



City of Albuquerque

Office of Internal Audit

FOLLOW-UP OF THE

APD – Emergency Response Time Assessment

Report 25-22-118F

Date: April 9, 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Internal Audit (OIA) issued report No. 22-118, “APD – Emergency Response Time Assessment,” on October 19, 2022. OIA completed a follow-up to determine the corrective actions that the City of Albuquerque’s (City’s) Albuquerque Police Department (APD) has taken in response to the report. The report contains six recommendations, two that have been implemented and are now considered closed and four that remain open as identified in this report.

BACKGROUND

The assessment was completed by Federal Engineering, Inc. (FE) on behalf of OIA. The assessment involved reviewing and completing an objective analysis of APD response times as measured from when calls are received by APD Emergency Communications Center (ECC) until officer arrival. The assessment was conducted pursuant to a request from Council Services, and the objective was to determine whether emergency (Priority 1 and 2) calls are answered and dispatched efficiently and effectively by the APD to meet community needs. Specifically, FE assessed the proper classification of call priority; response time historical trends; information technology operations, including the adequacy of infrastructure, administrative support and applications, Computer Aided Dispatch management, and information management practices; as well as the organizational structure of the activities and related staffing levels and scheduling.

Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) are dedicated 9-1-1 call centers responsible for receiving emergency and non-emergency calls and processing those calls according to a specific operating policy. APD’s ECC is the primary PSAP for the police department. Fire and Emergency Medical Services are transferred to a secondary PSAP. The daily dispatch operations are overseen by the Communications Manager, who reports to the Deputy Chief, who then reports to the Chief of Police. In addition to the Communications Manager, the ECC has an allocation of 117 Telecommunicators, 11 Shift Supervisors, three ECC Administrators, seven Administrative Staff (including a Data Analyst), and 14 Records Specialists (one is a supervisor).

As part of the assessment, FE conducted an analysis of randomly selected emergency calls (Priority 1 or Priority 2). Priority 1 calls are defined as “Any immediate life-threatening situation with a great possibility of death or life-threatening injury, or any confrontation between people that could threaten the life or safety of any person where weapons are involved.” Priority 2 calls are defined as “Any crime in progress that may result in a threat of injury to a person, major loss of property, or immediate apprehension of an individual. A Priority 2 call also includes accidents with injury for situations in progress or that just occurred.”¹

Two other significant considerations that were presented in the original report (page 9) are as

¹ Albuquerque Police Department Standard Operating Procedures 2-100-3. APD operating procedures can be accessed at < <https://public.powerdms.com/COA/tree/documents/324739>>, last accessed March 11, 2025.

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follows. “It is of note, and not foreign to FE during an assessment, that the APD has been under external oversight for more than seven years as part of its Court Approved Settlement Agreement with the Department of Justice. In discussions with APD management, FE determined that one requirement that could impact emergency response times is a mandate that the APD send officers with specific equipment when dispatched to certain emergency calls. Such a mandate would require additional officers’ response to a single call, making fewer officers available to respond to other calls. Other than identifying it as a potential influencer, FE could not determine whether such a mandate directly contributed to any response time delays. A more comprehensive analysis assessing such a direct causal relationship is outside the scope of this response time assessment.

“Perhaps the greatest influence on response times is the lack of available law enforcement resources to respond to calls, due in large part to what is thought to be a nationwide crisis of officer staffing shortages in today’s law enforcement market.² In a September 2019 study by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) on the staffing crisis, the report outlines the effects the crisis has on cities: ‘Longer wait times for calls for service, fewer crimes solved and cleared.’”

Further information pertaining to the audit scope, limitations, and methodology can be found in Appendix A of the original audit report.

FOLLOW-UP OBJECTIVE

The objective of this follow-up was to determine whether APD has taken the corrective actions recommended in OIA’s October 19, 2022. Consistent with Government Auditing Standards, Section 9.08, promulgated by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the purpose of audit reports includes facilitating a follow-up to determine whether appropriate corrective actions have been taken. This field follow-up is a non-audit service. Government Auditing Standards do not cover non-audit services, which are defined as professional services other than audits or attestation engagements. Therefore, APD is responsible for the substantive outcomes of the work performed during this follow-up and is responsible to be in a position, in fact, and appearance, to make an informed judgment on the results of the non-audit service. OIA limited our scope to actions taken to address our audit recommendation from the original audit report dated October 19, 2022 through the submission of actions on March 7, 2025.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objective, OIA did the following.

- Reviewed updated APD SOP 2-100, Emergency Communications Center (ECC) Division
- Reviewed public snapshot January 2025, website, and YouTube video: A Day in the Life
- Reviewed FY25 & FY26 performance measures
- Met with APD management and staff to obtain a better understanding of staffing and new systems
- Requested response time reports for a six-month period in order to understand trends and perform analytics, as applicable
- Reviewed copy of weekly response times and Area Command Priority 1 and 2

² International Association of Chiefs of Police, The State of Recruitment – A Crisis for Law Enforcement – September 2019 https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/239416_IACP_RecruitmentBR_HR_0.pdf, last accessed on October 6, 2022

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RESULTS

Of the six recommendations addressed in the original audit report, two have been implemented and are now considered closed. See ATTACHMENT 1.

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ATTACHMENT 1

OIA Recommendation	Responsible Agency	Department Response	OIA Conclusion	OIA Use Only Status Determination
Recommendation #1: The APD ECC should move forward with implementation of a Quality Assurance/Quality Integrity (QA/QI) program with a clearly defined process for quality assurance case reviews that include call-taking and dispatching activities. The number of calls reviewed should be two percent in accordance with national standards. If the APD determines that review of two percent of its calls is burdensome, it could incrementally move towards this goal as the program is implemented.	Albuquerque Police Department	“Due to significant staffing issues and the retirement of the ECC Manager, this program has not yet been implemented pending the appointment/hiring of a new ECC Manager along with the potential hiring of the third ECC Administrator position.” Estimated Completion: “Fall 2025”	OIA acknowledges that the implementation of the QA/QI program has been delayed due to staffing challenges and the recent retirement of the ECC Manager. An interim ECC Manager is currently in place, with formal appointment anticipated following the completion of a six-month probationary period in April 2025. Additionally, the department is considering the potential hiring of a third ECC Administrator before proceeding with any programmatic changes. However, OIA recognizes that the Administrator position cannot be filled until the interim ECC Manager position is formally appointed. Per APD, they are currently in the process of posting a supervisor position to fill the gap once the ECC Manager is appointed and permanent.	☒ Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested

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OIA Recommendation	Responsible Agency	Department Response	OIA Conclusion	<u>OIA Use Only</u> Status Determination
			This recommendation remains open.	
Recommendation #2: As part of the City's Performance Measures pilot initiative outlined in the City Fiscal Year 2023 budget, the APD should define prescriptive and quantifiable response measures that support officers' response times and the arrival at the scene of an emergency call as quickly and safely as possible. Currently, only Priority 1 calls have an established metric. As there is no national standard for officer response times, FE recommends the APD establish response time goals that are reasonable to the community they serve. (See Area Command Priority 1 – 2 Response Times)	Albuquerque Police Department	"The new CAD system did not go live until May 2024. Data reports remain in the development process and training on report development and data extraction only occurred in September 2024. The appropriate stakeholders will need to be gathered to determine best course of action on this item (Chief, DC's, ECC staff, Data Architect, etc)" Estimated Completion: "Fall 2025"	OIA acknowledges the efforts made to implement the system and provide training as of September 2024. However, OIA understands that gathering key stakeholders, including the Chief, Deputy Chiefs (DCs), ECC staff, and the Data Architect, still needs to occur in order to determine the most effective course of action for completing this item in the future. Per APD, they are currently working with the new CAD vendor and the Technology & Innovation Department to automate and publicly post response time data. This recommendation remains open.	☒ Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested

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Recommendation #3: The APD should require written policies and procedures that address how police response time should be calculated (e.g., from the time the call is answered in the ECC to when the first APD first officer arrives on scene). These policies and procedures should include how often APD will assess the data.	Albuquerque Police Department	“This has been added to our SOP 2-100-3 Letter H-Q. Effective 2/27/2024.” Completion Date: “February 27, 2024”	OIA recognizes that the updated SOP highlights the necessity of formalizing policies to ensure clear, consistent, and accurate measurement of response times—from call answering in the ECC to officer arrival on scene. SOP 2-100, Section 5, outlines that the ECC must have the necessary equipment and staff to track and evaluate key data, including call volume, answer times, and response times. Response times will be measured from dispatch to arrival and additional times, such as the duration from call entry to CAD system input, may also be tracked. If available, total call time, from dispatch to incident clearance, will be reported. This data will be extracted monthly. OIA considers this recommendation closed.	☐ Open ☒ Closed ☐ Contested

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Recommendation #4: As part of its replacement of its Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, the APD should work with the CAD vendor to create analytic reports and reporting tools that will more clearly and accurately make available its response time data. Such reporting tools should also give the APD the ability to separate the response time for a location of occurrence, area command, beat, zip code, or XY coordinates.	Albuquerque Police Department	“CAD go live delayed until May 2024. Training provided September 2024 on report development. Further steps are pending the appointment of the ECC Manager and discussions on best reporting practices.” Estimated Completion: “Fall 2025”	OIA recognizes the challenges posed by these delays and by the pending appointment of an ECC Manager to oversee the Quality Assurance/Quality Integrity (QA/QI) program and discuss best reporting practices. This recommendation remains open.	☒ Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested
Recommendation #5: The APD should continue to explore avenues to promote transparency in response times reporting through education, media relations, and evaluation of its area boundaries.	Albuquerque Police Department	“This will be a continuous ongoing effort with the PIO’s office and other resources to provide education to all customers. Staff participate in the Civilian Police Academy and CPC meetings, attend recruitment and public education events. Suggest this item be closed as it will be an ongoing/continuous effort.”	OIA acknowledges the efforts made to integrate educational initiatives into ongoing operations and effectively share call response time information with stakeholders and the public. OIA has reviewed the “A Day in the Life” video, APD’s website, and the Public Snapshot (January 2025) provided by APD. Additionally, APD has	☐ Open ☒ Closed ☐ Contested

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		Completion Date: “January 2025”	conveyed this information through various channels, including social media, block captain conferences, City Council presentations, and a public televised forum with the CPOAB. OIA considers this recommendation closed.	
Recommendation #6: After response time performance measures are established, and analytical tools are in place (e.g., by area, council districts, time of day, day week, and staffing levels), a comprehensive analysis of the emergency response times for officers should be periodically conducted.	Albuquerque Police Department	“While ECC extracts the data for this recommendation, this likely belongs to Field Services/Operations Review.” Estimated Completion: “Fall 2025”	Since the possibility of implementing Recommendation #6 depends on the prior implementation of Recommendation #2, which is still open, OIA’s conclusion on Recommendation #2 applies here also. OIA acknowledges the efforts made to implement the system and provide training as of September 2024. However, OIA understands that gathering key stakeholders, including the Chief, Deputy	☒ Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested

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OIA Recommendation	Responsible Agency	Department Response	OIA Conclusion	<u>OIA Use Only</u> Status Determination
			Chiefs (DCs), ECC staff, and the Data Architect, still needs to occur in order to determine the most effective course of action for completing this item in the future. This recommendation remains open.	