

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE April 29, 2022

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Dallas Fire-Rescue Investigation into Dispatch Delays**

Dallas Fire-Rescue (DFR) places safety and effective emergency response at the top of its priorities. Identified deficiencies in performance are taken very seriously. To that end, please accept this memorandum as an update to the earlier communication regarding the fire incident that occurred at 9659 Forest Lane. Also included are recommendations resulting from DFR's internal investigation involving delays in the dispatching of units to the fire.

On Tuesday, April 19th, 2022, a 911 call for a reported structure fire was received at 9:52:36 pm. Initially, the 911 dispatcher attempted to transfer the call to DFR but was unable to complete the transfer due to extremely heavy call volume being handled in Fire Dispatch. The 911 Dispatcher then attempted to dispatch the incident but utilized an incorrect code. The incident was also mistakenly added to a waiting queue designed for low-acuity call types, which contributed to the delay in dispatching.

During this time, a designed feature of the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system activated, whereby an alert notification was made to dispatchers that the reported incident was in close proximity to another active incident. In this case, the reported structure fire was erroneously appended by a dispatcher to an active medical call at a different yet nearby location. When the unit on the medical incident cleared that scene, it caused the incident to disappear from the list of active incidents. This was noticed by a DFR dispatcher who was aware of the calls being appended, and he reopened the call to investigate. Shortly thereafter, a first alarm fire response was dispatched to 9659 Forest Lane. There is no evidence to suggest any malfunction in either the CAD System or the Station Alert System (Locution).

Investigation Recommendations:

- DFR and 911 Dispatch leadership will enact measures to ensure proper transfer of high-priority calls.
- DFR personnel and 911 Dispatchers will receive training on the proper coding of calls.
- DFR will improve procedures and training for appending calls due to proximity alerts.
- DFR will create procedures to include 100% quality assurance review of all multiple alarm fires.

While there were errors and delays in the processing of this call, I am confident this is an isolated event and the planned quality assurance actions will allow the citizens of Dallas

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to continue to place their trust in the emergency service provided by the 911 Call Center and Dallas Fire-Rescue.



Jon Fortune
Deputy City Manager

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Deputy City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Assistant City Manager
Robert Perez, Interim Assistant City Manager
Carl Simpson, Interim Assistant City Manager
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
Genesis D. Gavino, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
Directors and Assistant Directors