

NORTHWEST CENTRAL DISPATCHING PROJECT

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tions included more spectrum space, reassignment of frequencies with a more logical, geographic and population priority, and the coordination of systems among clustered communities.

Phase Three of APCO Project III, which would have implemented the committee's recommendations was denied funding by LEAA. The APCO Project III, Phases One and Two appeared headed for the archives.

However, the recommendations were reduced to two words inferior as the more than a dozen towns were concerned. Those towns comprise the Northwest Police Academy, based in Arlington Heights, Illinois. Those two words are "Central Dispatching".

The Northwest Police Academy

The Northwest Police Academy was incorporated in 1966, uniting the police departments in this area for the purposes of recruit and in-service training, and for the formulation of a task force to handle natural and man-made disasters—including civil disturbances.

When APCO Project III appeared headed for the shelf and when the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission was created, in 1968, the Northwest Police Academy presented a grant application.

The application sought to unite five municipalities under a central dispatch system with two frequencies; using five other municipalities, on another frequency, as "control" departments. This was to determine if the central dispatch system, recommended by the APCO study, would out perform the five base-station system of the "control" towns. Central records was also included in the same grant application.

The application was presented in mid-1969, and was denied.

In November of 1969, I was called into a meeting with Chief Bill Calderwood of Arlington Heights and Chief Cy Campbell of Rolling Meadows. Captain Maury English was also present. We agreed that central dispatch was

the answer to the police communications problem in our area, if not for the Lake Michigan Metropolitan Area; and, that it would only be a matter of time until the Federal Communications Commission would step in and insist on the implementation of the APCO Project III, Phase Three.

We also agreed that the IITRI was the logical consultant organization to help in the preparation of a second grant application. We would again try to go with five departments involved with central dispatch and five control departments, but we would not include the records function in the new project application.

IITRI was contacted. The result was a meeting in January 1970, with Otto Rhoades, Frank Campbell of Indianapolis, Indiana, the Northwest Police Academy Chiefs and the Managers of the municipalities represented.

This meeting opened a whole new series of considerations which was to take sixteen months to resolve, before the project was approved by the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission in May, 1971.

RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR CENTRAL DISPATCH

Police Departments

Chief Calderwood, Chief Campbell and I agreed that we would spearhead the project and attempt to recruit at least two other departments, so that the project could test the APCO recommendations with a minimum of five departments and a population of about 130,000 residents. The minimum we would settle for, however, was three municipalities.

We did not find the enthusiasm that had prevailed in the first grant application, but we did come up with five towns whose police chiefs were agreeable to the project.

Considerations which took its toll of some of the communities was the exclusion of fire frequencies from central dispatch, monitoring of burglar alarms and manpower. For example: The supplying of a man to central dispatch would not relieve the need or desire of the community to keep a

man at their own complaint desk to handle administrative phone calls, walk-in complaints and the monitoring of burglar alarms.

Some police departments also monitored fire alarms and dispatched fire equipment.

Village Managers

Village Managers were harder to influence than police chiefs because they, too, had to convince the Village Presidents and Boards of Trustees.

Some of the managers could see the advantages of utilization of manpower and service to the public. They could see the potential for the eventual expansion of such a system to include all emergency type communications.

Boards of Trustees

Once convinced that the project was feasible, Boards of Trustees insisted upon a joint agreement—an inter-municipal compact. This agreement was drawn up by the consultants and revised by the three Village Attorneys.

The Boards of Trustees for the Villages of Arlington Heights, Elk Grove Village and Mount Prospect adopted the agreement and the grant application was filed with the Cook County Committee on Criminal Justice in November of 1970.

MAJOR CONCERN OF POLICE OFFICIALS

Improved Service

Unless the project results in better service to each community it will be doomed to failure. However, with the ability thru central dispatch to assign priorities to calls in the area serviced, and with the proper equipment at the base and in the field; we are confident that improved service to all our citizens will result.

This confidence is enhanced in information obtained in two trips to Muskegon County, Michigan, where Donald Mead is the Director of a county-wide, central dispatch system. His cooperation, both in those visits, and his part in the APCO Evaluation Commit-

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