METRO REGION
9-1-1 Standards, Protocols, Procedures

Document Section:	**1 - Training**	911 TOC Approval:
Sub-Section:	**METRO**	Date: 09/15/2016
Procedure Title:	**Minimum Training Standard, Emergency Communications Professional**	MESB Approval:
Effective Date: Replaces Document Dated: Date Revised:	**01/01/2017**	Date: 11/09/2016

1. Purpose or Objective

To provide a minimum training requirement for individuals that will serve as a public safety emergency communications professional also referred to as telecommunicator, public safety call-taker and/or dispatcher, in the Minnesota Metro Region. The training topics here provide the basic foundational knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the role of an emergency communications professional.

2. Background:

Emergency communications professionals make life and death decisions on a daily basis and must be highly trained and skilled professionals due to the consequences of their actions or inactions. The safety of the communities and responders served is dependent on their ability to effectively gather and communicate critical information while maintaining situational awareness of incident response and responders. Minimum training requirements and standards ensure the public receives the highest quality of service in their time of need regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

3. Operational Context:

This standard outlines the minimum basic training requirements only. It is imperative that all emergency communications professionals receive supplemental training that will enable them to process emergency calls that are specific to their agency. It is strongly encouraged that line public safety emergency communications professionals be required to demonstrate understanding of the knowledge and concepts included in this standard through practical application as part of an on-the-job training process. The length of time and depth of training with a particular topic must correlate to the needs and services rendered within the agency.

4. Definitions:

Emergency communications professional - A person employed by a public safety answering point (PSAP) who – after receiving supplemental training that will enable them to process emergency calls specific to their respective PSAP – is qualified to handle emergency calls and/or provide for the appropriate emergency response in a live environment. Basic training by itself does not qualify one to take calls in a live environment, rather it provides a baseline level of knowledge.

5. <u>Recommended Protocol/ Standard:</u>

Requirements:
> Highly recommended for entry level public safety emergency communications professional
> ☐ Recommended for _____
> ☐ Optional for _____

6. <u>Training Topics:</u>

A) Roles and Responsibilities: Public safety emergency communications professionals must understand the roles and responsibilities of their position as it relates to the agency's stakeholders. Stakeholders include the public, response and ancillary agencies, as well as other PSAPs that might be involved in the incident. The level of professionalism exemplified is a direct reflection upon the agency and the public safety industry.

Recommended Training Topics – Roles and Responsibilities
- Introduction to agency mission, vision and terminology
- Duties and responsibilities of the position
- Explanation of the communities and agencies served
- Roles and responsibilities of public safety partners (police, fire, EMS, emergency management, etc.)
- Ethics, professionalism, values, personal conduct, image
- Local, regional, state and industry wide policies, procedures, rules, regulations and standards
- Role of the emergency communications professional as it relates to responder safety
- Structure of local governance

B) Legal Concepts: The emergency communications professional must be aware that every action taken could be scrutinized within a court of law, as well as by the community served. Preparation for the role of emergency communications professional should cover the rules and regulations that govern the emergency communications profession at both the local and federal level.

Recommended Training Topics – Legal Concepts

- Liability, confidentiality, negligence, duty
- Overview of criminal and civil law as it pertains to agency response
- Documentation, MN Data Practices Act, recording, and records retention
- Media/information dissemination
- Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA)

C) **Interpersonal Communications:** The techniques used by the emergency communication professional could have a drastic impact on the outcome of the incident. This section focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that every emergency communication professional should have to perform effectively in their role.

Recommended Training Topics – Interpersonal Communications
- Communication and de-escalation techniques
- Active listening techniques
- Information processing, communications cycle
- Internal and external customer service and interactions with others
- Diversity/demographics
- Non-Native-Language Callers
- Communication-Impaired callers

D) **Emergency Communications Technology & Information Systems:** Each PSAP within the U.S. faces a constantly changing landscape of communications technologies and advancements. It is important that emergency communication professionals understand the terminology associated with call delivery, call processing, and dispatch infrastructure. Each subtopic is intended to be customized to meet the instructing agency's needs, with the understanding that the technology component serves as a building block for future learning environments.

Emergency Communications Technology & Information Systems:
- Telephone technologies (selective routing, wireline, wireless, multi-line telephone systems, private branch exchange, voice over internet protocol, class of service, etc.)
- Basic and enhanced 9-1-1, NG 9-1-1
- Automatic Number Identification (ANI)/Automatic Location Identification (ALI)
- Wireless Phase I and Phase II
- Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/Teletypewriter (TTY)/Telephone Relay Service (TRS)
- Text to 9-1-1 capabilities
- Telematics and enhanced third party call delivery capabilities
- Computerized mapping/geographic information systems (GIS)
- Logging recorders
- Computer-aided dispatch (CAD) Systems

- Mobile data systems (MDS), automatic vehicle location (AVL), paging, alarms, etc.
- Call transfers, alternate and default Routing, etc.
- Mass notification systems and procedures
- Criminal justice information systems (CJIS)/National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS)
- Agency department information technology operations
- Interagency networks and databases

E) **Call Processing:** This section covers many of the most essential skills that an emergency communication professional needs to possess. They must be able to process a variety of incident types and sizes. The management of the call from delivery through categorization, prioritization, pre-arrival instructions, and dispatch of appropriate resources is the core of the emergency communication professional's position. Even when PSAPs are discipline specific (i.e., law enforcement only), the reality of multidiscipline incidents is evidence that working knowledge of other disciplines is necessary. The development of a local curriculum that includes all response disciplines is in the best interest of the responder and the public.

Recommended Training Topics – Call Processing
- Call receiving (hang-up, abandoned, open line, call tracing and records retrieval procedures)
- Interviewing/interrogation techniques
- Structured call-taking protocols and standards overview
- Maintaining control of the call
- Escalated incidents and managing high-risk calls (domestic assault, active shooter/hostile events, suicidal, mass casualty incident, etc.)
- Managing specialty calls (children, elderly, mentally or emotionally challenged, communications impaired)
- Call categorization/prioritization
- Homeland security/terrorism/weapons of mass destruction (WMD)
- Aircraft/rail incidents/marine
- Hazardous materials incidents
- Missing/exploited/trafficked Persons
- Discipline specific call processing and dispatching (law, fire, EMS)
- Responder-initiated calls
- Amber Alerts

F) **Emergency Management:** The emergency communications professional plays a pivotal role in the management of emergency incidents, especially as the scope of an incident grows in complexity. Having a minimum-level understanding of Incident Management and Incident Command Systems is necessary to ensure they can effectively serve small incident response to disaster-level events.

Recommended Training Topics – Emergency Management
- Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS) – IS 100
- ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents - IS 200
- National Response Framework an Introduction - IS 800
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) – IS 700
- Emergency management roles and responsibilities
- Disaster preparedness
- Mutual-aid/Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce (TERT) – IS 144
- Governmental and private resources
- Local emergency operation plans

G) Radio Communications: With the majority of emergency calls coming from mobile devices, it is important to understand radio systems play a lead role in both call delivery and dispatch functions. The emergency communications professional should possess an understanding of the rules, regulations, abilities, and limitations of the local radio system and how this can affect the response.

Recommended Training Topics – Radio Communications
- ARMER system and state standards; at a minimum State Standard 1.11.3 – Training Radio Telecommunicators and State Standard 1.11.4 – Training ARMER End Users
- Minnesota Dispatchers Communications Best Practice Guide
- Radio communication techniques (rate of speech, terminology, formulating communication)
- Radio technology and equipment (system information and coverage, malfunction and failure procedure)
- Rationale for radio procedures and protocols
- Radio discipline (professionalism, controlled communication, etc.)
- Interoperability and role of emergency communications professional in coordinating multi-agency communications (COML, COMT, etc.)
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Rules

H) Stress Management: All members of the public safety family experience intense levels of stress. It is important for an emergency communications professional to understand the effects of stress on their job performance and life outside of work. A well-designed stress-management program, accounting for both personal and organizational needs, results in a better quality of life for the emergency communications professional and a higher level of service for the responder and citizen.

Recommended Training Topics – Stress Management
- Definition, Causation, Identification
- Strategies for dealing with stress/accumulative stress and burnout (peer support, lifestyle changes)

- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Employee assistance program (EAP)

I) Quality/Performance Standards Management: To ensure a training program is effectively meeting the needs of the emergency communications professional and the organization, metrics should be put in place to measure the success of the program. Items such as daily observation reports (DOR) and skills performance testing are recommended to track progress and identify areas of performance needing improvement. The same process should be applied to all emergency communications professionals to ensure that the organization is providing a uniformly high level of service to its customers.

Recommended Training Topics – Quality Management
- DOR/Skills Performance Testing/Performance Standards
- Acceptance of feedback
- Attendance
- Quality Assurance (QA)/Quality Control (QC)/Quality Improvement (QI)

7. Recommended Procedure:

It is highly recommended that Public Safety Answering Point managers ensure that their training programs meet or exceed this standard as the minimum competency-based training for entry level emergency communications professionals.

8. Management

PSAP Management will ensure that emergency communications professionals demonstrate minimum competencies in accordance with this standard and that all training is conducted by qualified personnel.

9. References[1]

"Model Statute for the Regulation of Minimum Training Guidelines for Telecommunicators", NENA International, Alexandria, VA, 2016
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[1] *Disclaimer: Portions of this document contain text taken verbatim from the references listed.*

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Checklist of Minimum Training Requirements for Metro Region

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Checklist of Minimum Training Requirements for Emergency Communications Professionals - Metro Region

- Acceptance of feedback
- Attendance
- Quality Assurance (QA)/Quality Control (QC)/Quality Improvement

Employee Name:

Employee signature:

Management Name:

Management signature: