

# unit 4 Law Enforcement Communications BADGE #9-1-1

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## POLICE DISPATCHER STORY

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*“It was a run of the mill Friday night, no full moon just a few details, one DUI and two Officers with a neighborhood spat. I was dispatching two agencies, a total of 20 Officers on the street ‘protecting and serving’. Scattered about were Officers on traffic, one at the station, and one at a local tavern on a ‘walk through’. The Comm Centre was a quiet hum, everyone just absorbed in his or her own work. It was a good feeling, just good work as usual. I leaned back in my chair and realized it had been adjusted for a person who didn’t need a lot of back support. While things were a bit quiet, I took a moment to bend down and reach under the chair to turn the little black knob that would increase my back support. “King 3 shots fired!” Alert tones, beep, beep, beep — “King 3 with shots fired Blinker Tavern, 303 South Washington, the air is closed.” My reaction was as fast and automatic as blinking my eye. Amazing how the night can change faster than that blink.”*

Police Communications is very interesting and complex work. The law enforcement communications function is stimulating as one shift can be full of twists and turns and the Call Takers and Dispatchers are fully involved with the Officers. This is amazing work and there is a lot to learn to be able to do the job well.

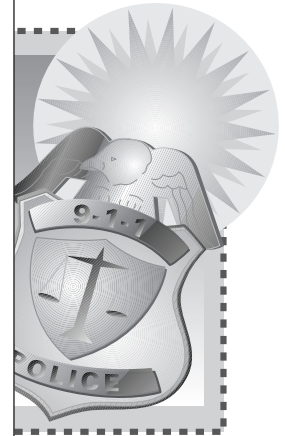
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## THE MANY FACES OF POLICE COMMUNICATIONS

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The law enforcement *communications* culture is varied. For example, you may be a Clerk-Dispatcher for a small department and work alone — or you could be one of 100 other Comm Centre personnel working with fifteen others. The size and structure of each law enforcement agency will differ but will the sum of knowledge, skill, type of duties and responsibilities vary accordingly? The answer to that is yes and no. The small department demands a larger variety of involvement in the department, while the larger agency requires a large volume of work and a larger variety of calls.

Although there are certainly common law enforcement topics to be explored, there are also state and local laws, methods and terms unique to each area and agency. Once the concepts, the underlying basics of law enforcement, are understood — the task of individualizing a trainees program can begin.



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## AGENCY OR AREA SPECIFIC LEARNING

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Some areas that will extend beyond basic training are as follows:

- Agency organization
- Provincial law enforcement systems
- Radio frequency allocation
- Local and provincial emergency disaster plans and coordination
- Radio procedures
- Unit identification systems
- Records information systems

In addition the size and structure of your Comm Centre will determine your procedures for call handling, dispatch, chain of command and so forth.

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## ORGANIZATION OF POLICE AGENCIES

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In 1950 you would have found dispatchers who were police officers assigned to the radio, and not happy about that assignment. In 1970 you probably would find a mixture of civilian and uniformed personnel. In the 90's, the trend moved to civilian dispatch supervised by civilian administrators. Small departments usually assign a Police Administrator to communications; possibly a Sergeant, while larger departments are moving toward total civilianization. Combined or consolidated communications agencies generally have civilian administration.

The list below shows many of the typical divisions in law enforcement. Due to the changing times (terrorism, homeland security, etc.) there may be new or reorganized agencies at all levels of government.

### **Federal law enforcement agencies:**

- RCMP - Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- OPP - Ontario Provincial Police
- SQ - Sûreté du Québec
- CSIS - Canadian Security Intelligence Service
- Canadian Coast Guard
- CBSA - Canadian Border Services Agency
- Canadian Railway Police
- City Police Department

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**Provincial law enforcement agencies:**

- Sheriff's Department
- State Highway Patrol
- Fish and Wildlife (Department of Natural Resources)
- Liquor Control Board
- Campus police

**MUNICIPAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES:**

- City Police Department

**SPECIAL AGENCIES AND DISTRICTS:**

- Aboriginal police
- Port authorities
- Private security

**UNINCORPORATED  
AREAS ARE LARGE  
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## **Rural areas or COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Incorporated towns and cities have their own town or city government. *Unincorporated* areas are large areas that have one county government. Large unincorporated areas with no city or town government have Rural Detachments of the RCMP for law enforcement in all of the provinces except for Ontario and Quebec. These provinces have their own Provincial Police (OPP for Ontario & SQ for Quebec).

Policing in Canada is divided by each province like the OPP and SQ. Within the RCMP, who police the rest of the rural areas, they have different divisions:

- **"B"** Division for Newfoundland and Labrador
- **"C"** Division for Quebec (for federal sections of policing only)
- **"D"** Division for Manitoba
- **"E"** Division for British Columbia
- **"F"** Division for Saskatchewan
- **"G"** Division for Northwest Territories
- **"H"** Division for Nova Scotia
- **"J"** Division for New Brunswick

- "K" Division for Alberta
- "L" Division for Prince Edward Island
- "M" Division for Yukon Territory
- "O" Division for Ontario (for federal sections of policing only)
- "V" Division for Nunavut Territory
- "Depot" Division for RCMP training base in Regina, Saskatchewan
- "National Division" for the Capital, Ottawa

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## MUNICIPAL POLICE AGENCIES — DIVISIONS/DEPARTMENTS

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Municipal police departments differ in size and function as much as county. They range from small police departments common in rural areas to large departments in cities such as Toronto or Vancouver.

Various divisions and departments may exist within municipal departments. In general, sub-divisions will fall within functional lines including operations, investigations, administration, and support.

- Administrative
- Canine/Traffic Investigation
- Chief of Police and staff
- Civil service/Warrant service
- Communications
- Community Service
- Crime prevention/Public Education
- Drug Enforcement/Task Forces
- Evidence Technicians
- Internal Investigations
- Investigations
- Municipal Correctional/Jail
- Operations
- Patrol
- Property crimes and crimes against persons
- Public information (media liaisons)
- Records
- Special investigation units — such as for sexual crimes and child abuse investigations

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- Special Services or Operations (SWAT/ERT teams) Units, Hostage Negotiation Teams, etc.
- Support
- Training

Generally patrol units work with communications the most. Although dispatch may make notification to the proper personnel within a division of the agency (outside patrol) for a variety of reasons.

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## THE BEGINNING OF COMBINED CENTERS

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With the trend in the 70's to form combined communications facilities, many departments relinquished the communications duties to a separate entity. No longer was the police department in total control of the policies and procedures for their field communications. Each of the members of the agencies had to come to agreement on the "best" way to do things. Initially there were agencies that tried to maintain their autonomy through their specialized methods — it didn't work. The intent was to professionalize communications, which can only be accomplished through consistent practices.

In addition to the need to professionalize services, it was initially felt a combined centre would save money. Each department would have representation on the advisory or user board and many times would be allocated voting power according to department size. Likewise, the departments would pay per capita for the services of the communications centre according to department size. Departments still needed to staff the station or clerical division 24 hours to handle counter traffic, phones or officer requests, so the savings in personnel costs was questioned.

The loss of control was felt along with the personal relationship with the communications staff enjoyed before consolidation. Many officers felt they were not in good hands with people they did not know. The Dispatchers now felt isolated from the "family" nature of the police department. Although many agencies encourage visits from the officers, many try to discourage too much unnecessary activity in a dispatch facility.

Another problem with the combined centre concept was politics. Fire department personnel felt police received priority in call handling. Although this is not true it is understandable since most of the calls at the centers are for police service. In some cities there has traditionally been rivalry between the police and fire departments. This has more recently been felt in the E9-1-1 implementation process when these departments had to meet and agree on communications procedures. Still combined centers offer a professionalism and ability to communicate the far exceeds the previous 'every agency to its own' methods.

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## THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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The communications division of the police department is the brain of the body. The brain is where the information comes in and is sent out to the various parts of the body for completion of tasks. Communications is the core of the entire process but many times is not used to its fullest potential. For example, communications personnel can effectively be used for investigation and research. Team concepts utilized in many training situations have also been underutilized in regard to communications personnel. Many departments will train an officer or a team for crisis negotiations but never include or train the call taker in the communications department. This is the person who may take the call from a hostage or the hostage taker and stay on the line until completion. Still, more agencies are seeing the importance of extending more in-depth training to communications personnel.

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## WHAT IS CRIME?

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Crime can be viewed in ways other than in the standard legal definitions. Such alternatives define crime in terms of the type of victim (child abuse), the type of offender (white-collar crime), the object of the crime (property crime), or the method of criminal activity (organized crime). Such definitions usually cover one or more of the standard legal definitions. For example, organized crime may include fraud, extortion, assault, or homicide.

*Note: In Canada, Statistics Canada's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) compile the statistics we refer to in this book. For more specific crime statistics, visit the Statistics Canada website. Statistics Canada's UCR program collects information from law enforcement agencies about crimes and offences in eight sections; Civil courts and family law, Correctional services, Crimes and offences, Criminal courts, Family violence, Justice system spending, Legal Aid and Victims and victimization.*

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## VIOLENT CRIME

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Murder, Rape and sexual assault, Robbery, Assault

### *Trends*

Violent crime rates have declined recently, reaching the lowest level ever recorded by Statistics Canada, Uniform Crime Reporting. Males were more likely to be victimized by a stranger, and females were more likely to be violently victimized by a friend, an acquaintance, or an intimate.

Recent reports show about six in ten sexual assault victims stated the offender was an intimate, other relative, a friend or an acquaintance. While youth and children victims know 8 in 10 offenders.

### *Time of occurrence*

While overall violent crimes were more likely to occur during the day than at night, some crimes exhibited different patterns. Fifty-four percent of incidents of violent crime occurred between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Approximately two-thirds of rapes/sexual assaults occurred at night — 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.

### *Place of occurrence*

About a quarter of incidents of violent crime occurred at or near the victim's home. Among common locales for violent crimes were on streets other than those near the victim's home (19%), at school (14%), or at a commercial establishment (12%).

### *Workplace violence*

Of selected occupations examined, police officers were the most vulnerable to be victims of workplace violence, as well as correctional officers, taxicab drivers, private security workers, and bartenders.

### *School violence*

In recent years, students age 12 through 18 were victims of an estimated 101,000 crimes and 50% of them occurred at school. Of all the incidents happening at school, cannabis possession (23%) and common assault (22%) were the most common. The trend for school violence has decreased.

### *Weapon use*

In Canada, only 2% of the incidents of violent crime, a weapon was present compared to 26% in the USA.

Offenders had or used a weapon in 47% of all robberies, compared with 5% of all sexual assaults. Attempted murder and homicide are most often committed with firearms.

### *The role of alcohol in crime victimization*

According to data from the 1999 General Social Survey (GSS) on victimization, in approximately 51% of physical assault incidents (an estimated 636,000) and 48% of sexual assaults (241,000) the victim believed that the incident was related to the perpetrator's use of alcohol or drugs.

Women who reported that their partners were usually drinking at the time of the assault(s) were more likely than nondrinkers (53% compared to 36%) to have serious violence used against them (being beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife, or sexually assaulted).

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## PROPERTY CRIME

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- Property crimes include break & enter, theft, and motor vehicle theft.
- Property crime makes up about 80% of all crime in the Canada.
- In 2015, property crimes rates were up mainly by an increase in fraud (+15%) and possession of stolen property (+13%)
- In 2015, there were 1.1 million property related crimes reported to police.

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## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT DEFINED

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### *Indictable , summary or hybrid offence?*

The Criminal Code of Canada differentiates between serious crimes and crimes where punishment should be less severe. Hence the indictable or summary offence.

In general, summary convictions are crime types less serious in nature. The maximum punishment is 6 months prison and/or \$5000 fine. Summary convictions basically means in a quick and simple manner. There is no choice of court and there is no right to a trial by judge and jury. Unless there is other reasons, accused in a summary offence are given a promise to appear in court at a certain time and date and are not necessarily arrested and brought to the police station. The accused also has to be charged (meaning legal papers presented to a judge in court) within 6 months of the offence. After the 6 months, nobody can be charged.

An indictable offence is more serious than summary convictions. There is more than one procedure for the accused and this procedure depends on the crime. Most accused are arrested, brought to the police station, fingerprinted and not released unless ordered by the judge. For an indictable offence, there is no limitation period for charges to be laid and the penalties can vary to a life sentence which for Canada is 25 years in prison.

Hybrid are when both summary or indictable can apply depending on the circumstances. For example, a simple shoplifter would be charged with theft punishable on summary conviction. However, if an employee stole the same value as the shoplifter but from his employer who trusted him with the cash, this employee may be charged with indictable theft (more serious punishment) because of the nature of trust given to him. Hence a hybrid charge.

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**JURISDICTION IS  
TO A COURTROOM  
WHAT POSTAL  
CODE IS TO THE POST  
OFFICE.**



***What are the rights of the accused?***

The accused person has a right to know what they are being charged with. If the accused is going to be interrogated (questioned), the accused also must be advised of the Charter of rights and freedom which is; the right to remain silent, be able to speak with an attorney, and the courts must provide an Attorney if the accused cannot afford one.

***What are the victim's rights?***

Canada has specific rights for victims unlike the USA. Victim of crimes (in the case of death their family/legal custodian) have the right to get information of the proceedings, speak in court and even ask for identity protection for their safety. Most often, people provide victim impact statements just before sentencing in order to have their say in court.

***What are the typical criminal courtroom procedures?***

If a crime has been committed and the police have a suspect in mind, the police can give the suspect a notice to appear which means they must be present in court on a certain time and date in order to answer to the charge. In cases of an indictable offence, the accused can be brought directly to court to start the proceedings.

***Arraignment*** is a formal courtroom procedure where the accused is brought before the Judge and informed of the charges against him. At this point, the accused would do well to hire a Lawyer, or the court may appoint one.

***Bail Hearing*** is when an accused is in custody and the police ask the judge to incarcerate the person until the court process is completed. Most requests are done to prevent other crimes, for the safety of the public or the police believe that the accused will not re-appear in court when needed.

***Plea Bargaining*** is allowed due to the enormous number of criminal trials. Prosecutors seek to eliminate trials by encouraging defendants to plead guilty to a lesser charge for a lighter punishment.

***What types of sentences usually are given to offenders?***

- ***Incarceration*** — The confinement of a convicted criminal in a Federal or State prison or a local jail to serve a court-imposed sentence. Confinement is usually in a jail, administered locally, or a prison, operated by the State or Federal Government. In many States offenders sentenced to 1 year or less are held in a jail; those sentenced to longer terms are committed to a State prison.
- ***Probation*** — The sentencing of an offender to community supervision by a probation agency, often as a result of suspending a sentence to confinement. Such supervision normally entails specific rules of conduct while in the community. If the rules are violated, a sentence to confinement may be imposed.

**CANADA HAS A  
VICTIMS BILL OR  
RIGHTS UNLIKE  
THE USA**

**A PERSON MUST  
HAVE THE CAPACITY  
TO COMMIT A CRIME  
IN ORDER TO  
BE PUNISHED FOR  
THAT CRIME...**

- **Suspended sentence** — The offender who gets sentenced but give him a chance to follow specific conditions that allow him to escape that sentence.
- **Conditional discharge** — Like a suspended sentence but if the conditions are all met, the charge is erased from his criminal record 3 years later.
- **Conditional sentence (House arrest)** — The offender serves his jail time outside of prison but with the same jail-like conditions.
- **Restitution** — The offender is required to provide financial repayment for the losses incurred by the victim.
- **Community service** — The offender is required to perform a specified amount of public service work, such as collecting trash in parks or other public facilities.
- **Fines** — An economic penalty that requires the offender to pay a specified sum of money within limit set by law. Fines often are imposed in addition to probation or as alternatives to incarceration.

### *Can all people be tried for crimes?*

Surprisingly, NO. Anyone under the age of 12 cannot be charged or tried for any crime. As for anyone over the age of 12, a person can be charged, but if they are unfit to stand trial, the proceedings end there.

- **Intent** — In criminal law, intent is the cement that holds the bricks together. A person may buy a gun without intent to commit a crime. However, if that person points that gun at someone and demands money, then his intention to commit a crime with that gun is quite real.
- **Motive** — Motive is the ‘why’ of crime. In most cases motive is apparent and can point the finger of blame. However, some people commit crimes against others without any clear motive or reason. Therefore, in criminal law it is more important to establish intent than to find motive.
- **Insanity or mental disorders** — A person can be unable to know it was wrong or was incapable of appreciating the nature and quality of the act. In such cases the defendant, though clearly guilty, is declared that the accused committed the act or made the omission but is not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder.

### *Youth Criminal Justice Act*

When the defendant is between 12 and 18 years of age, the trial proceeds according to the Criminal Code of Canada. Once found guilty, the sentencing must follow different guidelines because of their age. The YCJA is used to set different principals of sentencing, that ensures meaningful punishment for them but promotes more rehabilitation and reintegration.

## POLICE CALL TYPES CALL TAKING AND DISPATCHING GUIDELINES

### CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS

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#### HOMICIDE

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Causing the death of another person without legal justification or excuse.

##### *What is homicide?*

Criminal homicide is defined as all deaths where a perpetrator is found to have intentionally killed someone without legal justification or to have accidentally killed someone as a consequence of reckless or grossly negligent conduct.

Manslaughter is a form of accidental death, but it is the result of sudden violence such as might happen in a heated argument. Unlike murder, manslaughter is not considered intentional.

##### *Homicide Interrogation*

*In progress:* Until a person is deceased, the crime is assault. If it were apparent that the attacker clearly has the intention of causing the victim death, using force, weapons or violence that will result in death the call would be called an attempted murder.

Questions should focus on officer and citizen safety, time delay, location of the parties involved and location and type of weapon if any. The call taker must maintain connection with the scene by staying on the line if possible. If the caller disconnects, a call should be placed back in.

If there is an injury and medical units must be dispatched, care should be taken that the scene is secure before the unprotected Medical Responders enter.

##### *Homicide Obvious*

If the homicide was witnessed, *keep the caller on line until an officer arrives.* Advise all parties to remain at the scene and not to disturb anything. All information on witness, suspect, victim, circumstances, weapon location, drugs or liquor may be gathered until the officer arrives. The relationship of the parties involved is important information. Did the suspect and the victim know each other? What happened? Your interrogation may result in vital information useful in solving or prosecuting the crime. officer safety concerns the weapons, and state of mind of those present.

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**YOUR INTERROGATION  
MAY RESULT IN VITAL  
INFORMATION USEFUL  
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PROSECUTING THE CRIME.**