



County of Marquette

CENTRAL DISPATCH DEPARTMENT

9-1-1 and Emergency Management Programs
180 US-41 East
Negaunee, MI 49866

Manager 906/475-1118
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September 25, 2009

Karen Norcross
Michigan Public Service Commission
6545 Mercantile Way #7
Lansing, MI 48911-59909

RE: 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Training Standards

Dear Ms. Norcross:

Marquette County Central Dispatch has participated in the Dispatcher Training process since its inception under the auspices of the State 9-1-1 Committee. The approved courses and the funds have been a real blessing to us in helping to provide training necessary for our staff. Important concepts in the current system are -

- Funding - for us significant travel expenses are often necessary to participate in classes. Further, when dispatch staff are away at training, we must fill the dispatch positions with part-time dispatchers or with overtime. These funds have made it possible for us to do that.
- Distribution of Funding – the current method (based on number of FTE's at the Primary PSAP) is equitable and allows all PSAPs to provide excellent training. Having the funds available prior to training is extremely beneficial for Marquette County and I know other counties in the UP as well. Recent drops in surcharge revenues have made this even more important.
- Approved Courses – the current efficiency of course approval has served us well. Scheduling challenges are mitigated by having courses we sponsor approved in a timely manner when the need for the training has been identified, the instructors are available, and multiple PSAPs can combine to provide students at the same course offering. Long delays in course approvals will not be an enhancement to the current system and will not necessarily improve the course contents.

We have followed closely the development of the training standards by the State 9-1-1 Committee over the past few years. We had a number of suggestions and concerns that we expressed to the Committee. Many of our recommendations have been incorporated into the documents that were sent to you for rule making. We support the recommendations of the State 9-1-1 Committee and hope to you will retain to the greatest extent possible those recommendations as written.

Thank you for an opportunity to comment.

Joseph W. Van Oosterhout
Manager