

2020 Surveillance Impact Report Executive Overview

Computer-Aided Dispatch

Seattle Fire Department

DRAFT

Overview

The Operational Policy statements in this document represent the only allowable uses of the equipment and data collected by this technology.

This Executive Overview documents information about the collection, use, sharing, security and access controls for data that is gathered through Seattle Fire Department’s Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD). All information provided here is contained in the body of the full Surveillance Impact Review (SIR) document but is provided in a condensed format for easier access and consideration.

Note: All use of CAD as described in this document and the SIR is governed by SFD’s Policy and Operating Guidelines (POG) Section 500-535 and Section 4007, which contain details on policy and training related to deployment and use of SFD’s CAD system.

1.0 Technology Description

CAD is a distributed server environment utilizing multiple workstations to centrally manage 911 emergency calls. CAD receives information from callers in order to properly respond to emergency situations, often including their name, phone number, address from which they are calling, medical conditions, and potentially other personally identifiable information. While most of this information is consciously volunteered by callers, some of the information may be stored for future reference in emergency situations or for quality assurance purposes. Additionally, information may be provided to CAD about someone or a situation with identifiable information without their knowledge.

2.0 Purpose

Operational Policy:

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Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) is a suite of software packages that provide unit recommendations for 911 emergency calls based on the reported problem and location of a caller. All subsequent actions taken by SFD personnel in responding to emergency calls and events are predicated on the information obtained by CAD after a call has been received.

3.0 Data Collection and Use

Operational Policy:

SFD’s Policy and Operating Guidelines (POG) Section 500-535, contain details on policy and training related to deployment and use of SFD’s CAD system.

CAD information includes both manually collected and automated data. Details about both are as follows:

Manually collected information includes the call information that CAD operators input into the system in the course of an emergency call. In addition to this information, there is an Emergency Medical Dispatch CAD plug in application which includes a decision tree protocol that facilitates interactions with callers.

Automated information include data from phone companies that they are required to collect and use to route emergency communications. The automated information includes but is not limited to automatically collected phone numbers with address links. These are described below:

- ANI is Automatic Number Identification. The ANI is a 10-digit Telephone Number (TN) associated with a device originating a 9-1-1 call. The ANI may be the actual number of a device, such as at a home; it may be a number that represents a Billing Telephone Number (BTN). This representation is often the case when calling from a business MLTS / PBX; it also may be called an Emergency Location Identification Number (ELIN), often used to indicate a more granular location within a business, especially in large campus or building environments.
- ALI is Automatic Location Identification. The ALI information is the '911 call location data' that is displayed to the 9-1-1 call taker on their computer display when answering 9-1-1 calls.

4.0 Data Minimization & Retention

Operational Policy:

All records are kept in accordance with state retention requirements.

Information intake occurs during the initial call, during evaluation and response triage. When trying to validate location information to determine response resources, the operator may attempt to clarify this information from the caller and/or use computerized look up or confirmation of location. Once on scene at an emergency, there may be a need to update the initial intake information based on the existing situation.

Data is retained for the life of the system. The following roles are responsible for ensuring compliance with data retention requirements:

- Assistant Chief of Risk Prevention
- Communications Deputy Chief

5.0 Access & Security

Operational Policy:

Only trained members of the Fire Alarm Center can input information into CAD.

Access

Uniformed Seattle Fire Department personnel assigned to emergency response are involved with the use of the CAD system. This includes but is not limited to call dispatch operators, departmental operations, and mobile apparatus operators. The following divisions within the organization use the CAD system:

- Fire Alarm Center (FAC)
- SFD Operations Staff (SFD HQ)

Seattle Fire Department employees have access to CAD view, which is restricted via Active Directory controls and firewall rules. There is also a software firewall built into the system server to limit access and provide an additional level of system security.

Access to CAD systems and data are as following:

- Caller information is collected by SFD dispatchers. The data is then accessible by all Fire Department personnel and is role-based depending on need to access the information and system.
- CAD data is also shared with American Medical Response (AMR) in real-time in order to coordinate resources needed for basic life support (BLS) EMS calls. AMR has their own access into the CAD system via Mobile Data Computer (MDC) in real time to aid in determining dynamic resource allocation and immediate response dispatch if warranted by the emergency.
- Some basic information including emergency response time, location, whether the incident is active or closed, and the date and time is also available online to the public via Realtime 911: <http://www2.seattle.gov/fire/realtime911/> with a one-minute delay.
- Pulse Point, a phone app that coordinates CPR volunteers and the location of AEDs with emergency cardiac victims. The app receives CAD info on cardiac emergencies at the same rate as the SFD personnel do for specific cardiac event response and public assistance for CPR. This has saved lives over the use of the system.

Additionally, incidental data access may occur through delivery of technology client services. All ITD employees are required to comply with appropriate regulatory requirements regarding security and background review.

Security

Seattle Fire Department CAD data is stored on a secure server located at the Fire Alarm Center. A back-up physical server in case of catastrophic failure is also maintained at the Seattle Police Department's West Precinct. SFD personnel arrive at the backup location when that is activated.

6.0 Data Sharing and Accuracy

Operational Policy:

Data sharing partners include:

- **American Medical Response (AMR)**
- **The University of Washington, Harborview Medical Center (UWHMC)**
- **ESO Solutions, current vendor for electronic healthcare records (eHR)**
- **King County – King County Emergency Medical Services (KC EMS) contracts through KC for hosted eHR records access**
- **In case of suspected criminal activity resulting in or from an emergency response, applicable event data is provided to SPD for investigative purposes.**

Data sharing with law enforcement occurs only when criminal involvement is suspected in an emergency event. SPD complies with CJIS requirements for investigative data collection.

The following are entities that use the CAD system:

- AMR accesses a limited view of CAD data for staging ambulances close to an incident. The data access and protocols for use are outlined in the memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the company and SFD.
- King County gets a nightly extract of the data via an electronic health records (eHR) data export of CAD to a data secure FTP server.
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA: FEMA/DHS) receives a quarterly update on performance measure, per regulatory requirement.

All patients can request reports from CAD via the Public Disclosure Officer (PDO). However, the PDO and other SFD staff will never alter a record once it has been created. If a data error is discovered, the quality assurance manager at the FAC will make note of the error and any subsequent corrections made to a record.

Per City of Seattle's Privacy Statement, outlining commitments to the public about how we collect and manage their data: *We do not sell personal information to third parties for marketing purposes or for their own commercial use.* The full Privacy Statement may be found [here](#).

7.0 Equity Concerns

Operational Policy:

Prior to any disclosure, a subject matter expert will evaluate the relevant CAD data and who can access the information. A quality assurance manager will also regularly check the data for accuracy and compliance with Department policies and procedures related to dispatching.

The entire set of CAD data is only made available to members of the Seattle Fire Department and some Seattle IT employees who may manage the system from a technical standpoint. External agencies, including law enforcement, are only provided data for specific incidents as part of a law enforcement investigation.

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