



*Internal Audit Report*

BOCC Public Safety-  
Emergency Dispatch



**Report Number:** 2019.15  
**Date:** December 3, 2019



## BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch



To: The Honorable Linda Doggett, Lee County Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller

From: Tim Parks, Chief Internal Audit Officer/Inspector General

Date: December 3, 2019

Re: Audit of BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch

Dear Ms. Doggett,

The Inspector General Department has completed an audit of BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch. Mabel Febles, CIGA, Senior Internal Auditor conducted this review.

This audit activity conforms to the Institute of Internal Auditor's (IIA) *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (Red Book)* and the Association of Inspectors General (AIG) *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General (Green Book)*.

The audit client's response is attached to this report. We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance provided us by management and staff during this review.

This report will be posted to the Clerk of Courts website, [www.leeclerk.org](http://www.leeclerk.org), under Inspector General, Audit Reports. A link to this report has been sent to the Lee County Board of County Commissioners and appropriate parties.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Parks".

Tim Parks, CIA, CIG, CIGI  
Chief Internal Audit Officer/Inspector General  
Inspector General Department

TJP/GK



# BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch



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# BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch



## Executive Summary

The BOCC Lee County Public Safety's Emergency Dispatch Center (EDC) audit was included in the 2019 Annual Audit Plan as a carryover from 2018. A risk assessment project was completed for all BOCC business units prior to creating the audit plan.

The audit objective was to assess the department's ability to measure and monitor its internal objectives and its contribution to the overall mission of the BOCC, and determine that controls are in place to ensure compliance with applicable policies, standards, laws, and regulations.

EDC's risk factors were identified in a risk assessment questionnaire that was completed by department management. An entrance conference was held with management to discuss the results, confirm the audit's objective and scope, and to solicit current information regarding risks.

Our conclusion is the EDC personnel are adequately trained and certified to perform the required tasks. Internal controls are in place to ensure compliance with the required training and management of emergency calls and dispatch. We offer recommendations to add value and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of EDC's processes and controls.

During a review of the controls to monitor the promptness in which calls are answered, it was discovered that a related compliance alert was inadvertently made inactive. Management took immediate action and enabled the alert function. We recommend that a process be created as a preventive measure.

We recommend that enhancements pertaining to the tracking and monitoring of complaints be implemented.

## Background

The EDC is one of Lee County's Public Safety Divisions. The Center receives calls for all emergency medical services and 19 of the fire districts in Lee County. The calls are routed from the local police or the sheriff's dispatch center.

EDC's mission is to provide the best possible service to Lee County EMS, the 19 fire districts, and to the residents and visitors of Lee County. The Center is recognized by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch as an Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) whose goal is to improve public care and to maximize the efficiency of emergency systems.

A total of 7,676 calls were answered in July 2019, and an average of 98.78 percent of the calls were answered within fifteen seconds. That performance is greater than the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Performance Standard of 90 percent.



# BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch



## Objective, Scope, and Methodology

The objective of the audit was to assess the department's ability to measure and monitor its internal objectives and its contribution to the overall mission of the BOCC, and determine that controls are in place to ensure compliance with applicable policies, standards, laws, and regulations.

The audit scope focused on a review of the following:

- Management of emergency calls and dispatch
- Required training
- Personal confidential information management
- Complaints and resolutions
- Access control management for CAD and NICE application systems
- Contingency plan

The audit methodology was comprised of four steps:

- **Preliminary Risk Assessment:** A meeting was held with management to discuss the audit objective and scope and to solicit information regarding risks.
- **Planning:** Audit procedures were developed based upon research, audit objective, scope, and the preliminary meeting.
- **Field Work:** Managers and employees were interviewed for insight on the operations. Evaluations and tests were conducted on operations and procedures to address and complete the audit fieldwork.
- **Wrap-up:** An Exit conference was held with management to discuss the audit results.

## Observations and Recommendations

### *Complaints and Resolutions*

The EDC was unable to generate a list of historical complaints and the corresponding resolutions.

Maintaining and monitoring complaint records:

- Can serve as a tool for measuring and improving performance and for training purposes.
- Could minimize the risk of operational inefficiencies or negative publicity that could arise regarding the organization.



## BOCC Public Safety-Emergency Dispatch



### Recommendation

We recommend that a process be created to maintain and monitor all EDC complaints.

### *Emergency Calls and Dispatch*

Lee County Ordinance No. 0816, Section 15B -Prompt Service Required states that *“Every call for service shall be answered promptly....Those instances where more than three (3) minutes elapse between receipt of an emergency call and dispatch of a permitted emergency vehicle shall also be reported to the Director of Public Safety or designee with documentation of circumstances.”*

EDC had a procedure to receive email alerts when incidents take longer than three minutes to dispatch. However, the compliance alert was inadvertently made inactive, and emails had not been received since January 2019.

### Recommendation

We recommend that the alert system remains enabled and a process be created to minimize the non-compliance risk.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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District One

November 26, 2019

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Ray Sandelli  
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Attn: Tim Parks

Brian Hamman  
District Four

P.O. Box 2469, Fort Myers, FL 33902

Frank Mann  
District Five

Subject: Audit of BOCC Public Safety Emergency Dispatch

Roger Desjarlais  
County Manager

Dear Mr. Parks,

Richard Wm. Wesch  
County Attorney

On behalf of Lee County Public Safety's Emergency Dispatch Center (EDC), we would like to thank Mabel Febles and her team for their professional interactions throughout the audit process of the Emergency Dispatch Center. We have taken immediate action on the recommendations identified in the Internal Audit Report.

Donna Marie Collins  
Hearing Examiner

*"We recommend that a process be created to maintain and monitor all EDC complaints."*

Immediately after this concern was identified during the audit interview, Lee Control Emergency Dispatch Center created a process to maintain and monitor all complaints regarding the EDC and its personnel. Following the interview, it became policy that all complaints regarding dispatch operations and/or dispatch personnel shall be entered upon receipt into the Support Center Ticketing System under the topic: "Lee Control – Customer Complaint". The complaint is then sent to the manager of the Emergency Dispatch Center, who then the investigation process. All data collected during the investigation process is both documented and searchable in the Support Ticket System.

*"We recommended that the alert system remains enabled and a process be created to minimize the non-compliance risk."*

In order to ensure compliance, Lee Control Emergency Dispatch Center has initialized a system-generated page sent directly to the manager of the EDC reporting all instances where more than three minutes elapse between receipt of emergency call and dispatch of a permitted emergency vehicle. Upon receipt of this notification, the manager initiates a Quality Assurance / Ordinance Compliance review of the incident and carefully details the results and any further actions taken in a secure file.

Lee County Public Safety Emergency Dispatch Center is confident that the actions taken in response to the recommendations detailed in the Internal Audit Report will satisfy all requirements and minimize operational risks moving forward.

Sincerely,

Casey Allo  
Chief, Emergency Dispatch Center