

July 1, 2011

TO: Scott McDonell
County Board Chair

Joe Parisi
Dane County Executive

Paul Rusk
Chair, Public Protection and Judiciary Committee

FROM: Travis Myren
Director of Administration

RE: Emergency Management, 911 Merger Options

The 2011 Budget directed the Department of Administration to conduct an implementation study to determine the most effective and efficient way to consolidate the Department of Emergency Management with the Department of Public Safety Communications (911 Center). The Budget further stipulates that the merger will not occur until the County Board adopts and the County Executive approves a resolution based on the study and a review of the study by the appropriate standing committees. Consistent with this directive, the Department facilitated a study team to guide the analysis. The study team consisted of the following five members:

- Director of Public Safety Communications (John Dejung),
- Interim Director of Emergency Management (David Janda),
- County Board Supervisor appointed by the Board Chair (Carousel Bayrd),
- Representative of the Public Protection and Judiciary Committee as designated by the Chair of the Committee (Paul Rusk), and
- Representative designated by the County Executive (Josh Wescott).

The Budget calls for a report to be transmitted to the County Executive, County Board Chair, and the Chair of the Public Protection and Judiciary Committee by July 1, 2011. This memorandum fulfills that reporting requirement. The paper summarizes the information gathered by the study team including the organizational structures currently in place, organizational structures used by other counties in Wisconsin, opportunities and threats posed by a potential consolidation, and an analysis of three different organizational structures. Finally, the memorandum conveys the recommendation of the study team which is to maintain the status quo.

Department of Emergency Management Current Organizational Structure and Responsibilities

The Department of Emergency Management is responsible for mitigating, preparing, responding, and recovering from major emergencies and other catastrophic events. The current organization includes a Director of Emergency Management who is employed under a management contract and reports to the County Executive. The Director is

supported by an Assistant Director and an Administrative Assistant I. The Department is organized into three program areas or divisions: Emergency Planning, Hazardous Materials, and Emergency Medical Services. The Department's total operating budget is over \$1.2 million, and approximately thirty percent (30%) of the total operating budget is supported by grant funds or other revenue sources.

The Director is responsible for the overall outcomes of the agency. The Director serves as the administrator of the department but also carries a project management workload. Approximately 20% of the Director's time is spent on administrative oversight, and the remaining 80% is dedicated to programmatic initiatives for mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. State Statute 323.14(2) requires that each County designate a head of emergency management.

The Assistant Director provides management support to the agency and is also responsible for specific programs such as the communication and warning system, reverse 911 system, hazard mitigation planning, evacuation planning, and the weather radio distribution program. The warning and communication system was transferred to Emergency Management from the 911 Center in 1993. Emergency Management is now responsible for maintenance and testing and acts as the secondary point of activation. The primary point of activation is the 911 Center. Emergency Management also maintains a Reverse 911 system and develops policies, installs upgrades, troubleshoots problems, and trains users on the system. The system is activated by the 911 Center and backed up by Emergency Management.

The Population Protection Planner assists in emergency planning programs with an emphasis on population protection, voluntary organization coordination, and emergency resource coordination. The position also serves as the department's public information officer. The position assists local units of government and other public safety agencies in the development of plans and conducts disaster exercises, technical emergency planning, and training.

The Hazardous Materials program is headed by the Hazardous Materials Planner who is supported by a Clerk Typist III. The EPCRA formula grant supports approximately 40% of the total cost of these positions. This program develops emergency planning programs with an emphasis on hazardous material planning and community disaster exercises. The program coordinates incident management team training, decontamination training with twenty eight (28) fire departments, and technical assistance to public safety agencies and the private sector by developing off site plans for facilities that store hazardous materials. The Department provides these plans to the 911 Center which are entered into the CAD system and used to provide information and response recommendations to first responders.

The EMS program is staffed by an EMS Supervisor and Training Coordinator, an Emergency Medical Services Specialist, and a Clerk Typist I-II¹. This program coordinates ongoing medical training and information for the public, emergency medical

¹ This position is unfunded.

technicians, and medical professionals and paraprofessionals. The staff develop and instruct in-service training programs for emergency medical service districts and supervise the training and enrollment of all EMT and EMT refresher courses. The unit is also responsible for recommending new training concepts, programs, and field equipment used in EMS and coordinates with twenty-one (21) ambulance districts to provide limited information to the 911 Center on ambulance movement and assets.

The Division has a contract with a medical doctor to provide advice and consultation on changes and improvements to medical protocols used by emergency medical technicians. The cost of the contract is \$60,000.

The EMS program also administers a pooled insurance program for EMS districts in coordination with the County's Risk Manager. The County funds the premiums for general liability insurance, workers compensation for EMS volunteers, and automobile insurance for many of the EMS District ambulances. The total premium cost to the County is approximately \$217,000 in 2011.

All department staff assist in emergency management operations during severe weather and other emergencies that require activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center.

Governance and Oversight

The Department is directly responsible to the County Executive for day to day operational activities and strategic planning to achieve future goals and objectives. The Public Protection and Judiciary Committee is responsible for policy making and rule making and satisfies the statutory requirement that the County designate a committee of the County Board as the county emergency management committee. The department also receives limited direction from the Local Emergency Planning Committee on issues related to hazardous materials planning and from the Emergency Medical Services Commission on issues related to pre-hospital care and transport.

Department of Public Safety Communications

Current Organizational Structure and Responsibilities

The Public Safety Communications Department or 911 Center provides countywide 911 emergency call-taking and communication services. The 911 Center currently provides dispatching and centralized communications services for the Dane County Sheriff's Office, Madison Police and Fire Departments, 21 other law enforcement agencies, 26 other local fire departments, and 21 EMS agencies. The department's total operating budget is \$6.8 million and relies nearly exclusively on general purpose revenue to fund operations.

The Department is headed by the Director of Public Safety Communications who is employed under a management contract and reports to the County Executive. The Director is responsible for the overall outcomes of the agency, supervises management staff, manages significant capital projects, and represents the agency to governance

bodies and user groups. The Department has three program areas: 911 Operations, Support Services, and Technical Services.

The Operations program provides emergency call taking and dispatch services. The program is headed by an Operations manager who is supported by 8 Communications Supervisors and 68 Communicators. This unit also implements the recommendations of Support Services staff for on the job training, quality assurance, and customer support. The Operations program is the primary point of activation for the emergency communication and warning system and the reverse 911 system.

The Support Services program is staffed by a Support Services Manager and three Communicators. The program administers the departmental quality assurance program and develops, maintains, and monitors procedural standards. The Support Services staff review calls to monitor the quality of service and recommend corrective action where needed. The Division is also responsible for staff recruitment and all departmental training. Support Services conducts pre-service training and on the job training for new employees and certification and re-certification testing on particular call taking and dispatch disciplines. Support Services is also the primary contact for public relations, open records responses, complaint resolution from user agencies, website development, and public information. The Support Services Division relies on the services of a medical director to provide advice on response procedures and protocols used by Communicators when assisting callers. The Division also oversees and supervises the departmental administrative support personnel.

The Technical Services Division is responsible for technology support and for managing technical projects for the Department. It is staffed by a Technical Services Manager, a database coordinator, and a CAD Analyst. The Technical Services Manager is also responsible for project management of the new radio communications system and a new computer aided dispatch application. These two projects represent significant investments by the County and will command a significant staff effort to manage the implementation and maintenance of those systems.

Governance and Oversight

The Department is directly responsible to the County Executive for day to day operational activities and strategic planning to achieve future goals and objectives. The Public Protection and Judiciary Committee provides overall policy oversight, but the operational activities of the Department are also subject to the oversight of the 911 Center Board. The Center Board performs a role in hiring and evaluating the Director and in developing operating practices for the Center. The Center Board serves in an advisory capacity in all other matters including reviewing the department's proposed budget.

Review of Organizational Structures in Wisconsin

Counties have chosen to organize Emergency Management and 911 Center functions in a variety of different ways. The Department of Emergency Management provided survey results from a survey conducted by Wisconsin Emergency Management on the organizational structure of the Emergency Management function in County governments. Sixty-three of seventy-two counties responded to the survey. The survey revealed that

- 17 counties have integrated the Emergency Management function within the Sheriff's Office;
- 14 counties have the Emergency Management function associated with the Sheriff's Office but as a separate organizational entity;
- 41 counties organize the Emergency Management function as a separate County department;
- Manitowoc County has the 911 Communications Director also serving as the county's Emergency Manager;
- Waukesha County has a Director of Emergency Preparedness who oversees radio services, communications, and emergency planning.

Consolidation Discussion

The Department of Emergency Management and the Department of Public Safety Communications have similar general and specific functions. Although the scope and scale of services is different and unique, they both intervene when individuals, groups, or other jurisdictions face emergencies or crises. Both agencies also have a role in training and public information, and both use advanced technology to serve the public. More specifically, the two agencies have complimentary responsibilities for the emergency warning system and the reverse 911 system. They also rely on similar resources, contracting with medical directors for advice in developing protocols for emergency medical response.

While these similarities exist, both Directors are engaged in day-to-day management and direct program support. The 911 Center is in the process of implementing two large and complex capital projects while Emergency Management is maintaining its current portfolio of activities and the capacity to respond to emergencies and support response and recovery efforts without a permanent Director. Therefore, integrating the two departments into a cohesive consolidated agency may require balancing ongoing responsibilities and potentially shifting responsibilities and priorities between the two agencies' staff. The potential for a consolidation to assist in maintaining current efforts and improving overall performance is examined below.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

To examine the viability of a consolidated department, the study team performed a SWOT analysis which evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the current organization and the opportunities and threats posed by consolidation. The complete analysis is attached as an appendix to this report. The SWOT analysis indicated that the primary opportunities presented by a merged agency include:

- Staff cross training
- Expanded networking with the community and customers
- Supplementing Emergency Operations Center activations with Support Services staff
- EM Public Information Officer assisting the 911 Center's public information efforts
- 911 Technical Services assisting with Emergency Management's future technology needs
- Leveraging administrative support staff to assist both agencies

- Improving communication & situational awareness during emergency events
- Potential cost savings
- Single point of contact for user agencies that now interact with both departments
- Standardized personnel classifications between departments

The SWOT analysis also revealed potential threats posed by a consolidated agency:

- Grant work is under increased scrutiny from funding agencies so adequate staffing is needed
- State and Federal budgets for EMPG/EPCRA grants are uncertain
- The departments may suffer a loss of identity
- EM may lose direct reporting to the PP&J Committee and to the County Executive
- Reporting relationships & oversight responsibilities would need to be clarified
- MMRS (Metro Medical Response System) work may suffer without sufficient staff capacity
- Consolidation may crowd out other opportunities to merge with other 911 centers
- Emergency responses may stretch director
- No apparent champion for change
- Consolidation effort may face criticism for moving too fast - without external study
- Grant work could suffer
- Consolidation may be perceived negatively by staff
- Need full time directors to keep up with current work
- Increasing need for tech support in 911
- No excess capacity to accommodate merger
- No co-located space
- Culture clash potential
- Increasing demands and expectations of both departments

Stakeholder Input

The Public Protection and Judiciary Committee held a public hearing on whether stakeholders believed that merger was a positive initiative at this time. A total of nine individuals submitted registration forms. Of those nine individuals, three spoke in opposition to the consolidation initiative, and six registered in opposition.

A representative from the Emergency Medical Services Association and the Dane County Fire Chief's Association provided testimony to the Committee. The Emergency Management staff also registered their opinions with the Committee.

Although one speaker acknowledged that he did not know the exact organizational model that was being contemplated, the public hearing revealed many of the same concerns that were raised during the study team's SWOT analysis process. Those concerns included:

- A reduction in the level of service provided by Emergency Management
- Capacity in a merged department may not be sufficient to manage a crisis or emergency
- Emergency Management will become less of a County priority which was the case in a Green County consolidation initiative and at the State level when

Wisconsin Emergency Management was merged with the Department of Military Affairs

- Emergency Management stakeholders will lose direct access to the County Executive on policy priorities and budget matters
- The previous Emergency Management Director headed both agencies for a nine month period and opined that it was not a sustainable model
- Countywide medical direction may be sacrificed
- The DaneComm project may suffer if it receives less attention from the director.
- Commingling the budgets may result in Emergency Management absorbing a larger share of any specified reduction.
- By adding the budgets together, Emergency Management would be subject to the budget cuts that are required for large departments which are typically a higher percentage than those required for smaller departments.

In addition to the testimony, many of the Emergency Management staff registered in opposition to the concept of consolidation.

Other stakeholder input was received through written correspondence. The Dane County Fire Chief's Association adopted a resolution opposing the merger. Local 1871, the bargaining unit representing the professional staff in Emergency Management, issued a communication expressing concerns about the limited cost savings associated with the merger, the loss of management capacity, a complex governance structure, and pay equity among management staff. The Town of Westport Chairperson also submitted a letter in opposition to the merger due to limited cost savings, a potential loss of emphasis on EMS activities in a merged department, and current performance under the status quo.

Options for Consolidation

Given the size, responsibilities, and significant organizational capabilities of the two agencies, creating a consolidated department must be guided by the ability to find synergies and efficiently maximize organizational capacity. The following organizational options were developed by the study team and are evaluated in terms of the ability to capitalize on the opportunities of consolidation and minimize the threats.

Option 1

The first option creates a single Director for the consolidated agency and creates a Division of Emergency Management in the consolidated department. This option eliminates the Emergency Management Director position and creates a Division Manager for Emergency Management by utilizing the existing Assistant Emergency Management Director position.

The Division Manager would be responsible for staff management and for overseeing grant applications, grant reporting, and other program responsibilities. The Emergency Management Division would continue to be responsible for Emergency Planning, Hazardous Materials Planning, and Emergency Medical Services. The Division manager would also serve as the primary staff person responsible for maintaining readiness for emergency response and for managing the activation of the Emergency Operations Center and its responsibilities during an emergency.

This option also creates a dedicated supervisor for Emergency Planning titled Emergency Planning Coordinator. This position is created using the existing Special Population Planner which would otherwise be eliminated in the middle of 2012 due to the loss of grant funding. Under this scenario, the position would be funded with grant revenue for the first part of the year and then transferred to general purpose revenue for the remainder of 2012. The position would continue in the department's base budget for 2013. The Coordinator position would have supervisory responsibility for the Population Protection Planner/PIO, which is re-titled to Emergency Planning Specialist, and for limited term project positions and interns that may be hired to accomplish certain grant activities. In order to maintain grant and project management capacity, the Coordinator would also manage its own set of projects and funding sources.

Finally, this option combines technology support responsibilities in the Technical Services Division by transferring the Communication Interoperability Planner to that Division.

Due to classification considerations, the Division Manager is upgraded by one management range to an M-11 to be consistent with the other division managers in the department, and the Hazardous Materials Supervisor is upgraded by one range to an M-10 to be consistent with the other unit supervisors.

Cost Analysis

Change	2012 Savings/(Cost)	Ongoing Savings
Eliminate EM Director	(\$126,729)	(\$126,729)
Create EM Coordinator	\$84,817	\$84,817
Grant for EM Coordinator (2012)	(\$42,000)	
Reclassify Division Manager	\$4,615	\$4,615
Reclassify Hazardous Materials Supervisor	\$4,042	\$4,042
TOTAL SAVINGS	(\$75,255)	(\$33,255)

Organizational Analysis

This consolidation option addresses some of the opportunities associated with the consolidation. It saves money by eliminating one department head position, and it may improve situational awareness during emergency events since the response will be coordinated through a consolidated director. This option also achieves pay equity between the two departments by reclassifying the new Emergency Management Manager to an M-11 and the Hazardous Materials Supervisor to an M-10, consistent with the other division managers and supervisors employed by the consolidated department. Additionally, this option protects against the threats associated with diminished capacity by retaining the Special Population Planner position and converting it to a supervisory position. As a management position, the position would be required to lead the Emergency Planning Unit, create plans for the future, and would have budget and

personnel responsibility. The addition of the Coordinator position also helps to address the leadership gap threats presented by the potential consolidation.

The Technical Services Division is enhanced by the addition of the Communications Interoperability Planner. This Division would manage all of the technical projects and technology services offered by the department. Moving the Communication Interpretability Planner to this Division would have the advantage of optimizing technical capacity and cross training on the existing systems and on the new systems currently being implemented. This Division would continue to implement significant technology improvements like the radio system and the computer aided dispatch application, and once those systems are installed, the Division would be responsible for operations and maintenance. The Division would also manage the emergency communication and warning system, the reverse 911 system, and the weather radio program.

Option 2

Option 2 represents an effort to combine similar functions to take advantage of potential operational synergies while continuing to address management and capacity issues. In addition to combining technology support responsibilities in the Technical Services Division, it further consolidates training and certification responsibilities in the Support Services Division by transferring the EMS unit to that Division. This option also maintains the Emergency Planning Coordinator position for additional management capacity and continues the classification improvements of Option 1.

Cost Analysis

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Grant for EM Coordinator (2012)	(\$42,000)	
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TOTAL SAVINGS	(\$75,255)	(\$33,255)

Organizational Analysis

Transferring the EMS function into the Support Services Division is an attempt to combine department efforts in training and support for employees and user agencies. Although EMS would be a discrete function within the Division, some training enhancement could result from the combined skills of the existing staff. The inclusion of EMS within Support Services would also provide a single point of administration for the medical director contracts. Each contract would continue to include a unique scope of services, but organizational improvements could result from a more consolidated management approach. The consolidation of the EMS Division within Support Services would also mitigate the loss of a Clerk Typist I-II position currently assigned to EMS and may allow the County to sustain unfunding the position as approved in the 2011 Budget.

Finally, the Support Services Division would offer the surge capacity needed during an EOC activation and the longer term response activities following an emergency. Quality assurance reviews and training activities can be postponed or scaled back during an emergency response and then resumed when response activities subside.

Governance Changes – All Consolidation Options

Any of the consolidation options outlined above would present the same need to modify certain governance and reporting responsibilities. The Department would continue to report to the County Executive for day-to-day management, operations, and strategic planning for the future. The Public Protection and Judiciary Committee would continue to provide oversight to the consolidated agency. The Department would continue to receive limited direction from the Local Emergency Planning Committee on issues of hazardous materials planning and from the Emergency Medical Services Commission on issues related to pre-hospital care and transport.

The only potential need for change to accommodate the consolidated department would be to restrict the role of the Center Board to the policies of the Operations Division and that their role in establishing operating policies not be extended to the other program areas in Emergency Planning, Support Services, or Technical Services.

Option 3 – Status Quo

The final option is to maintain the status quo. This option would forgo the savings associated with eliminating a department head position and may impair improvements to situational awareness during emergency events, cross training, surge capacity in the EOC, and potential efficiency gains that the other two options offer. A consolidation effort does not guarantee that these improvements would occur, and some of these improvements could be gained through a closer working relationship between the two departments. In either case, achieving these improvements will require close and active collaboration among the existing staff and dedication from its leadership.

This option would avoid the threats presented by a loss of capacity, loss of identity, and grant support that the other options may present, and it would allow each of the departments to build on their strengths and work more closely together on situational awareness while maintaining department identity.

Study Team Recommendation

The study team adopted a recommendation to maintain the status quo but to encourage the two departments to continue to work together to improve communication and coordination, operational efficiency and effectiveness.