

2020 Surveillance Impact Report Executive Overview

Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD)

Seattle Police Department

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 Police Department’s Computer-Aided Dispatch. 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.

1.0 Technology Description

CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) software, made by Versaterm, consists of a set of servers and software deployed on dedicated terminals in the 9-1-1 center, on SPD computers, and as an application on patrol vehicles’ mobile data computers (MDCs) and on some officers’ smart phones.

When a request for police service is initiated by a 9-1-1 call or an officer on-viewing an incident, a CAD event is created by the 9-1-1 Center staff, and a unique CAD event ID number is automatically generated. Information related to that CAD event is entered into the CAD system. A call taker assigns the CAD event a specific type code and priority associated with the type of police service requested. The location of the event is entered, and CAD validates the address, locates the address electronically, and then plots it on a map. Based on this information, the call taker routes the CAD call to the appropriate dispatcher. The dispatcher then assigns patrol officers to the service request and records this information in the CAD event. Each of the assigned patrol officers then log their activities related to that request for service into CAD using established codes. When the request for service is completed, the primary officer assigned closes the CAD call. Based upon the codes used to close the CAD call, the system then automatically routes the information recorded into SPD’s Records Management System (RMS) where additional information, such as police reports and supplementary material, is stored.

2.0 Purpose

Operational Policy:

CAD is the system used by SPD to coordinate and document, in real-time, requests for police service and SPD’s response to those requests.

The Seattle Police Department’s 9-1-1 Center is the primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for emergency 9-1-1 calls placed within the City of Seattle. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) is a software package utilized by the Seattle Police Department’s 9-1-1 Center. It assists 9-1-1 Center call takers and dispatchers with receiving requests for police services, collecting information from 9-1-1 callers, and providing dispatchers with real-time patrol unit availability so dispatchers may dispatch appropriate patrol resources to requests for police service. CAD software also enables real-time documentation of the Seattle Police Department’s response to calls for service, including relevant information obtained by responding officers.

3.0 Data Collection and Use

Operational Policy:

Data collected by the CAD system is collected for the purpose of requesting police service or dispatching emergency response

When an individual places a call to 9-1-1, the telephone number they are calling from, the location they are calling from, the name associated with the phone number (if available from the phone company), and the type of telephone service (landline, cell phone, VOIP phone) are provided by the West VIPER telephone system and automatically entered into CAD when a CAD call is initiated by the call taker.

Non-emergency calls, and associated phone numbers, are not automatically entered into CAD. If the call is determined to be a request for police services, call takers and dispatchers then manually enter additional information into CAD, such as the nature of the emergency, and create a CAD event to facilitate a police response. Call takers and dispatchers may add supplemental information into CAD regarding scene safety, descriptions of individuals, vehicles, and premises. Much of the privacy-sensitive information entered into CAD is provided by 9-1-1 or non-emergency callers or by officers or dispatchers who input information into the CAD system when responding to a call.

4.0 Data Minimization & Retention

Operational Policy:

SPD retains CAD data that is not case specific (i.e. not related to an investigation) for 90 days.

Case specific data is maintained for the retention period applicable to the specific case type.

The CAD system documents information provided by the participants and witnesses in the event being reported, as input by SPD personnel. The system itself does not check for accuracy of the information that is provided by personnel. Instead, the Department may later determine that the information provided was not accurate and can provide updated information.

5.0 Access & Security

Operational Policies:

SPD's authorized users of CAD include all sworn personnel, 9-1-1 Center staff, and other civilian staff whose business needs require access to this data. Additionally, Seattle IT provides client services and operational support for IT technologies and applications.

All authorized users of CAD must be CJIS certified and must maintain Washington State ACCESS certification. SPD Policy 12.050 defines the proper use of criminal justice information systems.

Access

Only authorized SPD users can access the system, technology, or the data. Access to the application is limited to SPD personnel via password-protected login credentials. All activity within CAD (including timeline of commands issued) generates a log that is auditable. Authorized SPD users, may have access to the system to document, review, or report on police activity pursuant to law and policy, to extract information for use in court or administrative proceedings as required by law, to respond to appropriate requests for information, to make aggregate information available to the public, and to provide information to oversight bodies on issues such as stop and detention rates, for example.

Security

Data is securely input and used on SPD's password-protected network with access limited to authorized users. The entire system is located on the SPD network that is protect by industry standard firewalls. ITD performs routine monitoring of the SPD network.

All the data in CAD is held in SPD/ITD servers, located on City premises on SPD networks. All data that goes to mobile clients are encrypted to FIP 140-2 standards and is therefore CJIS compliant.

6.0 Data Sharing and Accuracy

Operational Policies:

No person, outside of SPD and Seattle IT, has direct access to the application or the data.

Data obtained from the system may be shared outside SPD with the other agencies, entities, or individuals within legal guidelines or as required by law.

Data sharing is not an automatic component of the CAD system. Instead, discrete pieces of data may be shared with outside agencies and individuals only within the context of the situations outlined. Data sharing may be necessary for SPD to provide coordinated, rapid responses to 911 incidents, particularly reducing the amount of time needed to contact individuals, thereby improving outcomes.

Discrete pieces of data collected by CAD may be shared with other law enforcement agencies in wanted bulletins, and in connection with law enforcement investigations jointly conducted with those agencies, or in response to requests from law enforcement agencies investigating criminal activity as governed by SPD Policy 12.050 and 12.110. All requests for data from Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) authorities are referred to the Mayor’s Office Legal Counsel in accordance with the Mayoral Directive, dated February 6, 2018.

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:

SPD Policy 5.140 forbids bias-based policing and outlines processes for reporting and documenting any suspected bias-based behavior, as well as accountability measures.

The CAD system is used to assist in the dispatch of police resources and document SPDs response to requests for service throughout the city of Seattle. There is no distinction in the levels of service this system provides to the various and diverse neighborhoods, communities, or individuals within the city.