



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

George L. Fosque, Emergency Communications and 911 Director (gfosque@ps.ci.cambridge.ma.us)

Thomas F. Cahill, Chief of Emergency Operations

Kenneth T. Pitts, Public Safety Computer Systems Manager

Pat Macher, Administrative Assistant

Memorandum

To: Robert Healy
From: George Fosque
Re: Response to Council Order 24 from November 23, 1998
Date: 12/7/98

The council expresses concern about the status of the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and any bugs that may not have been worked out of the system.

The CAD system software experienced a major upgrade on October 18, 1998. This upgrade was over 18 months in the planning, programming and testing and was largely designed to improve the ability of the CAD to handle certain advanced aspects of fire and police dispatching. The upgrade generally went smoothly although a variety of problems were uncovered and have been fixed, depending on priority, in the days since the upgrade. The clean-up of many older statistical reports; the addition of many new functions and reports, and the tuning of many operational issues will continue for some time under the coordination of Supervisor Snow and Ken Pitts (chief programmer). In addition, many changes have been made to speed complex functions or address problem areas in operator training or CAD functionality.

Over 100 changes were made to the CAD, most at the request of the dispatchers. Note that many of the changes were made far in excess of the CAD contract requirements. We thank the vendor for their efforts to listen to our very detailed special requirements and to make changes based on those needs.

Supervisor Paula Snow coordinated the requests for changes, and the extensive training of each dispatcher. She received a commendation for her patient, persistent efforts which paid off in a relatively smooth transition

given the large number of changes that were instituted and the many new features that were addressed in training.

Dispatchers got many new functions which they requested and helped design. These included station-based fire status; intelligent unit recommendations for police dispatch based on unit schemes; much improved run plan and first-in fire unit recommendations; a whole new system to manage multiple alarm fires with automatic move-ups and cover assignments; better tracking of operator changes; automatic bi-directional interface to the Zetron encoder; more flexible narrative; instant access to background information at a location; improved flagging of warrants/RO's/notices; better business and emergency contact information; better handling of non-patrol police units; and many dozens of other improvements large and small.

In addition to all of this the CAD added digital dispatch to police and fire rescue laptops; larger computer screens for the fire and police dispatchers; an improved interface to E911 information; and clearer entry of business and commonplace information.

24-hour support of the system continues with software improvements being made at periodic opportunities as well as on-shift follow-up training of dispatchers.

Please rest assured that the CAD is working properly as an indispensable tool of the ECC.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

December 14, 1998

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 33, regarding a report on the status of the CAD system, received from Emergency Communications Director George Fosque.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #6

8145

Relative to Awaiting Report
Item Number 33, regarding a
report on the status of the
CAD system.

In City Council December 14, 1998

Referred to
City Auditor to conduct an
audit on motion of C. Sullivan.