheriff's Association (MSA). The executive directors of each those

organizations cooperated and supported this effort. The Director also sent a letter of explanation and request for cooperation to all police dispatchers in the State of Michigan. Every department employing dispatchers received copies of that letter for their dispatchers. The Director of the State Police insisted on identifying the researcher as a retired member of the State Police. That procedure may have aided in establishing credibility with the respondents.

Sample Size

Assuming that proportion p would be about .5 the following formula was used to estimate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{(N-1) B^2 + 1}$$

where N is the population, where n is the sample size, and where B is the bound of error estimated. The following sample sizes were computed. The state police dispatchers for reasons explained represent 100%.

An assumption is made of a normal distribution. A guess at the bound of errors is .05. Proportion is the primary population parameter of interest.

Table 4.1 -Size

Group	Population Size	Sample Size
MSP Dispatchers	N=73	
Other Dispatchers	N=1415	n=312
Sergeants	N=110	n=86
Troopers	N=525	n=227

Table 4.2 - Response Rate of 4 Groups

Group	Sample Size	N of Responses	Response Rate
MSP Dispatchers	*73	62	85%
Dispatchers in Other Departments	312	207	66%
MSP Sergeants	86	66	77%
MSP Troopers	227	<u>140</u>	62%
		475	

Overall Response Rate - 68%.

* 73 is the populations size.

Departments Represented in Sample

There were two hundred and sixteen police agencies were polled to develop the sampling frame for the other departmental dispatchers. Two hundred and five agencies responded. The eleven agencies that did not respond included ten city agencies and one township agency. All eleven were located in southeastern Michigan. There were no major police departments included in this group of nonresponders. State police experts estimate that no more than twenty-five dispatchers were omitted from the sampling frame.

Table 4.3 - Police Agencies Represented in Sample

Agency Type	N Departments represented
Departments of Public Safety	14
Police Departments	80
Sheriff Departments	45
Univeristy Public Safety Departments	6
Federal Department	1
Park Ranger Agencies	2
Township Police Departments	9
Central Dispatch Centers	8
State Police Posts	24
	189

Geographical Distribution

Fifty-nine of Michigan's eighty-three counties were represented which is 71% of the state's land area. Seven (47%) of the fifteen counties in the Upper Penninsula were included and fifty-two (76%) of the sixty-eight counties in the Lower Penninsula were included. All of the major population centers were included in the random drawing of the sample.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

A self-addressed stamped envelope was included in the mailing package sent to dispatchers for the critical incident technique. Because the CIT was an open-ended survey which asked dispatchers for their opinions and perceptions of descriptors of effective and non-effective dispatching, it was decided to make this portion of the study confidential. This was done so

that dispatchers could be recontacted by telephone for clarification if necessary.

In the second stage of the research, the administration of the survey instrument, all of the respondents were treated as anonymous. A stamped post card was used for this purpose so that non-respondents could be identified for follow up letters. Each respondent was asked to mail the instrument in the stamped self-addressed envelop provided and then to mail the post card separately to signify that a questionnaire was mailed. This method allowed the researcher to know who responded, but connections could not be made between the post cards received and the questionnaires that were returned. The instruments did not have any identifying names or numbers on them. This process was explained in the transmittal letters.

Analysis of Survey Instrument

In order to determine which training factors were important for achieving dispatcher effectiveness, the survey instrument questions were constructed to determine the proportion of dispatchers that chose one factor over another to describe effectiveness.

Training variables in which 75% or more of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed will be included in a pre-service training program. Variables in which 50% or more agreed, but less than 75%, will be considered for in-service training. Those variables that respondents chose less than 50% as indicative of effectiveness were disregarded.

Types of Variables Identified

The analysis of the critical incidents revealed variables that could be placed in three major categories. In order to be included in the category the

variable had to be observed in the behavior in several of the critical incidents. Most were repetitive. Those variables, once identified, were used to construct the survey instrument.

Training Variables

Forty-two training variables were identified. Questions 1-42 include variables relating to laws, use of technical equipment, police procedures, and other training subjects.

Personality and Skills Variables

Twenty three variables were identified. Questions 43-65 include variables relating to personality attributes of effective dispatchers, and the skills, attitudes, and abilities possessed by effective dispatchers.

Organizational and Experience Variables

Thirty-four variables were identified. Questions 66-99 include variables relating to experience, perceptions of others in the organization, perception of self in the organization, and perceptions of the organization. Such variables also relate to a perception of a dispatcher's authority and responsibility as well as accuracy of a dispatcher's position description.

Demographic Variables

Twelve demographic variables were included in the instrument. Questions 100-111 are demographic variables.

Open-Ended Questions

Questions 112-114 were used as a measure to capture other variables that may not have been identified from the critical incident technique. These questions asked for training factors, personality characteristics, and preferred structure and recommended length of training. Question #115 was

used for respondent identification by group.

Training Profile

In order to measure the current level of training of the dispatchers, questions #116 to #146 were constructed. These thirty-one questions were designed to measure the level of competence that each dispatcher felt he or she had in thirty-one training areas that were previously identified. If the respondents indicated that they were not trained those elements would be considered for a pre-service training program. If the respondents indicated that they were familiar with the topic those elements would be considered for in-service training. If the respondents answered as trained those elements were excluded from consideration for the training program. The survey instrument that was mailed to the sergeants and troopers did not include these last thirty-one questions.

Statistical Analysis

All of the data are nominal or ordinal level so appropriate statistical tests were used to meet the assumptions of those levels.

Chi Square Test of Independence tests were used to determine if relationships existed between tested variables by the type of job that respondents held.

Cramer's V was used as an indication of the strength of the relationship. Asymmetric Lambda was used to reinforce when variables were presented as dependent/independent. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was simply used to determine if a relationship was positive or negative.

Many of the variables had a wide range of alternatives, consequently in

cross-tabulating them many cells were generated. Because of this, the robustness of the Chi Square test is diminished.

Other Decision Rules

Because the Chi Square test for Independence estimates expected cell frequencies, as the number of cells increases, the ability to discriminate between variables is diminished. Thus, with those numbers of cells, there is a lessened likelihood of finding significant differences. However, intuitively when viewing percentages of interest in the variable subject matter, there appears to be strong preferences for certain variables by respondents used to define effectiveness. Acceptance of these variables for consideration for training, even though not statistically significant, will be favored when there is a strong preference across all of the job types. This decision was based on experience, personal observations, and in consultation with dispatch experts.

Confounding Variables Considered

There are no doubt some confounding variables that, to some degree, may account for the relationships or lack of relationships found. One department or another may train their dispatcher staff to a greater or lesser degree. Dispatchers who have more training may account for a higher percentage favoring one variable or another as descriptive of effective dispatching. To avoid this both the type of training and period since last training were included in the demographic variables.

The selection procedures among departments may differ. Some of the smaller departments may not be as rigorous as the larger departments in their selection procedures. Departmental budget size may also be a confounding variable. This premise is based on the assumption that the

larger the budget the more opportunity there may be for training. The size of the agency, individual intelligence levels among dispatchers, and personal motivation could also be confounding variables. The broad cross section of sample units may assist in reducing any such confounding. The category that poses the biggest problem for the presence of confounding variables is the personality, attitudinal, and abilities category of variables. People are different and come from diverse backgrounds each having different values and educational levels. The decision rule to accept only those variables as reflective of effective dispatching that have at least 75% of respondents favoring the variable should correct this problem.

Organizational and experience variables may be affected by an individual supervisor's management style or by the organizational management philosophy. It is not uncommon in organizational settings to have training used as the scapegoat for poor, unresponsive, or uninformed management.

Cost Considerations

An early consideration in the plan for this research was to interview each of the seventy-three state police dispatchers to obtain the critical incident reports. After examining the sampling frame and figuring the cost of travel at .22 per mile it was decided that the cost would be prohibitive. If the required trips were well planned the mileage alone amounted to 4,770 miles. The cost of mileage was \$1,049.40. If meals and lodging were included the cost of obtaining interviews would amount to over \$1,600.00.

Mailing a self-administered critical incident forms was less costly even though there could be some loss of richness. Cost prohibitions were regarded

as outweighing the possibilities that some people may lack writing skills or may not be precise. Because it was decided that the CIT portion of this research would be confidential telephone follow up to a second mailing was planned instead.

The cost of mailing a CIT would include two letters. One from the Director to explain the CIT which consisted of 2 pages and one 6 page reporting form. The letter cost was estimated to be \$70.00 and the 6 page CIT form was estimated to be \$100.00. Reminder letters and follow up post cards would cost \$20.00 for a total cost of \$190.00. The difference between personal interviews and mailing forms for a CIT would be over \$800.00. The state police agreed to financially support the cost of printing and mailing.

Summary of Major Research Steps

1. **Development of Sampling Frames**
2. **Development of Critical Incident Forms**
3. **Administration of Critical Incident Technique to MSP dispatchers.**
4. **Content analysis of the CIT responses by using a form of analytic induction.**
5. **Determination of variables to be used in the survey instrument.**
6. **Design and pilot testing of survey instrument.**

- 7. Revision of survey instrument after two pilot tests.**
- 8. Administration of survey instrument to four samples of respondents.**
- 9. Analysis of data**
- 10. Presentation of findings**
- 11. Conclusions**

CHAPTER 5

Analysis of Critical Incidents

Introduction

Because the entire survey instrument rests on the basis of the analysis of the critical incidents, a view of those findings is presented before the data analysis of the survey instrument. This chapter contains descriptive information relative to the nature of the critical incidents, the relationships of those incidents to safety factors, and summaries of responses to the open-ended questions posed in the research. Because the critical incident technique evolved after several discussions with one hundred and eighty dispatchers, summaries from those discussions are also presented. Some examples of the incidents are also reported.

The Nature of Reported Critical Incidents

The Critical Incidents were reported in a narrative form by the dispatchers in response to the directions sent to them. Forms for these responses were developed so that each dispatcher had a separate page for reporting each of the six critical incidents that came to mind. The state police dispatchers were asked to describe three critical incidents that were examples of effective dispatching and three that were examples of ineffective dispatching. They were asked to describe in great detail the occurrence itself, what the dispatcher did in handling the incident, and what it was that made the dispatcher either effective or ineffective. For the most part three self-reported paragraphs were written by each of the responding

dispatchers on each of six incidents. All of the critical incidents are based on the actual experiences the respondents. There were seventy-two different types of incidents reported to describe effective dispatching and sixty-three different types incidents reported to describe ineffective dispatching.

Contexts of Reported Critical Incidents

Brief descriptions of the types of critical incidents are listed below.

Effective Dispatching

A family fight involving a shooting
 A false report of a stolen car
 Robbery Armed (2)
 A stolen car and a chase
 Multiple car injury accidents (6)
 A baby who stopped breathing
 A house fire-child left in the house
 A mother who stopped breathing
 A person threatening suicide
 A man with a gun holding a hostage
 A child who stopped breathing
 A husband with a heart attack
 A larceny and fraud
 Murders (3)
 A drunk driver
 Request for back up from officers
 A man menacing others with a gun
 An attempted suicide
 A suicide attempt by drugs
 A robbery, fire and injury accident
 A high speed chase
 A man with a gun
 A shooting and man with a gun
 A garbled message from officers
 Prowlers (2)

Ineffective Dispatching

A Person with weapon
 Robbery armed (2)
 Burlary alarm
 A traffic stop- felony warrant
 A family fight with weapon
 Officer requesting backup (4)
 A drunk in a car- found dead
 A warrant check
 A high speed chase
 A suicide
 An assault in progress
 A burglary
 Gun shots fired
 An investigation of suspect
 Blockade: robbery armed (2)
 A safe job
 A family fight
 Injury accidents (6)
 A burglary alarm
 A man with a gun (2)
 A frustrated officer
 A kidnapping & robbery (2)
 A double murder
 Improper LEIN use
 A felonious assault

Effective Dispatching

Bank robberies (4)
 Shooting of police officer
 A report of a hostage
 An injury accident-use of CPR
 A family fight
 A request for directions
 A search of a woman
 A man holding a rifle on an officer
 A stolen car leading and chase
 A person on drugs firing a gun
 An escaped convict
 An arrest of person with weapon
 A felonious assault
 A burglary in progress (2)
 Children locked in a freezer
 File check for wanted person
 An officers with defective radio
 An escaped murderer
 A person arrested with false name
 An armed robbery and chase
 A burglary in progress and suicide
 An airline fire
 A gasoline storage tank leak
 A child hemmoraging
 A officer in need of help
 A car fire and explosion
 A train derailment
 A hostage & barricaded gunman (3)
 A toxic chemical spill
 An arrest on a warrant
 A request for information
 A crib death
 An officer injured in an accident
 A shooting report
 A wife with heart attack
 A shooting of a police officer
 Use of CPR by dispatcher

Ineffective Dispatching

A lazy dispatcher (2)
 Mental caller
 Hysterical caller
 A gun found in a car
 A report of a drunk driver
 A man shooting a gun
 A man carrying a gun
 A dead body found
 A prowler
 A shooting
 An officer assaulted
 A vehicle check
 A dispatcher who left station
 Multiple car chase
 A high speed chase
 Burglaries in progress (3)
 A trailer fire
 A family fight
 Accidents (4)
 A chase-officer injured
 Failing to dispatch
 A delayed dispatch of patrol
 A hysterical woman
 A plane crash
 A request for information
 A barn fire
 Poor information obtained
 Failed to get information(3)
 Report of a burglary
 A man with gun in apartment
 Shooting of persons
 Improper LEIN use
 A felonious assault in progress
 Information for other agency
 A stakeout
 An escaped convict
 A request for EMS

Effective Dispatching

A construction accident
 Blockade: shooting of police officer
 A tornado warning
 LEIN checks on driver
 A capture of a felon
 A multiple car accident & gasoline fire
 A identification of a murder suspect
 A robbery armed with a shooting
 A homicide

Ineffective Dispatching

A request for car- not sent

Interviews with Statewide Dispatchers

Several dispatchers were engaged in conversation during the course of three training sessions, and at several informal meetings. The purpose of those meetings was to gather the dispatchers' perceptions of their job, their problems, and their descriptions of effective dispatchers. Twelve recurrent themes surfaced during those meetings. The majority of dispatchers in attendance at those training sessions were from other law enforcement agencies.

1. Serious concern was expressed as to who would train the officers on the road relative to the complexity of a dispatcher's job and the value of a dispatcher to police officers.
2. Several dispatchers felt that they were frequently demeaned by certain officers of their departments.
3. Mention was made that everyone is not capable of being a dispatcher. The role of dispatching is complicated by the fact that too little time is devoted to training them on the telephone. They also made it clear that the job requires a person who has a balanced attitude, self-control, and who can handle multiple tasks quickly and accurately.

4. **Most dispatchers criticized the selection procedure. They suggested having senior dispatchers included in the interview process for applicants.**
5. **When asked to describe effectiveness they said that it boiled down to being an independent thinker and a good decision maker.**
6. **Most of them said that the job is presented incorrectly to applicants. Employers fail to tell them of the responsibilities, job complexity, stress, and working conditions.**
7. **The overriding majority felt that the entrance test for dispatchers is not job related. The test that most of them took related to someone who could file and type.**
8. **There was some resentment displayed toward police supervisors. A remark frequently heard was that supervisors feel that "any idiot could do the job of dispatching".**
9. **Many dispatchers expressed the view that the organizations have not kept pace with the times. The job of dispatching has changed drastically over the past several years. Police officers and their supervisors must understand that dispatchers do care and that they are part of the police team.**
10. **Most dispatchers expressed frustration with the organizational constraint of a lack of upward mobility. The only alternative they offered in this regard was the insitution of certification. They admit that certification would not enhance their salaries, but feel it would raise their status in the organization.**
11. **To a person, dispatchers felt that their supervisors should come from a dispatcher pool.**
12. **A sizeable number expressed a desire for training standards and in-service training. In-service training should utilize role playing.**

Critical Incidents and Safety

In the descriptions used by the state police dispatchers to complete the critical incident reports there were seventy-two incident examples of effective dispatching and sixty-three incident examples of ineffective dispatching. Overall, there were one hundred and thirty-five incidents reported and described. Several of each category were for similar situations. Eighty-three separate kinds of incidents were identified. A significant number of the incidents revolved around the personal safety of an officer or a citizen. Safety for individual officers, individual citizens, or a large group of citizens was an issue in 93% of the reported cases. The incidents were collapsed into nine major categories. On the following page the nature of the critical incidents is presented in Table 5.1

Table 5.1 - Nature of Reported Critical Incidents

Nature of Incident	Number	Percentage
Felony crimes *	40	48%
Injury Accidents	8	10%
Heart Attacks and Breathing	6	7%
Suicide s	3	4%
Children in danger	5	6%
Incidents exposing many	7	8%
Calls for back up	6	7%
Information requests	4	5%
Miscellaneous actions	4	5%
	83	100%

* Of the 40 felonies reported twelve (30%) involved guns.

MSP Dispatchers' Responses to Open-Ended Questions

The majority of state police dispatcher's responses were concerned with the role of the dispatcher and the relationship between the dispatcher and the officer or the department. Almost all of the respondents indicated that pre-service training and in-service training should be mandatory. Very few recommended training subject matter, but most indicated that there was a lack of understanding of role between dispatchers and the officers. None of the dispatchers of this group commented on personality attributes, but confined most of their responses to internal organizational issues.

Training Subjects Needed for Dispatchers

Dispatchers should be police oriented enough so that the patrol officers respect their judgment. Many just said that they had a lack of knowledge in police related subjects and had to put callers on hold to find out the answers. Some felt that they should observe the court procedures to be able to talk to callers intelligently on the subject.

Type and Length of Training

Pre-service training is viewed as a must by the dispatchers. Several felt that it should be in increments of classroom, observational, on the job with a senior dispatcher, and then back to the classroom. Most dispatchers recommended a longer pre-service training period ranging from one month to three months. The latter was recommended for the incremental type training. In-service training should be mandatory and the cycles range from once a year to once every three years.

Organizational Issues

Several felt that they answer calls that should not be their responsibility because the questions pertain to traffic or criminal laws. They do not know those laws. Those from central dispatch centers felt that it was important for departments to develop guidelines, because there are difficulties in determining "good complaints" from "bad complaints". Most said that dispatchers should be trained before sitting at the consoles. A common remark was that dispatchers should be debriefed after serious incidents and dispatchers should be able to discuss problems with other dispatchers. A small percentage felt that troopers look down on the dispatcher and perhaps officers should work the desk to understand the pressures of dispatching. One noted that the test was taken nine years ago and it was a clerical test with no mention of police work. A few recommended that dispatchers should be psychologically evaluated prior to selection. Several stated that it is erroneous to think that dispatchers are constantly supervised. Frequently the situation is well along before a supervisor gets into it. Those at large centers felt that dispatchers were treated like second class citizens, were expected to know too much, and had no training.

Other Dispatcher's Responses to Open-Ended Questions

The largest sample responding to the questionnaire was the sample of other departmental dispatchers. Very few of the respondents from this sample commented on personality attributes beyond their answers on the questionnaire. The greater number recommended some form of pre-service

training as desirable. In most cases they recommended on site in-service training. Similar to the state police dispatchers, this group reported internal organizational issues as a problem.

Training Subjects Needed for Dispatchers

Some said that they had no training in police procedures and felt that it would be helpful because it would nice to know what officers do on the road. Many from this sample stated a preference for LEIN training on an annual basis. A common remark was that dispatchers should have police knowledge before being a dispatcher and that dispatchers should not be in the office without a supervisor nearby. Others suggested classes in how to deal with people. Many felt that one must understand the police officer's job before they can do a good job as a dispatcher. A few dispatchers felt that the only way to remedy the situation was to have police officers with a minimum of five years experience as dispatchers.

Type and Length of Training

Very few from this sample commented on the length of training. The most common period was forty hours of pre-service and forty hours of in-service. All of them felt that in-service training should be held at the work location. Pre-service training was viewed as mandatory. When these dispatchers recommended on the job training they included a provision for being trained by a mentor-supervisor. Role playing was the most common recommendation for the form of the training.

Organizational Issues

Many noted that not all supervisors understand the dispatcher's job. They also stated that dispatchers should be able to take charge when needed. An equal number felt that supervisors should be available to dispatchers all of the time. Many noted a lack of support from the command staff and a lack of respect from officers. A majority stated that dispatchers and officers must work together, therefore the two must be viewed as a team. A common suggestion was to have dispatchers and officers interchange jobs once per month. Several respondents report that each shift is run differently, and uniformity of operation would be preferable. The two most common remarks were that management was insensitive to the dispatcher and that in order to be a good dispatcher a person must know the officer's job.

Troopers' Responses to Open Ended-Questions

The majority of this sample's responses revolved around the role of the dispatcher in the organization and problems faced by dispatchers. Almost all of the troopers recommended training for the dispatchers. Very few commented on the personal qualities needed in dispatching and most chose to concentrate on dysfunctions they observed. The same four categories are used to present the consensus of the troopers.

Personality Attributes

Many said that dispatchers need patience. One summed up his view by saying that to be a dispatcher you have to be a super-person on a salary of twenty thousand dollars a year.

Training Subjects Needed for Dispatchers

Many suggested that dispatchers should ride on patrol with officers to get to know what goes on on the street. They said that they need to know what officers do and they must know law enforcement terms. Knowledge in criminal, civil, and traffic law was stressed. Some also recommended that officers should know the dispatcher's job. Most indicated that knowledge of the geographical area was important. Most felt that dispatchers needed the ability to work under stress and must possess initiative.

Type and Length of Training

Mandatory pre-service training was recommended by the overall majority of troopers. The length of the training ranged from three to six weeks. Annual in-service training should be given as needed. Some recommended a pre-service stress evaluation as part of the pre-service training. The majority of troopers felt that the training should have practical application and preferably include role playing.

Organizational Issues

A small percentage of troopers stated that the state police radio system lacks a uniformity of response. Several commented that the dispatchers do not have defined responsibilities, and addressing this problem is long overdue. Many felt that selection problems existed. To remedy this, officers recommended screening of applicants. Many felt that there was a lack of respect for dispatchers by management. Several noted that if the dispatchers are to work alone in the post without a sergeant then they will need more training. Several commented that the department must

clearly define the dispatchers' role as it relates to the troopers and sergeants. Lastly, a common comment was that dispatchers should be included in staff meetings and accepted as team members.

Sergeants' Responses to Open Ended-Questions

The majority of respondent sergeants took the time to write out their comments on the three open-ended questions on the questionnaire. Those responses can be put into four categories, 1) personality needed for effective dispatching, 2) training subjects needed for dispatchers, 3) type and period of training needed, and 4) organizational issues. All of the comments were examined and many are repetitive.

Personality Attributes

This sample reports that dispatchers need patience, self-control, and a flexible personality. They need to possess a good deal of common sense. It is important that they like their work and enjoy doing it. They should also be composed, mature, organized, and reliable. The sergeants recommend, that in order to be a good dispatcher, a person must be assertive and optimistic. Because dispatchers provide the only information the officer has to make a decision, they must be able to handle stress. They must be caring people who have a sense a humor.

Training Subjects Needed for Dispatchers

Sergeants suggested that dispatchers should have training in criminal and civil law, patrol procedures, telephone answering skills, departmental

policy and procedures, as well as training in radio and the other technical skills for operators of radios and computers.

Stress management training was viewed as most important because of the many hours spent talking to "weird" people. It is important that they talk as calmly to the last caller as they did with the first caller. Dispatchers need listening skills. They also need traffic law training. "We don't want them to be police officers, but they need more training in law areas".

Type and Length of Training

All of the respondents indicated that training was needed for the dispatchers. Most felt that pre-service training should be mandatory with the majority favoring an academy environment. The period recommended ranged from a low of one to three days to a high of six weeks. The average recommendation was two weeks of pre-service training. The need for regular in-service training was stressed by these respondents. It ranged from once every six months to once every two years. The average recommendation was once per year for a period of one week. The respondents cited the changing nature of the work as a primary reason for training.

Organizational Issues

Some respondents indicated that their answers would have been different if the sergeants were assigned to the road and the dispatchers were alone at the posts. Some felt that the disputes that do arise between officers and dispatchers could be eliminated if officers and dispatchers each understood the other's role. Some note that they observed a lack of experience among dispatchers. They indicated that some were hired off the

lay-off and recall lists, and some of those people who worked for social services and had no real desire to be dispatchers in the first place. A suggestion was made that a six month training period would socialize a person to fit into the structure of policing. Many sergeants felt that radio operator and dispatcher duties should be spelled out to all members involved. Some stated that contracts for the enlisted members of the state police are bargained for by separate unions with no regard how the new contracts will relate to each other. A common remark was that the dispatcher's authority should be clearly defined. Others note that the selection of dispatchers by civil service is not based on a criteria of ability. A better trained dispatcher could, in the opinion of some sergeants, run the front desk to free the sergeants for other work.

Others felt that with added training the dispatcher would have a better idea on what to send a car on, but as it is, they are sent on any call. Many felt that if the sergeants were taken out of the office the dispatchers would not be competent to do the job unless they had further training. Some indicated that dispatchers are often asked to make decisions that should be made by command officers. Lastly, some noted that dispatchers should be given other duties to fit into the departmental goals.

Summary of Open-Ended Responses

Clearly there is discord in dispatching and it is not limited to the Michigan State Police. The perceptions of officers and dispatchers alike indicate that there is a need for pre-service training, in-service training, and a need to strengthen dispatcher selection criteria. Overall, respondents indicated that there is role conflict present. Dispatchers are not sure of

where they fit into the organization and neither are their counterparts. Dispatchers, if they are to be effective, must be trained in police related subject matter.

The job of being a dispatcher is complex and requires extraordinary personality attributes not commonly demanded from those in the lower echelons of organizations. There appears to be a lack of acceptance of the dispatcher as a team member in police agencies. The authority and responsibilities of dispatchers are not clearly defined by agencies and this fact may contribute to the dysfunctions observed.

Examples of Critical Incidents

The critical incidents were reported in the respondents' own writing on the critical incident forms. The content of those reports was then reviewed and later transferred to critical incident response forms, for use in the analysis. After reviewing the reports, the specific actions taken by the dispatchers, the concepts used, the skills displayed, and the attitudes observed when handling incidents were noted on the analysis forms. Observing how dispatchers handled these incidents provided some sense about their thinking, their training, their talents and skills, and their attitudes. Examples of the content of some of those reported critical incidents are provided here, using the reporting format. The wording used by the respondents has been maintained in these examples. On the critical incident reporting form, the dispatchers were asked three questions: 1) What was the situation? 2) How did the dispatcher handle it? and 3) Why was the dispatcher effective or ineffective.

In the examples that follow those questions will be numbered in the same way.

Effective Dispatching

1. Shooting at a family fight.
 2. Sent the only patrol car and an ambulance.
 3. Described the location of a rural farm house with a description of cars parked in the yard. Described the weapon and who currently had the weapon, and his location in the house. Gave the location of the victim in the kitchen of the house and the degree of injury. Kept the victim on the phone.
-
1. Reported stolen car that was a false report.
 2. Took the information from the alleged victim without questioning the validity of report (baited the hook).
 3. Investigating officer was able to obtain a false statement from the alleged victim. Victim was arrested for making a false report.
-
1. Robbery armed of a rural party store and gas station.
 2. Got the vehicle, suspect, and weapon information.
 3. Dispatcher was calm in the handling of the radio traffic and kept officers calm during high speed response to the location.
-
1. S.I.D.S. crib death. Mother called the post, hysterical, begging for help. She had gone to the baby's bedroom to check on infant and found the child cold, blue, not breathing. She advised she was holding the baby, but had no idea of what to do.

2. **The dispatcher asked for her address, phone number, and her first name. A Sgt. was working desk at the same time so the dispatcher was able to hand him the addresss for car dispatch and also an ambulance. The dispatcher asked about 3 appropriate questions and determined that the child was probably dead. However, the distance to the residence would involve approximatley 5 minutes for emergency first responders so the dispatcher talked the mom through CPR.**
3. **By using her first name and often, the dispatcher calmed the mom down enough to get necessary information-address, phone, etc. Although the information indicated the child was probably dead, she was able to give the mother something to do to attempt to help her child, while waiting for the first responders. Dispatcher kept the mom on the phone until help arrived and gave her a sense of not going through the tragedy alone. Dispatcher waited until the first responder talked to her on the phone to make sure someone trained and responsible was at the scene. She was effective because she is CPR certified and knew the skill well enough to instruct the mom over the phone.**
1. **6 year old male juvenile was home alone as one parent was going to work and one parent was coming home from work. He was left alone for approximately 15 minutes. He started a fire on the stove in the kitchen and was on the phone with this dispatcher (911) and was hysterical.**

2. Calmed juvenile down, got his name, address and tx number, got him to close the doors safely without locking them and go stand by the curb and flag down the fire department. Results were the juvenile was safe, fire was confined to only the stove and part of the kitchen, with minimal damage to rest of the house.
 3. This dispatcher was just off of probation, and had only 6 months experience, remained calm and got the necessary information, and got subject to safety, and the fire department to the scene in a short time.
-
1. Drunk man with a gun was holding a subject hostage in a garage.
 2. Dispatcher kept the friend on the phone who was in the house observing incident taking place. Dispatcher had the caller continuously update her as to the goings on in the garage and kept the caller talking to keep him occupied and not paniking. Dispatcher continuously updated the cars responding to the scene. When it appeared the situation was getting out of control and the victim might be injured, and officers had not arrived at the scene, dispatcher activated an ambulance and advised them to standby at a safe distance until officers made contact and got the scene under control.
 3. Dispatcher knew the area and the time it would take for emergency personnel to arrive at the scene. Dispatcher kept the caller on the line, getting as much information as possible that might assist the officers on their arrival. Dispatcher kept the caller calm. Dispatcher had the ambulance, that was less than a mile away, respond when the injury was confirmed.

1. Report of subject high on drugs shooting rifle inside his house. Wife was the complainant and there was another male subject in the house. Phone number was obtained from wife and contact was made with the suspect.
2. He established contact with suspect and obtained the reason for the suspect's actions. He kept responding and kept officers abreast of suspect's actions and attitude. Kept suspect on the phone until the officers entered the house and apprehended him.
3. He kept suspect on the phone for 28 minutes while trying to calm and reassure suspect it would be better to put the gun down and surrender. Dispatcher kept suspect's attention while responding officers snuck into the house and jumped the suspect. While the suspect did get off one shot , no one was hurt.

Ineffective Dispatching

1. Dispatcher received a call of a prowler in the yard.
 2. Dispatcher advised they would send police right over and hung up the phone.
 3. Dispatcher should have kept the complainant on the phone, getting updated information on location of prowler, and keeping cars informed of exact location of prowler at all times until car arrived.
-
1. Working with obnoxious person on a busy day.
 2. Dispatcher walked off the job. Takes a mental health day.
 3. Cannot handle the job.

1. **Bank alarm and hold up. Turned out to be a good alarm.**
 2. **Dispatcher did not get all the information. Dispatcher was more nervous than the person who had been held up.**
 3. **Information necessary was not obtained. Such as the vehicle involved, the direction of travel, description of the vehicle. Officer, as it turned out, had gone past the suspect vehicle while enroute to the alarm.**
-
1. **Man despondent over loss of girlfriend, started shooting a gun out of window of house.**
 2. **Dispatcher sent enough cars, but did not try to cordon off the incident area, and the Sgt. in charge was pinned down with gunfire in the ditch out front. When he called for help all the dispatcher said was "OK clear".**
 3. **Dispatcher had no control of situation and had no idea of what to do next when the officer said he was receiving gunfire. The suspect escaped from the house and original area, but was later apprehended.**
-
1. **911 center received a call on a subject passed out drunk in a car in a driveway and the car was running. It was a very busy 2nd shift and the dispatcher was very rude and short with the callers. Several hours later the car ran out of gas, and the subject froze to death as it was below zero weather.**
 2. **Very rude and short with the two callers. Did not dispatch a car to the incident even later after it was slower paced in the dispatch center. Did not take down the information and failed to pass it along**

to the dispatcher or shift supervisor or next shift.

3. The dispatcher in this incident was very immature and hot tempered. Easily shook up and not patient with the public.
1. Stakeout of a business after hours. The cleaning people were suspected of stealing money.
 2. Dispatcher was briefed. An alarm went off at the business. The dispatcher called the business and identified self as state police and asked if everything was ok. Dispatcher never informed the officers about the alarm going off until after calling the business.
 3. Dispatcher blew the investigation. Did not remember about the stakeout or the set up. Instead of calling the business, dispatcher should have radioed officers on the stakeout and told them about alarm.
1. Burglar alarm.
 2. Sent the patrol car to the wrong village.
 3. Did not know two neighboring villages had drug stores with the same names, both on streets with same name. Did not know the area.
1. Patrol unit had a vehicle stopped. Felony warrant in LEIN for driver.
 2. Dispatcher did not get the location of the traffic stop, and did not read the LEIN print out properly. Gave the patrol unit back information on a traffic warrant instead of a felony warrant.
Dispatcher did not follow procedure and was lax in job.
 3. Dispatcher should know where cars are and when they make stops

should get their location. Should also read all printouts. Don't just skim over them. Dispatcher is the only connection to the post that the patrol officer has. He trusts that the information you are giving him is correct.

1. Officer stopped into a convenience store just after an armed robbery and called into dispatch that the suspect was on foot somewhere in area and armed with a hand gun.
2. Not well. Dispatcher acknowledged the officer's traffic, but did nothing further. Sent no back up units and didn't hold the air for a dangerous situation. The more senior back-up dispatcher sat right there and didn't do anything either.
3. Dispatcher did not take control and hold the air, send back-up units, suggest a canine unit, or try to place cars around the square mile to contain the suspect. The utmost in a dispatcher's mind should be the safety of the officer in the field. The more senior back-up dispatcher was also at fault for not taking control.

1. Dispatcher received a call of a possible personal injury accident.
2. Did not get enough information from caller and sent patrol unit in the wrong direction. When patrol unit advised that he could not find the accident, the dispatcher not wanting to admit a wrong advised the officers to disregard as it was probably a nuisance call anyway. It was a valid accident and the driver was pinned in the vehicle for several hours until help arrived.
3. Dispatcher was not trained properly and did not know the area.

1. **Boyfriend-girlfriend trouble. Shots fired. Lady inside the house shooting at boyfriend outside the house.**
 2. **TX operators received calls that a lady was shooting at man from inside the house. They never bothered to check with the dispatcher who sent the call out, to see what the situation was. The boyfriend had left and the lady was shooting at the officer who arrived at the scene and she still thought that she was shooting at the boyfriend.**
 3. **It was neglect on both of the operators who took the calls after the officer was on the scene. Both of them never checked with the city dispatchers to find out what the situation was. They just told the people calling (who were inside the house with the lady shooting) that the police would be there shortly. Never once did they check to see if it was the officer or to update information. They assumed the police were not there. As it turned out, the boyfriend had left the scene and the police parked their car around the block and came on foot. One officer was standing behind a tree waiting for back-up. The lady assumed it was the boyfriend and kept shooting. The telephone dispatcher failed to find out that it was the police there and failed to inform the people who were calling that it was an officer behind the tree. This put the officer in an immediate danger zone, which could have been alleviated if proper procedures were used.**
-
1. **Gas station robbery armed and kidnapping. Victim at a home.**
 2. **Very poorly handled. Dispatched police units and hung up the phone. Approximately one year ago the same subject called and said he had been robbed, when it had been a drive-away without paying for gas.**

3. **Taking things for granted. Thinking it was another drive-off as in the past. Police unit arrived at gas station and no one there and the station was open. I did call the home and talked to the attendant and got the right information, car, suspect description, which way the car left. The only thing I did do right was to get the phone number. Lesson. Don't take things for granted.**

1. **LEIN hit was missed because the dispatcher failed to run a proper LEIN query.**

2. **Did not use proper method of getting all the information available to the operator.**

3. **Had the proper LEIN input been made the subject would have been apprehended at the time of the stop. The subject was later apprehended because he became involved in another felony.**

1. **Felonious assault in progress. A man chasing a woman down the street with a knife.**

2. **The car was dispatched, but for some reason the new officer was not sure she could take the route she was taking, so she asked the dispatcher to check the route and see if it went all the way through. The dispatcher replied in the affirmative.**

3. **Because the dispatcher did not check the maps properly, the officer was delayed and had to double back a total of four miles. Another car had to be dispatched. The original officer was called off. It is possible the injuries to the lady could have been avoided.**

These are just a few examples of the incidents as they were reported. Analyzing them and determining what each dispatcher was required to know in order to be effective under each circumstance provided a rich area for discovery. Each report was reviewed several times. First the reports were examined for knowledge variables. Then they were examined for display of attitudes. The same process was used to tease out skills and abilities, knowledge of procedures, knowledge of particular laws and other police related processes.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The data will be presented in three sections. The first section is the data and summary of the training profile of dispatchers. This profile was limited to those respondents who were dispatchers. The results will be used in conjunction with the decision rules to determine the scope and content of the training program, which will be developed at the completion of the study. The second section is the data from the survey instrument. The tables and summaries are presented in the order in which the variables appeared in the instrument according to three categories. The first category is composed of training variables. The second category is composed of personality variables. The third category are composed of organizational and role variables. Only those variables that were statistically significant appear in the tables of this section. The analysis of this data is used to make determinations of whether or not differences in perception exist between dispatchers and uniformed personnel, and if so, to what degree. The data are analyzed to either confirm or disconfirm the presence of contextual disequilibrium. The independent variable is the job of the respondents.

The data presented in the third section are the proportions of respondents that agree or disagree that a particular variable is descriptive of an effective dispatcher in terms of the training required for effectiveness.

The decision rules previously discussed will be applied to this data to determine which of the variables will be included in a recommendation for pre-service training. Those variables in which at least 75% of the respondents agree will be recommended for a pre-service training program. Those variables in which at least 50%, but less than 75% agree will be recommended for use in an in-service training program for dispatchers.

The primary interests are the training variables, but the results of respondents' choices for personality and organizational variables will be also be reported. Personality data will be used as a basis for development of selection criteria. Organizational data will be used to identify problems for the administration of the state police that may have negative effect on dispatching.

Training Profile of State Dispatchers

The training profile was completed by 269 dispatchers included in the sample. Three possible answers were provided for the training profile:

1. **Trained** indicated that the dispatcher had received formal training in the subject matter and was confident in the subject.
2. **Familiar** indicated that the dispatcher had not been formally trained, but either through experience or on-the-job training was familiar with the subject, but still was uncomfortable in emergency situations.

3. **Not trained** indicated that the dispatcher had had no training at all in the subject.

The recommendations for pre-service training will result from the analyses of the survey instrument and will be determined by using the 75% decision rule. If 75% or more of respondents agreed or strongly agreed those variables were included in the training recommendations. Where respondents agreed or strongly agreed more than 50%, but less than 75% of the time, those variables were included in suggestions for in-service training.

A training profile was included at the end of the survey instrument to provide a feel for the current level of dispatcher training. Though not intended for direct use in determining training requirements, none the less it was useful for understanding the percentages of those already trained, and those who felt that they needed more training because of a lack of confidence in a particular subject area.

The thirty-one training elements were collapsed into three categories. Knowledge variables are those that are needed as a base for decision making. The process used to collapse the responses involved combining responses of strongly agree with agree into one category. The same was done with choices of disagreement. The differences between strongly agree and disagree are difficult to define and for purposes of acceptance or rejection. This collapsed process was deemed sufficient.

Training in these matters could be lecture type presentations and could be tested using objective type examinations. Skill and ability variables also lend themselves to the lecture method of instruction. Such matters are best

tested using role playing techniques utilizing observer check lists.

Procedure variables also require instruction and can be tested by using a combination of objective tests and role playing techniques that are appropriate to the specific procedure. Table 6.1 is presented on the next page.

Table 6.1 - Knowledge Variables

Variables	Trained	Familiar	Not Trained	No Response	Need Some Training
	% No.	% No.	% No.	% No.	% No.
Law of Arrest	23.4 (63)	38.3 (103)	35.3 (95)	3. (8)	73.6 (198)
Search & Seizure	20.1 (54)	30.1 (81)	46.1 (124)	3.7 (10)	76.2 (205)
Abnormal Psych.	13.8 (37)	28.6 (77)	54.3 (146)	3.3 (9)	82.9 (223)
Liability Issues	27.5 (74)	51.3 (138)	18.2 (49)	3. (8)	69.6 (187)
Crime Scenes	16.4 (44)	34.6 (93)	45.7 (123)	3.3 (9)	80.3 (216)
Civil Disorders	16. (43)	48.5 (130)	31.7 (85)	3.7 (10)	80.2 (215)
Weather Emergency	41.6 (112)	45.7 (123)	8.9 (24)	3.7 (10)	54.6 (147)
Crim.& Civil Law	25.3 (68)	46.8 (126)	24.2 (65)	3.7 (10)	71. (191)
Use of Force	18.6 (50)	27.5 (74)	49.8 (134)	4.1 (11)	77.3 (208)
High Speed Chases	33.1 (89)	46.5 (125)	16.7 (45)	3.7 (10)	63.2 (170)
General Invest.	17.8 (48)	44.2 (119)	34.2 (92)	3.7 (10)	78.4 (211)

The data in Table 6.1 indicate that respondents had training in only two of the eleven categories at the 30% level. In nine of the eleven

categories the training level was less than 30% for the respondents. The profile indicates that approximately one third of the respondents are trained one third are familiar, and one third are not trained in these areas.

Table 6.2 - Skill & Ability variables

Variables	Trained % No.	Familiar % No.	Not Trained % No.	No Response % No.	Need Some Training % No.
LEIN/Radio Use	83.6 (225)	8.9 (24)	4.5 (12)	3. (8)	13.4 (36)
CPR & First Aid	66.9 (180)	21.6 (58)	7.8 (21)	3.7 (10)	29.4 (79)
Time Management	14.9 (40)	34.2 (92)	46.8 (126)	4.1 (11)	81. (218)
Interpersonal Skills	19. (51)	46.1 (124)	30.9 (83)	4.1 (11)	77. (207)
Stress Management	24.9 (67)	42. (113)	29.7 (80)	3.3 (9)	71.7 (193)
Decision Making	35.7 (96)	46.1 (124)	14.5 (39)	3.7 (10)	60.6 (163)

The analysis of the critical incident reports reveals that effective dispatchers utilize the technical skills of LEIN, radio, and computer and frequently give advice on CPR and first aid. The data in Table 6.2 show that over 70% of the respondents are trained in these areas. Both the literature and the analysis of the critical incidents point to a need for effective dispatchers to manage their time, possess good interpersonal skills, to manage stress, and practice good decision making skills. The data in Table

6.2 indicate that the level of training in these categories is less than 30%.

Table 6.3 - Procedure Variables

Variables	Trained % No.	Familiar % No.	Not Trained % No.	No Response % No.	Need Training % No.
Policy	52.8 (142)	39. (105)	5.2 (14)	3. (8)	44.2 (119)
Obtaining Warrant	16.7 (45)	43.1 (116)	37.2 (100)	3. (8)	80.3 (216)
Criminal Procedure	22.7 (61)	40.5 (109)	33.8 (91)	3. (8)	74.3 (200)
Court Procedure	19.3 (52)	38.7 (104)	38.7 (104)	3.3 (9)	77.4 (208)
Blockade System	37.9 (102)	34.2 (92)	24.9 (67)	3. (8)	59.1 (159)
Barricaded Gunmen	26.4 (71)	42.8 (115)	27.1 (73)	3.7 (10)	69.9 (188)
Haz. Materials Issues	27.5 (74)	49.8 (134)	19. (51)	3.7 (10)	68.8 (185)
Major Emer. Response	17.8 (48)	41.6 (112)	36.8 (99)	3.7 (10)	78.4 (211)
Bank Alarm Procedure	61.3 (165)	29.7 (80)	5.6 (15)	3.3 (9)	35.3 (95)
Natural Disasters	25.3 (68)	48. (129)	22.7 (61)	4.1 (11)	70.7 (190)
Patrol Procedure	34.2 (92)	48.3 (130)	13.8 (37)	3.7 (10)	62.1 (167)
Undercover Issues	9.3 (28)	42. (113)	45. (121)	3.7 (10)	87. (234)
Gen. Investigation	13.8 (37)	46.5 (12.5)	35.3 (95)	4.5 (12)	81.8 (220)

The data in Table 6.3 indicate that that respondents were above the 30% level in four of the thirteen categories. Comparing the categories below the 30% level to the proportion of respondents that indicate a need for knowledge of such procedures points to a deficit in the training of the dispatchers in the sample.

Summary of Training Profile

The knowledge category, skills and abilities category, and procedure category all indicate a much higher level of awareness, when examining the number of respondents who are familiar with the subject matter. That awareness may have been gained either from experience while working as a dispatcher or from on the job training.

Using simple averages, that data indicate that 31% of the respondents have been trained in these procedures. Forty-one percent of the respondents indicated a familiarity with the subject matter, but they are not comfortable with their familiarity in emergency situations. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that they have had no training in the subject matter. Roughly two thirds of the respondents indicate a need for some kind of training.

The data in Tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 reveal that dispatchers have not been formally trained in police related matters, policies, and procedures that they must use on a day to day basis to make critical decisions. As expected, they have been trained in the technical aspects of the job such as the use of radio, LEIN, and computers. There are omissions in several areas that form the basis for their decision making process. The data in the tables also show

that though many dispatchers have assimilated useful knowledge through on the job training or experience, they are not confident in emergencies with those subjects in which they indicated familiarity. It is concluded from the training profile that training is needed in all but the most common police procedures.

This analysis of the training profile indicates that unless appropriate job relevant training is provided by the departments that have dispatchers, a potential exists for injuries to officers and citizens alike. Agencies who fail to train their dispatchers may be vulnerable to vicarious liability suits under the concepts of "negligent training" or "negligent supervision". The standard for such suits is generally gross negligence, and the act of the employee must be the proximate cause of an injury. Once training needs have been identified and indicated as necessary, such suits could prevail.

The data in the following tables relate to those variables in which the chi square tests for independence were statistically significant. The dependent variables are grouped into three categories. Those categories are training variables, personality variables, and organizational variables. The independent variable is the job type of the respondents. In those tests that were statistically significant, sworn officers were more likely to disagree. The type of job held by the respondent accounted for the level of significance. The variables described in these tables are labeled only as a descriptive synthesis of the variable.

Table 6.4 Training Variables- Indep.Var - Respondent Type

Dependent Variables	X²	df	sig	Lambda	V
Policies & Procedures	65.992	20	.0000	.104	.186
Mental Disorders	37.372	20	.0106	.015	.140
Blockade System	66.944	20	.0000	.130	.187
Crime Scene Issues	38.972	20	.0067	.059	.143
Rules of Evidence	87.836	20	.0000	.075	.215
Court Procedures	97.128	20	.0000	.075	.215
Community Leaders	49.454	20	.0003	.016	.161
Rode patrol in last yr.	50.232	20	.0002	.032	.162
Fraud Scams	69.748	20	.0000	.105	.191
Drug Culture Slang	58.437	20	.0000	.022	.175
High Speed Chases	45.460	20	.0010	.011	.154
Limits of Use of Force	40.906	20	.0038	.013	.146
Investigative Proc.	67.905	25	.0000	.086	.169

The data in Table 6.4 reveal that of the forty-two variables in this category, troopers and sergeants are more likely to disagree in thirteen of the forty-two variables. The job type of the respondents accounts for the level of significance. There are significant differences in perception of what training factors are required for effective dispatchers between respondent types. The null hypothesis was rejected for thirteen of the forty-two variables. Of the thirteen variables that showed statistical significance, four of them were favored by all respondents at a rate of over 80%. The remaining nine variables when viewed by the 75% decision rule do not appear at that level.

Table 6.5 Personality Variables Indep. Var - Respondent Type

Dependent Variables	χ^2	df	sig	Lambda	V
Have good interpersonal skill	28.974	15	.0162	.027	.142
Adapt quickly to change	39.139	20	.0064	.047	.143
Anticipate problems	51.659	20	.0001	.005	.164
Have excellent retention	37.841	20	.0093	.027	.141
See decision making as critical	111.031	20	.0000	.095	.241
Can prioritize quickly	45.072	15	.0001	.131	.177

The data in Table 6.5 reveal that of the twenty-three variables in this category that troopers and sergeants are more likely to disagree on six of the twenty-three variables. The analysis indicates that the job type of the respondents does account for the variance in this dependent variable. There are significant differences in perception of what personality characteristics effective dispatchers possess by the type of job of respondents. The null hypothesis was rejected for six of the twenty-three personality variables. In Table 6.11, the tables indicating proportion of overall responses, twenty-one of the twenty-three personality variables scored over 75%. The majority of scores are over 90% in agreement. Five of the six variables in Table 6.5 scored over 90% in Table 6.11. Table 6.6 is presented on the next page.

Table 6.6 Organizational Variables. Indep. Var - Respondent Type

Dependent Variables	χ^2	df	sig	Lambda	V
Off. understand dispatcher	84.997	20	.0000	.038	.211
Super. understand dispatcher	57.566	25	.0002	.027	.155
Off. should work dispatch	41.271	25	.0215	.038	.131
Disp should ride patrol	58.571	20	.0000	.114	.175
Disp integral to agency	50.457	25	.0019	.014	.145
Disp. make decisions	72.796	25	.0000	.031	.175
Off. respect dispatchers	32.904	20	.0346	.013	.131
Off. appreciate disp. work	49.037	25	.0028	.010	.143
Dsp/Off. equal in training	46.856	25	.0051	.009	.140
Disp. selection needs change	44.837	20	.0012	.037	.153
Disp. responsibility clear	56.620	20	.0000	.030	.172
Disp. authority clear	37.272	20	.0109	.012	.140
Off. treat disp. as equals	52.950	20	.0001	.004	.166
Job description accurate	102.295	25	.0000	.062	.207
Disp. do not need police training	42.267	20	.0026	.016	.149
Priorities same on each shift	55.028	20	.0000	.074	.170
Dispatching is effective when disp. part of team	57.474	25	.0002	.237	.155
Off. treat dispatcher same regardless of gender	60.571	25	.0001	.006	.159

The data in Table 6.6 reveal that of the thirty-four variables relating to organizational issues, troopers and sergeants are more likely to disagree on eighteen of the thirty-four variables. Job type of the respondents does account for the level of significance. There are significant differences in

perception of organizational role, place, and importance of dispatchers in the agency. The null was rejected for eighteen of the thirty-four organizational variables.

Summary of Findings

There is significant disagreement between sworn personnel and civilian dispatchers on what training matter is important in order to be an effective dispatcher. The job type of trooper and sergeant also accounts for differences in perception of what personality characteristics effective dispatchers should possess. The greatest differences were noted in the variables describing organizational conditions and perceptions. Officers and dispatchers hold different views on the role of the dispatcher and somewhat different perceptions on the responsibility and authority of the dispatchers. The null hypothesis was rejected for 31% of the training variables, for 26% of the personality variables, and for 53% of the organizational variables.

These findings indicate that sworn officers do not look upon dispatchers as peers. They do not feel that the civilian dispatchers need the in-depth training that the research indicates. This may be due to their lack of full understanding of the demands of the dispatcher's job. Sworn officers do not fully recognize the complex and broad personality characteristics that effective dispatchers are required to demonstrate. Many of the younger police officers have never worked the desk or dispatcher position and therefore may be unaware of the complexities of the job or what characteristics and knowledge successful dispatching requires.

The analysis of the organizational variables reveals that sworn

officers do not perceive dispatchers as critical in the operation of the police department. Officers generally do not feel that it is useful for them to work the dispatch position. Table 6.6 indicates that officers tend to disagree with dispatchers on most organizational variables. This finding indicates a strong disagreement between the two job types on dispatcher authority, training, responsibility, and the organizational importance of the dispatching function.

The variables were constructed from an analysis of the critical incidents, and represent descriptions of actual dispatcher behavior while handling critical incidents. The analysis of the data points out that the officers that are dispatched do not have a detailed understanding of what dispatchers do in their daily work. There are some serious differences in opinion regarding the scope of a dispatcher's job.

Each training variable used in the survey instrument was extracted from the critical incident reports. Only those descriptions that appeared repeatedly were included. The behaviors in each reported incident were evaluated, noted, and tallied. A determination was made of the knowledge required to perform the particular behavior and what personality characteristics, skills, or abilities were demonstrated.

The data in Table 6.4 and Table 6.5 indicate that uniform personnel do not feel as strongly as dispatchers that it is important for a dispatcher to be well informed on such matters as policy and procedure, dealing with persons with mental disorders, crisis intervention, or investigative procedures. When examining the details of the critical incidents and reviewing the comments from the open-ended questions, it is clear that

dispatchers rely on such knowledge and skills to assist the officers as they respond to citizens' calls or make requests for support information.

The data in Table 6.6 is probably the most revealing in terms of identifying perceptual differences between officers and dispatchers. Several organizational issues surfaced from an examination of this data. From the data in the tables that follow, comparisons are made between the proportion of all respondents who agreed or disagreed on these three categories with the data from these tables.

Conclusions can be reached regarding disparity between the police and dispatcher context and the content and level of training recommended for effectiveness. Recommendations for solutions to organizational problems can also be made.

With the exception of gender, the demographic variables, when used as the independent variable, showed very few significant differences. When gender was used as the independent variable the statistical significance meant that females were more likely to disagree with males Table 6.7 presents the data on gender on the following page.

Table 6.7- Training Variables - Indep. Var - Gender

Dependent Variables	χ^2	df	sig	Lambda	V
Policies & Procedures	26.489	16	.0475	.010	.118
Mental disorders	28.910	16	.0245	.069	.123
Rules of Evidence	54.405	16	.0000	.086	.169
Know community resources	26.656	16	.0455	.020	.118
Court procedures	53.119	16	.0000	.126	.167
Know community leaders	46.934	16	.0001	.004	.157
Can explain CPR/FA to others	27.610	16	.0352	.007	.120
Ridden on patrol	30.552	16	.0153	.007	.126
Fraud Scams	30.701	16	.0147	.004	.127
Drug culture slang	40.370	16	.0007	.038	.145
Know drug effects	43.659	16	.0002	.007	.151
Crisis intervention	46.033	12	.0000	.013	.179

The data in Table 6.7 reveal that when gender is used as the independent variable that females are likely to disagree with males on twelve of the forty-two training variables. The gender accounts for the level of significance. There are significant differences in perception of what training factors are required for effective dispatchers between female and male respondents. When accounting for gender, the null hypothesis was rejected on twelve of the forty-two variables. Twenty-nine percent of the

time female respondents are likely to disagree with male respondents on the importance of variables related to effective dispatchers. These findings suggest that the females may be occupationally socialized differently than their male counterparts. The findings support an earlier speculation, made after several interviews with dispatchers. Those speculations were that female dispatchers display a stronger sense for nurturing and compassion when dealing with the public and the officers they dispatched. They appeared to concern themselves more with the overall success of the incident than the males. As Table 6.8 indicates, the females show a greater concern for accurate decision making. Coping with stress, evaluating alternative courses of action, and possessing self-control were common observations during the interview process. All of these variables deal with the quality of the dispatcher's overall output and its relation to the success of the assigned mission.

The data in Table 6.8 indicate that of the twenty-three variables in this category that females are more likely to disagree with males on thirteen of the twenty-three variables. Fifty-six percent of the time, female respondents are likely to disagree with male respondents on the personality variables that describe effective dispatchers. The gender does account for the level of significance. When accounting for gender, the null hypothesis was rejected on thirteen of the twenty-three variables.

Table 6.8 - Personality Variables- Indep. Var - Gender

Dependent Variables	X²	df	sig	Lambda	V
Sense of humor	34.967	20	.0203	.004	.135
Interpersonal skills	31.433	12	.0017	.009	.148
Adapts quickly	37.474	16	.0018	.018	.140
Copes well with events	44.023	16	.0002	.019	.152
Problem solving skills	27.375	16	.0375	.005	.120
Sees decision making as critical	95.097	16	.0000	.109	.223
Sensitive to others' feelings	48.977	12	.0000	.004	.185
Can prioritize quickly	57.989	12	.0000	.084	.201
Copes well with stress	30.710	16	.0140	.006	.127
Ability to acquire new skills	23.952	12	.0206	.092	.129
Evaluates courses of action	76.928	12	.0000	.009	.232
Have good self-control	60.955	16	.0000	.123	.179
Have quick recall	21.890	12	.0388	.087	.123

The data in Table 6.9 indicate that that of the thirty-four variables relating to organizational issues, female respondents are more likely to disagree with male respondents on ten of the thirty-four variables. Gender of the respondents does account for the level of significance. Twenty-nine percent of the time there are significant differences in perception of organizational issues between male and female respondents. When accounting for gender, the null hypothesis was rejected for ten of the

thirty-four variables. The data presented in Tables 6.4- 6.9 indicate that there is disequilibrium between the dispatches and the uniformed officers.

Table 6.9- Organizational Variables - Indep. Var - Gender

Dependent Variables	X²	df	sig	Lambda	V
Off. understand dispatchers	35.954	16	.0029	.003	.137
Off. should work dispatch	34.353	20	.0238	.041	.134
Dsp. should ride patrol	51.369	16	.0000	.083	.164
Dsp. make critical difference	26.452	12	.0093	.012	.136
Dsp. speak for agency	26.561	16	.0466	.003	.118
Job description accurate	50.688	20	.0002	.006	.163
Dsp. training improves safety	102.911	16	.0000	.037	.232
Dispatching is effective when dsp. is part of team	68.651	20	.0000	.166	.190
No role conflict between dsp/off.	102.164	20	.0000	.032	.231
Dsp. treated same regardless of gender of dsp.	35.204	20	.0190	.006	.136

The dispatchers and officers work in the one context of police response. That context is bounded on the one side by the call from the public to the police. These calls start the response cycle. On the other side it is bounded by the arrival of the officer at the scene and the stabilization of the incident. It appears, that even though dispatchers and officers work in a mutually dependent environment, each of them have different views on the content of the process in regard to each other's role, responsibility, and criteria for effectiveness.

Determination of Training Program Content

The data presented in the tables that follow will be used to determine what specific subjects will be recommended for a state police dispatcher training program. Personality and organizational variables are also presented because it appears from the analysis of that data that some other training and organizational initiatives are indicated for others in the organization. The decision rule that will be applied to the data is that a particular subject will be adopted for use in pre-service training when 75% or more of the respondents indicate agreement with the variable that was used to describe the subject. The responses on the survey instrument were on a scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

In the tables that follow that scale has been collapsed into Agree, Neutral, and Disagree. The questions were phrased as: Effective dispatchers understand, know or are familiar with.... Variables in tables are descriptive syntheses. The collapsing was done as explained on page 162.

Table 6.10 - Training Variables N=475, < 75%

Variables	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No R	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Understand Criminal Law	81.4	(385)	12.3	(58)	6.3	(30)	.4	(2)
Know Policy & Procedure	96.2	(457)	2.9	(14)	.8	(4)		
Know misdemeanor/felonies	89.9	(427)	7.8	(37)	2.3	(11)		
Understand Mental Disorders	80.6	(383)	14.5	(69)	4.8	(23)		
Liability of emergencies	92.2	(438)	5.7	(27)	2.1	(10)		
Can utilize LEIN	99.4	(472)	.4	(2)	.2	(1)		
Blockade system	92.	(436)	7.4	(35)	.6	(3)		
Blockade points	81.7	(388)	14.5	(69)	3.8	(18)		
Bomb Threat Procedure	93.7	(445)	5.5	(26)	.8	(4)		
Barricaded gunmen	91.4	(434)	7.8	(37)	.8	(4)		
Hazardous material spills	95.8	(455)	3.8	(18)	.4	(2)		
Airline Accident Procedure	88.	(418)	11.2	(53)	.8	(4)		
Bank Alarm Procedure	98.1	(465)	1.5	(7)	.4	(2)		
Know Community resources	86.1	(409)	11.8	(56)	2.1	(10)		
Radio for undercover off.	89.7	(426)	8.6	(41)	1.7	(8)		
Obtain special equipment	79.5	(377)	15.2	(72)	5.2	(25)		
Know CPR & F.A.	78.5	(373)	16.8	(80)	4.4	(22)	.2	(1)
Can explain CPR & F.A.	75.8	(360)	16.6	(79)	7.5	(36)		
Know Local area	94.7	(450)	4.4	(21)	.8	(4)		
Know local hazards	89.9	(427)	9.1	(43)	1.0	(5)		
Patrol procedures	78.9	(375)	17.1	(81)	4.0	(19)		
Disaster response	90.5	(430)	7.8	(37)	1.7	(8)		
Chases	89.9	(427)	6.1	(29)	4.	(19)		

Table 6.11 - Personality Variables N=475, < 75%

Variables	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No R
	%	N	%	N	%	N	
Sense of humor	85.7	(407)	13.7	(65)	.6	(3)	
Clear Speaking skill	99.4	(472)	.6	(3)			
Good listener	98.1	(466)	1.9	(9)			
Resource specialist	84.2	(400)	13.9	(66)	1.9	(9)	
Interpersonal skills	94.7	(450)	5.3	(25)			
Adapts quickly	95.4	(453)	4.4	(21)	.2	(1)	
Coping skills	98.9	(470)	.8	(4)	.2	(1)	
Problem solving skills	92.8	(441)	6.1	(29)	1.1	(5)	
Good memory	92.4	(439)	7.2	(34)	.4	(2)	
Sensitive to others	78.7	(374)	20.	(95)	1.3	(6)	
Assertive	80.4	(382)	16.	(76)	3.5	(17)	
Prioritizes quickly	96.	(356)	3.6	(17)	.4	(2)	
Copes with stress	98.1	(466)	1.5	(7)	.4	(2)	
Acquires new skills quickly	95.6	(454)	4.2	(20)	.2	(1)	
Gets along with peers	94.1	(447)	5.9	(28)			
Evaluates courses of action	91.6	(435)	8.	(38)	.4	(2)	
Gets along with people	92.6	(440)	7.2	(34)	.2	(1)	
Compassionate to caller	82.5	(392)	16.4	(78)	1.1	(5)	
Self control	96.8	(460)	2.7	(13)	.4	(2)	
Quick recall ability	92.8	(441)	6.9	(33)	.2	(1)	
Multiple sources of information	93.1	(442)	6.5	(31)	.4	(2)	

A review of the data in Table 6.11 reveals that respondents scored 75% or greater in agreement in twenty-one of the of the twenty-three variables. Sixteen of those were over 90% agreement on the personality, skills, and abilities needed to be an effective dispatcher. The conclusions reached from the data analysis of Table 6.11 will be incorporated into the personnel selection criteria for state police dispatchers. As noted in Table 6.6, the sergeants and troopers were likely to disagree on six of these variables. The respondents showed general agreement on the personality, skills, and abilities requirements for effective dispatchers.

Table 6.12 Organizational Variables N=475, < 75%

Variables	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No R.
	%	N	%	N	%	N	
Officer should work dispatch	81.9	(389)	10.1	(48)	8.	(38)	
Goes beyond for patrols	93.3	(443)	4.4	(21)	2.3	(11)	
Pre-service training needed	81.9	(389)	14.1	(67)	4.	(19)	
In controversial role	76.	(361)	17.3	(82)	6.7	(32)	
Disp.training improves safety	86.1	(409)	10.1	(48)	3.8	(18)	
Dispatcher effective when team member	91.8	(436)	6.3	(30)	1.9	(9)	
Dispatchers make critical difference in outcome	97.9	(464)	1.9	(9)	.2	(2)	
Disp. work ends with call	8.2	(39)	2.9	(14)	88.9	(422)	
Police training not necessary	9.0	(43)	9.5	(45)	81.5	(287)	

The data in Table 6.12 confirms what respondents said in the open-ended questions on the questionnaire. Overall, respondents agree that dispatchers need some form of pre-service training and most feel that training of dispatchers would improve officer safety. Eighty-one and nine

tenths percent felt that officers would gain from working the dispatcher's job from time to time. A majority of the respondents felt that training in police matters was necessary for effective dispatching. Respondents also recognize that the dispatcher is in a controversial role and would be more effective if viewed as part of the police team. Almost 98% of the respondents agree that dispatchers make a critical difference in the outcomes of the police responses.

In Tables 6.13, 6.14, and 6.15 that follow, the tables reflect those variables in which respondents agree or disagree more than 50% , but less than 75% of the time. The subject matter that these variables represent will be used for determining the content of future in-service training programs. Because they score below the 75% decision rule, they will not be included in the development of pre-service training programs.

Table 6.13 - Training Variables N=475, < 50 % and > 75%

Variables	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No R.	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Understand civil law	70.3	(334)	21.1	(100)	7.8	(37)	.8	(4)
Understand law of arrest	62.7	(298)	25.3	(120)	12	(57)		
Arrest without warrant	64.8	(307)	21.5	(120)	13.7	(65)	.2	(1)
Crime scene protection	55.4	(263)	33.7	(160)	11.	(52)		
Knows who needs to know	74.1	(352)	22.5	(107)	3.4	(16)		

Table 6.14 - Personality Variables N=475, < 50% and > 75%

Variables	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No R.	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Inquisitive by nature	70.5	(335)	26.5	(126)	2.9	(14)		
Decision Making	74.1	(352)	16.	(76)	9.9	(47)		

Table 6.15 Organizational Variables N=475, < 50% and > 75%

Variables	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No R.	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Police understand disp.work	59.6	(283)	11.2	(53)	29.2	(139)		
Disp. understand police work	68.4	(325)	17.1	(81)	14.6	(69)		
Police super.understand disp.	56.6	(269)	24.8	(118)	18.5	(88)		
Officers appreciate disp.work	50.1	(238)	22.7	(108)	27.2	(129)		
Need to know officer's job	66.5	(316)	19.8	(94)	13.7	(65)		
Selection method needs change	51.3	(244)	44.2	(210)	4.5	(21)		
Speak for agency	54.5	(259)	17.5	(83)	28.	(133)		
Treated like equals	16.4	(78)	19.8	(94)	63.8	(303)		
Job description accurate	17.1	(81)	26.3	(125)	56.7	(279)		
Policy Same all shifts	54.1	(217)	14.5	(69)	31.4	(149)		
Recommend certification	68.2	(324)	23.8	(113)	8.	(38)		
No Role Conflict	20.4	(97)	17.5	(83)	62.1	(295)		

The data in Table 6.13 reveal , according to the decision rule, that in-service training is indicated in five additional areas. Table 6.14 data indicate that many respondents agree that decision making is an important part of the dispatcher's role, but slightly less than the required 75% required for use in the training. Decision making will be considered as part of the selection criteria.

Table 6.15 data show that over 50% of respondents feel that the dispatcher's job description is not an accurate picture of the job. A higher percentage, 63.8%, feel that the dispatcher is not accepted as a peer of the officers. Respondents are divided on whether the dispatcher speaks for the agency in the absence of a supervisor.

These findings tend to support the contention that a dispatcher's authority is not clear. Sixty-eight and four tenths percent of the respondents felt that a dispatcher is more effective if he or she understands police work in general, and 66.5 % felt that effective dispatchers need to know the officer's job. Almost 60% of the respondents indicated that police officers and police supervisors did not understand the job of dispatcher.

Respondent Demographics

Overall, there were 15% more males than females among respondents. When respondent officers were removed though, it appears that dispatching is a female dominated profession. Among dispatchers, 67.6 % are females and 30.4% are males.

Almost 80% of the respondents fall in the 26-45 year age group. The

most common age group was 36-45 years (41.9%) followed by 26-35 years (37.5 %).

Whites made up the majority of the sample with 86.7% followed by blacks with 7.2% and hispanics with 3.4%. Other respondent races were less than one percent.

The most common shift worked by respondents at the time of the survey was the day shift, followed by afternoons and midnights in that order. Less than 16% of the respondents worked split or other shifts.

All of the respondents have had some form of training ranging from just OJT to pre-service. In-service training was experienced by 49% of the respondents, but only 5.5% indicated that they had had pre-service training. Table 6.16 through Table 6.20 reflect the demographic data.

Table 6.16 Respondent Gender N=475

Gender	%	N
Male	56.2	267
Female	41.3	196
No Resp.	2.5	12
	100.	475

Table 6.17 Respondent Age N=475

Age	%	N
> 25	5.9	28
26-35	37.5	178
36-45	41.9	199
46-55	10.9	52
< 56	2.9	14
No Resp.	.8	4
	100	475

Table 6.18 Respondent Race N=475

Race	%	N
Black	7.2	34
Hispanic	3.4	16
White	86.7	412
Indian	.8	4
Other	.2	1
No Resp.	.7	8
	100	475

Table 6.19 Respondent Work Shift N-475

Shift	%	N
Midnight	20.4	97
Days	39.6	188
Afternoon	23.4	111
Other	15.6	74
No Resp.	1	5
	100	475

Table 6.20 - Respondent Training N-271

Training	%	N
Pre-service	5.5	15
OJT	21.	56
In-service	49.	131
Refresher	11.	30
OJT only	12.	32
No Resp.	1.5	7
	100	271

Note: A few respondents were also police officers.

Summary

There are significant differences in perceptions between sworn officers and civilian dispatchers. Those differences exist in their perceptions of training requirements and personal characteristics that effective dispatchers possess. There are also significant differences in perceptions between sworn officers and dispatchers on organizational issues.

When using the respondent job type as the independent variable, the analysis revealed that officers were more likely to disagree with the dispatchers on the importance and content of training, personal characteristics, and organizational issues. Officers disagreed with the dispatchers on 31% of the training variables, on 26% of the personal characteristic variables, and on 53% of the organizational variables.

The significant differences in perception among respondents indicates that contextual disequilibrium, as defined, does exist. The officers possess a view of their work world from actual experience and have perceptions relating to the work world of dispatchers. Likewise, dispatchers have a view of their work world from actual experience and have perceptions relating to the officer's work world. The officer's view of dispatcher's job is different than the job as it is and the same holds true for the dispatcher's view of the officer's job. Though both groups work on one context, the emergency response process, each have different views of each other's role, importance, and job requirements. This is the contextual disequilibrium that exists.

It is contended that training, mutual exchange of ideas and problems, and organizational initiatives that will provide for dispatcher input, will reduce this disequilibrium to some degree. Dispatchers and officers must

understand one another's role if there is to be equilibrium and reciprocity.

When gender was used as the independent variable females were likely to disagree with males on 29% of the training and organizational variables, and 56% of the personality characteristics.

Despite the significant differences in perception among the respondents ,when using the decison rule the 475 respondents pinpointed areas believed to be related to effective dispatching. There were 23 training areas that indicated 75% or more agreement among respondents. There were 21 personal characteristics that indicated 75% or more agreement among respondents. Nine organizational issues were selected by respondents with 75% or more agreement which indicated important issues that need to be addressed in order to have a postive impact on dispatching effectiveness. In addition to these findings several areas of interest were found that will be useful for in-service training as depicted in Tables 6.13-6.15.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This inquiry consisted of the administration of a critical incident technique to the population of state police dispatchers, followed by the administration of a survey instrument to those same dispatchers, and samples consisting of troopers, sergeants, and dispatchers from one hundred and sixty-five other law enforcement agencies in Michigan.

The analysis of the data developed in both of these processes was used to determine whether, as hypothesized, there was contextual disequilibrium between the civilian dispatchers of the Michigan Department of State Police and the sworn officers of that department. The analysis of data was also used to determine what training factors were considered as important by all of the respondents in terms of achieving dispatcher effectiveness.

In order to address the requests of the State Police the respondents' perceptions of effective personality factors were also identified for use in the development of job relevant selection criteria for dispatchers. Because it was thought that there was a significant degree of disequilibrium between dispatchers and their officer counterparts, questions in the organizational context were posed to determine whether there were organizational issues or situations present that hindered dispatcher effectiveness.

Conclusions

Collectively, the analysis of data indicate that there are strong preferences across respondent job types for certain training variables. These

preferences indicate the type of training a dispatcher requires in order to be deemed effective by respondents. Similar preferences were noted for the personality characteristics of effective dispatchers.

The analysis of data from the survey instrument confirmed the presence of a moderate degree of contextual disequilibrium between the dispatchers and the sworn officers. Using the respondent job type as an independent variable, it was learned that officers are likely to disagree with dispatchers regarding the importance of specific training variables and personality variables that are reflective of effective dispatchers. The officers disagreed with the dispatchers on the role and importance of dispatchers in the police response process on several organizational variables. A conclusion reached from the analysis of this data is that officers do not fully understand the nature of the dispatcher's work, nor do they fully appreciate what training an effective dispatcher requires. This conclusion confirms earlier suspicions that the dispatchers do not receive reciprocity from their counterparts. Much of their frustration can be attributed to a lack of personal recognition and a lack of appreciation of their contribution to the overall police response.

As long as there is disequilibrium between dispatchers and officers, in the emergency response process; and as long as a lack of reciprocity exists, the conditions are present for the development of serious problems in this part of policing. Dispatchers will continue to have stress which can lead to anxiety. That anxiety can lead to ineffective behavior in handling critical incidents. The results of such behavior can lead to conditions that cause injuries to officers and misapplied police services.

A dispatcher who is not properly trained may misinterpret the content

of a citizen's call for service. This condition could lead to obtaining inaccurate information for the responding police officer and that situation could result in under or over reaction by the police. Both of these responses are inappropriate and could lead to harm to all concerned.

The conclusion is that when there are such differences ,the two elements of the emergency response team- dispatcher and officer- are each working and reacting from different sets of assumptions and beliefs when performing their tasks. Communication between these two crucial police positions is necessary for effective performance.

A second conclusion reached was that dispatchers do in fact perform many functions that are police-like in nature. Dispatchers require police knowledge, yet they are not adequately trained in the police related subject matter. Dispatchers are required to use a wide latitude of discretionary decision making while performing their tasks. Many of their decisions revolve around issues of citizen or officer safety. This is particularly so when handling critical incidents. In order for dispatchers to be effective, they must be familiar with a broad range of police related subject matter. They do not merely answer the public's calls for service, but they must determine what has occurred and the intensity of the call must be determined prior to assigning a priority to the call. Many skills and abilities are required for a dispatcher to successfully interpret calls and insure that the information that is transmitted to the responding officer is complete.

A third conclusion pointed out that the personality characteristics, attitudes, skills, and abilities necessary for effective dispatching are far more complex than the officers or administrators previously recognized. The

Michigan Department of Civil Service has classified the emergency dispatcher as a Communications Clerk IV. That classification is closely associated with that of a secretary. The selection criteria for such positions have been highlighted by emphasizing the need for two years of office work and the ability of typing 30 words per minute.

The current position description utilized by Civil Service is that of a Communications Clerk. That document does not accurately describe the true nature of the work or the consequences of errors while performing the required tasks. It was concluded that police emergency dispatchers are an integral part of the police process, particularly in the process of emergency response. The study results indicate that dispatchers require in depth training in several police subjects, but the training profile reveals that they are not so trained. Effective dispatchers require a unique mix of personality traits and ability, but the current selection criteria does not address these prerequisites. It was also concluded that many uniformed officers do not perceive the dispatcher as an important part of the police team.

The dispatchers themselves feel that they are viewed as second class citizens by some officers. Such officer perceptions may result from previously held misconceptions regarding civilian employees in the police department. They may also result from a lack of awareness of the role of the dispatcher.

When examining the role of the dispatcher and the relationship of that role to the role of the responding police officer, one can naturally conclude that the effective use of the two positions requires team work. Dispatchers and officers are team members. Together they must receive, interpret, and determine what needs of the citizen must be met. They must then apply the

appropriate law enforcement services to fulfill that need. Unless dispatchers and officers view their roles as mutually dependent and supportive, disequilibrium will continue and dysfunctions will exist. Those dysfunctions could have negative effects on the overall performance of the agency.

The analysis of the data from this study indicates a need for the development of job relevant selection criteria based on the job as it is being performed. A change in the civil service position description for dispatchers is also indicated.

Research Questions

Several research questions were posed in Chapter I. Those questions dealing with differences in perception among respondent officers and dispatchers have been answered. There are significant differences in perception of what training and personality characteristics are required in order to have effective dispatchers. Specific answers to these questions are found in the summary of the analysis of data in Chapter VI .

Twenty-three police related training areas were identified by the respondents as necessary for achieving dispatcher effectiveness. The list of those variables is found in Table 6.10 Briefly, the respondents indicate a need for training in criminal law, civil law, patrol procedures, and a long list of emergency procedures used by responding police officers.

The results of the study also indicate that effective dispatchers must be compassionate, sensitive persons who speak clearly, have excellent hearing and good memories. Effective dispatchers must be able to adapt quickly to changing conditions and be able to cope with stress. They must also be able to evaluate between different courses of action, prioritize, make decisions,

and be aware of and know how to use multiple sources of information. An effective dispatcher will have good interpersonal and problem solving skills and be able to display self-control under trying conditions.

Effective dispatchers will go beyond for the officers they dispatch and develop supportive information to assist the patrols. Dispatchers and officers view pre-service training as a necessary function of selection. Both parties view the job of a dispatcher as controversial. The rotation of officers and dispatchers between jobs could have a positive impact on this problem and clear up some of the controversy.

The position description currently used by the state police is not an accurate assessment of the dispatcher's job. Almost 60% of the respondents felt that the position descriptions in use for dispatchers were inaccurate.

There are policy implications concerning the inaccuracy of position descriptions, inadequacy of selection criteria, and lack of job relevant training.

An accurate position description can inform those in the job of what they are to be held accountable for, and it can provide a bench mark for supervision, from which to evaluate trainees or probationary employees. The current position description does not reflect the complexity of the dispatcher's job or the training required for acceptable performance.

Revised selection criteria can assist the agency and the civil service staff in choosing persons with the appropriate experience , background, personal qualifications, and skills to do the job. The use of the current criteria requires the state police to interview hundreds of applicants in order to fill a few positions.

The majority of the applicants are secretaries and few have any idea of the nature and scope of a dispatcher's job. The title of Communications Clerk is a misnomer for the job of dispatcher.

Civil service should consider and decide upon a new position description and an enhanced selection criteria. If the descriptions and recommendations of this study are accepted as an accurate portrayal of the job of dispatcher, there no doubt will be classification changes.

The union that presently represents dispatchers could lose dispatcher membership if the position is changed from communications clerk to another classification which is not included in the bargaining unit.

The training recommendations have been submitted to the state police for development into a dispatcher pre-service training program. Those organizations who fail to train their subordinates may be vulnerable to liability suits. This is particularly so if it can be shown that a lack of training was the proximate cause of a resulting injury. It is conceivable that officers could bring suit against their own agency if they received an injury that could be attributed to a lack of training of a dispatcher and that lack of training was shown to be the proximate cause of an injury.

Reflecting upon the theoretical framework of this study, the goal of dispatcher effectiveness has provided derivative rights and duties to others. The dispatchers have a right to be trained. They also derive a responsibility to act according to that training. The departmental supervisors have a duty to provide the training and a duty to insure that their dispatchers perform according to the training standards.

One major implication from this study, and one that state police

management supports, is the recognition of the dispatcher as a civilian police professional. These persons are entitled to the training that the job requires and have a right to that training.

Organizational changes are also indicated. There appears to be a need for a stronger emphasis on recognition of dispatchers as civilian police professionals, and as integral parts of the police service. Historically, the police have accepted civilian laboratory personnel as equals. For some reason they have not accepted, as peers, those that dispatch their cars. Lab personnel have traditionally been perceived as "doing police work". The results of this study indicate that dispatchers are also "doing police work". They interview citizens, press for facts and details, and use investigatory skills to determine what is happening. These processes require police knowledge. The recognition of the dispatcher as an important first link in the police emergency response process will go a long way in reducing many of dysfunctional attitudes observed. If dispatchers are given the opportunity to ride on patrol periodically they will be able to obtain an officer's perspective. If officers are periodically assigned to work with dispatchers, they would be able to obtain the dispatcher's perspective.

Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are based on the extensive interviews with dispatchers, the analysis of the critical incidents, and the analysis of the data from the survey instrument.

1. It is recommended that the state police adopt the selection criteria that was prepared for them as a starting point for selection of new dispatchers. Such criteria should be used in conjunction with an interview process, which

should include at least one senior, experienced dispatcher.

2. It is recommended that the Michigan Department of Civil Service restructure the position description used to classify police emergency dispatchers by utilizing the revised position description that was prepared. In adopting the prepared position description, the dispatchers will have a realistic understanding of the job they are entering and supervisors will have a benchmark from which to judge dispatcher performance. That document can assist supervisors in maintaining accountability.

3. It is recommended that the state police institute a pre-service training program for all newly hired dispatchers. The factors presented in Tables 6.10, 6.11, and 6.12 should be included in the training curricula.

4. It is recommended that state police management take steps to recognize the importance of emergency dispatchers in their overall operation. The steps should include the assimilation of dispatchers into the social structure of the department. The recognition of dispatchers as civilian police professionals, supported by appropriate job relevant training, should have a positive impact on the overall performance of the department. Mutual understanding and respect for each other's role, between dispatchers and the officers, should reduce the disequilibrium that is present in the police emergency response system.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Selection Criteria for State Police Dispatchers

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR STATE POLICE EMERGENCY DISPATCHER

Class Series Description

The subject matter of this report is important to the dispatchers, the police, and the citizens that call upon the police for diverse services. Disregarding the constraints of civil service formats, this report is presented in the following manner. First, a general background is presented so that the reader will understand the context in which dispatchers work. Second, the rationale for the recommendations is presented. Third, a description of the knowledge or training factors is presented followed by personality factors that effective dispatchers require. The latter includes skills, abilities, and attitudes demonstrated by successful and effective dispatchers.

General Background and Context of Dispatching

Employees in this class perform a full range of emergency dispatch duties. An emergency dispatcher is probably one of the more misunderstood duties in policing. In order to appreciate the role of the dispatcher and relate selection criteria to that role, it is necessary to understand where the dispatcher fits in the police system.

The police emergency response is the context in which to view dispatching. This context begins with the reception of a demand for service from the citizen who calls the police. The call may be a request for simple or complex information, a report of a suspicious circumstance, the report of a

crime or disorder, or a request for some service. The intensity of the caller's report may range from low priority as in the case of information requests, to high priority as in cases of life threatening situations.

The second step of the response context is the investigation phase. A dispatcher must determine exactly what is transpiring. This is often difficult because many excited citizens just wish to call, report, and hang up. A dispatcher in this phase must be able to actively listen and extract several propositions, and then be able to determine which of the several propositions are critical to the police. This is a phase involving investigatory skills and deductive skills. After analyzing the call, the dispatcher then must make decisions.

A third phase of the police response involves the dispatcher making a decision regarding what has occurred, whether it is a crime, and if so, what kind of police response is warranted. A dispatcher may also be required to make a decision not to assign a police response to the call. In some cases referrals are made to other governmental agencies. Dispatchers exercise discretionary decision making authority in this phase of the police response. The consequences of error may be extreme if a dispatcher does not assign a car when one is needed.

The fourth phase of the police response is the assignment or dispatching of a police unit to the call. This is followed by the fifth phase which is backup work for the police officer. Depending on the nature of the call, a dispatcher may be required to immediately obtain other information for the responding officer. Examples of such follow up include obtaining record checks on possible suspects, obtaining back up units when appropriate,

making decisions to call supervisors into the matter, and making decisions to activate a broad list of support services.

Rationale for Choosing Knowledge, Skill, and Personality Factors

Culminating two years of study of dispatchers supported by univariate and bivariate analyses, several knowledge, personality, attitudinal, and skill factors were identified and defined. The following sections, outlining the knowledge, skill, ability, and personality factors required for effective dispatchers, were empirically gathered using a three-tiered rigorous methodology. Both statistical tests and other tests using decision rules were employed to reach the conclusions that follow.

The starting point for the identification of these factors was the detailed critical incident as reported by the state police dispatchers. The knowledge and required behaviors outlined below come from the actual experiences of dispatchers who work in the dispatch function on a day to day basis. After a deductive analysis of the incidents, a survey instrument was constructed and state police dispatchers were re-tested. In addition, to assure the data were realistic, a sample of 227 troopers, 86 sergeants, and 312 other agency dispatchers were surveyed. Contrary views of others were accounted for. The factors that remained are a realistic assembly of the factors needed to effectively dispatch. Further supporting this effort there were 180 dispatchers interviewed over the course of the last two years in order to obtain a conceptual viewpoint. This report is a very brief explanation. For a detailed review of the empirical work which supports these contentions, one must review the dissertation from which these

recommendations come. The publication and printing of that document will not be available until June 1989.

Knowledge Requirements for Dispatchers

Using a scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree 475 respondents identified the following areas as necessary for effective dispatching. The decision rule was that only those categories in which 75% or more of the combined respondents agreed would be included.

A dispatcher must understand criminal law in order to be able to know if a crime was committed. One must know and understand departmental policies and procedures. One must know when reported conditions amount to misdemeanors or felonies. One must understand persons with mental disorders because some callers may be mentally disturbed. Frequently officers must respond to those who are mentally handicapped. One must be aware of issues revolving around vicarious liability as it relates to police response. As active participants and representatives of the department, dispatchers' actions are subject to review and may bring the department into liability. Dispatchers must be able to understand and use LEIN, radio, and computers relating to communications. They must know many community resources and know how to obtain them to support the patrol force.

Dispatchers are required to understand the details of several procedures such as the blockade system, the blockade points and how to get to them , bomb threat procedures, barricaded gunmen procedures, hazardous materials procedures, airline or major utility accident procedures, bank alarm procedures, and patrol procedures. In the absence of such procedural knowledge, dispatchers may not be able to make proper decisions on the

dispatch of cars or be able to make accurate determinations regarding the nature of reported incidents. Dispatchers must not only be familiar with CPR and first aid, but also be able to explain these processes over the phone to callers who are emotional. Dispatchers must also know and understand issues involving high speed pursuits by officers, and the appropriate actions to take in response to disasters.

Personality, Skill, and Ability Requirements for Dispatchers.

A person in this class must possess a sense of humor and have the ability to cope with stressful situations. Individually, a dispatcher must be able to speak clearly and have excellent listening skills. A person in this job must be able to solve problems and apply solutions in a short period of time. The dispatcher is required to adapt quickly to changing conditions and must be able to prioritize complex matters quickly and accurately. A person in this position will be required to display a good memory and possess quick recall, while being aware of multiple sources of information. Effective dispatchers are compassionate to callers, sensitive to the feelings of others, and practice good interpersonal skills. Effective dispatchers are assertive and practice self-control. Persons in this position must be able to marshal their own resources and take control of emotional and complex situations with callers, in order to obtain the required information for a proper police response.

Specific Technical Skills Required

An employee in this class will be able to read maps, have extensive knowledge of the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN), National

Crime Information Network (NCIC), and the Corrections Management System (CMIS). They must be able to access these systems and interpret outputs from them. A minimum of 30 wpm typing skill is required of persons in this position. A person in this position will be using personal computers, alarm panels, National Air Warning Alert System (NAWAS), and other police oriented equipment.

Examples of a Dispatcher's Work

An emergency dispatcher will be able to take control of incoming calls to a police facility or a central dispatch center from emotional or irrational callers. They will be able to isolate several propositions and be able to determine what, in the reported matter is of critical importance in formulating a police response. Once obtained, such information must be put into clear concepts and transmitted to patrols so that the response is appropriate for the problem.

More often than not a victimized caller is not clear and concise, and emergency dispatchers must be able to tactfully extract relevant case information by remaining calm, without losing dialogue with the caller.

In the pressure of this context, the dispatcher must assign patrols, coordinate multiple responses when required, anticipate and procure needed resources or support staff for the responding patrols.

After the initial action is taken, the effective dispatcher will make other inquiries in support of a successful police response.

Emergency dispatchers, possessing the knowledge outlined, must be able to recognize hazards in reported conditions and act with purpose

and accuracy in making critical decisions. The citizen's and officer's safety often depend on the thinking ability of the emergency dispatcher.

An emergency dispatcher may be receiving, interpreting , or searching for information prior to involvement in a broad range of emergency responses. Examples of emergency responses may include hazardous materials spills, major accidents, blockades, train derailments, natural disasters, bank robberies, kidnappings, suicide attempts or high speed pursuits.

Education and Experience

Education: High School or greater and capable of successfully completing an extensive training program.

Experience: Sufficiently broad experience working with people in the general public to provide the applicant with maturity to handle the stresses of emergencies.

Ability to grasp the concepts and acquire the knowledge outlined in this report.

**Major Lawrence Miller
Commanding Officer, Uniform Division
Department of State Police
714 S. Harrison Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48823**

March 8, 1989

Dear Major Miller:

In partial fulfillment of my agreement with the Department of State Police I am submitting the State Police Dispatcher Selection Criteria and the substance for an updated Position Description for that position for your review and use.

As you are aware, the substance of these submissions has been taken directly from the data of the state police dispatcher study that I am in the process of completing. The data analysis portion of the study is completed, therefore I am able to complete this facet of the submissions.

Once the dissertation has been completed, defended, and printed I will be submitting a copy to the Director as agreed.

Within the next week or two I intend to submit the recommended training program material for use in the development of Dispatcher Pre-service and In-service training programs.

If you have any questions regarding these submissions I am available at my office at 517/ 353-5482 .

Sincerely,

**Dennis M. Payne
504 Baker Hall
School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University
E.Lansing, MI 48824-1118**

**Major Lawrence Miller
Uniform Services Division
Michigan Department of State Police
714 S. Harrison Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48823**

March 7, 1989

Re: Dispatcher Position Description & Selection Criteria

Dear Major Miller:

The nature of dispatcher work, as revealed from the analysis of the critical incidents, and strengthened by the analysis of the survey research, leads me to conclude that the current position description and selection criteria for dispatchers are inaccurate.

The dispatcher's job was studied in depth for the past two years. These conclusions, coupled with the review of related literature, support a major change in this regard.

I am convinced that the position of dispatcher is a crucial link between the distressed citizen's call for service and the application of police service to that call. The first person a citizen speaks to, when calling for help and making a demand for service, is the dispatcher or call receiver. The dispatcher must be able to marshal and apply a broad range of knowledge, ability, and skill, and do so adroitly in order for the citizen to receive a proper police response.

The consequence of error in this process can be alarming. If dispatchers do not have the appropriate personality characteristics, knowledge, or skills they may incorrectly interpret calls which could lead to no car being sent

when one is necessary or one being sent when not required. Either way, the dispatcher has an impact on the use of police resources.

I feel bound to be straightforward and candid in my appraisal of this matter. It may be significant to note that from the inception of police communications in 1858 until recent years, the dispatch function was performed by trained and experienced police officers. Whether the use of civilian dispatchers resulted from financial need or just natural evolvement of policing is not material. The fact remains that civilian dispatchers are in common use nationwide. As you are keenly aware, the demand for police services is also accelerating.

I propose, given that civilian dispatching is here to stay, that it is critical that definitive selection criteria be established, accurate position descriptions be developed, and job relevant training be implemented as soon as possible.

Training alone will not suffice. It is important that both the selection criteria and job description reflect the job as it is being performed and as it is required.

Organizationally, I am not confident that officers have fully accepted the dispatchers as peers and team members. Further, there are some organizational changes that can be initiated which could relieve some of the dysfunctions noted in the study. Removal of unnecessary job stresses and acceptance and recognition of dispatchers as police professionals can only increase dispatcher effectiveness. Both the literature and the results of the research indicate that dispatchers do in fact have an impact on the overall effectiveness of the police.

To this end, I am recommending the acceptance of the content of the selection criteria and the revised material for a new position description that is enclosed. You will note that I have not used the particular format that civil service has provided. That form and its accompanying list of job descriptors is designed for communications clerks. To provide decision makers with content, I have chosen to use the position description categories and added descriptive narrative for the construction of a job relevant position description.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Payne
School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1118

APPENDIX B

Revised Position Description

Revised Position Description
For CS-214

The following information is presented by item number for the construction of a State of Michigan, Department of Civil Service, Position Description- C.S. form #214.

Item Number

4. Michigan State Police
5. Field Services Bureau
6. Operations
7. Field Radio Dispatch Section
11. Radio Operator/ Dispatcher
13. Sergeant or senior dispatcher
14. Post Commander
15. Rotating Shifts for 24 hour police operation.
16. Functions as a receiver of citizen calls for police service who must determine the nature of the problem, obtain clarifying detailed information from emotional citizens, so that a proper police response can be formulated. Must make accurate decisions regarding the nature of the call and an appropriate police response.
The purpose of the job is to assure that the correct police response is provided to the citizen caller. In addition to this primary role of call reception, interpretation, and transmittal, a person functioning in this position will be required to provide both emergency and non-emergency police, fire, and medical related assistance to citizens as well as other public safety agencies. This position requires that a dispatcher act as a resource to patrols by anticipating and obtaining diverse other services, staff, and support equipment as the need of the situation dictates. This work requires the use of LEIN,

computers, radio, and other technical police equipment including those innovations for the hearing impaired. Assist in training new workers.

17a.

Duty 1: 55%

Receive telephone call from caller and determine, from the information that can be obtained, the nature of the call. Make decisions regarding the applicability of the call for police service, and if determined to be a police matter, to make a decision in terms of the response. To interpret concepts of complex calls and convert them to useful information for the responding patrols. Call may be a request for criminal justice related information or a call for service. Service may be civil or criminal in nature, and may involve matters of crime such as robberies, kidnappings, murders, assaults and several other crimes or personal matters such as suicides or life threatening situations like heart attacks, lost children, or mentally handicapped persons reporting problems.

Duty 2: 25%

Assignment as either primary or assistant dispatcher. Transmit those properly constructed messages that inform the patrols of the situation, location, and when known, the parties involved. Be alert for requests for further assistance to the patrol and where possible take actions that will provide the patrols with the required support services or equipment that the call requires. As dictated by conditions take the initiative to run record checks and other investigatory actions in support of the cases officers are working on. Make decisions based on knowledge of proper priority of calls and services. After determining the nature of call, to format the information for patrols so that they will have accurate pictures of the conditions they are facing.

Duty 3: 15%

Operate the LEIN/ NCIC and other system terminals to enter, retrieve, broadcast and manipulate criminal justice data. As messages are received from out of state agencies, file check the data in various categories. Enter new data accurately on stolen vehicles, wanted persons, and make decisions on whether wanted information should be broadcasted locally, regionally, or statewide.

Duty 4: 5%

Maintain police records, resource data, and regularly update records for accuracy and completeness. Update wanted records to assure that information is current to avoid illegal arrests by officers. On a regular basis validate warrant information by contacting officers on the case to be sure that the person in the file is still wanted in order to protect the agency from liability.

- 17.b. Duties 1, 2, 3, and 4. All four duties carry responsibility and have a high consequence of error.
18. a. The source of the task is dictated by the calls from the citizens and the nature of the calls. A citizen's requests for service may be of an emergency or non-emergency nature. Supervisors may also make assignments as needed.
b. Source of job assignment is the supervisor which may be a sergeant, or post commander.
19. a. Procedures and practices for a wide range of emergency responses varying from procedures for bank alarms to those for handling barricaded gunmen. In many cases there are no past practices. Talking to suicidal callers has no set procedure and must be handled on a case by case basis. Determining where a young caller lives who does not know her own address in order to provide a needed police service is not in a manual, but requires innovative skills.
b. Policies for predetermined conditions and set plans for action.
c. Requestors' desires. Many of those that call for service do not state their need in rational terms and details must be determined by initiative.
d. Personal judgment based on prior experience, training, and native intelligence.

- e. **Knowledge of supervisor's viewpoint if conditions permit.**
 - f. **Reference manuals and reference lists such as:**
 - 1. **Departmental Official Orders.**
 - 2. **LEIN,NCIC, and INLET Manuals.**
 - 3. **Post and Departmental Policy books.**
 - 4. **Michigan Vehicle Code.**
- 20. **a. Must use judgment and experience in determining true nature of call and accurate call content. Must determine what is happening and what crime or disorder is involved. When determined, must set the priority to be given to each call. Often must make a judgment of the validity of call content and mental stability of caller.**
 - b. **May ask for detail on whether a particular call content amounts to a felony or misdemeanor or whether it is civil or criminal matter.**
- 21. **Act as telephone answering point for emergency and non-emergency requests for assistance from the public. The general public in need of police services may be from any social, economic, or other classes. In regular contact with officials of other criminal justice agencies, medical, and fire emergency personnel.**
- 23. **The position requires rotating shift work, working weekends, and holidays. The nature of the work is stress producing due to a high volume of work, uncertainties, discretionary decision making in matters of personal safety for citizens and officers, and the diversity of calls. The decisions made in this position must be rendered quickly and accurately in order to achieve effectiveness.**
- 25. **Dispatchers provide emergency and non-emergency police, fire, and medical related assistance to citizens and public safety agencies. The context of the work is such that it traverses a wide range of human problems, often requiring immediate assistance and frequently presented in complex and discordant ways.**
- 26. **This position is a crucial link in the police response process, acting as the first contact for citizens in need of police services or reporting unlawful or problematic conditions.**

27. **None**
28. **A detailed study was performed by an independent researcher, with the support of the Michigan State Police, to determine what personality characteristics, skills, abilities, and knowledge were required to perform the dispatch function effectively.**
29. **Departmental concern.**
30. **a. High School education
b. Minimum of two years experience working with the public.
c. None
d. None**
31. **Must be able to understand criminal law in order to determine if a crime was committed or if a matter was civil. Must know and understand the thinking behind departmental policy and procedures. Must be able to understand persons with mental handicaps. Must be able to tactfully control the caller's pace so that salient information can be assembled in order to determine the police response. Must know a myriad of emergency procedures. Must be sensitive, compassionate, and have a clear speaking voice with excellent listening skills and hearing. Must be able to prioritize complex matters quickly and apply knowledge to situations in order to reach sound decisions rapidly. Must be able to work in a stressful environment and be able to cope with rapidly changing conditions which are often emotionally charged.**
32. **Newly hired dispatchers will be required to participate and graduate from a new Pre-service training program and participate in scheduled in-service training programs designed to test skills and abilities. Upon assignment employees are assigned to experienced personnel for relevant on-the-job training.**
33. **Six months to one year. Following successful completion of a 6 month probationary period, employees receive permanent status.**

APPENDIX C

Training Program

**Training Recommendations
for
Michigan State Police Dispatchers**

Content from a Study

of

**Contextual Disequilibrium:
A Study of Dispatchers' Perceptions of
Job Related Training Factors**

by

**Dennis M. Payne
1989**

Introduction

The recommendations that are made in this report were taken from the analysis of data from the study performed for the Michigan State Police. The recommendations that are made are for the subjects deemed necessary for effective dispatching. Preliminary work for the study was done in the summer of 1987. During that period 180 dispatchers were interviewed throughout the course of three separate training programs sponsored by the state police.

Beginning in June of 1988 further work was begun. Since that time the entire population of state police dispatchers completed a self-reported critical incident technique. That process provided data that explained what dispatchers were doing in their jobs and how they were doing it, when handling critical incidents. The criticality of the incidents was determined by the dispatchers. Thus, the basis of the study derives from the actual experiences of those working in the position of dispatcher.

Hundreds of reports were received and analyzed. By examining the narratives of the critical incidents the author was able to extract the type of knowledge, the personality characteristics, the attitudes, skills, and abilities that the dispatchers reflected when performing their tasks. The context of the critical incidents was effective dispatching.

Those elements extracted from the critical incident reports were restructured into a survey questionnaire. The original state police dispatchers were re-tested by completing the questionnaire. In addition, a sample of troopers and sergeants, who worked in the same areas as the dispatchers, were also administered the survey questionnaire. To get a

broader picture and because it was felt that other dispatchers in other agencies were similar, over three hundred other dispatchers were also surveyed. The result was that the preferences for training subject matter reflect not only state police dispatcher perceptions, but the perceptions of the officers who work with them and the perceptions of several hundred other dispatchers.

Decision Rule

The respondents were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement on a Lickert type scale. The answer choices were Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. For purposes of clarity, agreement and disagreement were collapsed into one answer each. It was decided that if 75% or more of the respondents agreed that a particular variable was reflective of required training for effective dispatching, then that subject would be included in recommendations for a Pre-Service Training Program.

If more than 50% but less than 75% agreed on the importance of a particular training variable, that subject would be recommended for use in an In-Service Training Program. The tables from the study are enclosed with this report for reference.

Not all of the variables were specific training variables. Many were classified as personality characteristics, abilities, and skills. The same decision rule was applied to those variables and the tables for personality variables are also included with this report for reference. The tables developed in the study and the survey instrument used are located in the appendix of this report. Details for development of training scenarios can be developed from the content of the critical incident reports. The author

will be available to assist the training professionals in this regard, but those reports were confidential therefore they are not submitted. Identification of the individual dispatchers cannot be made and connections can not be made to work locations. However, because those critical incidents were completed in the dispatchers' own handwriting, the author stands ready to assist by outlining cases as needed, and will assist in preparation of case scenarios if desired, but the actual reports will be kept confidential. These controls are deemed necessary in order to preserve the integrity of the process.

Training Format

The actual format and delivery method of training must be left to those in the state police who will prepare the actual training program. Due to insights obtained by completing this study, certain recommendations are made regarding the method of training.

Specific Knowledge

Certain subject matter lends itself to the lecture method of training. Dispatchers can be tested in these areas by using objective tests such as true and false, multiple choice, and matching answers. Where appropriate, recommendations are made for this type of training. The ultimate choice of course is left with the department.

Procedural Knowledge

Several areas of preference include detailed procedures. Dispatchers can be tested in these areas by using either the objective test or role playing exercises. The latter should include detailed check offs to insure that each important element of the particular procedure is demonstrated. Testing this

type of subject matter could include the use of prepared scenarios with desired actions on a check off list. The dispatcher in the role playing environment can read the scenario and take the appropriate action. Instant feedback can be provided to the dispatcher using this method to enhance understanding. For purposes of reality it is suggested that a mock up radio room or telephone answering point utilizing telephones be used. Setting up conditions as close to the actual practice will provide the trainee with real world stresses and conditions. Scenarios may be prerecorded or other actors may be used as the citizen caller.

Skills and Abilities

Where a particular skill is required the dispatcher can be tested in demonstration method. Use of LEIN, radio, telephone are examples of skills. These examples provide the trainer with the opportunity to observe speaking skills and listening skills.

Training Design

The purpose of this report is not to provide the actual training design, but rather the relevant training content, however some suggestions are included for review by the professional trainer.

Definition of Education and Training Requirements

It is recommended that a comparison be made of the skills and knowledge required for competent job performance with the personnel

available to fill the jobs. In this regard the selection criteria and revised position description may be useful to the trainer. The difference between job performance requirements and the overall abilities of the population that are to do the job defines the training requirements. In the context of this study this could be the difference between effective and ineffective dispatchers. A review of the training profile in the appendix may be helpful.

Objectives and Tests

Each dispatcher to be trained should be provided statements of behavior the student is expected to demonstrate as a result of the training. This should include the conditions under which performance is expected, such as the work site. It should also include standards of acceptable performance. The objectives should be supportive of the performance requirements. Once the training objectives are solidified, a test to measure the student's ability to perform the desired behavior should be developed. As indicated, those tests may be objective, role training, or situational in nature.

Planning and Evaluation Considerations

Once the instruction strategy has been selected the sequence of instruction should be determined. Next the trainers will no doubt determine what facilities and equipment are needed. After class size and make up is determined, a determination should be made of what training is needed by the instructors. Evaluation procedures are always necessary. The nature of dispatcher training lends itself to external field evaluation by supervisors, who are in a position to observe activities and behaviors for adherence to standards.

Training Content Recommended

Pre-Service Training

The first section of this category are those areas where more than 75% of the respondents indicated a need for training. The information is taken from the training profile of dispatchers. The second section includes those areas that all the respondents favored for training at the 75% level or higher. There may be some overlap in these training categories. A third section will provide those areas that were favored more than 50%, but less than 75% and it is recommended that these subject areas be considered for future in-service training. The recommendations for the time allotted to the training areas are only a suggestions, which are based on comparisons with trooper training and other training programs. Methods of delivery, expertise of individual trainers, and cost considerations will likely require adjustments in the time allotted for training in any one particular area.

Material from Training Profile (Advisory)

For Use in In-Service Training

Knowledge Areas

<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>Hours of Instruction</u>
Search & Seizure	1 hr.
Abnormal Psychology	2 hrs.
Crime Scene Issues	2 hrs.

Civil Disorder Issues	2 hrs.
Use of Force by Police Officers	1 hr.
General Investigation Issues	2 hrs.

Skill and Ability

Time Management	2 hrs.
Interpersonal Relations	2 hrs.

Procedures

How Warrants Obtained	1 hr.
General Court Procedures	2 hrs.
Major Emergency Responses (fire, airplanes, tornados)	4 hrs.
Undercover Officer Issues	1 hr.
Investigation Procedures (who,what,when,where,etc.)	2 hrs.

The previous topics were taken from the training profile and are submitted for an overview to be used in conjunction with the following materials.

Subject matter from the training profile provides the basis for in-service training. The following recommendation is the actual training content that is recommended for minimal standards of effectiveness.

Recommendations for Actual Pre-Service Training

<u>Training Variables</u>	<u>% Agreed</u>	<u>Hours of Instr.</u>
Criminal Law	81.4	3 hrs.
Dept.Policy/Procedure	96.2	5 hrs.
Misd./Felonies Differences	89.9	2 hrs.
Common Mental Disorders	80.6	2 hrs.
Liability of Emergencies	92.2	2 hrs.
LEIN Training	99.4	To be determined
Blockade System	92.	1 hr.

<u>Training Variables</u>	<u>% Agreed</u>	<u>Hrs. of Instr.</u>
Blockade Points (what is done)	81.7	1 hr.
Bomb Threat Procedures	93.7	2 hrs.
Barricaded Gunmen Procedures	91.4	4 hrs.
Hazardous Material Incidents	95.8	4 hrs.
Airline,Train Accident Procedures	88.	2 hrs.
Bank Alarm Procedures	98.1	2 hrs.
Radio Procedures for U.Cover Off.	89.7	1 hr.
Special Equipment (what it is, how to obtain it)	79.5	1 hr.
CPR.& First Aid	78.5	established
Patrol Procedures	78.9	3 hrs.
Disaster Response Procedures	90.5	4 hrs.
Issues in High Speed Chases	89.9	2 hrs.

<u>Personality Variables</u>	<u>% Agreed</u>	<u>Hrs. of Instr.</u>
Speaking Skills	99.4	2 hrs.
Active Listening	99.4	3 hrs.
Interpersonal Relations	94.7	2 hrs.
Stress Coping Techniques	98.9	2 hrs.
Decision Making(problem solving)	92.8	4 hrs.

The recommendations include 54 hours of instruction for pre-service training. These hours do not include LEIN or radio training and only assume four hours for first aid and cpr. A two week 80 hr. block of instruction appears to be the minimum required for effective pre-service training of dispatchers.

Administrative matters, testing, and other time consuming necessities of training will no doubt require greater than the 80 hours recommended. Time for graduation ceremonies, group photographs, general orientation, and personnel matters will of course impact on the overall time required to implement a training program. A minimum of 8 hours should be added for this purpose. If role playing and use of scenarios is chosen as a training method the hours recommended must be adjusted to include the extra time required.

In the study there is ample support for pre-service and in-service training for dispatchers. Troopers ,sergeants, and dispatchers all recommend pre-service training as a minimum requirement for effective dispatchers.

A complete review of the study, by those who will be preparing the dispatcher training program, will provide the developers with added information and support for various facets of this program recommendation.

APPENDIX D

Critical Incident Transmittal Letters

UNIFORM DIV.
OPERATIONS UNIT
MEMORANDUM-37

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

DATE : July 25, 1988

TO : District and Post Commanders

FROM : Colonel R. T. Davis, Director *RTD*

SUBJECT : Departmental Dispatcher Study

The department is in the process of conducting a study of the dispatcher's job in order to determine the most relevant training factors for use in dispatcher training and to identify appropriate selection criteria for those positions. The basis of this study will be the job according to the perceptions of the dispatchers. The developmental portion of the study is currently underway at Michigan State University. Early this summer the researcher will be conducting surveys in order to gather relevant data for the study.

Lt. Col. Dennis M. Payne, retired from this department, is completing work on his doctoral degree from Michigan State University's, School of Criminal Justice. In fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Colonel Payne has agreed to perform this study for the department. A brief outline of the steps involved in this research is being provided to you. If you have questions regarding this study you may contact Sgt. John Wolf for further details. Sergeant Wolf is the department's liaison with Colonel Payne.

This study and its results are important to the department, and your cooperation in this endeavor is appreciated. The study design is such that it will cause a minimum of interruption of day-to-day work; however, there are some commitments that must be met in order to produce the desired results. Both the new 9-1-1 legislation and the "Role of Shift Commander" study make this study timely.

All of the dispatchers of this department will receive a letter outlining the purpose of the study. They will be asked to describe in detail, in the context of actual critical incident: those factors they believe describe effective and ineffective dispatchers. This portion of the study is confidential and the dispatchers will be mailing their responses directly to the researcher. After evaluation of those reports, a questionnaire will be developed. That questionnaire will be sent back to the dispatchers as a retest. It will also be sent to a selected sample of troopers and sergeants in the same geographical area to see how much agreement exists between them and the dispatchers as a group.

The questionnaire will also be sent to a random sample of other police department dispatchers statewide. The purpose of this step is to determine whether or not the results can be generalized to other agency dispatchers.

After the questionnaires have been completed and analyzed, a training program for dispatchers will be developed by Colonel Payne and submitted to the department. It should be noted that the first segment, the Critical Incident Report, will be confidential. Therefore, the dispatchers will be returning their reports directly to Colonel Payne and sending him post cards to show that they have submitted the report. Names are not being used on the questionnaires. For the remaining portions of the study, those completing the questionnaires are given anonymity. The returned questionnaires will have no individual identifiers on them and they, too, will be mailed directly to Colonel Payne.

The questionnaires, as well as the critical incident reports, must be sent directly to the dispatchers and the officers involved. This effort is an important undertaking and we must protect the integrity of the process if we are to obtain a quality product. For these reasons, the responses are not to be sent via departmental mail or through channels, but will be mailed back by the respondents in return stamped envelopes. Your cooperation in this regard is critical.

Involvement in the study is voluntary. I encourage all members of the department to participate if asked to do so. The study depends on the forthright answers of the respondents.

Upon the completion of the study, an executive summary of the results will be made available to those involved in the study and to other interested members. The recommendations for the training program, that results from the study, will also be available to other agencies in Michigan.

MEMORANDUM

STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

DATE : July 27, 1988

TO : All State Police Dispatchers

FROM : Colonel R. T. Davis, Director *RTD*

SUBJECT : State Police Dispatcher Study: Critical Incident Reports

The department has requested a study of the dispatching function in order to develop a training program for dispatchers that is job relevant. The focus of the study is the selection and training of dispatchers in the Michigan State Police. It is my desire that the best and most appropriate training be administered to our dispatchers and that relevant selection criteria be identified.

You are being asked to participate in this study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to discontinue participation at any time without penalty. I also urge each of you to assist in this study as your answers are very important since they are based on your actual experiences.

The study will be conducted by Lt. Col. Dennis M. Payne from the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Colonel Payne is a retired deputy director of this department and a doctoral candidate in Criminal Justice at Michigan State University.

The field portion of the study will be divided into two parts. First, you are being asked to complete the enclosed Critical Incident Reports and mail them directly to Colonel Payne. Approximately five weeks later, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will be constructed from the data obtained from these Critical Incident Reports. The questionnaire will be mailed to you with completion and mailing instructions.

Participation in completing the Critical Incident Reports and the questionnaires is voluntary. Your completion and mailing of those instruments, per the instructions, is indicative of your agreement to participate.

The critical incident portion of the study is totally confidential and only Colonel Payne will know the identity of the individual dispatcher. This is being done so the researcher can recontact a dispatcher for clarification if needed.

The questionnaire portion of the study is anonymous. Anonymity will be explained in detail in the instructions that accompany the questionnaire. There will be no way to connect your responses with who you are.

Later in the study the questionnaire will be administered to a sample of officers of this department and dispatchers from other police agencies.

STATE POLICE DISPATCHER STUDY

Critical Incident ReportGeneral Instructions:

This is a self-administered report. You are being asked to describe, in your own words, the context of six actual incidents that you can recall regarding an effective dispatcher and an ineffective dispatcher. A number has been assigned to your report so do not put your name on the report. If the researcher needs further clarification he will contact you. For this reason this portion of the study is confidential. No one else will know who you are.

We ask that you be as candid and descriptive as you can. You may wish to think of three incidents in which a dispatcher performed effectively and then describe your thinking of why he or she was effective. Do the same thing to describe ineffective dispatching. Do not use names in the description.

Please state what the dispatcher did that made him or her effective or ineffective. We are interested in your personal views based on actual experiences. In other words, what did they do that made them effective? How did they do it? What talents or traits did they demonstrate? What knowledge or skills did they demonstrate, etc.?

Mailing

After you have written three descriptions for effective dispatchers and three descriptions for ineffective dispatchers, place your descriptions into the stamped envelope that has been provided and return them to Mr. Dennis M. Payne, Room 504 Baker Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1118. If you have any questions, or need further explanation, feel free to call (517) 353-5482. Please complete these reports and return by August 6, 1988.

This study is voluntary and you may choose not to participate without penalty. I will interpret your submission of these Critical Incident Reports as indicative of your agreement to voluntarily participate.

CRITICAL INCIDENT FORMS

The following forms deal with the experience you personally have had with dispatching.

Three of the forms deal with a description of an effective dispatcher and three deal with an ineffective dispatcher.

In completing the forms, use an actual person and an incident that together provide a base of behavioral data.

- . In order for this research to be meaningful, it is necessary for the research team to have as much detailed information as is possible for you to provide.

You are in a unique position due to your experience with dispatching, with other dispatchers, and with officers. I hope you can provide me with the information that will be used for developing a relevant training program for dispatchers. Such programs may not only enhance your effectiveness, but may aid you in the resolution of problems that you encounter in dispatching.

There are six blank pages attached to these instructions. Three pages are designated Effective Dispatchers and three pages are designated Ineffective Dispatchers. Feel free to use additional pages if necessary. If you do add pages, please be sure to staple them to the proper description.

Your code number is at the upper right corner of the page. Place this number on any additional pages you may use. If needed, you may use both sides of the incident report forms.

Next Page Please

Ineffective Dispatcher #1

No. _____

1. What was the situation?

2. How did the dispatcher handle it?

3. Why was the dispatcher ineffective?

APPENDIX E

Survey Instrument

MEMORANDUM

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

DATE : November 7, 1988

TO : All State Police Dispatchers

FROM : Colonel R. T. Davis, Director

SUBJECT : State Police Dispatcher Study

The department has requested a study of the dispatching function so that a training program for dispatchers can be developed that is job relevant. You are being asked to participate in this study. The focus of the study is the selection and training of dispatchers in the Michigan State Police. It is my desire that the best and most appropriate training be administered to our dispatchers and that the most relevant selection procedures be identified.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate in the study without penalty. I also urge each of you to assist in this study as your answers are very important since they are based upon actual experiences.

The survey will be administered by Lt. Col. Dennis M. Payne from the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Colonel Payne is a retired deputy director of this department and a doctoral candidate in Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Colonel Payne will explain, in more detail, the purpose of the study. If there are things that you do not understand as you complete the survey, please ask for his help. If you decide to participate it is important that you complete the entire survey and respond to each question or statement as frankly as you can. It is also important that you select the answer that you think comes closest to fitting your case, even though no one answer may fit exactly.

The identification of appropriate training factors depends largely on your answers. Experience has shown that it should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You may be assured that the answers you give will be anonymous. The department is interested in overall patterns and your perceptions, not in any particular individual. I appreciate your cooperation in this research endeavor and I believe that the outcome can only enhance your work and the professionalism of our department.

STATE POLICE DISPATCHER STUDY

QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUCTIONS

BACKGROUND:

This research is undertaken to assist the Michigan State Police in the development of a dispatcher training program and to identify job relevant selection criteria. Because it was felt that dispatchers knew their jobs better than anyone else, the dispatchers were recently asked to provide data, by means of the Critical Incident Reports. That open-ended survey was used to determine the training factors according to a dispatcher's perspective. This survey is an outgrowth of that open-ended survey that you completed earlier.

Please DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME on the questionnaire. Your answers are completely anonymous and cannot be linked to your name or any departmental records in any way. When you have completed the questionnaire, please mail it directly to Mr. Dennis M. Payne, Room 504 Baker Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1118, no later than November 17, 1988. A stamped envelope has been provided.

We also ask that you mail the enclosed post card separately after you have completed the questionnaire so that the researcher will know that you have completed the questionnaire. Keep in mind that the researcher will not know which questionnaire you have completed, only that you have completed one.

Please do not compare your answers with other dispatchers or converse during the survey. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Colonel Payne. His office telephone number is (517) 353-5482. You do not have to give him your name, merely identify yourself as one of the dispatchers. The answers you provide will be completely anonymous. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning the questionnaire.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SURVEY

When you mark your answers, please do the following:

- * Circle the number directly on the questionnaire indicating your choice.
- * Circle only one number for each statement or question.
- * Feel free to use pen, marker, or pencil to mark your response.

MEMORANDUM

STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

DATE : November 7, 1988

TO : Sample of Troopers and Sergeants

FROM : Colonel R. T. Davis, Director *RTD*

SUBJECT : State Police Dispatcher Study

The department has requested a study of the dispatching function so that a training program for dispatchers can be developed that is job relevant. You are being asked to participate in this study. Your name was chosen at random and cannot be associated in any way with your responses on this questionnaire. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may choose not to participate. I also urge each of you to assist in this study as your answers are very important since they are based upon actual experiences.

The focus of the study is the selection and training of dispatchers in the Michigan State Police. It is my desire that the best and most appropriate training be administered to our dispatchers and that the most relevant selection procedures be identified.

The study is being administered by Lt. Col. Dennis M. Payne from the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Colonel Payne is a retired member of this department and a doctoral candidate in Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. If there are things that you do not understand as you complete the questionnaire, please ask for his help.

If you decide to participate, it is important that you complete the entire questionnaire and respond to each question or statement as frankly as you can. It is also important that you select the answer that you think comes closest to fitting your case, even though no one answer may fit exactly.

The identification of appropriate training factors depends largely on your answers. Experience has shown that it should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

You may be assured that the answers you give will be anonymous. The department is interested in overall patterns and your perceptions, not in any particular individual. I appreciate your cooperation in this research endeavor and I believe that the outcome can only enhance your work and the professionalism of our department.

STATE POLICE DISPATCHER STUDY**QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUCTIONS****BACKGROUND:**

This research is undertaken to assist the Michigan State Police in the development of a dispatcher training program and to identify job relevant selection criteria. Because it was felt that dispatchers knew their jobs better than anyone else, the dispatchers were recently asked to provide data by means of the Critical Incident Reports. That open-ended survey was used to determine the training factors according to a dispatcher's perspective.

This questionnaire is an outgrowth of that open-ended survey that the departmental dispatchers completed earlier. We ask that you complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope to Mr. Dennis M. Payne, Room 504 Baker Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1118, no later than November 17, 1988. He may be reached at (517) 353-5482.

Please **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME** on the questionnaire. Your answers are completely anonymous and cannot be linked to your name or any departmental records in any way. We also ask that you mail the enclosed post card separately after you have completed the questionnaire so that the researcher will know that you have completed it. Keep in mind that the researcher will not know which questionnaire you have completed, only that you have completed one.

The answers you provide will be completely anonymous. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning the questionnaire.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SURVEY

When you mark your answers, please do the following:

- * Circle the number directly on the questionnaire indicating your choice.
- * Circle only one number for each statement or question.
- * Feel free to use a pen, marker, or pencil to mark your responses.

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JAMES J. BLANCHARD, GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE
714 SOUTH HARRISON ROAD, EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN 48823
COL. R. T. DAVIS, DIRECTOR

November 7, 1988

TO: Police Dispatchers, State of Michigan

The department has requested a study of the dispatching function so that a training program for dispatchers can be developed that is job relevant. You are being asked to participate in this study. Your name was chosen at random from a list of all dispatchers statewide and cannot be associated in any way with your responses on this questionnaire. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may choose not to participate. I am asking you to assist in this study as your answers are very important since they are based upon actual experiences.

The primary focus of the study is the selection and training of dispatchers in the Michigan State Police. It is my desire that the most appropriate training be administered to dispatchers. The majority of dispatchers are not found in the State Police, but are located in agencies across the state, such as your agency. Therefore, we wish to have your input so that the training program that eventually is developed will be useful to all dispatchers.

The study is being administered by Lt. Col. Dennis M. Payne from the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Colonel Payne is a retired member of this department and a doctoral candidate in Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. If there are things that you do not understand as you complete the questionnaire, please ask for his help.

If you decide to participate, it is important that you complete the entire questionnaire and respond to each question or statement as frankly as you can. It is also important that you select the answer that you think comes closest to fitting your case, even though no one answer may fit exactly.

The identification of appropriate training factors depends largely on your answers. Experience has shown that it should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

You may be assured that the answers you give will be anonymous. The department is interested in overall patterns and your perceptions, not in any particular individual. I appreciate your cooperation in this research endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. T. Davis".

DIRECTOR

STATE POLICE DISPATCHER STUDY
QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUCTIONS

BACKGROUND:

This research is undertaken to assist the Michigan State Police in the development of a dispatcher training program that can be used by the State Police, as well as others. Because it was felt that dispatchers knew their jobs better than anyone else, dispatchers were recently asked to provide data by means of the Critical Incident Reports. That open-ended survey was used to determine the training factors according to a dispatcher's perspective.

This questionnaire is an outgrowth of that open-ended survey. We ask that you complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope to Mr. Dennis M. Payne, Room 504 Baker Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1118, no later than November 17, 1988. He may be reached at (517) 353-5482.

Please DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME on the questionnaire. Your answers are completely anonymous and cannot be linked to your name or any departmental records in any way. We also ask that you mail the enclosed post card separately after you have completed the questionnaire so that the researcher will know that you have completed it. Keep in mind that the researcher will not know which questionnaire you have completed, only that you have completed one.

The answers you provide will be completely anonymous. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning the questionnaire.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SURVEY

When you mark your answers, please do the following:

- * Circle the number directly on the questionnaire indicating your choice.
- * Circle only one number for each statement or question.
- * Feel free to use a pen, marker, or pencil to mark your responses.

MEMORANDUM

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

DATE: August 22, 1988

TO: State Police Dispatchers

FROM: Col. R. T. Davis, Director *RTD*

SUBJECT: Follow-up Request - State Police Dispatcher Study

This follow-up letter, with the attached forms, is being sent to you as a reminder of the importance of the State Police dispatcher study and the importance of your response to that study.

The focus of the study, as explained in the original cover letter, is on the development of realistic training for dispatchers, as well as the development of accurate position descriptions and selection criteria. Such a study can be a real benefit to the dispatchers, in particular, and the department as a whole.

Because of the season, many dispatchers may have been on vacation, on leave for other reasons, felt that it was too late past a due date, or that their opinions and experiences were not important enough to complete the critical incident reports.

Your views, based on your personal experiences, are important. The information from the Critical Incident Reports is the basic foundation of the study. Unless a sufficient number of departmental dispatchers decide to participate, very little else can be accomplished in this regard. Though voluntary on your part, I again urge each of you who have not done so to complete the forms and submit them as indicated in the original instructions.

If you need further guidance or help, please contact Mr. Dennis M. Payne at (517) 353-5482. If you are in doubt as to what is desired, he will be most helpful. The researcher has advised that the responses, thus far, have been very well done and contain rich information. You are free not to respond, but this project can not move forward without your assistance and cooperation.

DISPATCHER QUESTIONNAIRE

First we would like some general information on the training you feel is important for dispatchers. We want your opinion on those subjects that you feel are important in being or becoming an effective dispatcher.

Instructions:

The statements below describe training and other factors relative to effective dispatching. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. Please express your feeling about each statement by indicating whether you Strongly Agree-(SA), Agree-(A), Are Neutral-(N), Disagree-(D), or Strongly Disagree-(SD). Circle the number that best describes your feeling. Please answer every statement.

<u>Effective Dispatchers:</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>SD</u>
1. understand criminal law.	1	2	3	4	5
2. understand civil law.	1	2	3	4	5
3. understand laws of arrest.	1	2	3	4	5
4. know when officers can arrest someone without a warrant.	1	2	3	4	5
5. understand departmental policies and procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
6. know the difference between misdemeanors and felonies.	1	2	3	4	5
7. have knowledge in handling people with mental disorders	1	2	3	4	5
8. understand liability relating to emergency response.	1	2	3	4	5

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<u>Effective Dispatchers:</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>SD</u>
9 can effectively utilize LEIN, NCIC, and Radio.	1	2	3	4	5
10. are familiar with Michigan Blockade System.	1	2	3	4	5
11. are familiar with crime scene protection procedure.	1	2	3	4	5
12. know their departmental blockade points and how to get there.	1	2	3	4	5
13. know proper procedures for handling bomb threats.	1	2	3	4	5
14. know barricaded gunmen response procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
15. know what to do with a report of hazardous materials spills or accidents.	1	2	3	4	5
16. know proper procedures for airline accident response.	1	2	3	4	5
17. understand issues involved in bank alarm response.	1	2	3	4	5
18. are familiar with the rules of evidence.	1	2	3	4	5
19. know community social resources and know how to obtain their services.	1	2	3	4	5
20 are familiar with court procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
21. know their community leaders.	1	2	3	4	5
22. understand radio procedures for undercover officers.	1	2	3	4	5
23. know where to obtain special equipment.	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Effective Dispatchers:</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>SD</u>
24. know CPR and First Aid.	1	2	3	4	5
25. can explain CPR and First Aid to others.	1	2	3	4	5
26. know local geographical area very well.	1	2	3	4	5
27. know alternate routes to given locations.	1	2	3	4	5.
28. are aware of special hazards and construction sites in jurisdiction.	1	2	3	4	5
29. have ridden on patrol 8 hours in the past year.	1	2	3	4	5
30. are familiar with basic patrol procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
31. have a general knowledge of fraud scams.	1	2	3	4	5
32. have had training in abnormal psychology.	1	2	3	4	5
33. understand the drug culture slang.	1	2	3	4	5
34. know the effects of different controlled substances.	1	2	3	4	5
35. know the elements of a wide variety of common crimes.	1	2	3	4	5
36. know radio procedures for undercover officers.	1	2	3	4	5
37. know how to handle high speed chases.	1	2	3	4	5
38. know the legal limitations of the use of deadly force	1	2	3	4	5

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<u>Effective Dispatchers:</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>SD</u>
39. understand basic issues of crisis intervention.	1	2	3	4	5
40. know when to initiate radio silence.	1	2	3	4	5
41. understand parent organizational structure and who "needs to know".	1	2	3	4	5
42. have basic understanding of investigative procedures.	1	2	3	4	5

PERSONALITY, SKILLS, AND ATTITUDES

Next we would like your perception of personality factors, attitudes, and skills that you feel effective dispatchers possess. Please continue to circle the answer that represents your choice of either, Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

<u>Effective Dispatchers:</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>SD</u>
43. have a sense of humor.	1	2	3	4	5
44. have clear speaking voices.	1	2	3	4	5
45. are good listeners.	1	2	3	4	5
46. perceive their role as resource specialists.	1	2	3	4	5
47. have good interpersonal skills.	1	2	3	4	5
48. can adapt quickly to change.	1	2	3	4	5
49. can cope well with unanticipated events.	1	2	3	4	5
50. anticipate problems and quickly apply solutions.	1	2	3	4	5

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<u>Effective Dispatchers:</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>SD</u>
51. see controlling as a major part of their job.	1	2	3	4	5
52. see decision making as a major part of their job.	1	2	3	4	5
53. are sensitive to the feelings of others.	1	2	3	4	5
54. manage their time well.	1	2	3	4	5
55. can prioritize complex matters quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
56. cope well with stress.	1	2	3	4	5
57. have the ability to acquire new skills.	1	2	3	4	5
58. get along with officers and peers.	1	2	3	4	5
59. can evaluate between alternative courses of action.	1	2	3	4	5
60. get along well with people in general.	1	2	3	4	5
61. are sympathetic to callers.	1	2	3	4	5
62. have good self-control.	1	2	3	4	5
63. are good at public relations.	1	2	3	4	5
64. are inquisitive by nature.	1	2	3	4	5
65. Can think of several ways to obtain information.	1	2	3	4	5

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ORGANIZATIONAL AND EXPERIENCE FACTORS

Next we would like your opinion on questions dealing with your relationships with others in the work place. Please continue to think in terms of effective and ineffective dispatchers when you answer. Continue with the same method of marking your answers.

	<u>SA</u>	A	N	D	<u>SD</u>
66. Effective dispatchers have police experience.	1	2	3	4	5
67. Police officers understand dispatch work.	1	2	3	4	5
68. Dispatchers understand police officer's work.	1	2	3	4	5
69. Police supervisors understand the dispatcher's job.	1	2	3	4	5
70. Civilian supervisors understand the dispatcher's job.	1	2	3	4	5
71. Officers should periodically work the dispatch job.	1	2	3	4	5
72. Dispatchers should periodically ride on patrol.	1	2	3	4	5
73. Other departmental persons regard the dispatcher as an integral part of the department.	1	2	3	4	5
74. A dispatcher can make the critical difference in the outcome of a police response.	1	2	3	4	5
75. Effective dispatching is finished when the officer receives the call from the dispatcher.	1	2	3	4	5
76. Dispatchers decide what to pass on to the patrol.	1	2	3	4	5
77. Effective dispatchers "go beyond" to obtain information for patrols.	1	2	3	4	5

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	<u>SA</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>S2</u>
78. Most officers respect dispatchers.	1	2	3	4	5
79. Most officers appreciate the work of dispatchers.	1	2	3	4	5
80. An effective dispatcher has to know a great deal about the patrol officer's job to do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
81. In terms of training emphasis, dispatchers and line officers are on an equal plane.	1	2	3	4	5
82. Selection methods for dispatchers should be changed.	1	2	3	4	5
83. Pre-service dispatcher training should be mandatory.	1	2	3	4	5
84. Dispatchers often find themselves in controversial roles.	1	2	3	4	5
85. Prior to arrival of police dispatchers act as controllers.	1	2	3	4	5
86. In the absence of supervisors, dispatchers speak for agency.	1	2	3	4	5
87. The organization has clearly outlined dispatcher's responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
88. The organization has clarified dispatcher's authority.	1	2	3	4	5
89. Dispatchers are treated like equals by officers.	1	2	3	4	5
90. A dispatcher job description is an accurate picture of what a dispatcher does.	1	2	3	4	5
91. A dispatcher is a technician and therefore does not have to have training in police subjects.	1	2	3	4	5

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- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 92. Officer safety can be improved with pre-service dispatcher training. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 93. On the job training with occasional in-service training is sufficient to provide for effective dispatching. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 94. Policies of the department are the same regardless of the shift a dispatcher is working. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 95. Priorities given to calls are the same across all shifts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 96. Certification of dispatchers would improve dispatching. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 97. Dispatching is most effective where the dispatcher is viewed as an integral part of the police team. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 98. There is no role conflict between dispatchers and officers. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 99. Officers treat dispatchers the same regardless of gender. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Before concluding the survey we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself. The answers to these questions will help us interpret the results of this study. Do not put your name on the questionnaire. We are only interested in statistical trends. Please circle the answer that matches your choice.

100. What is your gender?

- 1 Male
- 2 Female

101. What is your present age?

- 1 Less than 25
- 2 26-35
- 3 36-45
- 4 46-55
- 5 56 or more.

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102. What race are you?

- 1 Black
- 2 Hispanic
- 3 White
- 4 Native American
- 5 Oriental

103. What is your current shift assignment?

- 1 First
- 2 Second
- 3 Third
- 4 Other

104. Have you participated in dispatcher training?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

105. If you have had training, circle the type of training you have had.

- 1 Orientation only.
- 2 On the job training with senior dispatcher.
- 3 On the job training - self taught.
- 4 Formal training program.

106. If you have attended formal training, please choose the answer that best describes the length of the training program. Include the total of all formal training received.

- 1 Less than 1 day
- 2 1 to 3 days
- 3 1 week
- 4 2 weeks.
- 5 More than 2 weeks.

107. When was the last time you attended a training program?

- 1 In the past year
- 2 In the past two years
- 3 In the past three years.
- 4 More than three years ago

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108. Have you worked as a dispatcher in any other criminal justice agencies?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

109. How many years have you been a dispatcher?

- 1 less than 1 year
- 2 1-2 years
- 3 2-5 years
- 4 6-10 years
- 5 Over 10 years

PERSONAL COMMENT SECTION

This last section deals with what you feel would be appropriate training required to become an effective dispatcher. Your answers should be based on your perceptions and experience. This section also includes room for you to comment on what attitudes or personality characteristics best describe effective dispatchers. Please feel free to be candid as this questionnaire is anonymous.

110. What subjects do you think should be included in the training of dispatchers?

111. What attitudes do you feel best describe effective dispatchers?

112. What personality characteristics do you think effective dispatchers should possess?

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113. Please circle the appropriate number that describes your position.

- 1 Dispatcher with Sheriff, Township or City Police.
- 2 State Police Dispatcher.
- 3 Dispatcher with other agency.
4. MSP Trooper
5. MSP Sergeant

SPECIFIC TRAINING PROFILE

In determining what subjects should be included in a training program it is important to know what specific training you have already had and what you feel is your level of competence in the subject. In this last section of the questionnaire please indicate your response by circling the answer that best fits your particular level of training.

The choices are: 1. **Trained**: (have a working knowledge of the subject), 2. **Familiar** (have had some training in the subject or picked it up through experience, but feel you need more to be competent.) , and 3. **Not Trained** (you have not had any formal training in the subject matter).

	<u>Trained</u>	<u>Familiar</u>	<u>Not Trained</u>
114. Criminal Law	1	2	3
115. Civil Law	1	2	3
116. Law of Arrest	1	2	3
117. Search & Seizure	1	2	3
118. Departmental Policy & Procedures	1	2	3
119. Obtaining warrants	1	2	3
104. Criminal Procedure	1	2	3
120. Court Procedures	1	2	3
121. Abnormal Psychology	1	2	3
122. Police Liability	1	2	3
123. LEIN/Radio Operation and Uses.	1	2	3
124. Michigan Blockade System	1	2	3

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125. Crime Scene Protection	1	2	3
126. Bomb Threat and Bomb Disposal Issues	1	2	3
127. Civil Disorders	1	2	3
128. Barricaded Gunmen Responses of Police	1	2	3
129. Hazardous Materials Handling	1	2	3
130. Weather Related Emergencies	1	2	3
131. Major Emergency Responses(Air,Train)	1	2	3
132. Bank Alarm Procedures	1	2	3
133. Natural Disaster Response Issues.	1	2	3
134. CPR. & First Aid	1	2	3
135. Patrol Procedures	1	2	3
136. High Speed Pursuit Issues	1	2	3
137. Common Fraud Scams	1	2	3
138. Undercover Operation Issues	1	2	3
139. Constraints on the Use of Force	1	2	3
140. Crisis Intervention	1	2	3
141. Stress Management	1	2	3
142. Decision Making	1	2	3
143. General Investigative Processes	1	2	3
144. Interpersonal Relations	1	2	3
145. Time Management	1	2	3

THANKYOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

Please return this questionnaire in the envelop provided to:
Dennis M. Payne, Rm. 504 Baker Hall, School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118

APPENDIX F

Act 32, Public Acts of 1986

PUBLIC ACT 32 OF 1986

ENACTED MARCH 16, 1986

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
83RD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 1986**

Introduced by Senators Ehlers, Binsfeld, Faxon, McCollough, A. Cropsey, Sederburg, Geake, DiNello, Kelly, Vaughn, Arthurhultz, H. Cropsey, Shinkle, Nichols, Gast, Posthumus, Barcia and Conroy

ENROLLED SENATE BILL No. 303

AN ACT to provide for the establishment of universal emergency telephone districts; to provide for the installation, operation, modification, and maintenance of universal emergency telephone systems; to provide for the imposition and collection of charges associated therewith; to provide the powers and duties of certain state agencies, local units of government, public officers, telephone service suppliers, and others; to create an emergency telephone service committee; to provide remedies; to provide penalties; and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts on specific dates.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

CHAPTER I

Sec. 101. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "emergency telephone service enabling act".

Sec. 102. As used in this act:

(a) "Automatic location identification" or "ALI" means a 9-1-1 service feature in which the service supplier automatically forwards the name or address, or both, associated with the calling party's telephone number as identified by automatic number identification, to the public safety answering point.

(b) "Automatic number identification" or "ANI" means a 9-1-1 service feature in which the service supplier automatically forwards the calling party's billing telephone number to the public safety answering point for display.

(c) "Direct dispatch method" means the method of responding to a telephone request for emergency service whereby the person receiving the call at the public safety answering point decides on the proper action to be taken and dispatches the appropriate available emergency service unit located closest to the request for emergency service.

(d) "Emergency telephone charge" means a charge for the network start-up costs, customer notification costs, billing costs including an allowance for uncollectibles, and network nonrecurring and recurring installation, maintenance, service, and equipment network charges of a service supplier providing 9-1-1 service pursuant to this act.

(e) "Exchange access facility" means the access from a particular service user's premises to the telephone system. Exchange access facilities include service supplier provided access lines, PBX trunks, and centrex line trunk equivalents, all as defined by tariffs of the service suppliers as approved by the public service commission. Exchange access facilities do not include service supplier owned and operated telephone pay station lines, or WATS, FX, or incoming only lines.

(f) "Final 9-1-1 service plan" means a tentative 9-1-1 service plan that has been modified only to reflect necessary changes resulting from any exclusions of public agencies from the 9-1-1 service district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to section 306 and any failure of public safety agencies to be designated as PSAPs or secondary PSAPs pursuant to section 307.

(g) "Person" means any individual; firm; partnership; joint venture; association; cooperative organization; corporation, whether or not organized for profit; municipal corporation; state or other governmental entity; agency; body; department; commission; board; bureau; fraternal organization; nonprofit organization; estate; trust; business or common law trust; receiver; assignee for the benefit of creditors; trustee; or trustee in bankruptcy.

(h) "Private safety entity" means a private entity which provides emergency fire, ambulance, or medical services.

(i) "Public agency" means any village, township, charter township, or city within the state, and any special purpose district located in whole or in part within the state, which provides or has authority to provide fire fighting, law enforcement, ambulance, medical, or other emergency services.

(j) "Public safety agency" means a functional division of a public agency, county, or the state of Michigan, which provides fire fighting, law enforcement, ambulance, medical, or other emergency services.

(k) "Public safety answering point" or "PSAP" means a communications facility operated or answered on a 24-hour basis, assigned responsibility by a public agency or county to receive 9-1-1 calls and, as appropriate, to directly dispatch emergency response services, or to transfer or relay emergency 9-1-1 calls to other public safety agencies. It is the first point of reception by a public safety agency of a 9-1-1 call, and serves the jurisdictions in which it is located and other participating jurisdictions, if any.

(l) "Relay method" means the method of responding to a telephone request for emergency service whereby a PSAP notes pertinent information and relays it by telephone, radio, or private line to the appropriate public safety agency or other provider of emergency services that has an available emergency service unit located closest to the request for emergency service for dispatch of an emergency service unit.

(m) "Secondary public safety answering point" or "secondary PSAP" means a communications facility of a public safety agency or private safety entity which receives 9-1-1 calls by the transfer method only and generally serves as a centralized location for a particular type of emergency call.

(n) "Service supplier" means any person providing telephone services to a service user in this state.

(o) "Service user" means any exchange access facility customer of a service supplier within a 9-1-1 system.

(p) "Tariff rate" means the rate approved by the public service commission for 9-1-1 service provided by a particular service supplier.

(q) "Tentative 9-1-1 service plan" means a plan for implementing a 9-1-1 system in a specified 9-1-1 service district, after consultation with the director of the department of state police or his or her designated representative, which complies with chapter II, and which addresses the following system considerations:

(i) Technical considerations of the service supplier including system equipment for facilities that would be used in providing emergency telephone service.

(ii) Operational considerations including the designation of PSAPs and secondary PSAPs and the manner in which 9-1-1 calls would be processed, dispatch functions performed, and information systems utilized.

(iii) Managerial considerations including the organizational form and agreements which would control technical, operational, and fiscal aspects of the emergency telephone service.

(iv) Fiscal considerations including projected nonrecurring and recurring costs with a financial plan for implementing and operating the system.

(r) The tentative 9-1-1 service plan shall require each public agency and county operating a PSAP under the 9-1-1 system to pay directly for all installation and recurring charges for terminal equipment, including customer premises equipment, associated with the public agency's or the county's PSAP, and may require each public agency and county operating a PSAP under the 9-1-1 system to pay directly to the service supplier all installation and recurring charges for all 9-1-1 exchange and tie lines associated with the public agency's or the county's PSAP.

(s) "Transfer method" means the method of responding to a telephone request for emergency service whereby a PSAP transfers the call directly to the appropriate public safety agency or other provider of

emergency service that has an available emergency service unit located closest to the request for emergency service for dispatch of an emergency service unit.

(s) "Universal emergency number service" or "9-1-1 service" means public telephone service which provides service users with the ability to reach a public safety answering point by dialing the digits "9-1-1".

(t) "Universal emergency number service district" or "9-1-1 service district" means the area in which 9-1-1 service is provided or is planned to be provided to service users under a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act.

(u) "Universal emergency number service system" or "9-1-1 system" means a system for providing 9-1-1 service pursuant to this act.

CHAPTER II

Sec. 201. A 9-1-1 system shall not be implemented pursuant to this act unless a 9-1-1 tariff rate exists for each service supplier designated by the final 9-1-1 service plan to provide 9-1-1 service in the 9-1-1 system.

Sec. 202. A public agency which is excluded from a 9-1-1 service district in a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act, but which is operating an existing emergency telephone service at the time the 9-1-1 system is implemented, shall permit any technical modifications to its existing system which are necessary for compatibility with the 9-1-1 system. Any cost of the service supplier associated with such modifications shall not be the responsibility of the excluded public agency but shall be included as part of the costs collected from service users in the 9-1-1 service district pursuant to section 401.

Sec. 203. The digits 9-1-1 shall be the primary emergency telephone number within every 9-1-1 system established pursuant to this act. A public safety agency whose services are available through a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act may maintain a separate secondary backup number for emergencies, and shall maintain a separate number for nonemergency telephone calls.

Sec. 204. (1) A 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act shall be designed to meet the individual circumstances of each county and the public agencies participating in the 9-1-1 system, and shall be within the service limitations of service suppliers providing the 9-1-1 service in the 9-1-1 system. System designs shall include provision for expansion of the system to include capabilities not required in initial implementation, including the addition of PSAPs and secondary PSAPs.

(2) Every 9-1-1 system shall be designed so that a 9-1-1 call is processed by means of either the direct dispatch method, the relay method, or the transfer method. At least 2 of the specified methods shall be available for use by the PSAP receiving the call. The PSAP may handle nonemergency calls by referring the caller to another number.

Sec. 205. (1) A 9-1-1 system established pursuant to this act shall be capable of transmitting requests for law enforcement, fire fighting, and emergency medical and ambulance services to 1 or more public safety agencies which provide the requested service to the place where the call originates.

(2) A 9-1-1 system shall process all 9-1-1 calls originating from telephones served by the central office serving the receiving PSAP, whether or not the calling telephone is situated within the geographical boundaries of the 9-1-1 service district.

(3) A 9-1-1 system may provide for transmittal of requests for other emergency services, such as poison control, suicide prevention, and civil defense. Conferencing capability with counseling, aid to handicapped, and other services as considered necessary for emergency response determination may be provided by the 9-1-1 system.

Sec. 206. A PSAP may transmit emergency response requests to private safety entities under a 9-1-1 system.

Sec. 207. The installation of automatic intrusion alarms and other automatic alerting devices which cause the number 9-1-1 to be dialed shall be prohibited in a 9-1-1 system.

CHAPTER III

Sec. 301. (1) The board of commissioners of a county may establish an emergency telephone district within all or part of the county and may cause 9-1-1 service to be implemented within such emergency telephone district pursuant to this act.

(2) The board of commissioners of a county all or part of which is operating an existing emergency telephone service may modify the existing emergency telephone service or may alter the scope or method of financing of 9-

1-1 service within all or part of the county by establishing an emergency telephone district and causing 9-1-1 service to be implemented within such emergency telephone district pursuant to this act.

Sec. 302. Two or more county boards of commissioners may jointly establish an emergency telephone district within all or part of the counties and may cause 9-1-1 service to be implemented within such emergency telephone district pursuant to this act. If 2 or more county boards of commissioners wish to jointly establish an emergency telephone district pursuant to this act, then all actions required or permitted to be taken by a county or its officials pursuant to this act shall be taken by each county or the officials of each county, and all notices required or permitted to be given to a county or its officials pursuant to this act shall be given to each county or the officials of each county.

Sec. 303. To establish an emergency telephone district and to cause 9-1-1 service to be implemented within such emergency telephone district, the board of commissioners of a county shall first adopt a tentative 9-1-1 service plan by resolution. A tentative 9-1-1 service plan may specify whether telecommunication equipment for the deaf or severely hearing impaired is being considered and which 9-1-1 service features, including ANI and ALI, are being considered for the emergency telephone district.

Sec. 304. A resolution adopting a tentative 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to section 303 shall specify a time, date, and place for the public hearing to be held on the final 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to section 309, which date shall be not less than 90 days after the date of the adoption of the resolution authorized by this section.

Sec. 305. Within 5 days after the adoption of a resolution authorized in section 303, the county clerk shall forward a copy of such resolution, together with a copy of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan, by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the clerk or other appropriate official of each public agency located within the 9-1-1 district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan.

Sec. 306. (1) Unless a public agency files with the county clerk a notice of exclusion from 9-1-1 service district pursuant to this section within 45 days after receipt of a copy of the resolution and a copy of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan adopted pursuant to section 303, the entire jurisdiction of the public agency or, if less than the entire jurisdiction of the public agency is included within the 9-1-1 service district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan, then such portion of the jurisdiction of the public agency included within the 9-1-1 service district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan shall be included within the 9-1-1 district of the final 9-1-1 service plan. A public agency may exclude less than the entire portion of its jurisdiction included in the 9-1-1 service district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan. Each public agency, all or part of which is included within the 9-1-1 service district of the final 9-1-1 service plan, shall assist the particular county in the preparation of the final 9-1-1 service plan.

(2) If the entire jurisdiction of a public agency is to be excluded from the 9-1-1 service district pursuant to subsection (1), then the notice of exclusion from 9-1-1 service district shall be in substantially the following form:

**NOTICE OF EXCLUSION
FROM 9-1-1 SERVICE DISTRICT**

Pursuant to section 306 of the emergency telephone service enabling act, the _____ of _____ hereby notifies the board of commissioners of the county of _____ that the _____ of _____ is excluded from the 9-1-1 service district established by the tentative 9-1-1 service plan adopted by the board of commissioners on _____, 19____.

(Clerk)

(Acknowledgment)

(3) If less than the entire jurisdiction of a public agency is to be excluded from the 9-1-1 service district pursuant to subsection (1), then the notice of exclusion from 9-1-1 service district shall be in substantially the following form:

**NOTICE OF EXCLUSION
FROM 9-1-1 SERVICE DISTRICT**

Pursuant to section 306 of the emergency telephone service enabling act, the _____ of _____ hereby notifies the board of commissioners of the county of _____ that the portion of the _____ of _____ described on the attached map is excluded from the 9-1-1 service district established by the tentative 9-1-1 service plan adopted by the board of commissioners on _____, 19____.

(Clerk)

(Acknowledgment)

(4) A notice of exclusion from 9-1-1 service district shall be signed by the clerk of the public agency or, if the public agency has no clerk, by any other appropriate official of the public agency.

Sec. 307. (1) Any public safety agency designated in the tentative 9-1-1 service plan to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP shall be so designated under the final 9-1-1 service plan if the public safety agency files with the county clerk a notice of intent to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP within 45 days after the public agency which the public safety agency has been designated to serve by the tentative 9-1-1 service plan receives a copy of the resolution and the tentative 9-1-1 service plan adopted pursuant to section 303. The notice of intent to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP shall be in substantially the following form:

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO FUNCTION
AS A PSAP OR SECONDARY PSAP**

Pursuant to section 307 of the emergency telephone service enabling act, _____ shall function as a (check one) _____ PSAP _____ Secondary PSAP within the 9-1-1 service district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan adopted by resolution of the board of commissioners for the county of _____, on _____, 19_____.

(Acknowledgment)

(2) If a public safety agency designated as a PSAP or secondary PSAP in the tentative 9-1-1 service plan fails to file a notice of intent to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP within the time period specified in subsection (1), the public safety agency shall not be designated as a PSAP or secondary PSAP in the final 9-1-1 service plan.

Sec. 308. The clerk of each county which has adopted a tentative 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to section 303 shall give notice by publication of the hearing on the final 9-1-1 service plan to be held pursuant to section 309. The notice shall be published twice in a newspaper of general circulation within the county, the first publication of the notice occurring at least 30 days prior to the date of the hearing. The notice shall state all of the following:

- (a) The time, date, and place of the hearing.
- (b) A description of the boundaries of the 9-1-1 service district of the final 9-1-1 service plan as determined at the expiration of the time for filing a notice of exclusion from 9-1-1 service district pursuant to section 306.
- (c) That if the board of commissioners of the county, after a hearing, adopts the final 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to this act, an emergency telephone charge shall be collected on a uniform basis from all service users within the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 309. The board of commissioners shall conduct a hearing on the final 9-1-1 service plan at the time, place, and date specified in the notice published pursuant to section 308. All persons attending the meeting shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

Sec. 310. After conducting the hearing on the final 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to this act, the board of commissioners of the affected county may adopt by resolution the final 9-1-1 service plan. Upon adoption of the resolution, the county, on behalf of public agencies located within the 9-1-1 service district, shall apply in writing to the service supplier or suppliers designated to provide 9-1-1 service within the 9-1-1 service district under the final 9-1-1 service plan.

Sec. 311. (1) As soon as feasible after receipt of a written application from a county requesting 9-1-1 service within a 9-1-1 service district described in a final 9-1-1 service plan adopted pursuant to this act, each service supplier designated in the final 9-1-1 service plan shall implement 9-1-1 service within the 9-1-1 service district in accordance with the final 9-1-1 service plan.

(2) Upon implementation of 9-1-1 service in a 9-1-1 service district pursuant to subsection (1), each public safety agency designated as a PSAP or secondary PSAP in the final 9-1-1 service plan shall begin to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP.

(3) The costs of the service supplier for equipment installation or system modification, or both, necessary for a public safety agency to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP pursuant to this section shall be paid directly by the public safety agency and shall not be collected from service users within the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 312. After a final 9-1-1 service plan has been adopted pursuant to section 310, a county may amend the final 9-1-1 service plan only by complying with the procedures described in sections 301 to 310. Upon adoption of an amended final 9-1-1 service plan by the county board of commissioners, the county shall forward the amended final 9-1-1 service plan to the service supplier or suppliers designated to provide 9-1-1 service within

the 9-1-1 service district as amended. Upon receipt of the amended final 9-1-1 service plan, each designated service supplier shall implement as soon as feasible the amendments to the final 9-1-1 service plan in the 9-1-1 service district as amended.

Sec. 313. A 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act shall be terminated only if each public agency, all or part of which was included within the 9-1-1 service district of the final 9-1-1 service plan, withdraws its entire jurisdiction from the 9-1-1 service district pursuant to section 505.

Sec. 314. (1) At the time that a 9-1-1 system becomes operational or as soon as feasible thereafter, each service supplier or other owner or lessee of a pay station telephone to be operated within the 9-1-1 service district shall do both of the following:

(a) Convert or cause to be converted each such telephone to permit a caller to dial 9-1-1 without first inserting a coin or paying any other charge.

(b) Prominently display on each such telephone a notice advising callers to dial 9-1-1 in an emergency and that deposit of a coin is not required.

(2) After commencement of 9-1-1 service in a 9-1-1 service district, a person shall not install, cause to be installed, or offer for use within the 9-1-1 district a pay station telephone, whether on public or private premises, unless the telephone is capable of accepting a 9-1-1 call without prior insertion of a coin or payment of any other charge, and displays the notice described in subsection (1).

(3) All costs of a service supplier associated with converting pay station telephones and maintaining the required notices under this section shall be borne by the service users within the 9-1-1 district.

Sec. 315. If the 9-1-1 system does not provide ALI, each service supplier, owner, or lessee of a pay station telephone shall prominently display on each telephone or telephone pay station the address of the telephone at the time that a 9-1-1 system becomes operational or as soon as feasible thereafter.

Sec. 316. If ALI is not offered by the service supplier with the 9-1-1 system and the 9-1-1 system requires such information, a service supplier shall provide current customer telephone numbers and service addresses to each PSAP and secondary PSAP within the 9-1-1 system and shall periodically update customer telephone numbers and service addresses and provide such information to each PSAP and secondary PSAP within the 9-1-1 system. The 9-1-1 service district shall determine the period within which the service supplier shall update customer telephone numbers and service addresses. Expenses incurred in providing this information shall be included in the price of the system. Private listing service customers in a 9-1-1 service district shall waive the privacy afforded by nonlisted and nonpublished numbers to the extent that the name and address associated with the telephone number may be furnished to the 9-1-1 system.

Sec. 317. Name, address, and telephone number information provided to a 9-1-1 system by a service supplier shall be used only for the purpose of identifying the telephone location or identity, or both, of a person calling the 9-1-1 emergency telephone number and shall not be used or disclosed by the 9-1-1 system agencies, their agents, or their employees for any other purpose, unless such information is used or disclosed pursuant to a court order. A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Sec. 318. A county or public agency may enter into an agreement with a public safety agency of another county or public agency, or of the state, to serve as a PSAP or secondary PSAP for such county or public agency in a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act.

CHAPTER IV

Sec. 401. (1) As soon as feasible after installation and commencement of operation of a 9-1-1 system in a 9-1-1 service district, the service supplier shall provide a billing and collection service for an emergency telephone charge from all service users of the service supplier within the 9-1-1 service district. The emergency telephone charge shall be uniform per each exchange access facility within the 9-1-1 service district. The portion of the emergency telephone charge which represents start-up costs, nonrecurring billing, installation, service, and equipment charges of the service supplier, including the costs of updating equipment necessary for conversion to 9-1-1 service, shall be amortized over a period not to exceed 5 years, as approved by the public service commission, and shall be billed and collected from all service users only until such amounts are fully recouped by the service supplier. Recurring costs and charges included in the emergency telephone charge shall continue to be billed to the service user. Subject to the limitation provided by subsection (2), the amount of the emergency telephone charge to be billed to the service user shall be computed by dividing the total emergency telephone charge by the number of exchange access facilities within the 9-1-1 service district.

(2) The amount of emergency telephone charge payable monthly by a service user for recurring costs and

charges shall not exceed 2% of the highest monthly base rate charged by the service supplier for 1-party unlimited calling within the 9-1-1 service district. The amount of emergency telephone charge payable monthly by a service user for nonrecurring costs and charges shall not exceed an additional like amount. The difference, if any, between the amount of the emergency telephone charge computed under subsection (1) and the maximum permitted under this subsection shall be paid by the county from funds available to the county or through cooperative arrangements with public agencies within the 9-1-1 service district.

(3) The emergency telephone charge shall be collected in accordance with the regular billings of the service supplier. The emergency telephone charge payable by service users pursuant to this act shall be added to and may be stated separately in the billings to service users.

Sec. 402. Each billed service user shall be liable for any emergency telephone charge imposed on the service user pursuant to this act.

Sec. 403. Each service supplier shall be solely responsible for the collection of the emergency telephone charge and may take any legal action to collect these charges. The county implementing 9-1-1 service pursuant to this act and public agencies all or part of which are included within the 9-1-1 service district shall not be liable for the collection of emergency telephone charges imposed on service users pursuant to this act.

Sec. 404. After commencement of collection of the emergency telephone charge within a particular 9-1-1 service district, a service supplier providing or designated to provide 9-1-1 service pursuant to this act shall not alter the emergency telephone charge collected from service users within the 9-1-1 service district pursuant to this act except as follows:

(a) As provided in section 405.

(b) Subject to the limitations provided by section 401(2), if additions or withdrawals of PSAPs or secondary PSAPs are made to the 9-1-1 service within a 9-1-1 service district pursuant to this act, the emergency telephone charge shall be increased or decreased in an amount such that the total emergency telephone charges to be collected in such billing period and in each billing period thereafter shall equal the total cost of providing 9-1-1 service within the 9-1-1 service district based on the rates and charges of the service supplier.

(c) Subject to the limitations provided by section 401(2), if a public agency is added to or withdraws from a 9-1-1 service district pursuant to this act, the emergency telephone charge shall be increased or decreased within the jurisdiction of the particular public agency in an amount such that the total emergency telephone charges to be collected in such billing period and in each billing period thereafter shall equal the total cost of providing 9-1-1 service within the modified 9-1-1 service district based on the rates and charges of the service supplier.

Sec. 405. (1) Within 90 days after the first day of the calendar year following the year in which a service supplier commenced collection of the emergency telephone charge pursuant to section 401, and within 90 days after the first day of every calendar year thereafter, a service supplier providing 9-1-1 service pursuant to this act shall make an annual accounting to the 9-1-1 service district of the total emergency telephone charges collected during such preceding calendar year.

(2) If an annual accounting made pursuant to subsection (1) discloses that the total emergency telephone charges collected during the preceding calendar year exceeded the total cost of installing and providing 9-1-1 service within the 9-1-1 service district for the preceding calendar year according to the rates and charges of the service supplier, the service supplier shall credit the emergency telephone charge collected from service users in the 9-1-1 service district in an amount computed pursuant to this section. The amount of the credit shall be computed by dividing such excess by the number of exchange access facilities within the 9-1-1 service district as such district existed for the billing period immediately following the annual accounting. Costs of the service supplier associated with making credit under this subsection as part of the billing and collection service shall be deducted from the amount to be credited.

(3) If the annual accounting discloses that the total emergency telephone charges collected during the calendar year are less than the total cost of installing and providing 9-1-1 service within the 9-1-1 service district for such preceding calendar year according to the costs and rates of the service supplier, the service supplier shall collect an additional charge from service users in the 9-1-1 service district in an amount computed pursuant to this section. Subject to the limitations provided by section 401(2), the amount of the additional charge shall be computed by dividing the amount by which such total cost exceeded the total emergency telephone charges collected during the preceding calendar year by the number of exchange access facilities within the 9-1-1 service district as such district existed for the billing period immediately following the annual accounting.

CHAPTER V

Sec. 501. (1) After installation and commencement of operation of a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act, a public safety agency serving a public agency or county within the 9-1-1 service district may be added

to the 9-1-1 system as a PSAP or a secondary PSAP by giving written notice of intent to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP as provided in section 307 to the county clerk. Within 5 days of receipt of the notice, the county clerk shall forward the written notice to the service supplier. The public safety agency shall commence to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP as soon as feasible after giving the written notice.

(2) The costs of equipment installation or system modification, or both, necessary for a public safety agency to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP pursuant to subsection (1) shall be paid directly by the public safety agency and shall not be collected from service users in the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 502. (1) After installation and commencement of operation of a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act, a public safety agency serving a public agency or county within the 9-1-1 service district shall cease to function as a PSAP or a secondary PSAP 60 days after giving written notice thereof to the county clerk. Within 5 days after receipt of the notice, the county clerk shall forward the written notice to the service supplier.

(2) Notwithstanding any provision of this act to the contrary, any costs incurred by a service supplier for equipment removal or system modification necessary for a public safety agency to cease functioning as a PSAP or secondary PSAP pursuant to subsection (1) shall be paid directly by the public safety agency and shall not be collected from service users in the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 503. After installation and commencement of operation of a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act, all or part of the jurisdiction of a public agency within the county shall be added to the 9-1-1 service district pursuant to section 504 if both of the following occur:

(a) The legislative body of the public agency adopts a resolution including all or part of the public agency within the 9-1-1 service district.

(b) A certified copy of the resolution adopted by the legislative body of the public agency is forwarded by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the county clerk.

Sec. 504. Within 5 days after receipt of a certified copy of a resolution adopted by a public agency pursuant to section 503, the county clerk shall forward the certified copy of the resolution to the service supplier by certified mail, return receipt requested. Within a reasonable time after the service supplier receives the certified copy of the resolution, the service supplier shall commence 9-1-1 service to all or part of the jurisdiction of the public agency, as the case may be, and after commencement of such service shall commence the collection of the emergency telephone charge, in accordance with this act, from service users within all or part of the jurisdiction of the public agency added to the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 505. After installation and commencement of operation of a 9-1-1 system implemented pursuant to this act, a public agency all or part of which is included within a 9-1-1 service district may withdraw all or part of its jurisdiction from a 9-1-1 service district effective January 1 of the following year if all of the following occur:

(a) The public agency, after giving notice required in subdivisions (b) and (c), conducts a public hearing on the withdrawal at which all persons attending are afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

(b) Written notice of the time, date, and place of the public hearing conducted by the public agency is given to the county clerk and the clerk of each public agency within the 9-1-1 service district, at least 30 days prior to the date of the hearing.

(c) Notice of the time, date, place, and purpose of the public hearing is published twice in a newspaper of general circulation within the public agency, the first publication of the notice occurring at least 30 days prior to the date of the hearing.

(d) After the public hearing on withdrawal but prior to 90 days before the end of the calendar year, the legislative body of the public agency adopts a resolution withdrawing all or part of the area of the public agency from the 9-1-1 service district. Such resolution shall describe the area of the public agency withdrawing from the 9-1-1 service district. The resolution shall also state the emergency telephone number to be used within the jurisdiction of the public agency following withdrawal from the 9-1-1 service district.

(e) Within 5 days after adoption of the resolution by the legislative body of the public agency, the clerk or other appropriate official of the public agency shall forward such resolution by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the county clerk. Within 5 days of receipt of a certified copy of the resolution adopted pursuant to this section, the county clerk shall forward such resolution by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the service suppliers providing or designated to provide 9-1-1 service to the area of the public agency withdrawing from the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 506. Subject to the service limitations of the service supplier, a service supplier shall cease 9-1-1 service in the area of a public agency withdrawing from the 9-1-1 service district on the first day of the calendar year following the year in which the service supplier received a copy of the resolution adopted pursuant to section

506. The service supplier shall continue to collect the emergency telephone charge from all service users who continue to have 9-1-1 service, but the service supplier shall not collect the emergency telephone charge from service users within the area of the public agency withdrawing from the 9-1-1 service district who do not continue to have 9-1-1 service after the billing period in which the first day of the calendar year is included. The service supplier, using the calculations provided in section 406, shall credit or collect any additional charge from service users within the public agency withdrawing from the 9-1-1 service district.

Sec. 507. This act shall not be construed to prohibit a public agency or a county from contracting with a service supplier for 9-1-1 service within all or part of the jurisdiction of the public agency or county and paying for such service directly from the funds of the public agency or county.

CHAPTER VI

Sec. 601. The public service commission, upon request by a service supplier, county, public agency, or public service agency, shall provide, to the extent possible, technical assistance regarding the formulation or implementation or both of a 9-1-1 service plan.

Sec. 602. A dispute between or among 1 or more service suppliers, counties, public agencies, public service agencies, or any combination thereof regarding their respective rights and duties under this act shall be heard as a contested case before the public service commission as provided in the administrative procedures act of 1969, Act No. 306 of the Public Acts of 1969, being sections 24.201 to 24.328 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

Sec. 603. The public service commission shall review and make findings regarding the implementation of 9-1-1 emergency service in this state pursuant to this act and shall, not later than 3 years after the effective date of this act, report its findings and any recommendations for improving the procedures under this act to each house of the legislature.

Sec. 604. Other than for pro rata charges for the service during a period when the service may be fully or partially inoperative, a service supplier, public agency, PSAP, or an officer, agent, or employee of any service supplier, public agency, or PSAP, or an owner or lessee of a pay station telephone shall not be liable for civil damages to any person as a result of an act or omission on the part of the service supplier, public agency, PSAP, or an officer, agent, or employee of any service supplier, public agency, or PSAP, or an owner or lessee in complying with any provision of this act, unless the act or omission amounts to gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct.

CHAPTER VII

Sec. 701. As used in this chapter, "committee" means the emergency telephone service committee created in section 702.

Sec. 702. An emergency telephone service committee is created within the department of management and budget to develop statewide standards and model system considerations and make other recommendations for emergency telephone services.

Sec. 703. (1) The committee shall consist of 13 members as follows:

- (a) The director of the department of state police or his or her designated representative.
- (b) The director of public health or his or her designated representative.
- (c) The chair of the Michigan public service commission or his or her designated representative.
- (d) The president of the Michigan sheriffs association or his or her designated representative.
- (e) The president of the Michigan association of chiefs of police or his or her designated representative.
- (f) The president of the Michigan fire chiefs association or his or her designated representative.
- (g) The executive director of the Michigan association of counties or his or her designated representative.
- (h) The director of the office of criminal justice or his or her designated representative.
- (i) Three members of the general public, 1 member to be appointed by the governor, 1 member to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, and 1 member to be appointed by the majority leader of the senate. The 3 members of the general public shall have expertise relating to emergency radio communications, dispatching, and services or to telephone systems. The members of the general public shall serve for terms of 2 years.
- (j) The executive director of the Michigan fraternal order of police or his or her designated representative.

- (k) The president of the Michigan state police troopers association or his or her designated representative.
- (2) The committee shall elect 1 of its members to serve as chairperson. The chairperson of the committee shall serve for a term of 1 year.
- (3) Members of the committee shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled to actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official duties under this chapter.

Sec. 704. The committee shall do all of the following:

- (a) Organize and adopt standards governing the committee's formal and informal procedures.
- (b) Meet at a place and time specified by the chairperson.
- (c) Keep a record of the proceedings and activities of the committee.
- (d) Provide recommendations to public safety answering points and secondary public safety answering points on statewide technical and operational standards for PSAPs and secondary PSAPs.
- (e) Provide recommendations to public agencies concerning model systems to be considered in preparing a 9-1-1 service plan.
- (f) Research and make recommendations to the legislature no later than March 31, 1993 on coordination and establishment of a statewide emergency telephone service.
- (g) Research and make recommendations to the legislature and the department of management and budget on providing statewide staff assistance to 9-1-1 service districts.

Sec. 705. The business which the committee may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the committee held in compliance with the open meetings act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, being sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled Laws. Public notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting shall be given in the manner required by Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976.

Sec. 706. A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the committee in the performance of an official function shall be made available to the public in compliance with the freedom of information act, Act No. 442 of the Public Acts of 1976, being sections 15.231 to 15.246 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

Sec. 707. This chapter is repealed effective March 31, 1993.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Secretary of the Senate.



Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Approved

.....
Governor.



APPENDIX G

Newsletter Announcement



MICHIGAN POLICE CHIEFS NEWSLETTER: June 1988

general public using toilet facilities where the innocent citizens obviously had a more reasonable expectation of privacy." *Kalirnik* at 35 (Shepherd, J., concurring).

In the instant case, defendant was engaged in activities readily observable by anyone entering the rest room. These cases, including *Kalirnik*, which have upheld the privacy interest of an individual inside a rest room stall do not control this case. Even if we concede that defendant had a subjective expectation of privacy we are unwilling to conclude that that expectation is one society is prepared to recognize as "reasonable." Defendant was engaged in sexual activities in a place readily accessible and open to anyone needing to use the rest room, including children. An expectation of privacy in such a setting is unreasonable. Therefore, defendant's constitutional rights are not here implicated. See *Smith* at 25.

We therefore reverse the order suppressing the video tape evidence and the testimony of the police officers and remand this case for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.

/s/ Elizabeth A. Weaver
/s/ John H. Shepherd
/s/ Francis D. Broutillette

DISPATCHERS TO BE STUDIED

Dennis M. Payne of the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University is completing his work on a doctoral degree in Criminal Justice. In fulfillment of his requirements for a Ph.D., Mr. Payne has agreed to perform a study of dispatchers for the Michigan State Police in order to develop a job relevant training program for dispatchers. Though state police dispatchers are the original focus of the study, Mr. Payne would also like to include dispatchers from all Michigan police agencies. If the study shows that there is similarity among dispatchers statewide, regardless of the departments they work for, then the results of the study should have practical significance for all police dispatching functions.

The results of the study should provide those interested with a profile of an effective dispatcher, a training program for dispatchers based on the perceptions of the dispatchers, and criteria for selection of dispatchers.

The work on this original research is in the early stages of development. Mr. Payne will be contacting sheriffs and chiefs of police in Michigan in the next few months in hopes of enlisting their cooperation in the study. The critical role of dispatching and the importance of the dispatcher's function is key among his interests. Your cooperation with Mr. Payne is requested. Mr. Payne, a retired police officer from Michigan, wishes the work to have some practical value for the police field as well as be a scholarly work. The responses from your dispatchers, if chosen in the sampling, are most important to the success of this study. Potential respondents should know that responses on any questionnaire will be anonymous.

Prisoner overflow now gluts county jails in Michigan

By Rachel Reynolds
The Detroit News Lansing Bureau

Lansing - The overcrowding crisis that plagues Michigan's prison system has spilled over into county jails, according to the Michigan Sheriffs' Association.

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"Overcrowding is a systemic problem," said Dale Davis, deputy director of the association. "It doesn't just exist in prisons, but also in jails. It's an alarming trend."

The number of people confined to Michigan jails has increased by 50,000 over the last three years. In 1984, about 125,000 people were sent to jail, compared to more than 200,000 last year.

There are about 9,300 jail beds in Michigan. Counties have increased in bed space by 30 percent over the past three years, but the jail population has grown by 45 percent - so there are still more inmates than beds.

The state's prison system, meanwhile, has 13,300 inmates. That is 15 percent over its listed capacity of 20,200.

Prisons are state-funded institutions designed to house serious and long-term felons. Jails are county-run facilities housing people convicted of misdemeanors, suspects awaiting trial and felons sentenced to one year or less.

Davis said that felons who should be doing time in state institutions are increasingly being sentenced to county jails because there is no room for them in prisons.

The number of felons housed in county jails has doubled in the past three years and now totals more than 40 percent of the counties' inmates, according to the report.

There are 79 jails and three lockups - temporary holding facilities - in Michigan's 83 counties.

The Sheriffs' Association report, based on a survey of sheriffs, jail administrators and county commissioners, suggests changes to ease the jail overcrowding crisis:

• An independent jail council to oversee jail administration. Currently, jails are funded locally but are under the jurisdiction of the state Department of Corrections. A bill creating an autonomous jail council has passed the Senate and is now before the House Corrections Committee.

• State financial support to bring jails into compliance with state standards and to make necessary improvements. In the next eight years, an additional \$250 million will be needed for physical improvements in jails, the report stated.

• State compensation for counties housing sentenced felons.



TRUCK ENFORCEMENT TRAINING FOR OFFICERS

The Michigan Department of State Police announced recently the award of a \$23,000 federal highway safety grant to train county Sheriffs' deputies and local law enforcement officers in commercial carrier enforcement.

The grant, funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and administered by the Office of Highway Safety Planning, will give wider knowledge of truck enforcement to approximately 150 officers.

Training will be conducted at Dearborn (July 12-14), Grand Rapids (August 5-11), and Jackson (September 13-15). Officers interested in applying for training are encouraged to contact Project Director Lieutenant Billy Mann of the State Police Motor Carrier Division at (313) 337-6122 in Lansing.

APPENDIX H

Tentative 911 Service Plan

A TENTATIVE 911 SERVICE PLAN

PREFACE

Be it resolved that:

Public Act 32 of 1986 establishes the emergency telephone service enabling act. This act allows the board of commissioners of a county to establish an emergency telephone district within all or part of a county and may cause 911 service to be implemented within such emergency telephone district. To establish a emergency telephone district and to cause 911 service to be implemented within such an emergency telephone district, the board of commissioners of a county shall first adopt a tentative 911 service plan by resolution.

Article I

This tentative 911 service plan is a plan for implementing a 911 system in a specified 911 service district. The director of the Department of State Police/or his or her designated representative has been consulted as required. This tentative plan addresses the following system considerations:

- I. Technical considerations
- II. Operational considerations
- III. Managerial considerations
- IV. Fiscal considerations
- V. Payment plan for installation and reoccurring charges

The Final 9-1-1 service plan is exactly the same as the tentative 9-1-1 service plan with two exceptions. First, the exclusion of public agencies who have chosen to be removed from the plan. Second, the exclusion of PSAP's who failed to respond as required by Section 307.

Article II

Statutory Requirement:

"Technical considerations of the service supplier including system equipment for facilities that would be used in providing emergency telephone service." [Sec. 102(q)(i)]

Suggested Operational Considerations:

This requires in-depth discussion with the county's service supplier and written language which meets statutory requirements of the tentative plan.

The 911 system within the county may include the service features of:

- ▶ Selection routing
- ▶ Automatic number identification (ANA)
- ▶ Automatic location identification (ALI)

The service suppliers for the county exchanges will provide technical considerations with respect to the design, installation, and maintenance of the network in accordance with the Michigan Public Service Commission tariff rates, rules and regulations, which must be included in the tentative plan and the appropriate system equipment for facilities that would be used in providing emergency telephone service.

Article III

Statutory Requirement:

"Operational considerations including designation of PSAP's and secondary PSAP's and the manner in which 9-1-1 calls would be processed, dispatch functions performed, and information systems utilized." [Sec. 102(q)(ii)]

Suggested Operational Considerations:

Each "public agency" in the county, who has decided to participate in the 911 service district, has designated a public safety answering point as their service center. The designated PSAP's have structured their method of delivery of service so that a 911 call is processed by means of either direct dispatch method, the relay method, or the transfer method.

The following lists the primary PSAP(s), secondary PSAP(s), and public agencies who have decided to participate in the 911 service district. Additionally, the suggested method of delivery of 911 service which each PSAP proposes is provided.

Tentative 911 Service Plan for the County*

PSAP	Secondary PSAP	Public Agency	Type of Service and Dispatch Method		
			D-Dispatch	R-Relay	T-Transfer
<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Agency service provided for</u>	<u>Police</u>	<u>Fire</u>	<u>Medical</u>
			D	D	T

*"Final 9-1-1 service plan" means a tentative 9-1-1 service plan that has been modified only to reflect necessary changes resulting from any exclusions of public agencies from the 9-1-1 service district of the tentative 9-1-1 service plan pursuant to section 306 and any failure of public safety agencies to be designated as PSAPs or secondary PSAPs pursuant to section 307.

Additionally, the PSAP shall publish their procedure to provide for the available emergency unit located closest to the request for emergency services to be dispatched to the need of such service. The method of dispatch and the closest car concept must be approved by the public agency utilizing the PSAP's services.

Pursuant to this act, each public agency has 45 days after receipt of this tentative 911 service plan to file with the county clerk a notice of exclusion from the 911 service district.

Each public agency has 45 days after receipt of this tentative 911 service plan to file with the county clerk a notice of intent to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP. When a public agency files as a PSAP or secondary PSAP, they shall file a service plan listing the public agencies for which they will provide 911 service and method of dispatch and plan for incurring "the closest car concept."

Should any public agency fail to file a notice of intent to function as a PSAP or secondary PSAP, the designation becomes the decision of the county board of commissioners.

Article IV

Statutory Requirement:

"Managerial considerations including the organizational form and agreements which would control technical, operational, and fiscal aspects of the emergency telephone service." [Sec. 102(q)(iii)]

Suggested Operational Considerations:

A public agency which decides to operate a PSAP is responsible for the management of the on-line public safety dispatch center's operations, such responsibility will be in the area of operational configuration, equipment needs, personnel needs, etc. However, the tentative plan should establish a procedure by which the public agencies which utilize the PSAP are afforded the review capabilities of the level of service and adherence to the plan the PSAP is providing.

The county, through the board of commissioners in consultation with the designated representative of the Department of State Police will be responsible, consistent with the emergency telephone enabling act, to ensure an appropriate and timely implementation and maintenance of county 911 service. Such activities may include, but are not necessarily limited to, system wide planning, coordination, information liaison, and approval of payment for the counties portion of system charges.

Statutory Requirement:

"Fiscal considerations including projected non-recurring and recurring cost with a financial plan for implementing and operating the system." [Sec. 102(q)(iv)].

Suggested Operational Considerations:

This requires in-depth discussion with the county's service supplier and written language which meets statutory requirements of the tentative plan.

Public agencies who request to be PSAP's must provide detailed cost projections for the structuring of the center to their users. These cost projections should include:

- ▶ **PSAP Equipment Costs - The act requires each public agency operating a PSAP to pay for:**
 - All terminal equipment installation and annual reoccurring charges.
 - Any additional PSAP equipment and/or program features as determined by the public agency such as secondary PSAP's and numbers of incoming lines above the determination by the tariff.
 - Equipment costs for ANI and ALI displays, and ALI master and auxiliary controllers, if these services are included in the plan.

ANI and ALI displays show ANI or ALI information at the PSAP. The displays may be purchased from various vendors or leased from Michigan Bell Telephone Company.
 - Installation, and maintenance of ANI and/or ALI displays within the PSAP.
 - Any personnel costs needed to operate the center.

- ▶ **Estimated network cost:**
 - The county board shall be responsible for filing the necessary reports to the Michigan Public Service Commission so that the service supplier may seek a tariff increase as provided by the Act.
 - The act makes provisions for network installation and annual recurring costs be paid for by the telephone subscriber up to a 2% cap as computed by a formula contained in the act. Network costs for the individual homeowner and resident of the county will be paid by the 2% tariff issued by the Michigan Public Service Commission.

Article VI

Statutory Requirement:

"The tentative 9-1-1 service plan shall require each public agency and county operating a PSAP under the 9-1-1 system to pay directly for all installation and recurring charges for terminal equipment, including customer premises equipment, associated with the public agency's or the county's PSAP, and may require each public agency and county operating a PSAP under the 9-1-1 system to pay directly to the service supplier all installation and recurring charges for all 9-1-1 exchange and tie lines associated with the public agency's or the county's PSAP." [Sec. 102(q)(v)]

Suggested Operational Considerations:

Under Article VI, the PSAP in agreement with the public agencies who are going to use the PSAP services may agree to a billing cost to the public agency for the services and equipment provided. This billing procedure will be filed with the county clerk by the PSAP with its notice to function as a PSAP.

The PSAP shall be responsible for payment of all equipment costs and service fees to the service supplier regardless of the billing procedures established between the PSAP and public agencies who use the PSAP services.



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