

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
BOARD ACTION SUMMARY**

DEPT: Stanislaus Regional 911

BOARD AGENDA: 7.2
AGENDA DATE: February 4, 2025

SUBJECT:

Acceptance of an Update on Emergency Dispatch Call Processing in Stanislaus County and Stanislaus Regional 911's Computer Aided Dispatch System Project

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-0074

On motion of Supervisor Chiesa Seconded by Supervisor Withrow
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: Chiesa, Withrow, and Chairman B. Condit

Noes: Supervisors: C. Condit

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: Grewal

Abstaining: Supervisor: None


1) X Approved as recommended

2) _____ Denied

3) _____ Approved as amended

4) _____ Other:

MOTION:


ATTEST: KELLY RODRIGUEZ, Assistant Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

File No.

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
AGENDA ITEM**

DEPT: Stanislaus Regional 911

BOARD AGENDA:7.2

AGENDA DATE: February 4, 2025

CONSENT ☐

CEO CONCURRENCE: YES

4/5 Vote Required: No

SUBJECT:

Acceptance of an Update on Emergency Dispatch Call Processing in Stanislaus County and Stanislaus Regional 911's Computer Aided Dispatch System Project

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. Accept the update on emergency dispatch call processing in Stanislaus County and Stanislaus Regional 911's computer aided dispatch system project.

DISCUSSION:

Stanislaus Regional 911 (SR911) is a public safety organization that provides comprehensive 24/7 emergency dispatch services in Stanislaus County (County). Formed in 1999 through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between the City of Modesto (Modesto) and the County of Stanislaus, SR911 is governed by a four-member Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission (Commission) with representatives from both entities. Supervisors Grewal and B. Condit are the appointed members representing the County on the Commission. Using a centralized dispatch model, SR911 efficiently coordinates emergency responses for 22 county law enforcement and fire agencies, including cities that contract for law enforcement services with the Sheriff's Office. While the JPA was formed in 1999, the County and Modesto have jointly contracted for dispatch services since June 1978. This is a longstanding partnership dedicated to ensuring optimum essential emergency services support for the County.

On December 10, 2024 (Board Resolution 2024-0700), among other things, the Board of Supervisors requested the Sheriff to submit a comprehensive plan at the January 28, 2025, meeting, outlining the anticipated impacts of the Sheriff's stated intent to establish an alternative dispatch system. The request was for the plan to detail the complete one-time start-up and ongoing operations costs to implement the Sheriff's vision. Recognizing the Sheriff's development agreements with Oracle, the plan was expected to clarify the short-term costs while under the agreement and the long-term costs once the agreement expires. The Department was requested to include specific funding sources expected to support all costs, including the share of costs attributed to Patterson, Riverbank, Waterford, and Hughson for contracted Sheriff services. In addition to financial considerations, the full impact on the community was requested to be clarified, including any impacts related to transferring fire and emergency medical services calls and the transition process to the new model.

On January 28, 2025 (Board Resolution 2025-0051), the Sheriff's Office presented a

plan to outline the anticipated impacts of a proposed alternative dispatch system. The Board of Supervisors authorized the Sheriff to negotiate with the City of Ceres for a police dispatch services agreement to be brought back for Board approval consistent with the County's Purchasing Policy. Additionally, the Board of Supervisors requested an update from SR911 on the call processing time impacts related to transferring fire and emergency medical services calls within the County under the Sheriff's plan.

The 9-1-1 emergency system prioritizes law enforcement calls over fire and emergency medical services. This means that when calling 9-1-1, the call will be directed to the public safety answering point (PSAP) for the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in the caller's area. If the call is for fire or emergency medical services, and the initial PSAP does not dispatch for the required service, the call must be transferred to the applicable PSAP within the system.

When answering calls, emergency dispatchers obtain and verify the location of the emergency, a callback phone number in the event the call is dropped, and then ask the caller what happened to determine the type of assistance needed. The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) standard for 9-1-1 call processing is to verify all location information to obtain the most accurate dispatchable address for emergency response (NENA-STA-020.1-2020 Section 2.2.5.1). This verification process is essential in preventing misrouted calls and ensuring first responders reach the correct location. Beyond these standards, it is industry best practice to obtain the name of the caller. This same process exists with each transfer, so every new transfer introduced into the system will create a new need to obtain this information, which has the impact of increasing the duration of the call processing time and is in direct contrast to the Cal OES 9-1-1 Operations Manual which states that "[every] effort should be made to minimize the number [of] 9-1-1 call transfers."

When a transfer is unavoidable, the dispatcher advises the caller which PSAP the call is being transferred to, instructs them to stay on the line, and performs a "warm transfer" by relaying key details such as the location, callback number, and nature of the emergency (NENA Section 2.2.6). In addition to these standards, Cal OES 9-1-1 Operations Manual standards require procedures for advising the 9-1-1 caller that the call is being transferred and to remain on the line. Adhering to these standards ensures that emergency calls are processed efficiently, reducing unnecessary call transfers and enhancing public safety. All of this means that a caller will need to repeat for each transfer 1) the ring time (time it takes for the receiving PSAP to answer the call), 2) providing their name, 3) providing their phone number, 4) providing the address or location of the emergency, and 5) the nature of the emergency.

In the current countywide 9-1-1 system, all user agency communities participating in SR911 receive direct access to law and fire emergency services without needing a call transfer. Calls requiring emergency medical services (EMS) are transferred to an ambulance dispatch agency.

If the Sheriff's Office withdraws from the JPA, an additional transfer will be introduced into the system. This change would directly impact the County's unincorporated areas and communities within the Sheriff's Office jurisdiction, including the contract cities of Hughson, Waterford, Patterson, and Riverbank, where callers would experience two transfers to reach EMS. Specifically, the initial 9-1-1 call would be answered by the Sheriff's Office dispatch center, then transferred to SR911 for fire dispatch, and

subsequently transferred again to the ambulance dispatch agency, which could delay emergency response times. In situations where fire and EMS dispatch is required, such as cardiac arrest, additional transfers represent a delay in response time.

Below is the total number of calls requiring a fire or EMS response in the calendar year 2024 for each contract city under the Sheriff's Office and the unincorporated areas that would be impacted by the withdrawal of the Sheriff's Office from the JPA.

City	Fire ¹	EMS ²	Total
Hughson	116	871	987
Waterford	135	892	1,027
Patterson	383	1,910	2,293
Riverbank	328	2,045	2,373
Unincorporated	1,344	14,073	15,417
Total	2,306	19,791	22,097

Footnotes:

¹ These calls represent fire only calls.

² EMS calls include calls that may have required a fire response.

Efficiencies, such as a CAD-to-CAD link, could be introduced to streamline call processing by electronically transmitting call details between agencies. However, this solution does not eliminate call transfers, as the caller still needs to be transferred to each agency. Each agency is still responsible for completing call intake, triage, and coordinating a response, meaning the dispatcher needs to verify the location, a callback number, and the nature of the emergency.

The 911 call transfer process in Stanislaus County has room for improvement in terms of reducing response times and streamlining the dispatch process for fire and medical emergencies. The current multi-agency structure necessitates transfers in cases of fire and medical emergencies, creating the potential for delays, which can be critical when seconds count. Aware of the opportunity, on October 23, 2024, SR911 staff presented to CEDAC on 9-1-1 call processing in Stanislaus County. The presentation addressed that integrating EMS into SR911 would reduce call processing time, expedite getting help to citizens, and provide dispatchers the ability to intervene with life-saving pre-arrival instructions over the phone immediately. This integration would eliminate the need for a call transfer and create a one-stop shop for all emergencies. Staff are actively exploring the integration of EMS into SR911.

CAD Update

At the June 26, 2024, Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission (Commission) meeting, the Commission approved purchasing the Central Square Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System. Since approval, staff have been working with Central Square to implement the new CAD System. On January 28, 2025, Central Square, SR911, and user agencies began configuring the system. Agencies were provided a deadline of February 19, 2025, to provide configuration needs. Central Square will not be able to accommodate new configurations after the deadline. Operational assessment review will begin in April, followed by validation and readiness in July. The projected go-live date is September 15, 2025.

Due to the uncertain direction of the Sheriff's Office, the County has not entered into the necessary agreements with Central Square for County Fire and Probation. While County Fire and Probation are participating in the implementation project, the Sheriff's Office has elected not to participate. At this date, discounts to license costs have already been lost due to the County not purchasing the required licenses for County Fire, Probation, and the Sheriff's Office. Additional potential negative impacts of the Sheriff's Office not participating in the implementation project and the County not executing an agreement with Central Square for the required licenses by the February 19, 2025, deadline are noted below.

- There may be additional costs to configure for the Sheriff.
- The Sheriff's Office, County Fire, and Probation may experience a delayed implementation.
- The County would bear any additional costs attributed to the delays.

POLICY ISSUE:

The Board of Supervisors requested an update on emergency dispatch call processing times at the January 28, 2025, meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendations contained in this report.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' PRIORITY:

The recommended actions are consistent with the Board of Supervisors' priority of *Supporting a Strong and Safe Community* and *Delivering Efficient Public Services* by monitoring emergency dispatch call processing times within the County.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no staffing impact associated with the recommendations contained in this report.

CONTACT PERSON:

Kasey Young, SR911 Executive Director

(209) 552-3900

Public Safety Communications

4 February 2025



Presentation

- Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)
- Call Transfers
- Customer Experience
- 9-1-1 National Standards
- Challenges with Call Transfers
- EMS Consolidation
- CAD Update

PSAPs



9-1-1 Calls are received at a
Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)

“PSAPs” (Communications Dispatch Centers)

1. Receive the incoming calls
2. Determine the location of the emergency
3. Identify what type of assistance is needed
4. Dispatch the appropriate resources
5. And in some situations, can provide immediate assistance before help arrives on-scene

Call Transfers



All PSAPs within a geographic area work together to provide service to the community

Often, this requires transferring the caller to a different PSAP



Customer Experience



It is important for the dispatcher to complete call intake by:

- › Asking the caller for their **name**
- › Asking for and verifying the **location of the emergency**
(where does help need to be sent?)
- › Obtaining a callback **phone number**
(in case the call drops)
- › Allowing the caller to explain **what happened**
to identify **what type of assistance is needed**

Customer Experience



When emergency calls are transferred, callers are **re-asked** some of the same questions

1. name
2. location of the emergency
3. callback phone number
4. what happened

While this additional questioning is necessary to obtain and verify information **firsthand**, it creates an inefficient and frustrating experience for the caller reporting an emergency.

9-1-1 National Standards



National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
Standard STA-020.1-2020 (Section 2.2.5.1):

“[Dispatchers] SHALL verify all location information conveyed about the emergency in order to obtain the most accurate dispatchable location for emergency services response.”

This verification process is essential in preventing misrouted calls and ensuring Emergency Responders reach the correct location

9-1-1 National Standards



National Emergency Number Association (NENA) Standard
STA-020.1-2020 (Section 2.2.6):

“When calls need to be transferred to another PSAP, the telecommunicator SHALL advise the caller which PSAP they are being transferred to, in addition to advising the caller to stay on the line while the call is being transferred, such as “Please do not hang up; I am connecting you with (name of the agency).” The telecommunicator SHALL then initiate the transfer without delay. The telecommunicator SHALL stay on the line to announce the call to the transfer PSAP call taker/telecommunicator (a.k.a., “warm transfer” or “attended transfer”), and SHOULD relay the pertinent information, including, but not limited to:

1. Location
2. Callback Number
3. Nature of the call
4. Known safety information”

CalOES 911 Operations Manual



Chapter 1: Standards Section 3

“When transferring a 9-1-1 call, procedures will be developed for advising the 9-1-1 caller that the call is being transferred and to remain on the line. Every effort should be made to minimize the number of 9-1-1 call transfers.”

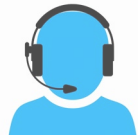
Challenges with Call Transfers



- › Each transfer creates an **additional step** where a call may be dropped
- › The additional questioning **adds time**
- › Callers may provide different (or less) information when they re-answer the questions during the transfer
- › **Caller frustration** lowers confidence in the 911 system

Current Practice

(Sheriff's Office (SO) with SR911)



SR911
(SO / MPD / Fire)

- ▶ Call Received
- ▶ Call Intake Questioning
- ▶ If needed, Dispatch Law
- ▶ If needed, Dispatch Fire

*EMS Incidents
Require 1 Transfer*



AMR
(EMS)

- ▶ Call Transferred
- ▶ Call Intake Questioning
- ▶ Dispatches EMS

EMS Calls

SR911 Average Call Processing Times

Answer through Call Intake	47 seconds
Transfer to AMR	34 seconds
Total	81 seconds

Transfer increases call processing time by 42%

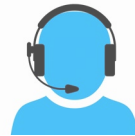
Sheriff's Office (SO) withdraws from SR911

(Option 1: Standard Transfer Practice)



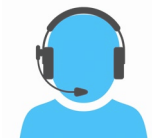
(SO / Ceres PD)

Fire &
EMS Incidents
Require Transfer



SR911
(MPD / Fire)

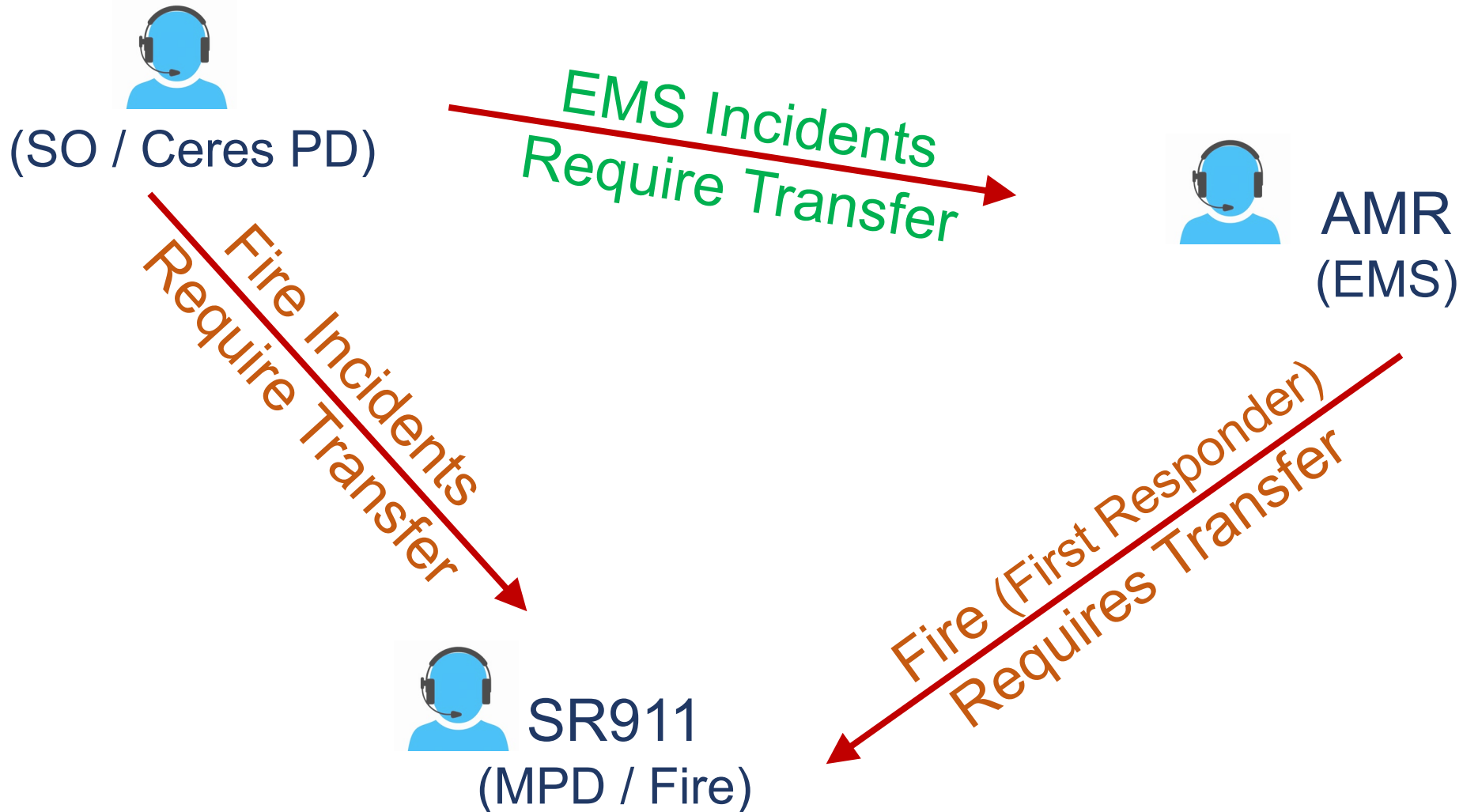
EMS Incidents
Require Transfer



AMR
(EMS)

Sheriff's Office (SO) withdraws from SR911

(Option 2: Ceres PD's Current Practice)



Challenges with Call Transfers



If the Sheriff's Office (SO) withdraws it will add an additional transfer into the system

- › one transfer to reach Fire services
- › two transfers to reach EMS w/Fire as a first responder

12 month average (2024)

City	Fire ¹	EMS ²	Total
Hughson	116	871	987
Waterford	135	892	1,027
Patterson	383	1,910	2,293
Riverbank	328	2,045	2,373
Unincorporated	1,344	14,073	15,417
Total	2,306	19,791	22,097

¹ These calls represent fire only calls.

² EMS calls include calls that may have required a fire response.

Call Transfers for EMS Calls

(Require Fire First Responders)



Number of Transfers

	Current SR911 Practice	Option 1 Standard Practice	Option 2 Ceres PD's Practice	SR911 w/EMS Consolidation
Law	0	0	0	0
Fire	0	1	1	0
EMS	1	1	1	0
Total # of Transfers	1	2	2	0

Types of EMS Calls

(Require Fire First Responders)



Cardiac Arrest

Pediatric Arrest

Choking

Childbirth

Vehicle vs. Pedestrian

Serious Hemorrhage

Seizure

Stabbing

Shooting

Difficulty Breathing

Chest Pain

Drowning

Stroke

Unconscious

9-1-1 Call Review



To share some examples of call intake and the PSAP transfers, we are going to play some 9-1-1 Calls.

These calls have been edited to protect each caller's privacy (you'll hear a series of beeps).

These calls may be difficult to listen to so we'll pause here to provide an opportunity for anyone to step out should they not wish to listen to the calls.

Pediatric Choking



SR911 Dispatcher:

“9-1-1. What’s the address of the emergency?”

Caller: *“Yeah, we have a little boy choking here at Denny’s. The Denny’s in Salida.”*

SR911 Dispatcher: *“What is the address there?”*

Caller: *“4324 Salida Boulevard. Salida, California.”*



Pediatric Choking



SR911 Dispatcher: *“Okay. And is your phone number?”*

Caller: *“Yeah, it’s um, 209... [redacted].”*

SR911 Dispatcher: *“Okay, let me transfer you to the ambulance. Don’t hang up.”*

Caller: *Yeah, thank you.”*

Pediatric Choking



EMS Dispatcher: *"Valley Comm."*

SR911 Dispatcher: *"Hi. Stan County here. Ma'am?"*

Oh, she might have disconnected.

It's for a child that is choking at the Denny's. 4324 Salida Boulevard."

Pediatric Choking



SR911 Dispatcher:

"The callback number is 209... [redacted]"

And Fire is going to be enroute."

EMS Dispatcher: *"Thank you."*

Caller Frustration (call excerpt)



SR911 Dispatcher: *“Okay, let me get you over to the ambulance company. Hang on, okay?”*

Caller: *“You’re the third person. Come on.”*

SR911 Dispatcher: *“I know, sir. I understand. Unfortunately, this is our protocol, okay?”*



Possible Efficiencies



A CAD-to-CAD Link between the Communication Centers creates a means to exchange some data electronically.

However, each PSAP is still responsible for the call-intake questioning to ensure that information is confirmed firsthand with the caller for accuracy.

CAD-to-CAD Limitations



When emergency calls are transferred, callers have to repeat the following:

1. Ring time
2. Name
3. Location of the emergency
4. Callback phone number
5. What happened

EMS Consolidation



On October 23rd 2024, SR911 provided a 9-1-1 Call Processing report to the Consolidated Emergency Dispatch Agency Commission (CEDAC) recommending EMS integration

EMS integration at SR911 would:

- › reduce call processing time
- › expedite help being dispatched
- › provide dispatchers the ability to intervene with life-saving instructions over the phone

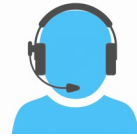
EMS Consolidation



This would **eliminate call transfers** for the communities SR911 provides service for and create a “one-stop shop” for all emergencies



SR911 w/ EMS Consolidation



SR911

(SO / MPD / Fire / EMS)

1. Call Received
2. Call Intake Questioning
3. If needed, Dispatch Law
4. If needed, Dispatch Fire
5. If needed, Dispatch EMS

Unresponsive, Gasping for Air



SR911 Dispatcher:

“Emergency Dispatch.”

Caller: *“Yes, my husband is having a medical emergency. He’s become unresponsive and he’s gasping for air and he’s unresponsive.”*

Unresponsive, Gasping for Air



SR911 Dispatcher: *"What is your address?"*

Caller: *[redacted]*

SR911 Dispatcher: *"Is that a house or apartment?"*

Caller: *"It's a house."*

Unresponsive, Gasping for Air



SR911 Dispatcher: *"Okay. Your phone number?"*

Caller: *[redacted]*

SR911 Dispatcher: *"I'm going to transfer you to the ambulance. Stay on the phone with me, okay?"*

Caller: *"Okay. Thank you."*

Unresponsive, Gasping for Air



EMS Dispatcher: *"Valley Comm."*

SR911 Dispatcher: *"Stan County with a transfer.
It's going to be at [redacted].
For ALOC and difficulty breathing.
Fire's enroute.
Hello, caller? Go ahead with the
ambulance company."*

CAD Update



June 26, 2024

CEDAC approved the purchase of Central Square CAD

January 28, 2025

SR911 and Response Agencies began configuration
(deadline for completion is February 19, 2025)

April 2025

Operational assessment of CAD

July 2025

Validation and readiness testing

September 15, 2025

Go-Live

CAD Update



- › County did not enter agreements due to uncertain direction of the Sheriff's Office
- › Licensing discounts lost due to delay
- › Possibility of additional costs to configure the Sheriff's Office (outside of initial process)
- › SO, County Fire, and Probation may be delayed
- › The County will bear any additional costs

Summary



Number of Transfers

	Current SR911 Practice	Option 1 Standard Practice	Option 2 Ceres PD's Practice	SR911 w/EMS Consolidation
Law	0	0	0	0
Fire	0	1	1	0
EMS	1	1	1	0
Total # of Transfers	1	2	2	0