

Evacuation of Primary PSAP

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Alternate PSAP / Backup Center

Boston Fire Alarm, located at 59 the Fenway, serves as the Back Up Center for the City of Boston. Five additional Next Gen 9-1-1 call taking positions are located in the main operations area at Fire Alarm and are continuously logged-on and available to receive any alternate routed 9-1-1 calls. A back-up operating center is housed in the basement area of Fire Alarm for receiving 9-1-1 calls and dispatching EMS and Police units should an evacuation of the Primary PSAP become necessary. The backup center is equipped as follows:

Ten (10) Telephone Positions:

- Five (5) 9-1-1 Police Answering Positions
- One (1) Police Duty Supervisor Position
- One (1) Police Clerk Position
- One (1) EMS Supervisor Position
- Two (2) EMS Answering Positions

Eight (8) Dispatch Positions:

- Six (6) Police Dispatching Positions
- Two (2) EMS Dispatching Positions

The decision to order an evacuation of the Primary PSAP and begin operating from the back-up Center shall be a decision based upon multiple factors and must include coordination by Boston Police, Boston EMS and Boston Fire Department personnel. Even under the best of circumstances, the ability to receive and process requests for emergency service from the back-up Center will be limited because of the reduced number of calltaking positions, dispatch capability and support services. It is conceivable that under certain types of equipment failures, the back-up center could be activated on a partial basis. For example, telephone answering could be completed at the back-up center while Citywide Dispatch, CMED and BAPERD operations continued at the primary PSAP. Prior to ordering any evacuation, caution should be exercised assuring there are no other reasonable alternatives.

Unless there appears to be a clear and present danger to Dispatch Operations personnel, the evacuation order for the Primary PSAP shall include consultation with the following Command Staff and Technical personnel: Superintendent in Chief; Superintendent of Field Services; Superintendent of Field Support, and the Commander of Dispatch Operations.

As soon as it appears an evacuation may become necessary, the **GDIT Help Desk (1-855-626-4911)** and Boston Fire Alarm should be notified of the situation and requested to begin preparing for possible activation of the back-up center.

- At least one dispatch qualified EMS Telecommunicator shall be sent to Fire Alarm with a portable radio to prepare to take over dispatch functions. This Telecommunicator does not necessarily have to be sent from Dispatch Operations and may come from a field unit or the administrative office if available.

- Upon arrival at Fire Alarm, the EMS Telecommunicator will be given access to a supervisor CAD workstation (if functioning) on the main floor of Fire Alarm. [CAD terminal **FDS03** has been designated for this purpose]. The Telecommunicator shall monitor the EMS incidents and prepare to take control of the EMS CAD group should an evacuation of the Primary PSAP become necessary.
- BFD: The senior operator or his/her designee shall open up the back-up Center and ensure that all Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) computers are powered up and functional. Fire Alarm personnel should not log onto Next Gen 9-1-1 units in the back-up center at this time as this may cause alternate routed calls to be delivered to the back-up center, rather than the main operations area upstairs.

Non-Emergent Evacuation

In situations where an evacuation is necessary, but there is no immediate threat to the life-safety of personnel, the following steps should be taken prior to, or in conjunction with, the routine evacuation of the Dispatch Center:

- Fire Alarm should be notified of the decision to evacuate and to prepare to handle alternate or re-routed 9-1-1 calls.
- Arrangements should be made to transport personnel to Fire Alarm via BPD and /or EMS units.
- Supervisors should ensure that all CAD and Next Gen 9-1-1 Terminals are “LOGGED OFF” prior to evacuation. Personnel should take their headsets with them to Fire Alarm.
- EMS: Communications Engineering will be called to “call forward” the EMS Dispatch Operations administrative numbers to Fire Alarm. Calls will be directed to ring at the EMS Supervisor position in the backup Center.
- An announcement shall be made via TAC-1, BAMA, and MED-4 advising units that CMED capabilities will be limited. The CMED operator shall select the COBTH group and announce “Attention all hospitals, be advised that Metro-Boston CMED is unable to coordinate patch requests at this time. Hospitals are directed to monitor their radios for incoming radio traffic until further notice.” The following Patch groups will then be established:

BASE	CHANNEL	HOSPITALS
2 W. ROXBURY	8	BWH, FLK
3 BOSTON	5	BID, BMCM# 1, BMCP, TMC
5 QUINCY	7.2	CRN, BID-MILT
6 CHELSEA	5.2	CHA-CAMB, MGH, SMRV
7 FOXBORO	4.2	BIDN, NORW
8 NATICK	1N	MWF, MWN
9 BURLINGTON	2.2	LAHY, WNCH
10 NEWTON	1.2	MNTA, NWH, STE
12 SCITUATE	7N	QMC, SSH
13 LITTLETON	8.2	EMER

- Once patch groups have been established, announce “The COBTH Disaster Network has been activated. Hospitals are now configured into their preset patches. Station KIR735, Metro Boston CMED, (operator ID), (time)”
- MassPort Fire Rescue and the Massachusetts State Police should be advised that 10 digit emergency numbers will be temporarily out of service. Requests for EMS or BPD response should be forwarded through Boston Fire Alarm Emergency 2-way number (617 536-1500).
- The “Evacuation 1 Schroeder” group page shall be transmitted with a notation that the back-up center at 59 The Fenway is being activated.
- The supervisor shall take a portable radio and, if available, a cellular phone. These items shall remain with the supervisor and taken to the back-up site.

Emergency Evacuation

If the cause of the evacuation is due to a catastrophic event or other hazardous condition making the Dispatch Center uninhabitable, the BPD and EMS Supervisors will advise their personnel to immediately evacuate the building.

- Should the Supervisor be injured or otherwise unable to fulfill these duties, the most senior Telecommunicator shall be in charge until relieved by a person of higher rank or a more senior Department member.
- Personnel shall be advised to meet in the designated meeting area (the corner of Tremont St. and Prentiss St. The Supervisor shall direct personnel to an alternate meeting site if it is determined that the designated meeting site cannot be utilized.
- EMS Personnel should assist in the evacuation of any injured employees or wheelchair bound personnel. Using the Evacuation chairs one on the BPD side and two on the EMS side near CNED and the AED (See “Fire at Dispatch Operations Center”).
- Evacuated personnel should assemble at the meeting location for roll call. In the event any personnel are missing and cannot be accounted for, the supervisor shall immediately notify the incident commander of the person’s last known location or assignment.
- Once the emergency evacuation is complete, any outstanding agency specific tasks outlined in Section 4 (“Non-Emergent Evacuation”) should be completed as soon as possible.

Transition to Back-Up Center Operations

Call Routing:

- If the police Call takers remained logged-on / ready during the evacuation, 9-1-1 calls will be presented to their terminal. If the call is not answered within approximately 55 seconds, the call will then be sent to a standby Next Gen 9-1-1 terminal at Fire Alarm through alternate routing.
- If the police Calltakers remained logged on / not ready during the evacuation, the Miran Card system will determine Calltakers are logged on but none are available. Callers will receive a recorded message to stay on the line and the call will be placed in queue.
- If a 9-1-1 call is placed and there are NO police Calltakers logged on to the system, the call will be sent to Call Takers at Framingham State 9-1-1, until someone logs on to Next Gen 9-1-1 at Fire Alarm.

- Upon notification that an evacuation of the Primary PSAP is underway, all available personnel at Fire Alarm should be prepared to staff the alternate PSAP positions. BFD Personnel should be prepared to receive alternate routed emergency calls over these lines.

Call Handling Procedures

- At a minimum, the following information should be elicited from every caller: Location of the reported emergency; call back number; Type of problem or description of incident.
- The information shall be used to generate a CAD incident using the same TYPE Code system used during normal operations (specifically, BFD Calltakers should use REQP when entering a request for police services or REQE when requesting EMS). In the event the CAD system is not functioning, calls shall be recorded legibly on cards with one card made out for each agency that will be responding.
- Because of the limited number of calltaking positions, call-handling procedures may have to be modified in order to ensure calls are processed in an efficient and orderly manner. Providing complete pre-arrival instructions or responding to lower priority calls may be temporarily suspended. This decision will be made by the supervisory staff on scene at the time and will take into account the number of personnel available to answer calls and call volume.

Dispatching

- It is imperative that a dispatch qualified Telecommunicator arrive at Fire Alarm as soon as possible to assume Citywide dispatch of EMS units. Initially, dispatching may be done by portable radio from the main operations area of Fire Alarm. Depending on the status of the radio equipment at Schroeder Plaza, there may be limited “portable to portable” coverage in some areas of the City, but “portable to vehicle” coverage should be acceptable.
- In the unlikely event that a complete evacuation of the Primary is PSAP is necessary before an EMS Telecommunicator has arrived at Fire Alarm, the Dispatch Operations Supervisor or designee shall contact Boston Fire Alarm (343-2880) by cellular telephone and remain in voice contact while enroute to the backup center. Fire Alarm personnel shall notify the EMS personnel of any EMS related incidents they have received and an EMS unit will be dispatched by EMS Dispatch Operations personnel while enroute to the back-up center.
- Upon arrival at the backup center, all pending EMS calls should be reviewed and appropriate EMS TYPE Codes assigned using the APCO EMD Guidelines. A roll call of EMS units should be performed to update their status and normal dispatch operations will commence.
- As more EMS Telecommunicators arrive, the EMS Supervisor shall assign them to assist the dispatcher as needed, function as Calltakers, monitor MED-4, or move downstairs to begin operating from the back-up Center.
- The telecommunicator assigned to CMED should direct units with Priority 2 or Priority 3 traffic to seek an alternate means of hospital notification (contacting the hospital via cellular phone or going through their own dispatch center). Units with Priority 1 traffic for a hospital with an existing patch (see section 4) should be directed to the appropriate MED channel with instructions to hail the hospital directly. If an existing patch is not available and the unit having Priority 1 traffic has no other means of notification, the CMED operator may provide a brief notification to the hospital via telephone or the VHF disaster radio.

Back-Up Center Activation

- Once a sufficient number of personnel have arrived and radio transmitters and digital logging recorders have been activated by BPD and EMS technical services personnel, Calltakers should begin logging on to the calltaking equipment in the back-up center. These calls can then be transferred, as appropriate to EMS or BFD calltaker positions for call entry.

Restoration of Operations

When a determination is made by Technical and Command staff personnel that operations at the Primary PSAP can be restored, the transition from the back-up Center to the Primary PSAP will be closely coordinated between all agencies involved.