



# SUNGARD PUBLIC SECTOR OSSI

Case Study  
Call Center  
Consolidation

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

CONSOLIDATING TWO BUSY COMMUNICATION CENTERS IN NORTH CAROLINA SHAVES SECONDS, SAVES LIVES.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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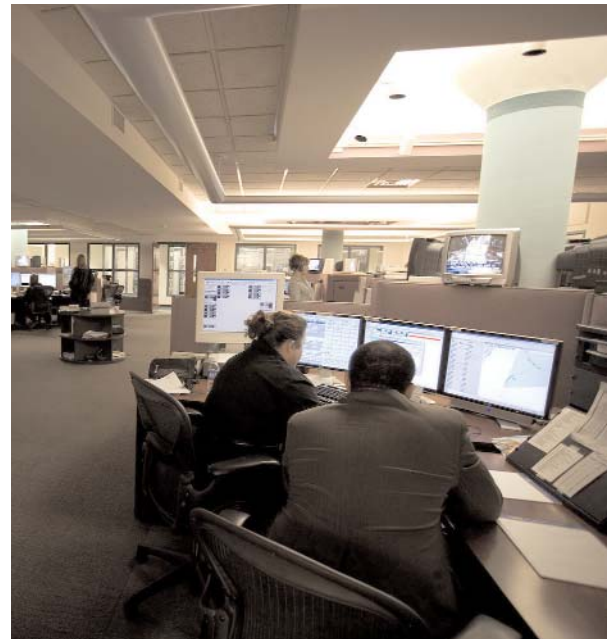


### DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Population Served	475,000
Annual Call Volume	895,000
PSAP Staff	120
Primary Positions	21

### SERVICES

Greensboro and Gibsonville Police Departments  
Guilford County Sheriff's Office  
Greensboro Fire Department  
24 separate Guilford County Fire Departments with 50 fire stations  
Emergency Management  
Guilford County Fire Marshall Office  
Guilford County EMS



### PRODUCT PROFILE

Computer-Aided Dispatch



### SITUATION:

Providing 9-1-1 services for a population approaching 500,000 residents and nearly 200,000 daily business commuters, Guilford County and the City of Greensboro, North Carolina, experienced inefficiencies when running two independent communication centers. In Guilford County, the county dispatch center was set up for fire, EMS, emergency management, and sheriff's department calls, while the City of Greensboro was set up to dispatch police and fire calls only. The two communication centers lacked interoperability, so they were forced to transfer 18 percent of their calls, losing valuable seconds each time.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## SOLUTION:

In 2003 through a multi-year consolidation initiative between the City of Greensboro and Guilford County, Guilford Metro 9-1-1 was formed to maximize the best resources from both centers. "Every consolidation is unique to its area—there is not one single community that is different," says Wesley Reid, director of Guilford Metro 9-1-1, in North Carolina. "You can't go to a bookstore or online and buy a book that documents how to consolidate a 9-1-1 center. You have to figure out the best path for your agency and your officials."

One of the first steps towards consolidation involved reaching out to other municipalities across the country that had successfully completed their own consolidations. Guilford Metro's staff examined fifteen different consolidated call centers and gathered input from a variety of staff about their processes. Another very early but critical step was to bring together the most important aspect of the call center's success—the operators—for their input and recommendations on how best to consolidate.

Also participating in the process at Guilford Metro were the center's various vendors—suppliers for everything from the phone system to furniture. When it came time to choose a computer-aided dispatch system, the team elected to remain with SunGard Public Sector's OSSI CAD, the system already installed at both separate centers.

"We knew SunGard was a top-tier company, and their OSSI CAD system had a lot of great features, says Reid. "It was almost a no-brainer for us. SunGard's High Point facility is just around the corner, and we always have had good experiences with their customer service and support. That is critical when you're talking about an emergency operation, and your CAD system and phones are your central, mission-critical components."

"The City of Greensboro first implemented the OSSI CAD system in 2004," recalls Dave Maddox, system administrator, Guilford Metro 9-1-1. "From the very onset, the OSSI CAD system delivered its true capabilities. The system has great functionality, and every year the High Point team makes continual improvements to it. One of the key

features is the integrated mapping—it helps both the staff in the call center and the officers in the field to stay on the same page and track happenings throughout the city. Both the Command Line and Drag and Drop features give us the flexibility to dispatch, en route, and clear calls. With the Unit Recommendation feature, it helps streamline the dispatching process by recommending appropriate units based on the nature of the call. Features like these help shave seconds off call dispatching, and at the end of the day, it's those seconds that help save lives."

## IMPACT:

The Guilford Metro consolidation began in 2003, and the completed call center launched in March 2007. That's roughly 4 years of planning to reach the final goal of a single department staffed by 120 employees, including the 800-MHz Technical Services Division.

Even though they endured a long, tedious process, Guilford Metro 9-1-1 has realized a number of improvements over the separate center configuration. Perhaps the most noticeable and immediate change has been a complete elimination of transferred calls between agencies. Prior to the consolidation, both the county and city call centers served the same geographic area but different agencies, racking up an average of 75,000 transferred calls every year. That number has now dropped to zero.

Guilford Metro experienced some more intangible benefits as well. "We've gotten into more cooperative efforts," says Maddox. "We're cooperating with other agencies with multi-agency efforts. For example, there are economies in purchasing software, as far as duplicate licensing.

"But the most rewarding benefit is the knowledge that we have service available in one big center that allows us to manage calls for better service. One of our slogans at Guilford Metro 9-1-1 is 'One call, one center, one source.' That's the catchphrase and the goal—a central location for residents to make one call to one center and receive one source."