



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

April 15, 2025

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SUBJECT: ECC & 911 TEXT Communication Systems

The purpose of this informal report is to outline the text communication and information exchange capabilities, utilized by the Emergency Communications Center (ECC), to engage with the community.

Overview and Objectives

The Emergency Communications Center is dedicated to delivering exceptional customer service and to ensuring clear, concise, and efficient communication with our community, in both emergency and non-emergency situations. Our commitment to accessibility and service includes text-based communication and information exchange, focused on seamless and efficient engagement for all community members.

The objectives of our text communication and information exchange are:

1. **Equal Access:** *Text-to-911* is a dependable alternative for requesting public safety assistance when voice communication is not possible, poses a safety risk, or is hindered by language barriers.
 - Tarrant County 9-1-1 District (TC911) deployed *Text-to-911* functionality, across Tarrant County, in November 2020, as reported to M&C in same year.
 - Ongoing community education, in partnership with TC911: “Call if you can, text if you can’t.”

2. **Efficient Communication:** Our ECC teams can rapidly initiate outbound text to facilitate both emergency and non-emergency communication. Additionally, they can request still imagery and video, to enhance situational awareness and promote effective and efficient public safety response. Utilization of non-emergency text communication can reduce call takers' talk time, enhancing their readiness to respond to incoming 9-1-1 calls.
 - November 2024: Needs assessment identified opportunity to test assistive technology to shorten talk times, enhance situational awareness, gain enhanced location information and eliminate language barriers.
 - A no cost trial of *Prepared Assist* launched in response to the assessment; trial began February 1, 2025
 - Service enhancement realized as part of this trial:
 - Shortened talk times by parsing requested non-emergency information, via text:
 1. Enhance situational awareness through still images or video
 2. Enhanced location information
 3. Remove language barriers to support non-English speaking callers, through AI powered language translation and transcription



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- Next Steps: Continue evaluating the effectiveness of the Prepared Assist solutions and identify funding to extend trial by 1 year, and potentially adding paid functionality of AI non-emergency call triage in future years.
- 3. **Keep citizens informed:** PowerEngage sends a courtesy notification for qualifying events when a patrol officer's response is delayed by more than 45 minutes.
- 4. **Evaluation:** PowerEngage text surveys are used to assess community satisfaction with the service provided by the ECC team.

Technology Platforms Used

9-1-1 Telephony System: Text-to-911

Prepared Assist: Outbound texting

PowerEngage: Courtesy delay notifications and community satisfaction surveys

Conclusion

The adoption of text communications in the ECC, supports public safety, accessibility, and operational efficiency. Some key reasons, include:

1. **Compliance with Federal Accessibility Standards** – Ensures the ECC meets ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements by providing equal access to emergency services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired.
2. **Equal Access** – Supports diverse communities by offering alternative communication options, including translation services for non-English speakers.
3. **Enhanced Response** – Enables discreet emergency reporting in situations where speaking is dangerous, such as domestic violence, human trafficking, or active assailant incidents.
4. **Increased Resilience in Emergencies** – Text messages can sometimes get through when voice calls cannot, such as in low-signal areas or during network congestion in disasters.
5. **Modern Communication** – Meets public expectations for digital accessibility and ensures public safety services remain relevant and effective.
6. **Operational Efficiency** – Reduces non-emergency talk times by providing an alternative means of communication; freeing up phone lines for emergencies.



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7. **Evaluation of Service & Experience** – Promotes accountability in public safety; validating strengths and identifying opportunities for growth, to foster a consistently high level of service to the community.

For questions regarding this information, please contact Aubry Insco, Emergency Management and Communications, 9-1-1 Communications Administrator at 682-362-3360 or Sonny Saxton, Director Emergency Management and Communications at 682-362-3914.

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