

PS COMMITTEE #2
January 19, 2012

MEMORANDUM

January 17, 2012

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Susan J. Farag, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: Update: Emergency Communications Center - FY12 budget impacts

Today the Committee will receive an update on the staff reduction at the Emergency Communications Center (ECC). Those expected to brief the Committee:

Chief J. Thomas Manger, Montgomery County Police Department
Brian Melby, Director, Police Emergency Communications Center
Bill Ferretti, Deputy Director, Police Emergency Communications Center

BACKGROUND

The County Executive recommended, as part of the FY12 Police Department Operating Budget, the reduction of dispatch operators at the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) during the overnight hours of 3:00 am to 7:00 am. This reduction (-\$208,000) was approved by Council.

At the ECC, each of the six Police Districts has a separate radio dispatcher who handles emergency and non-emergency radio traffic on a dedicated talk group for that District. Across these six talk groups, ECC also handles primary radio traffic for four other police agencies (Rockville City, Gaithersburg City, Chevy Chase Village, and County Sheriff's Office) as well as secondary traffic/mutual aid for four additional police agencies operating in the County (State Police, MTA Police, Takoma Park Police, and Park Police). The approved FY12 operating budget reduced coverage during the overnight hours. Instead of six radio operators, there are now three on duty.

The reduction was effective July 3, 2011, and the time period for reduced overnight dispatch hours was changed slightly to 4:00 am to 8:00 am daily. The Department provided an update in October 2011 to the Committee and noted that Radio Talk Time Data for the Consolidated Talk Groups during the reduced overnight dispatch hours are within typical

afternoon ranges for individual talk groups for the First Quarter of FY12. The Committee requested another update in 2012 to discuss 2nd quarter performance.

DISCUSSION ISSUES

- 1) Has the staff reduction resulted in additional overtime? If so, how much?
- 2) Has the reduction been problematic in any way?

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