

# KITSAP 911 VALUES STATEMENTS



*As critical members of the public safety team we are defined by the following attributes:*

## INTEGRITY

We are honest and consistent with colleagues and customers. We hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct.

## SERVICE

We are dedicated to exceeding the standards set for our profession by providing excellent, professional, and responsive service. We provide high quality results on or ahead of schedule.

## PRIDE

We take pride in ourselves, our profession, and our colleagues.

## TEAMWORK

We promote partnerships with internal and external customers. We treat one another with respect and communicate openly. We foster collaboration while maintaining individual accountability.

## OPEN COMMUNICATIONS

We discuss potentially contentious issues directly and quickly. We take responsibility for our own communication and conflict resolution. We do not gossip, triangulate, or spread rumors.

## INNOVATION

We thrive on creativity and ingenuity. We seek the innovation and ideas that can change our profession and improve our service delivery. We are flexible and learn from our experiences. We encourage the best ideas to surface from anywhere within the organization.

## DIVERSITY

We value our community's diversity and work to reflect and respect that diversity in our staff and in the delivery of our services.

## POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

We maintain a positive work environment which supports our employees and enhances job quality. We embrace the principles of participative management and personal responsibility and accountability.

KITSAP 911 • ALWAYS READY



*Photo by: Michael Spieker Photography*

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





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## OUR MISSION

We are Kitsap 911, providing exceptional public safety emergency communications services every day.

## OUR VISION

*“Kitsap 911 will be the benchmark provider of public safety emergency communications services in the state as evidenced by innovation, professional excellence, reliability and customer service. We will be a self-sufficient and fiscally stable agency known for good stewardship and transparency. We will employ and develop highly effective professionals in an employee friendly, service focused environment.”*

## PARTNER AGENCIES

### POLICE DEPARTMENTS

- Bainbridge Island Police Department
- Bremerton Police Department
- Kitsap County Sheriff's Office
- Port Gamble Police Department
- Port Orchard Police Department
- Poulsbo Police Department
- Suquamish Police Department

### KITSAP COUNTY

- Community Development
- Code Enforcement & Fire Marshall
- Coroner's Office
- Emergency Management
- Juvenile Corrections

### FIRE DEPARTMENTS

- Bainbridge Island Fire & Rescue
- Bremerton Fire Department
- Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue
- Fire District 18 (Poulsbo Fire)
- North Kitsap Fire & Rescue
- South Kitsap Fire & Rescue

### OTHER

- Bainbridge Island Ambulance Association
- Department of Corrections
- Kitsap Animal Control
- United States Navy
- Port Gamble Natural Resources

CENCOM was founded in 1973 as an effort to improve emergency medical dispatching within Kitsap County. In 1976, CENCOM went live as the first consolidated police, fire, and EMS dispatch center in Washington State. Callers dialed 911, but the system did not include any of the features associated with the 911 of today. In 1983, CENCOM became the second dispatch center in Washington State to deploy "Enhanced 911," which included a display of the caller's address for the dispatcher.

### The initial intent was to provide:

- A single emergency reporting number (911) for all Kitsap County citizens;
- An expanded emergency communications network for centralized coordination of police, fire, and medical;
- A reduction of response time;
- Elimination of 29 seven-digit emergency numbers;
- Consolidation of 12 separate dispatch systems;
- The ability for emergency response agencies to exchange information; and
- Enhancement of overall public safety functions.

### THE ABILITY TO MEET INCREASED DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The first staff included a director, supervisor, administrative staff, and 20 dispatchers to manage a 24hour, 365-day operation. Site design, facility construction, and formation of operational policy and procedures were completed by the end of 1976. This design also included installation of the electronics system, which included a "geofile," the location information base file for emergency 911 CAD systems. By 1993, 911 had expanded to cover the entire county and dispatch function for all public safety agencies. Ongoing funding originated from the passage of telephone tax initiatives.

In the late 1990s, CENCOM's Policy Board supported a funding methodology and development of a multiple-site radio system to improve service for Kitsap County's Fire/EMS and Law Enforcement agencies. The radio towers, electronic equipment, buildings, and ground space are

supported by reliable commercial and back-up generator power. These facilities continue to attract wireless service providers who have agreements with CENCOM to use the facilities and provide us with revenue, which offsets the cost of utilities and maintenance.

CENCOM began utilizing Mobile Computer Terminals or "MCTs" in emergency response vehicles to enhance communication while also lessening congestion on radio frequencies in the early 2000s. Since that time, the fleet of mobile computers has tripled, and CENCOM has taken on maintenance and repair for all member agencies.

Shortly after the Nisqually Earthquake in April of 2001, CENCOM asked the voters of Kitsap County to support a property tax lid lift for construction of a new 911 and County Emergency Operations Center. Fortunately, citizens recognized that the old 911 center was inadequate. In 2002, they passed a \$10.5 million, five-year property tax initiative. Voters approved another ballot measure in 2003 that enacted a dedicated 1/10th of 1% sales tax to provide a long-term, reliable funding source for CENCOM, eliminating the remaining three years of the property tax lid lift.

Planning for the new facility began in early 2002. The goal was to construct an all-new facility that would meet every one of CENCOM's current and future needs. Most importantly, the new building would be constructed to modern seismic code standards. The state-of-the-art building was commissioned on May 10, 2005. It took a little over three years to construct and install the equipment on budget. On December 7, 2006, the final bond loan payment was made on the new facility. With the 2007 budget year, CENCOM reduced fees charged to cities, the county, and fire districts for 911 and dispatch services. The organization simultaneously upgraded critical communications equipment for police, fire, and emergency medical responders.

To further enhance services, on-line reporting was implemented in 2008 for all interested law enforcement agencies within Kitsap County. It allowed citizens to 1) submit their reports on-line for a

pre-defined set of crimes with no suspect information, and 2) not have to wait for an officer to respond to their residence or need to call in.

In 2012, Kitsap County CENCOM saw the need for extra radio coverage in southern Kitsap. At the same time, Pierce Transit was looking for a site in the same area to get better coverage for them and for Pierce County 911. Pierce Transit, Pierce County Emergency Management, and CENCOM ultimately partnered to build this tower. They linked it to CENCOM's existing Gold Mountain tower site. This arrangement allowed each agency to place their equipment on the other's tower rent-free, which provided better coverage and improved interoperability. CENCOM's portion of the project was funded through CENCOM's Operations fund without any user fee or tax increases.

In 2015, CENCOM began taking Text to-911 events--a momentous step for 911 communications. This innovation allowed greater access to 911 for those within the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. It also provided more immediate response and protection for those in dangerous situations who could not speak freely. CENCOM was proud to be the first 911 center in the State of Washington to offer Text-to-911.

In 2020 Kitsap 911 was the first 911 center in the State of Washington to begin taking and dispatching 911 calls remotely. This allowed Kitsap 911 to maintain service levels during the COVID pandemic. Employees were able to work in isolation either at a location within our facility, in an emergency response trailer on our property, or at their own home if they met the requirements to do so. Had we not had this technology available, we would not have been able to maintain staffing levels necessary to provide our standard level of service.

In 2021 voters approved Proposition 2 that enacted a dedicated 1/10th of 1% sales tax to provide long-term, reliable funding to ensure safe and effective radio and data communications for first responders in Kitsap County. The collection of these additional sales taxes begins April 1, 2022. Planning for the radio replacement project has already begun with the entire process expected to be complete and the system online by 2027.

# 911

## KITSAP 911 PUBLIC AUTHORITY

In July 2015, the CENCOM Board decided to bring our leadership under a single umbrella so that we could become more responsive to changing needs and demographics in the region; more effective at managing resources; more nimble in increasing the ability to quickly solve problems and take advantage of opportunities; and more transparent by presenting plans and decisions with clarity.

Since then, CENCOM has worked through a strategic transition, moving from Kitsap County Central Communication, a department of Kitsap County, to Kitsap 911 Public Authority. Kitsap 911 Public Authority began operations on December 26, 2016.

Kitsap 911 is governed by the Board of Directors, which is made up of the same elected officials that served on the CENCOM policy board. Members include the three county commissioners and the sheriff; the mayors of Bainbridge Island, Bremerton, Port Orchard, and Poulsbo; three fire commissioners; and two Bremerton City Council members. The Board meets at least once per quarter. That schedule is located on our website at <http://www.kitsap911.org/governance/>.

Kitsap 911 Board of Directors appoints the Kitsap 911 Executive Committee to 1) exercise a certain limited authority, and 2) make decisions that are necessary in ensuring the efficient operation of Kitsap 911. However, the Board retains final decision-making authority for matters concerning the following:

- The annual Kitsap 911 Operations budget and funding, cost share distributions, the Enhanced 911 Tax Revenue Fund and Five-Year Expenditure Plan, and the accumulated Kitsap 911 Capital Reserve Fund;
- Amendments to these Bylaws;
- Strategic Plan Adoption;
- Appointment of the Kitsap 911 Executive Director; and
- Any other matter of major importance.

The Kitsap 911 Executive Committee consists of five Board members and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Strategic Advisory Board as non-voting members. This committee meets twice per month.

The Executive Committee makes recommendations to the Board on matters reserved for Board action. It also has limited authority, as provided by the Board, to make necessary decisions that ensure the efficient operation of Kitsap 911. These actions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing direction to and managing the performance of the Executive Director;
- Authorizing budget amendments, including expenditures from the reserves;
- Providing advice and recommendations to the Executive Director regarding labor agreements, staffing, or personnel issues; and
- Providing recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding excise tax levels and other such matters.

The Strategic Advisory Board is composed of police and fire chiefs of Kitsap 911 participating agencies. This board provides advice and input to the Kitsap 911 Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and the Executive Director on topics that may cover:

- Significant administrative issues and policies, staffing and service levels, and funding;
- Budget proposals, operational procedures, and other matters related to day-to-day operations; and
- Any other duties delegated by the Board or Executive Committee.

Today, Kitsap 911 staff includes a diverse management team, combined IT and radio technical systems group, administrative group, and 59 supervisory and dispatch personnel that manage the 24-hour, 365-day operation. The Kitsap 911 of today is vastly different from the CENCOM of 1973. Continued exploration into ever-changing technology and broader funding mechanisms, along with proactive long-term planning, continue to remain the mainstay of our organization.

# 2023 KITSAP 911 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# 2023 KITSAP 911 STRATEGIC ADVISORY BOARD



**JOE DEETS**  
Bainbridge Island  
City Council



**Jeff Coughlin**  
Bremerton City Council



**DENISE FRYE**  
Bremerton City Council



**GREG WHEELER**  
Bremerton Mayor



**DAVE ELLINGSON**  
Fire Commissioner



**JARED MORAVEC**  
Bainbridge Island  
Fire Chief



**JOE CLARK**  
Bainbridge Island  
Police Chief



**PAT MCGANNEY**  
Bremerton  
Fire Chief



**TOM WOLFE**  
Bremerton  
Police Chief



**JAY CHRISTIAN**  
Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue  
Fire Chief



**BOB MUHLEMAN**  
Fire Commissioner



**DUSTY WILEY**  
Fire Commissioner



**CHARLOTTE GARRIDO**  
Kitsap County  
Commissioner



**CHRISTINE ROLFES**  
Kitsap County  
Commissioner



**RICK LAGRANDEUR**  
North Kitsap Fire & Rescue  
Fire Chief



**RUSS CLITHERO**  
Kitsap County Sheriff's  
Office Undersheriff



**DOMINGO ALMIROL**  
Port Gamble  
Police Chief



**MATT BROWN**  
Port Orchard  
Police Chief



**KATIE WALTERS**  
Kitsap County  
Commissioner



**SHERIFF JOHN GESE**  
Kitsap County Sheriff



**ROB PUTAANSUU**  
Port Orchard Mayor



**BECKY ERICKSON**  
Poulsbo Mayor



**JIM GILLARD**  
Poulsbo Fire & Rescue  
Fire Chief



**RON HARDING**  
Poulsbo  
Police Chief



**JEFF FAUCETT**  
South Kitsap Fire & Rescue  
Fire Chief



**MIKE LASNIER**  
Suquamish  
Police Chief

# DIRECTOR



**Maria Jameson-Owens**  
*Acting Executive Director*

**2023 was a very busy year for Kitsap 911 filled with challenges and opportunities.**

Kitsap 911 continued to receive clean financial audits and advanced its commitment to financial stability, sound economic policies, and fiscal transparency.

Our Technology Team improved on-time project delivery to our customers, reduced turnaround times on MCT issue resolution, and made significant enhancements to our remote 911 capabilities.

Operationally, staffing continued to be a concern. It is a crisis throughout the State and industry as a whole. Filling our vacancies and positioning ourselves to provide better working conditions is a top priority. Being understaffed leads to mandatory overtime for our employees. We need to grow to the point where mandatory overtime is an anomaly so that our employees are able to have a healthy work life balance and continue to do the job long term. Leadership implemented several tools to help mitigate the resulting impacts on the morale and the general well-being of the Kitsap 911 team including increased support resources, guaranteed days off, and improved relaxation options in the workplace.

Human Resources developed a hiring strategy to attract more candidates for our open positions that included increased advertising and attending more public events and job fairs. This resulted in a 26% increase in candidates over the prior year.

Kitsap 911 conducted monthly customer satisfaction surveys for Operations during 2023. On a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent, the average rating was 3.9. Categories included length of time to handle the call to effectiveness of service provided. Our employees consistently rise above any obstacles and provide exceptional service to those we serve.

Lastly, Kitsap 911 continued to develop and strives to maintain an intentional culture of inclusiveness, teamwork, open communication, and respect. Our Intentional Culture team continued to meet throughout the year to evaluate how we are doing and learn ways to continue and build on our culture. Since we started a pointed focus on our culture, we have heard consistently positive feedback from new and tenured employees on the positive workplace we have created.

We are proud of all Kitsap 911 has accomplished and to be part of such a dedicated group of employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Jameson-Owens".

*Maria Jameson-Owens*  
*Acting Executive Director*

## FINANCE

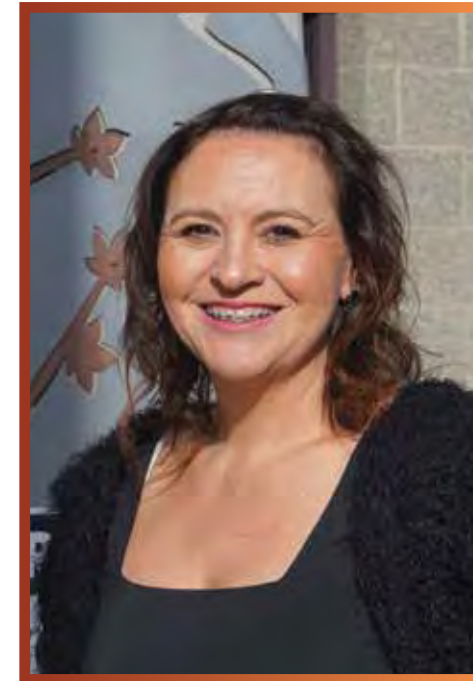
2023 came to a close with revenues a little higher and expenses a little lower than we were expecting, which is always good to see. Sales tax revenues were higher than they were in 2022, but we didn't see the kind of dramatic year-over-year growth that we saw that year or in 2021; we're keeping a close eye on that trend, but things seem to be leveling off at a reasonable pace. All in all, our outlook is good for our Radio Replacement project and for our financial position in general.

In November 2023, the Office of the Washington State Auditor issued their Accountability and Financial audit report for 2022, and we are proud to report that it was another good one!

### We don't like to brag but...

2016 - Clean      2020 - Clean  
 2017 - Clean      2021 - Clean  
 2018 - Clean      2022 - Clean  
 2019 - Clean

This kind of a track record is a huge accomplishment, and we're really proud of it, but it definitely doesn't belong to the Finance Group alone. It is always a combined effort from everyone in the agency, especially from the Technology Services and Administrative Groups. They frequently go above and beyond to make sure that all Ts are crossed and all Is are dotted before a single dollar is spent; and that is no small feat, considering we are in the middle of several complex, expensive projects with a lot of moving parts. So thank you everyone for a stellar 2023, and here's to a great 2024!

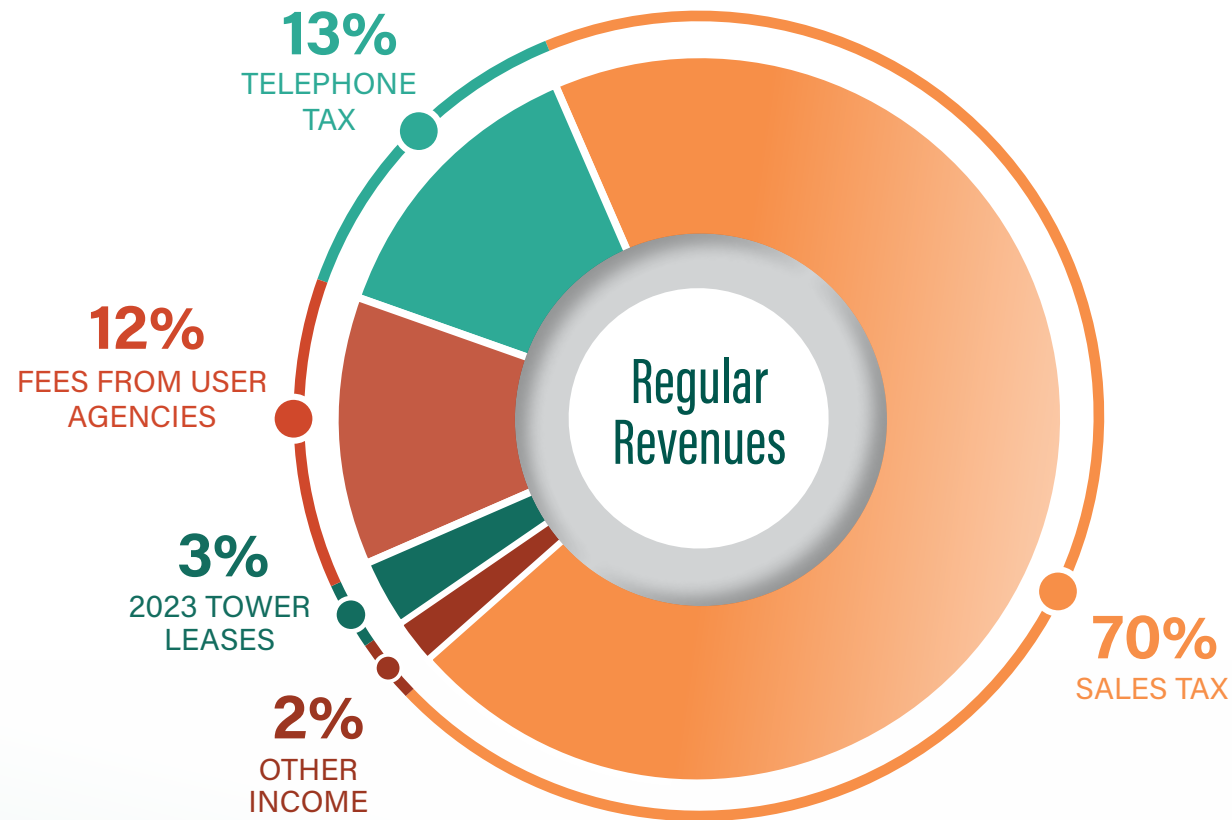


**Stephanie Browning**  
*Administrative Specialist*



**Steve Rogers**  
*Finance Manager*

## 2023 KITSAP 911 REGULAR REVENUES



The primary source of regular revenues for Kitsap 911 is dedicated 911 taxes (i.e., sales tax allocations and the 911 excise tax on wireless, wireline, VoIP, and prepaid wireless telephone services). In 2023, we received approximately \$16.7M (83%) from these sources, 70% of which came from sales tax alone.

In June 2022, we began receiving a second 1/10th of 1% allocation of sales tax through Proposition 2, which Kitsap County voters passed in November 2021. These funds are accounted for separately from our other sources of revenue; during 2023, we received approximately \$7.0M from Proposition 2, and its ending cash balance of approximately \$6.5M has been assigned for future use on the LMR and Radio Replacement projects.

We receive revenues for dispatching fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical calls. In 2023, we received approximately \$2.5M (12%) from our customer agencies for providing these services.

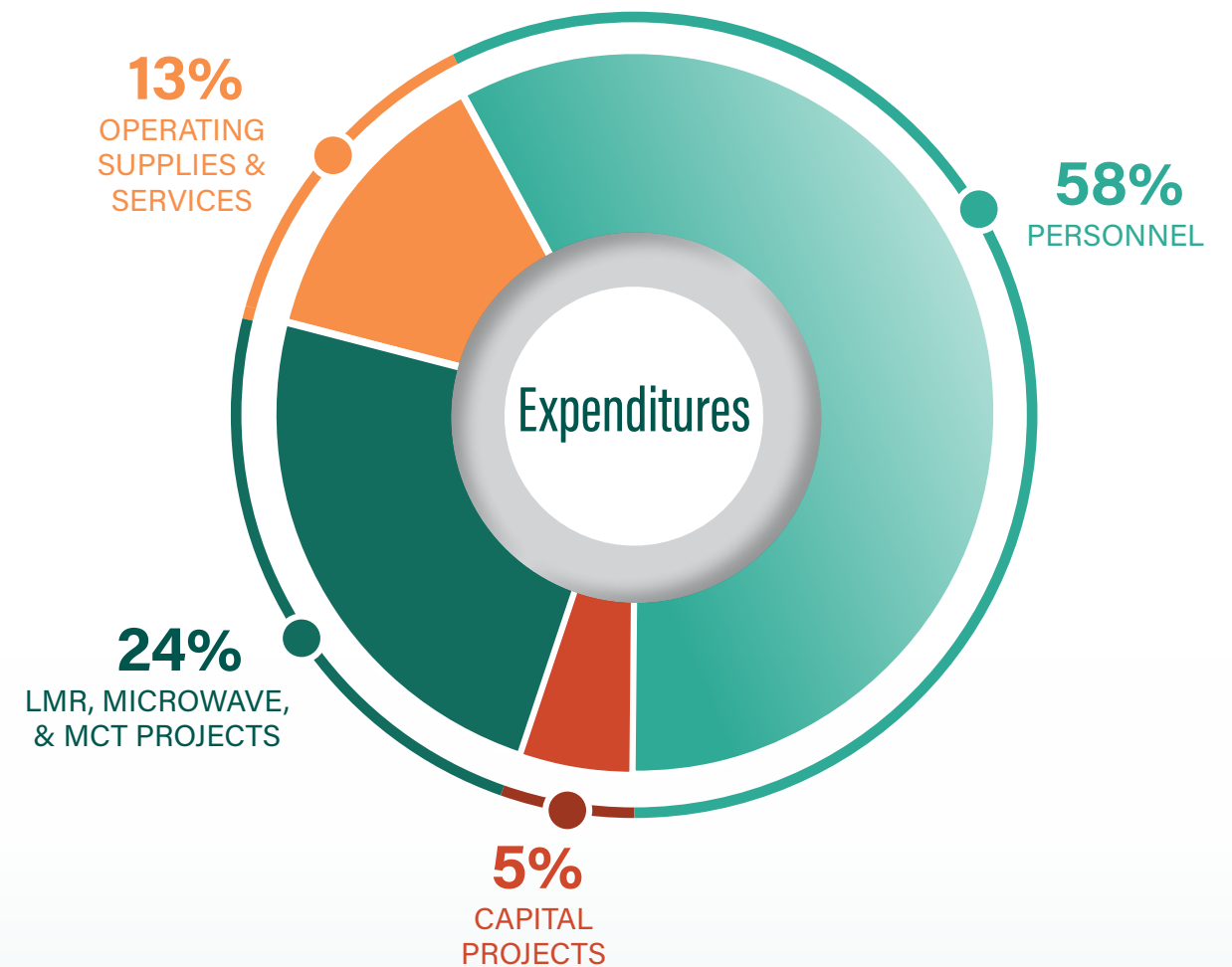
We receive revenues by leasing unused space on our radio towers. In 2023, we received approximately \$0.6M (4%) from these contract partners.

Other miscellaneous and one-time revenues primarily consist of receipts from Federal and State grants, as well as investment income. In 2023, we received approximately \$0.3M (1%) from these sources.

### 2023 REGULAR REVENUES

Sales Tax .....	\$13,993,807.11	70%
Telephone Taxes .....	\$2,688,543.56	13%
Fees from User Agencies .....	\$2,463,092.46	12%
Tower Lease Revenues .....	\$623,362.90	3%
Other Income .....	\$289,818.42	2%
<b>Total 2023 Regular Revenues .....</b>	<b>\$20,058,624.45</b>	<b>  100%</b>

## 2023 KITSAP 911 EXPENDITURES



In 2023, Kitsap 911 appropriated approximately \$13.7M in operating expenditures. Of this, we expended approximately \$13.5M (98%).

As of December 31, we had 70 FTEs and 5 "Extra Help" employees, and in 2023, we expended approximately \$11.0M (58%) in personnel costs related to them; labor costs comprise approximately 80% of our total operating budget.

In 2023, operating supplies and services expenditures totaled approximately \$2.5M (13%), which was approximately 20% of our total operating budget.

In 2023, capital expenditures and other non-operational expenditures totaled \$5.3M (29%). This includes the \$4.5M (24%) spent on the Land Mobile Radio ("LMR"), Microwave, and Mobile Command Terminal ("MCT") replacement projects, which were funded using Proposition 2 sales tax revenues.

### 2023 EXPENDITURES

Personnel .....	\$10,964,283.19	58%
Operating Supplies & Services .....	\$2,535,185.02	13%
LMR, Microwave & MCT Projects .....	\$4,486,201.57	24%
Capital Projects .....	\$854,680.51	5%
<b>Total 2023 Expenditures .....</b>	<b>\$18,840,350.29</b>	<b>  100%</b>

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The Kitsap 911 Human Resources Team was hard at work in 2023. Change was a constant, and the team adapted and created new and exciting ways of doing things. A big change for the team was the addition of a part-time Public Records Specialist late in the year which will free up much of our HR Administrative Specialist's time to focus on recruitment and the candidate experience. In the new year, we expect this change to allow her to attend more community job fairs to attract talent, and to attend high school career fairs to educate kids about considering 9-1-1 for their career. She will also spend her time focused on creating content for Kitsap 911 social media to educate the public about becoming a 9-1-1 Dispatcher. We are very excited to grow our HR team and launch new processes and efficiencies!

Over the last few years, we have thought outside the box for innovative ways to retain our most valuable asset, our current employees. We made some big changes to our benefits plan, including offering more medical plans so our employees can make the best decisions for their families, and adding orthodontia to our dental plan. Our operations employees are also enjoying the monthly meal delivery credits we offer. And we have found new ways to let them know that they are amazing and important, and we want them to stay because they make a difference.

Human Resources had a busy year of hiring and promotions. We hired 9 new telecommunicators, including three laterals from other agencies. We also had a successful recruitment for two public safety systems technicians who started late in the year. We promoted a communications supervisor and an assistant supervisor, and hired an assistant supervisor from another agency.

In 2023, the HR Team attended more community job fairs and high school career fairs than ever before. We also attended the Kitsap County Fair and WA State Fair, and provided resources so all employees at the booth were able to recruit. The HR Team found new ways of advertising our open positions in 2023, which included boosting the job on different platforms and attending new job and career fairs. This resulted in a 26% increase in candidates over the prior year.

In 2022, we purchased a product with NEOGOV called EFORMS that has made the employee personnel files all electronic, and since then we have discovered new ways to increase day-to-day efficiencies. In 2023, we began electronically routing internal HR forms for approval. Utilizing the EFORMS product has decreased the turnaround time to approve the changes needed for payroll.

The Human Resources team is continuing our focus to maintain an efficient and effective resource for our employees, and to provide an exceptional experience for our applicants and community. It is our goal to recruit an outstanding, diverse workforce and to retain our incredible first responders.



**Rachael Taylor**  
*Human Resources Manager*



**Rachelle Tate**  
*Administrative Specialist*



**Grace Owens**  
*Public Records Specialist*

# TECHNICAL SERVICES GROUP

The Technical Services Group meets Kitsap 911's needs for support, operation, maintenance, and repair of all technical systems and services. This includes all radio systems both hardware, such as tower sites, and software such as programming and monitoring. Additionally, the team supports all Information Technology systems such as networks, security, software, GIS, and hardware. The team also assists with the maintenance and operation of Kitsap 911's facility and tower sites, with support ranging from building maintenance (*both preventative and repairs*) to card access systems and site security.

This year we made significant progress toward replacing our microwave system and laid the groundwork for another upcoming long-range project which will be to replace Kitsap 911's aging radio system. We also planned, secured funding, and ordered replacements for our entire fleet of mobile computer terminals. Alongside this we undertook projects to expand our ability to operate remotely and completed a number of necessary proactive repairs to our facility and our tower sites. This work advances Kitsap 911's effort to proactively replace and upgrade its technology and systems in order to continue providing high quality 911 service to the residents of Kitsap County.

## SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS

A large number of the projects in 2023 built upon the long-range planning from previous years. We began the necessary work on many multi-year projects while at the same time undertook smaller projects to maintain and improve the technology we currently have in place. Kitsap 911 also received a grant for improvements to cyber security in 2023 and tasks outlined in the grant plan will be executed in the coming year.

The first major project we worked on was the replacement of our Microwave system. This system is spread across 14 tower sites and provides the communications backbone for our radio traffic. In 2023 we completed both the internal equipment installs at all the tower sites as well as installation of new dishes on our tower sites. At the end of 2023 we had entered into the system stability testing and burn in phase with a cutover to the new system planned for early 2024.

The second major project to get underway in 2023 was the replacement our Land Mobile Radio system which will replace our current UHF/VHF radio system with an upgraded P25 system. This includes both the radio

equipment at Kitsap 911 and tower sites, as well as all mobile and portable radios used by our member agencies. This is a multiyear and multi-phase project; however, we made some significant headway in 2023. This year we completed a Request for Proposal for the system and evaluated the results provided by four different vendors. We completed vendor selection for the back-end equipment and also for both mobile and portable radios, as well as the radio dispatch consoles. We then worked through a lengthy contract negotiation with the selected vendor. The contract was successfully executed by our board in December of 2023. The notice to proceed was delivered to the selected vendor before the end of the year.

One of the more technically challenging projects we undertook in 2023 was working with our Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) vendor and our neighboring 911 center, South Sound 911, to create a link between our two CAD systems. This link will improve the speed at which we communicate between centers and improve our ability to share resources between our two centers. Both Kitsap 911 and South Sound 911 have worked diligently during 2023 to get this interface tested and configured. While not completed in 2023, significant progress has been made and we expect to begin system stability and validation testing of the interface in the first half of 2024.

We worked on the much-needed replacement of our card access and building security system in 2023. With the needs analysis and vendor selection completed in the previous year, we undertook the task of replacing the system in 2023. The entire system for controlling access at Kitsap 911 was replaced, and the cameras and monitors in the building were upgraded. This work also included installing and configuring new card readers for every door at our facility. Part of this also included creating, designing, and issuing new badges to all employees. The new system also supports a mobile application which can be used in place of, or in addition to, the badge readers for gaining access. The bulk of the change-out work was completed in 2023 with the last of the punch list items and final project close out happening in January of 2024.

Kitsap 911 continued to make significant enhancements to our Remote 911 system this year. Among other work we implemented an enhanced system to allow remote dispatch staff to monitor multiple channels at

the same time. This was done using some back-end equipment to effectively create internal audio streams of our channels which could then be set to output from additional USB speakers added to all remote kits. We also added more computing power and redundancy to our system with the installation of more VXRail nodes. Finally, we resolved a long-standing bug working with the 911 phone system vendor which allowed us to move the system out of a beta phase and into actual production use. This allowed us to continue to employ one of our call takers who had moved to North Carolina.

The last major undertaking started in 2023 is a refresh of our dispatch floor and 911 center. We have begun a needs analysis including requests for information from a variety of vendors. During this refresh we will be repainting the entire 911 center, replacing the majority of the carpet, replacing the sound abatement on the walls, and replacing the hardware used for all of our dispatch consoles. In addition to the request for information and vendor analysis, we have also started reviewing the console offerings from a variety of vendors. This took place at public safety events and forums, and also consisted of trips to neighboring centers who are either in the process of replacing their consoles or recently completed a similar process. We are looking forward to making a selection and kicking off the work in the coming year.

## TECHNOLOGY GROUP

This year we completed a staffing study which was crucial in determining our current and future staffing needs. One of the results of this study showed we need additional staffing for our helpdesk in order to meet the growing technological needs of Kitsap 911 and its member agencies. We began working to address this in 2023 by posting and hiring two additional Public Safety Systems Technicians. These two new employees will provide a significant boost to our Helpdesk staffing and allow us to better support the work associated with day-to-day operations as well as our long-range projects and initiatives.



**Brandon Wecker**  
Technology Manager



**Chad Bennett**  
Public Safety Systems  
Engineer - Radio



**Kyle Boeddeker**  
Public Safety Systems  
Technician



**Katy Graham**  
Public Safety Systems  
Engineer - CAD



**William Jones**  
Public Safety Systems  
Engineer - IT



**Eadie Kaltenbacher**  
GIS Systems Analyst



**Andrew Kouklis**  
Public Safety Systems  
Technician



**Khris LaPlante**  
Public Safety Systems  
Master Technician



**Alvin Mathenge**  
Public Safety Systems  
Technician



**Scott Peabody**  
Senior Public Safety  
Program Manager



**Ryan Rorie**  
Public Safety Systems  
Engineer-Network & Security



**Eric Seda**  
Public Safety Systems  
Technician



**Tim Simonson**  
Public Safety Systems  
Master Technician



**John Sprague**  
Public Safety Systems  
Assistant



**Terese Ungren**  
Public Safety Systems  
Technician

# MCT REPLACEMENT AT KITSAP 911

## BACKGROUND

Mobile Computer Terminals affectionally referred to as MCTs provide crucial communication for all of Kitsap 911's member agencies. These fully ruggedized laptops and tablets are found in all primary first responder vehicles and provide an essential link to Kitsap 911's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. The setup varies between police and fire, but at their core these devices put a wealth of information at the fingertips of our first responders and are second in criticality only to the portable radios. Originally, these devices became part of our toolkit from a COPS grant received in 2009. When the hardware from this grant aged out and needed to be replaced in 2016 the responsibility fell to the user agencies. In 2023 Kitsap 911 realized there was an immediate need for MCT replacement. As such, Kitsap 911 funded the replacements of not only the MCTs but also all barcode scanners, modems, and printers. As a whole, this level of replacement had not been done since the original purchase in 2009.

## HARDWARE UPGRADE AND NEEDS

The continual advancement of computer technology means that after even a few years, computers and laptops are obsolete. The same is true for ruggedized MCTs, although their rugged form factor and quality design ensures they can easily work in a 24x7 environment for 5+ years before needing replacement. However as these devices age, their speed and reliability begin to wane and as such Kitsap 911 has them on a cycle to be replaced every 5-7 years. However, sometimes a change comes along that necessitates early replacement. In this case, replacement is necessary because of a new software for records management (RMS) being deployed by Kitsap County for all law enforcement agencies which had known compatibility issues with some of the current MCT models. This, coupled with the looming end of life of Windows 10, made an entire fleet change out necessary.

## REPLACEMENT PROCESS

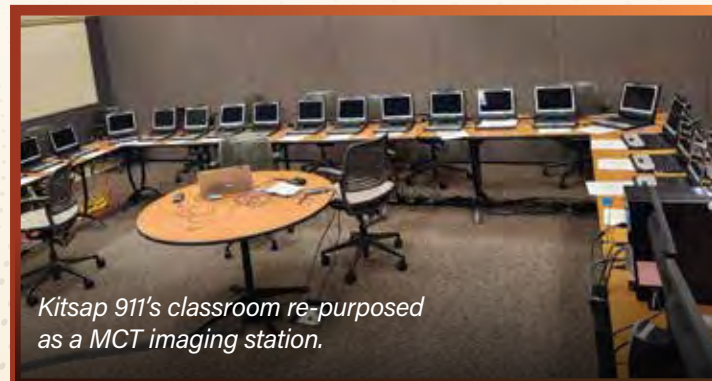
In the fall of 2022 Kitsap 911's board of directors authorized the full purchase and replacement of all MCTs and peripherals for all of Kitsap 911's member agencies. Once approved Kitsap 911 immediately put in an order for 392 MCTs plus over 2531 additional moving parts such as modems, docks, keyboards, barcode scanners, and printers. This also included replacing all the older style 4G modems in fire vehicles with upgrade 5G modems. Getting the order in early was crucial to getting the MCTs out to users in time to coincide with the RMS replacement project concluding in early summer of 2023.

The MCTs and additional hardware began arriving early in the first quarter of 2023, well before the potential delivery date originally quoted by the manufacturer. Kitsap 911's staff oversaw the large undertaking of receiving, inventorying, and sorting all this equipment in preparation for distribution to the agencies.



*The beginning of the shipments of all the equipment arriving.*

Once all the equipment was received and assembled, Kitsap 911's Technical Services Group (TSG) needed to load a variety of MCT specific software such as Netmotion Secure Access, the Mobile for Public Safety (MPS) software which links to dispatch, and additional fire and law specific software onto all these devices. This was done using KACE computer imaging software. Kitsap 911 fast tracked the training and configuration of this new system in order to have it ready in time to be utilized for the fleet of new MCTs. Our staff setup up an assembly line style workstation in our Classroom and worked off and on through their shift kicking off the imaging process and then performing finalization tasks of the MCTs. The process took multiple weeks to prepare the image, and then over a month and a half to process all the computers. Priority for imaging was given to completing law enforcement MCTs first, then replacing any that had failed from the previous fleet, and then finishing up with the replacement of all the fire agency MCTs.



*Kitsap 911's classroom re-purposed as a MCT imaging station.*



*Helpdesk staff working on the imaging and finalization process of some of the 392 MCTs.*

The large number of computers able to be imaged at one time was made possible with the help from our network and security engineer who utilized the fiber connections in our building to connect all the MCTs in the classroom to our imaging network. This afforded exceptionally high-speed data transmission to a large number of devices at one time.

Once the MCTs were imaged a post imaging checklist was filled out for every MCT ensuring all software had been installed, configured and verified. Then the MCTs were laid out according to which agency they belonged. Priority was given to imaging the MCTs for law enforcement in order to meet the deadline for the RMS cutover in the early summer of 2023.



*A batch of MCTs stacked and prepared for distribution to their respective agencies.*

## CURRENT STATE OF MCT REPLACEMENT

Kitsap 911 had the first round of MCTs imaged and ready to distribute the week following the RMS going live. Kitsap 911 worked with agencies to develop a plan for issuing devices in amounts that would allow them to successfully deploy them to staff. For many agencies this meant delivering completed MCTs in multiple batches to ensure a smooth rollout.

As of the end of 2023 Kitsap 911 has completed the imaging and distributed all new MCTs to all member agencies. We have transitioned to providing support for the new hardware and software and streamlined our troubleshooting process with the addition of the improved imaging software. This allows us to quickly reimagine a MCT experiencing issues allowing for a faster turnaround for software-based issues. This also improved our ability to turn around MCTs with hardware issues. Once a MCT returns from repairs we can image it and get it back to an officer in a shorter time frame than we had been able to achieve in the past. As part of the new MCT purchase we also purchased a number of spares which we keep on hand and updated which can be handed out to an officer in the event their MCT needs to be sent in for diagnostics and/or repair. This allows Kitsap 911 to continue to provide high quality support to its member agencies and ensures all first responders in the field have reliable access to critical incident information and the tools needed to keep them safe and successful in their daily work protecting and serving the residents of Kitsap County.



*Helpdesk staff delivering new MCTs.*

# RADIO REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The Radio Replacement project continued to build momentum in 2023 with vendor selections and fully executed contracts for equipment and services. More than 50 Kitsap public safety people participated in hands-on demonstrations and unanimously recommended the vendor selections culminating in Board approval in December. The replacement microwave system was assembled and tested at the factory before it was shipped and installed at eleven tower sites. In December, the system successfully completed 30 days of error free operation, the final quality check before moving all radio traffic to the system in January 2024.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

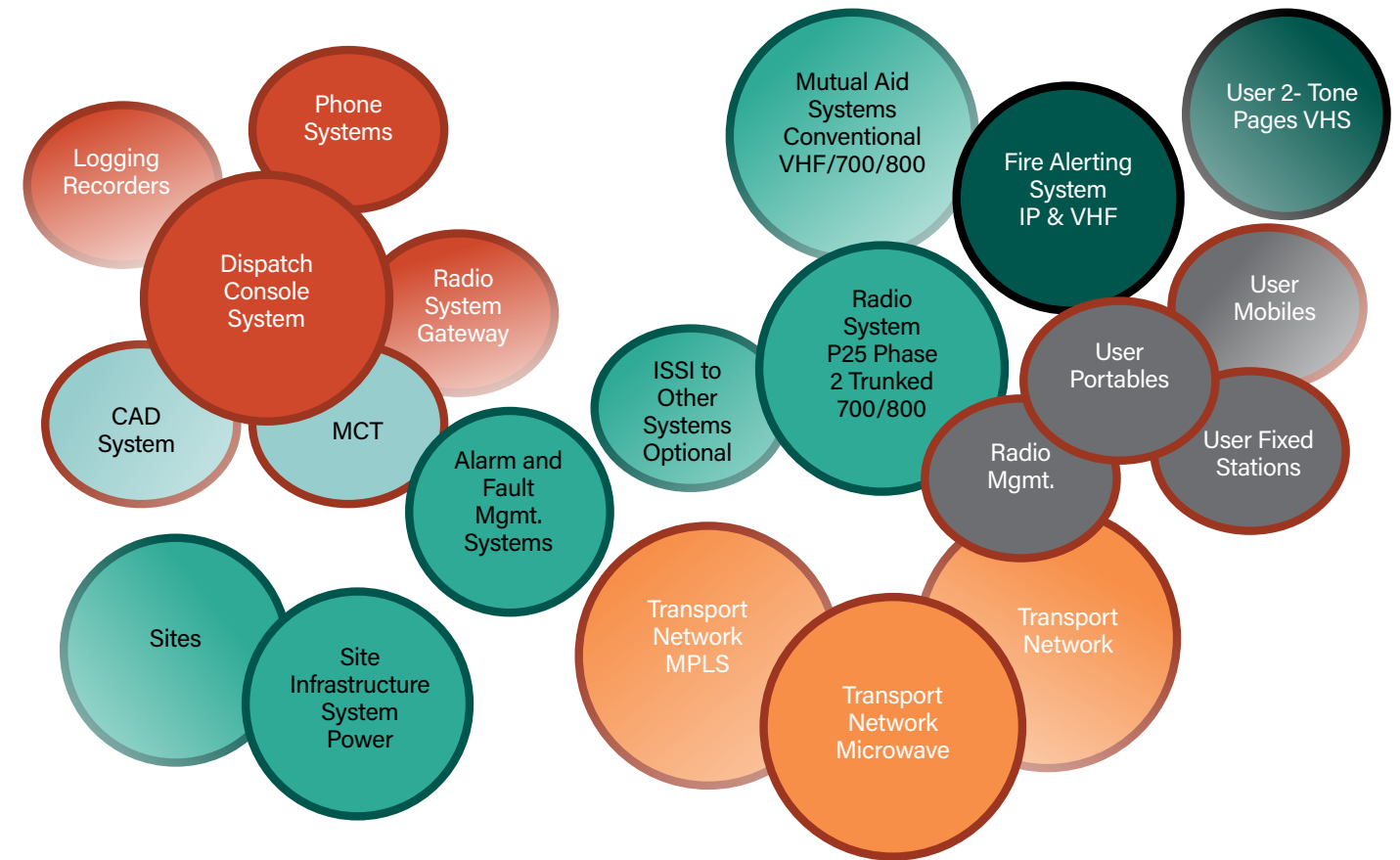
As the existing radio system approaches two decades of reliable service, the underlying technologies of the legacy system, based on phone lines, have been replaced with digital data solutions like the computer/router systems we use every day at home, in home offices, and workplaces. The new radio system will be based on public safety standard APCO Project 25, P25 for short, and join the growing list of nearly 3,000 installed P25 systems providing reliable and interoperable communications to first responders.

Maintaining 24X7 operation of the existing system while constructing another 7x24 system is a significant challenge for the program. The new system must be constructed in parallel with the existing system at the towers. The connections between the towers must maintain legacy connections and new connections, and the new user radios will be programmed to simultaneously work on the old system and the new system.

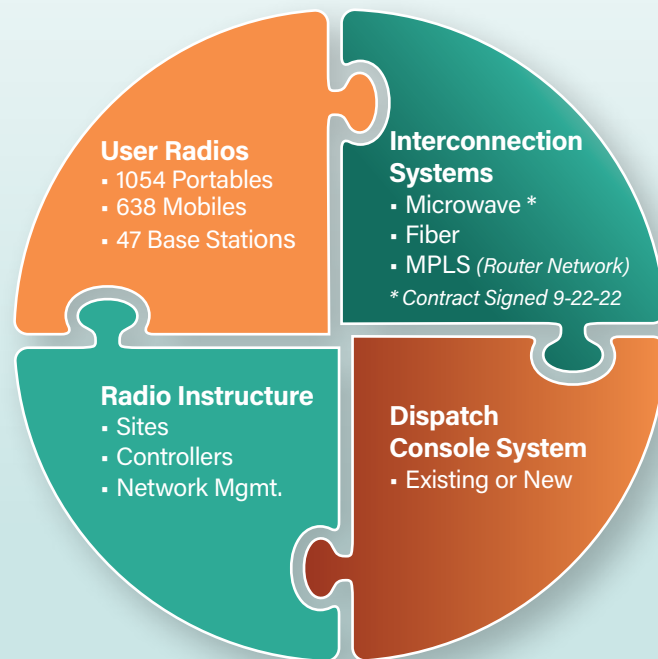
The scope of project further complicates the implementation. For radio users, all 1,700 mobile and portable radios must be replaced, a huge logistical challenge. The radio dispatch system used at Kitsap 911 must be upgraded/replaced to support the new system and the technical support team must learn to operate and repair new equipment.

## IMPROVED COVERAGE, SOUND QUALITY, AND SECURITY

The new system has been specified to improve coverage, provide better sound quality, and improve security. The design criteria and coverage testing have been developed to improve mobile and portable coverage in the county. No system can guarantee 100% coverage, but the new system will improve coverage. The old system also suffers from poor sound quality in many areas with adequate coverage. Digital signals are less susceptible to interference resulting in noticeable sound quality improvements. Security will be improved through radio authentication and encryption. Today's radio system does not authenticate user radios and does not support encryption. Access control to the system and encryption of sensitive communications are examples of ways to make radio communications more secure.



## Radio Program Four Subsystems



# 2023 REMOTE 911 UPDATE

In 2023 Kitsap 911 continued to improve the technical capabilities of the Remote 911 system. One of the major improvements this year was accomplished with the assistance of our 911 phone and radio vendor, Zetron. Kitsap 911 and Zetron worked together to address a stability issue discovered by Kitsap 911 related to dropped and disconnected calls. Together we were able to develop a patch to ensure that if a remote call session was disconnected, the caller was returned into a queue specifically designed to handle remote calls that have been dropped. This queue is a 911 priority answering queue. Training was then provided to the Operations group on the update and how to handle any calls entering this special queue.

Another major technological improvement was the addition of two more VXRail nodes to our virtual server cluster. The addition of these nodes further expanded the capacity and capabilities of the backbone of our remote 911 system. It allows for additional servers and workstations to be created and continues to reduce Kitsap 911's physical server footprint. Virtual servers and workstations provide enhanced reliability, redundancy, and improve the response and recovery time should an issue with a server arise.

Kitsap 911 also made a major advancement in terms of the distance a remote worker can be from Kitsap 911's core dispatch center. In 2023 we employed a full-time remote Call Receiver in North Carolina.



Conrad Shadel working remote from North Carolina

In order to get this working, we had to address major issues relating to bandwidth and latency. We worked with the employee and tested multiple Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to determine which could meet the necessary speed and latency requirements. The solution to the issue came in two forms: the first being the employee was able to secure the bandwidth requirement needed by renting a secured workspace in a business complex. This afforded him an improved and dedicated Internet connection. The second part of making this successful was changing the connectivity software used for access to the phone system from Remote Desktop protocol (RDP) to instead use the VMWare Horizons client. This client provided improved connection handling and audio compression which allowed the employee to overcome the latency delays encountered using RDP from previous locations.

Finally, at the 2023 APCO Fall Conference we were able to show off our Remote 911 Trailer which allows Call Receivers to work in an isolated space if required. The conference was held at the Wenatchee Convention Center in Wenatchee Washington. Kitsap 911's Remote 911 Trailer was set up on the vendor floor which was open to all conference attendees. Kitsap 911 offered attendees the opportunity to come into the trailer and watch our Training Supervisor take phone calls and talk to her about her experiences while she worked with our Remote 911 system.

In September our center was hit with an outbreak of COVID. While unfortunate, this afforded us a real world situation where we could put our remote 911 system and our disaster preparation planning to the test. Within 2 days we had 9 positive cases and almost half of our staff needed to be isolated or quarantined to some degree. Many employees were feeling okay to work but were not allowed in the building in order to mitigate the risk that the outbreak would spread to others. Kitsap 911 was able to keep employees working as part of minimum staffing by allowing them to work out of the Remote 911 Trailer or use their remote kits at home.

We currently have 22 remote kits deployed to employees' homes and also have one dispatcher and one call Receiver working 100% remote within Kitsap County. With three employees working remotely their feedback and troubleshooting has provided the added benefit of allowing our technical service engineers to continue making improvements to the system as a whole. Having active users



gives increased feedback on the health and stability of the system. It also allows our team to monitor the system, troubleshoot, and come up with solutions in real time.

## FUTURE OF REMOTE 911

We are continuing to work to evaluate and enhance the remote connectivity protocols and programs used as part of our remote 911 system and remote kits. Our goal is to determine if there are improvements which can be made to reduce remote requirements. We are also working to find solutions which will allow our employees to work in a wider variety of locations and with a larger selection of Internet Service Providers. Our vision is to make remote shifts available to employees and have remote kits at our backup center as well as other locations throughout the county. Working towards this vision will ensure that we are able to provide our continued excellent service to our citizens and user agencies and will afford us improved flexibility when responding to unforeseen service interruptions and/or disaster scenarios.

## TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR EMPLOYEES THAT HAVE WORKED REMOTELY

*Working remote has allowed me to continue to support the agency and my partners in situations where I would normally be unable to work. For example, this past October I was sick. I had very mild symptoms and felt well enough to work. I was able to spend the entire two weeks working remote. This meant my partners didn't have to work longer hours and days off to cover my shifts and I didn't have to use up my sick leave. Since then, I have been able to log in from home to work a couple hours here and there when my partners would have had to work short staffed otherwise. As with any new technology, it has its frustrating moments. I have been on both sides of this; at home, when my phone system is not working so I have to restart it multiple times, and inside the building when a remote radio crashes and I have assisted by working 2 radios for a brief time while the remote user restarts. Overall, I think the benefits outweigh the frustrations and the longer we have continued to operate and test remote dispatch the more stable it has become.*

*I will say that probably five years ago or so we were discussing on the floor that this job is one job that would never be remote. I can say I've had to eat my words since. The fact that it CAN be remote and actually work as well as it does still surprises me, and I've put a lot of hours in remote now. I have worked mostly remote since June of 2022*

*New technology and advances in technology is always good and, with how much we've been able to do this, it has gotten more fine-tuned. We have a great tech dept and I've talked with them more in the last 18 months than ever before. They've been super helpful and patient with me as I learn and gain some more understanding. Personally, sometimes it is just nice to be home, not pack up meals and drive to work. I personally was thankful when I first started doing this full time as it saved on gas at a time when gas skyrocketed.*

# THE OPERATIONS GROUP

Kitsap 911 is the primary public safety answering point in Kitsap County, WA. We are the unseen partner of emergency services, ALWAYS READY, providing services to seven law enforcement agencies, six fire districts, Kitsap Animal Control, and the Coroner's Office. We also work closely with the Washington State Patrol and Military Police.

Kitsap 911 runs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Operations staff is composed of two primary types of positions. Call Receivers, who are responsible for answering 911 lines and translating gathered information into actionable intelligence for user agencies, and Dispatchers who coordinate directly with responders. They track and monitor law enforcement, fire, and EMS units and their radio transmissions. They are also responsible for assisting with answering 911 lines when Call Receivers are dutifully occupied with emergency 911 lines. The Operations floor is staffed by one to three call takers, one non-emergency Call Receiver (*Monday through Friday*), and five to seven Dispatchers per shift. First-line supervision includes four Shift Supervisors (*Mary Valerio, Brandy D'Intinosanto, Jana Oliver*), three Assistant Supervisors (*Jason Meeder, Drew Tetrick, and Randy Dasho*).

Operations employees have a base schedule of four 10-hour shifts a week. With mandatory overtime, it is not uncommon for most Operations employees to work 12-hour shifts, along with overtime shifts on days off. In 2023 Operations employees worked a total of 17,806.75 hours of overtime, a decrease of 6.43% from the 19,312.25 hours worked in 2022.



We have 37 full-time Dispatch positions, 12 full-time Call Receiver positions, 6 full-time Assistant Supervisor positions, and 4 full-time Supervisor positions at Kitsap 911. On average in 2023 we had 11.27 vacant positions.

Our Continuous Improvement Process for 2023 was to implement a collaborative practice of Intentional Culture which encourages positive growth of community within the group and professional development. We saw a positive change in the culture on the Operations floor and an increase in professional development.

Operations had five employees accepted into the Acting Lead role. This role is to provide direction and support to the Operations staff on the dispatch floor when a Supervisor or Assistant Supervisor is unavailable. We also held an Assessment Center for Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor where we had three internal and two external candidates. From that assessment we promoted one internal candidate to Supervisor and two candidates to Assistant Supervisor, one internal and one external. We also had three Operations employees who expressed interest in going the training route. They were accepted into the training group and have become Certified Training Officers.

In 2023, Kitsap 911 had their fair share of major incidents in the county. One of the biggest events was the Washington State Ferry running aground the afternoon of April 15th. The first call came shortly after 4:30 pm with reports that the ferry had "beached" in Rich Passage. The ferry was carrying over 600 passengers at the time with the event lasting over six hours. There was coordination between Kitsap 911, three Kitsap Law Enforcement agencies, Bainbridge Island Fire Department, Washington State Ferries, Coast Guard, and even Kitsap Transit to help those that were stranded on the ferry.

## Kitsap 911 received a letter from Bainbridge Island Fire regarding this incident:

*"Thank you very much for Kitsap 911's response to the incident on April 15th, involving the ferry Walla Walla. The situation shoreside on Bainbridge Island was very dynamic and necessitated preparations to receive nearly 700 passengers at Lynwood Center and Pleasant Beach, as well as preparing to receive patients and passengers in Bremerton. The scale and complexity of the incident tested our existing systems and relationships.*

*I am pleased to say that the support received reaffirmed the strength of those relationships and the possibilities of what we can accomplish together through trust and working towards a common goal."*

This shows the grit and resiliency of our Kitsap 911 Operations team, how well they are able to come together when there is a major event, and how the floor turns into a "well oiled machine"

Another major event this year was a shots fired call with Poulsbo Police Department in September. This event involved neighbors who were having a disagreement. When Poulsbo Police arrived on scene one neighbor started shooting at the officers. This event had six different Law Enforcement agencies and one fire department involved. Throughout the event the Dispatcher sounded calm and collected all the while repeating and documenting pertinent information. In addition, the Dispatcher who had been handling the event chose to stay an additional two hours past their 12-hour shift to make sure the Operations floor had the coverage it needed. The Dispatcher's experience and knowledge shone through as she handled task after task. The Dispatcher received Kudos for how well she handled the event.

These two events are just an example of how our Operations group is resilient, hardworking, and a focused team not just on the large events, but in everyday life at Kitsap 911. They are truly dedicated to the public, our user agencies, and each other.

If you know of anyone who demonstrates these skills sets and would like to be a Call Receiver or Dispatcher, refer them to the Kitsap 911 website to apply. We are always looking for exceptional people to expand our team!



**Jamie Donley**  
Assistant Director  
of Operations



**Jana Parker**  
Public Safety Supervisor



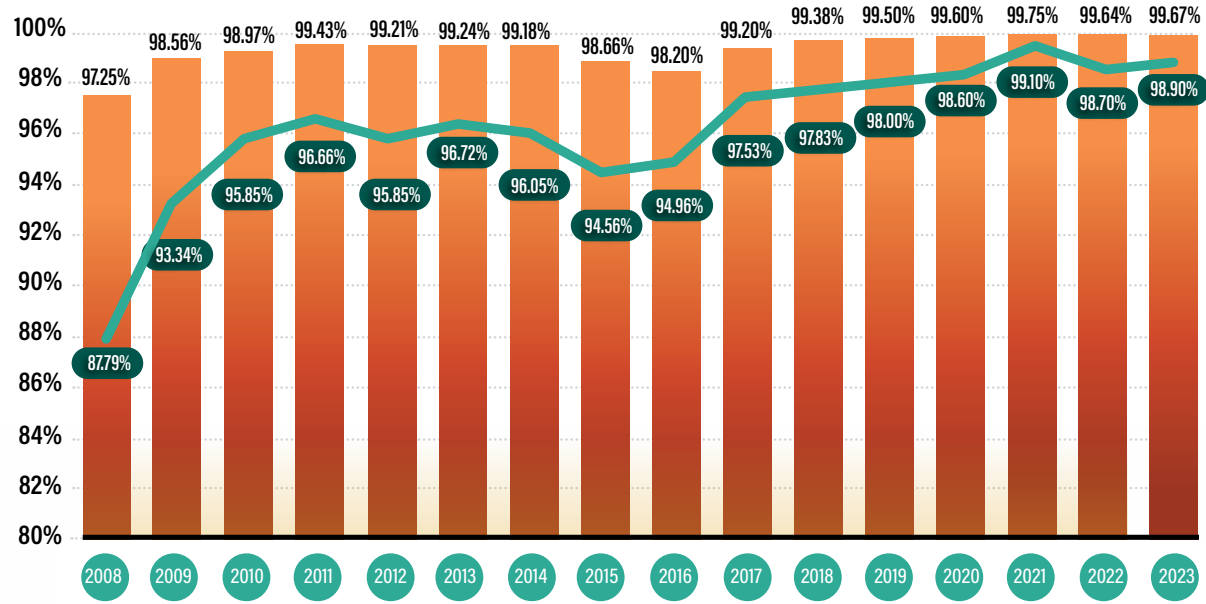
**Brandy D'Intinosanto**  
Public Safety Supervisor



**Mary Valerio**  
Public Safety Supervisor

# OPERATIONS

## 911 ANSWERING STATS



■ 911 Calls Answered within 15 Seconds (Goal 95%)  
— 911 Calls Answered within 10 Seconds (Goal 90%)

### Call Answering Performance

For call answering performance, we look at two goals.

First, we look at NFPA1221 which is - 95% of all 911 calls are answered within 15 seconds. **We continued to exceed this standard in 2023 with 99.67%.**

We also look at Kitsap 911's internal goal of all 911 calls answered within 10 seconds 90% of the time. **We also exceeded this goal with 98.9%.**

**The average 911 call was answered in 3 seconds.**

The dispatch floor processed 301,457 calls in 2023, down about 4% (312,645) from 2022.

184,281 of those were 911 calls, down 4%

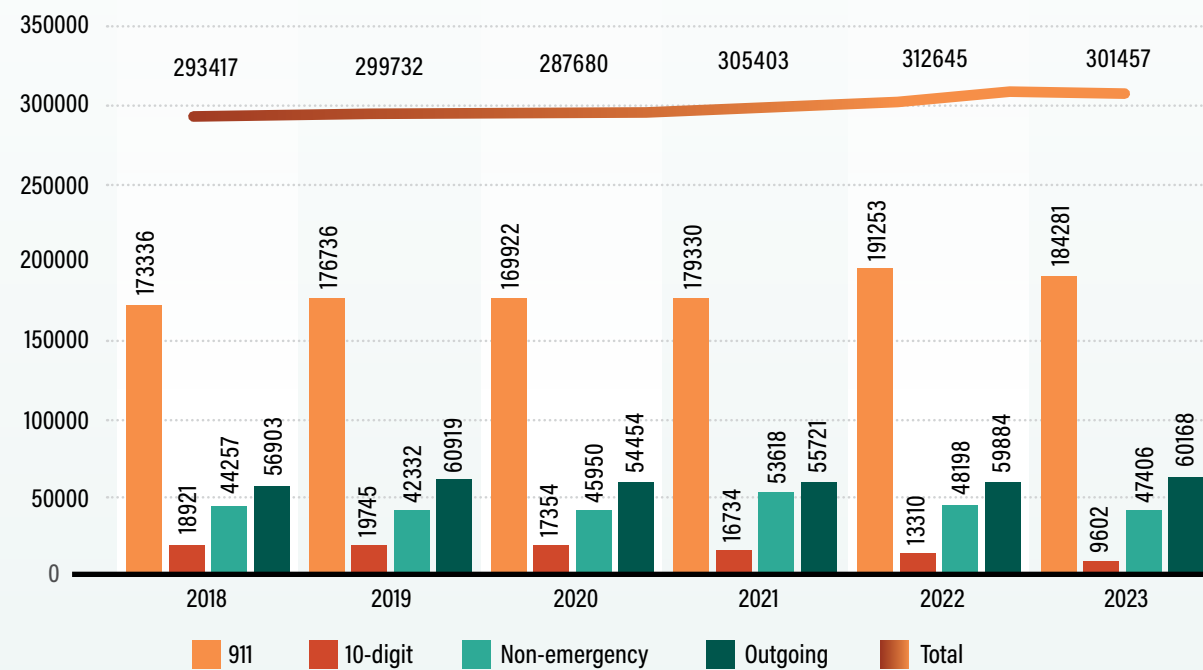
84% of those were wireless calls, 16% from a landline.

9602 were 10-digit emergency lines/ alarm lines, down 28%. This was an expected decline with the implementation of ASAP to PSAP, a computer integration that allows alarm companies to enter alarm calls directly into the CAD system.

47,406 were non-emergency calls, down 2%

60,168 were outgoing calls, up .5%

## CALLS PROCESSED ON THE DISPATCH FLOOR



## DISPATCH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

PRIORITY 1 LAW ENFORCEMENT	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Average Dispatch Time Priority 1 Law Events	29	30	26	26	26	28

FIRE/EMS STANDARDS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
90% Dispatched Within 64 Seconds	84%	81.5%	75.6%	78.2%	75.6%	69.1%
95% Dispatched Within 106 Seconds	96%	96.6%	96%	96.5%	96%	95.5%
Answered to Dispatched in Seconds	:47	:47	:52	:50	:52	:56

**Our processing times for priority 1 law enforcement events has remained steady the last several years.**

The goal is to dispatch these events within 30 seconds of their appearance in the CAD system. We met the goal in 2023 with a 28 second average.

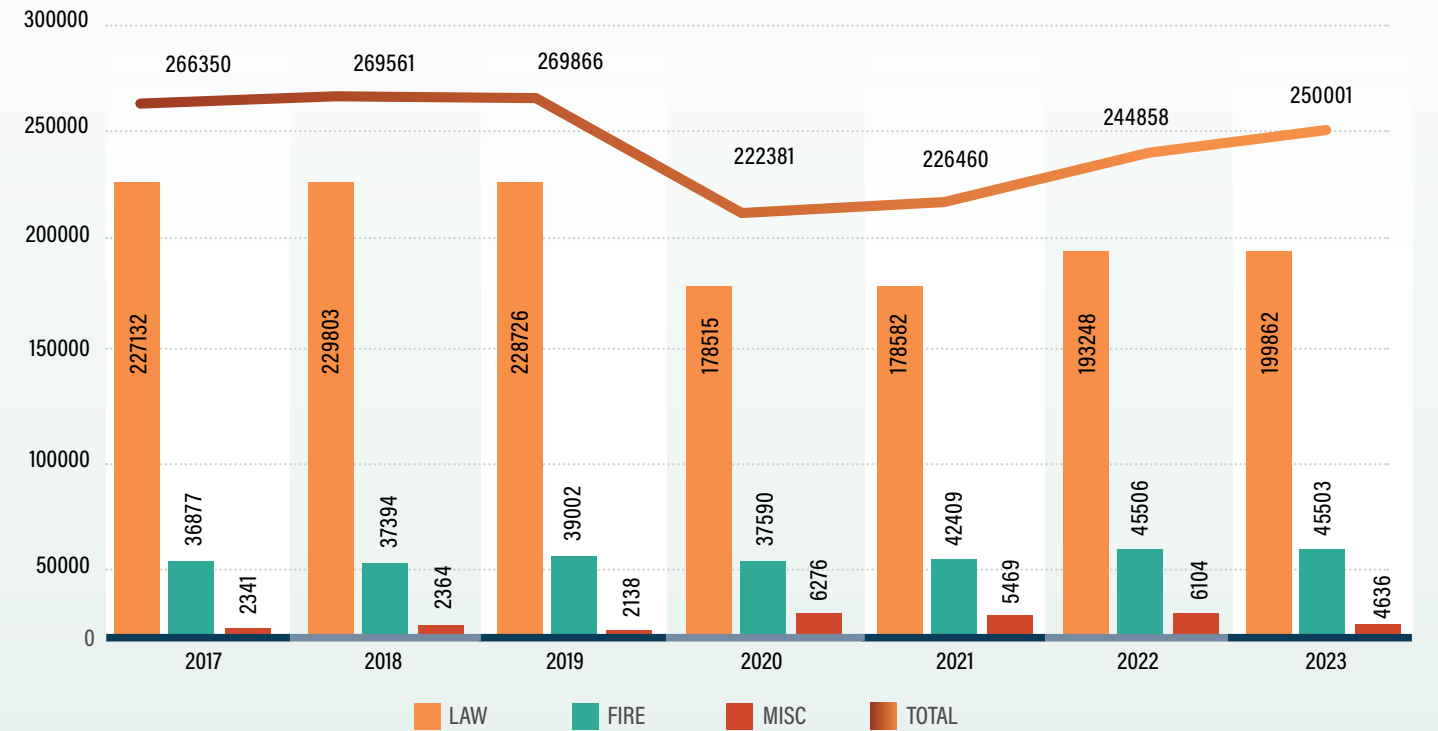
**For priority 1, 2, and BLS fire/EMS events there are two categories:**

For the first category - 90% of events dispatched within 64 seconds, our average for 2023 was 69.1%, down from 75.6%.

For the second category, 95% of events dispatched within 106 seconds, our average was 95.5% a slight decrease from 2022's 96%.

Our 2023 average answer to dispatch time for all fire and EMS events was 56 seconds, an increase from 52 seconds in 2022.

## DISPATCHED EVENT HISTORY



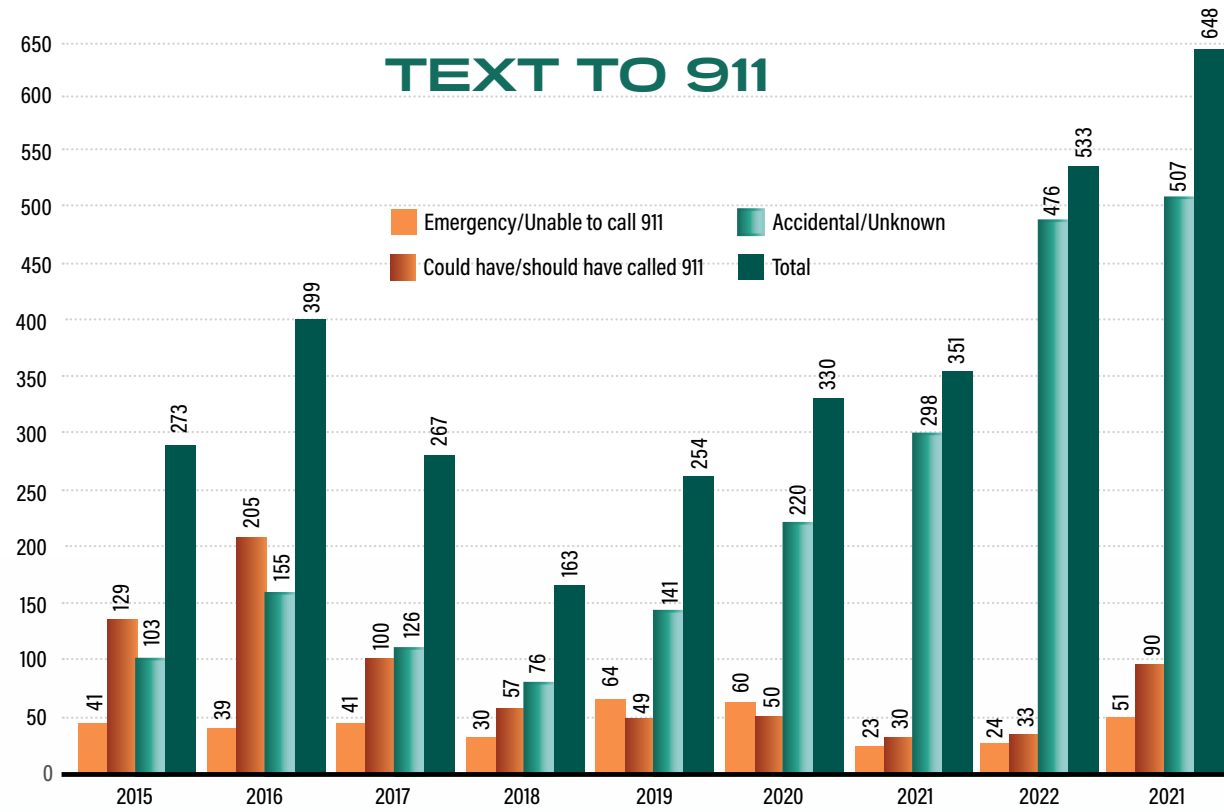
**Kitsap 911 handled 250,001 events on the dispatch floor, an increase of 2.1% over 2022.**

- Law accounted for 199,862, up 3.4% over 2022.
- Fire 45,503 a decrease of 3 events
- Other events totaled 4636, down 24% from 2022.

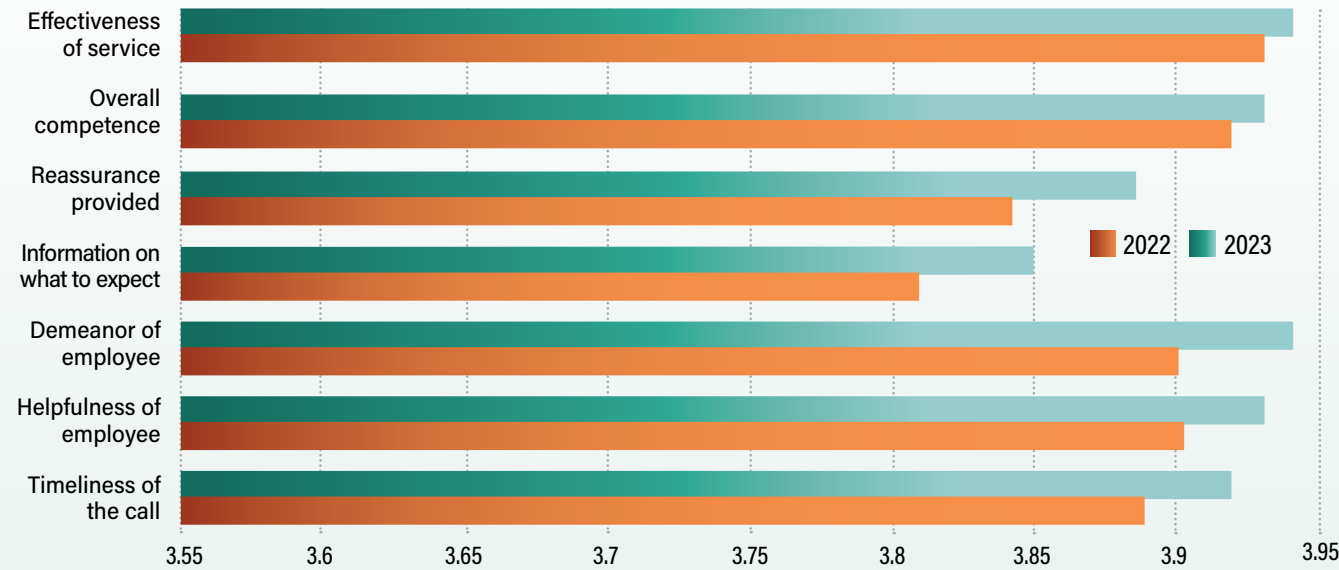
# OPERATIONS

In 2023, Kitsap 911 processed 648 Text to 911 events, an increase of 21.6% over 2022.

51 of those were for an emergency where the caller was unable to make a voice call, 90 were accidental, and 507 would have been better as a voice call.



# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS



We continued to send monthly satisfaction surveys to random 911 callers during 2023. We received 572 responses, a 58% increase over 2022.

- There were seven categories that range from timeliness of the call to overall competence of the 911 call taker.
- These were rated from 1 to 4, with 1 being poor and 4 being excellent.
- Our average score was 3.91, with an increased satisfactory rating in every category.

# CALEA ACCREDITATION

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) is an international credentialing authority that was formed in 1979 for the purpose of accrediting public safety agencies. The Commission accredits law enforcement agencies, training academies, communications centers, and campus public safety agencies.

CALEA Accreditation provides the gold standard in public safety. There are many benefits to accreditation, including identifying organizational risks, service gap opportunities and mitigation strategies. Complying with internationally accepted standards increases agency transparency and public confidence. It also provides a framework for Management in allocating resources and in making data-driven decisions.

Kitsap 911 has been accredited since 2016 and is one of only four accredited communications centers in Washington State. To remain accredited, our policies, procedures and operations are reviewed each year, and we are required to demonstrate continued compliance with over 200 CALEA standards. Standards pertain to nearly every aspect of our agency, from 911 call processing to records security to hiring and retention.

Kitsap 911 is committed to pursuing excellence through CALEA accreditation.



**Jennifer Andrews**  
Professional Standards Manager

# TRAINING RECAP FOR THE YEAR!

Kitsap 911 hosted two Call Receiving academies during the 2023 year. Our Certified Training Officer (CTO) group participated in two continuing education workshops with a focus on strengthening our knowledge in adult learning principles. Our trainers continued focusing on what the industry's best practices are to help create and develop new telecommunicators in our area. The operations staff began the year with education related to the complete overhaul of our Criteria Based Dispatch protocols, a system which allows telecommunicators to choose the correct resources for medical calls according to the local medical protocols and industry standards nationwide. We spent time reviewing our emergency operations procedures for larger events that might occur in the county and how to best support our citizens with the continued rollercoaster of COVID health in our county.

There were several opportunities for employees from all groups to attend some type of training throughout the year. Most significantly, we had several Technical Services employees participate in radio training for our upcoming switch to a digital radio system. This radio training was in addition to Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) courses to develop the knowledge base of what our CAD system can do for us to help citizens and our User Agencies in a timely and more efficient manner. Our Human Resources group completed annual training related to best hiring practices and interview training to help us increase the effectiveness of our hiring practices. We also had employees from our administrative group attending training related to the latest Public Disclosure laws. Our Finance team completed courses related to grant writing and best audit practices to be sure we always follow the letter of the law.

Our management staff spent many hours attending sessions related to the nationwide staffing crisis in 911 communications centers, how to maintain the health and wellness of telecommunicators, and how to promote direct communication and healthy work cultures.

All and all, Kitsap 911's Training Program runs smoothly because of the values of this organization to be at the best of our game! The citizens of Kitsap County and our User Agencies depend on us to be exactly that: the best in their time of need. It was a great year for development for all employees here at Kitsap 911, which will continue into 2024!



**Christine Law**  
*Training Supervisor*

# PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Kitsap 911's Public Education Committee consists of several employees who volunteer their time to develop and present educational material about 911 to the public. Our committee focuses on enhancing public awareness and understanding of the emergency system, helping to promote effective and appropriate use of 911.

We attended 50% more events in 2023 than in previous years, in part due to the ongoing easing of pandemic restrictions and our success with overcoming staffing challenges at Kitsap 911. Along with our yearly attendance at National Night Out and the Kitsap County Fair, we attended several school career and hiring fairs, provided presentations for the West Sound Tech Criminal Justice Program and the Bainbridge Island Community Academy, as well as the Marcus Whitman Jr High AVID classes.

This year committee members participated in two new events. One of our educators was featured on a local artist podcast, which allowed us to reach a new and broader audience. This platform provided an opportunity to discuss not only the critical role of 911 in an emergency but share some insight into the joys and challenges of being a public safety telecommunicator.

In another first, Kitsap 911 was invited to participate in a public panel discussion on Domestic Violence hosted by the YWCA. Along with representatives from several local law enforcement and community resources agencies, we were provided an opportunity to talk about the role of 911 in such critical emergency situations.

Kitsap 911 also provided support for the statewide 911 education and hiring booth at the Washington State Fair in September. Public Education Committee members along with representatives from the HR department volunteered several hours to staff the booth, answering questions about 911 as well as providing specific information about working for Kitsap 911.

As we look forward to 2024, our goal will be to continue seeking new opportunities to educate and engage with the public about the essential services provided by 911. This includes building and strengthening partnerships with our member agencies and growing our online presence through social media.



# PEER SUPPORT TEAM

Peer Support at Kitsap 911 is a team of 10 employees who provide listening support, referral information, and emotional assistance for peers who have been involved in a critical incident, job related stress, and/or are suffering a personal crisis. The role of a Peer Support member is to provide support in dealing with a reaction to a stressful event, not to provide psychological counseling. Over the last year, the Peer Support Team has been active in being supportive with employees and has a well-rounded, resourceful group of employees in different roles and departments.

Our team consists of 2 Call Receivers, 3 Dispatchers, 3 Supervisors, a member from TSG, and management. The team is overseen by a Management Representative, the Peer Support Coordinator, and an Assistant Peer Coordinator. To be a member of the Peer Support Team, an employee has to be recommended by a peer. The recommendation is then reviewed by the Peer Support Coordinator and the Management Representative for approval. In October, we were excited to welcome a new member, Ben Woodruff.

Peer Support can be employee initiated, self-dispatched, or requested by another Kitsap 911 employee. In 2023, PST had 26 overall contacts. Of these, 11 were employee-initiated and 15 were self-dispatched. This was an increase from 2022 with 23 contacts. Over the past year, we made it a goal to be more proactive. Once we are made aware of a critical incident or an employee dealing with a stressful situation, members of the team reach out to the employees involved as soon as possible to provide immediate support and resources.

2023 was an insightful year for the Kitsap 911 Peer Support Team. There were two informative training classes facilitated by Dr. Crampton, who is a Public Safety Clinical Psychologist with the Reign Center for

Psychological Wellness. PST members had an overview of wellness topics such as effects of the brain and the usefulness of breathing and meditation. The second training was on the topic of the importance and effects of sleep. The training was enlightening, effective, and targeted for our industry, which provided the Peer Support Team with tools to use and pass on to coworkers for overall better mental health. In 2024, we plan to continue our education by receiving training on Peak Performance, Habit Formation, Positive Thoughts and Actions/Building a Stronger Agency Culture from Within, Suicide Awareness, and Prevention. We also plan to get all our newest members Peer Support certified.

Kitsap 911's Peer Support Team has joined a Peer Support Network that works with agencies across Washington State. We are currently in the process of creating a response team for agencies that would deploy Peer Support members to any agency within the state who are in need of assistance. Everyone in 911 should have access to the same support, no matter how big or small the agency. The next goal is to provide support to those agencies who either don't have an established Peer Support Team or their own team needs the support.

In 2024, we will be researching how we can be even more proactive for employees by evaluating long term stressors. We do not want to only focus on critical incidents but how we can be of service for tough calls that may not be considered "critical" that build up, in addition to the daily stress of the job.

The PST continues to be a valuable resource. Paired with the Wellness Team, it has been a beneficial and crucial resource for the mental health and well-being of our employees with intentional outreach as well as building a welcoming team for employees to seek out.

# WELLNESS TEAM

Kitsap 911's Wellness Team consists of eight employee members working to support their coworkers and themselves in improving their wellness in all aspects of their lives. In 2023, we concentrated on giving our employees challenges to get them engaged in improving wellness from whatever level they were starting. These challenges did not have a singular winner, but all participants were entered into a drawing for a prize related to the challenge.

### The 2023 challenges included:

- **Breathing Challenge** – Learn to take at least 5 minutes to focus on breathing.
- **Water Challenge** – Drink more water. Start with one additional cup each day for the first week and build from there.
- **Clear the Clutter Challenge** – Employees were encouraged to spend a small amount of time each day looking at their rooms and removing things that they did not need any longer. An employee brought a large SUV and employees could bring their items to donate.

In 2023, the team distributed newsletters with information about various wellness categories for mental and physical health. The Wellness Team hosted a boba (*bubble tea*) bar and encouraged people to participate in the Holiday Bazaar for the second year that featured items made by our employees.

2023 saw the addition of a CENCOM MARKETPLACE on the Wellness Committee page in the agency's SharePoint. This was to encourage employees to share information on items they might want to get rid of and opening it up to other employees that might be interested. Additionally, a Wellness blog was added to SharePoint to encourage questions and input from all employees.

In 2024, the Wellness Team's overall goal is to continue to encourage activities and ideas that create time and space for employees to put energy toward improving their own health and well-being. Additionally in 2024, the team will:

- Continue to research and apply for Wellness Grants to assist in budgeting for wellness events, supplies, and equipment
- Create a remote training that breaks down compassion fatigue and ways to overcome it in our work and in our lives
- Prepare and distribute a quarterly newsletter
- Plan realistic challenges for each month beginning in January, encouraging employees to make small changes in their lives. *Examples: more steps, skin care, fiscal improvement, meditation, and more.*
- Continue to look for opportunities to work alongside the Peer Support Team

We are looking for 2024 to be the year that we achieve a majority of employee participation in improving their lives through our challenges. We will encourage more participation and continue to capitalize on the growing interest by seeking input from employees through our first quarter newsletter. Building on those ideas, we will offer more engaging opportunities for employees to share, grow and improve their lives together fostering a culture of care and wellness for all of us.

# 2023

## APCO AWARDS

*These awards recognize individuals who have demonstrated work performance that exceeds what is normally required in a year. The nominee demonstrates exemplary performance, attitude, and skill set that is outside the standard requirements.*



**DAWN PERRY**  
WASHINGTON AMERICAN LEGION  
*Operator of the Year*



**SHEILA RING**  
WASHINGTON APCO-WA  
*Telecommunicator of the Year for a Critical Incident*



# 2023 KITSAP 911 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

## SHEILA RING

*This award is chosen by Kitsap 911 employees from one of the quarterly award recipients.*



## QUARTERLY AWARDS

### JILL CLANCEY - 1ST QUARTER

*Public Safety Telecommunicator I*

Jill was nominated for several kudos she received over the past few months, from co-workers and citizens, for her customer service skills when handling 911 calls. She consistently demonstrates empathy and compassion for callers and uses effective communication skills, even when working with difficult callers or scenarios. Jill has also been extremely helpful as part of the team working on the Remote 911 project. She has had to develop her technical and troubleshooting skills while working in the remote environment and has provided valuable feedback to TSG about the system from the user perspective.



### DAVE WILSON - 2ND QUARTER

*Public Safety Telecommunicator I*

Dave has become a very solid call receiver since being hired in 2021. His calls are clear and thorough. Rarely are there questions about one of his details, but if there is, he is very responsive and quickly makes any needed additions or changes. He is accountable for his performance and strives to improve. I have never heard him sound irritated or upset with a caller. He remains professional and courteous to our most difficult callers. Dave conveys empathy to callers in crisis. He has a positive, can-do attitude. If something needs to be done, he will be happy to help out. He is also very engaging with new employees and helps to make them feel welcome. He also recently took on the role of CTO and has been working to gain knowledge on our training program so he's ready when he gets his first trainee.



### ERIC SEDA - 3RD QUARTER

*Public Safety Systems Technician*

Eric was nominated for his support to the Operations floor. Eric responds super quickly to requests, questions, and concerns no matter if it's through a work order or a question in Teams. He has become our "go to" guy. Eric always responds with a positive and uplifting attitude no matter the task, big or small. He keeps the supervisors well informed about what is being done if he is unable to fix the issue. His timeliness, communication, attitude, and thoroughness are greatly appreciated. Eric is a true asset to the Kitsap 911 team.



### SHEILA RING - 4TH QUARTER

*Public Safety Telecommunicator Lead*

Sheila was nominated by her supervisors for regularly going above and beyond. She answers more than her fair share of phone calls, actively seeks out supervisory tasks she can do to lessen the burden for the on-duty supervisor, and regularly serves as a resource to the room. Sheila volunteers to assist her coworkers with whatever they may need, ranging from data to making phone calls and verifications. She is highly accountable and is always striving to be better. Sheila exemplifies teamwork and represents exactly what we are looking for in Kitsap 911's culture.



# KITSAP 911 FAMILY

None of us at Kitsap 911 could do what we do without the support of our family and friends. Thank you to everyone who helps us be successful and healthy!

