

PSAP Assessment Companion Document

Please complete the following information about your PSAP. The requested information is based on North Carolina Administrative Code Subchapter 09 NCAC 06C effective July 1, 2016. If more space is needed to provide explanations, please provide an attachment.

OPERATIONS SECTION

OVERVIEW

The length of the site visit of the assessment depends greatly on PSAP work on the front end to complete the assessment binder and fully document each answer., Typically, a 4-inch binder will suffice to hold all the necessary documentation and will allow for a concise capture of all the needed supporting documentation. A binder that is tabbed off and follows the flow of the assessment document is also recommended and helps the assessment move quickly.

An area with a couple of chairs and a table is also appreciated and provides the assessment team with a space to review the assessment binder and communicate openly with the PSAP Manager or their representative in the event we have questions.

Remember, DO NOT read into the question beyond what the question is asking.

All questions that have a YES / NO drop-down selection require no additional explanation and no supportive documentation in the binder. However, many of these will require PSAP assessor observation while on site.

There is also no need to place multiple copies of the same document(s) in the assessment binder. In several instances, the same document may have elements within it that will suffice for more than one question. In these cases, simply place one copy of the document in the binder and reference a particular section or page for each individual question.

Certain observations will be made on the PSAP floor. This will require some interaction with the on-duty Telecommunicators. The assessors will not access the PSAP floor without permission and will not do so unescorted unless the PSAP manager gives us permission to do so. During periods of high call volume, the assessors will not engage in conversation with the Telecommunicators and will refrain from having loud conversations on the PSAP floor that could interfere with call taking.

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PSAP GENERAL INFORMATION SECTION – Questions 1 through 10

These questions have a YES / NO drop-down selection and require no additional explanation and no supportive documentation. However, many of these will require PSAP assessor observation while on site. Questions 7, 8, 9, & 10 are addressed individually below.

ANALYTICS – Questions 7 & 8

Question 7 - Does the PSAP have sufficient 911 capacity to receive 99.9% of all calls during the busiest hour of the average week of the busiest month of the year? [(Information obtained from the State Analytics Report via staff, 09 NCAC 06C .0211(b)(3))]

This question requires the PSAP to access the following Eclipse Report – **Call Volume and Statistics by Trunk Report - Run report for a 12-month period. In advanced features select “911” for Call Type.**

Select “Inbound” for Direction.

Select “Answered” for Disposition.

Hit the Back Button to display the modified report.

Question 8 - Are there enough Telecommunicators to complete the call taking process for 911 calls? [(Assessment team will review)]

This question requires the PSAP to access the following Eclipse Report – **PSAP Answer Time Standards Report**

Most questions in this section are YES / NO questions or analytical questions. Other require only general answers that should fit in the space provided, and any responses that exceed the space allowed should be answered on a separate Word document.

Question 9 - How do you provide the operating procedures to the Telecommunicators? [(09 NCAC 06C .0208(d); 09 NCAC 06C .0209(d))]

Give an abbreviated answer here as to where the operating procedures are kept and / or how they are accessed by the Telecommunicators. NOTE: This will also be an observation on the day of the assessment by the assessors.

Question 10 - How does the PSAP handle peak workloads? [(09 NCAC 06C .0210(a))]

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Provide a brief answer here. Typically, this will be addressed in an agency protocol or procedure. Place a copy of that protocol or procedure in the assessment book. Discuss capacity on the floor, staffing times, etc.

COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH SECTION - Questions 11 through 18

Most questions in this section are YES / NO questions. Others will require only general information. Question 12 is explained below.

Question 12 - Does the PSAP's CAD system include data entry, resource recommendations, notification capabilities, availability of emergency response units, and store records before, during and after all calls? [(09 NCAC 06C .0209(c); 09 NCAC 06C .0213)]

Remember, this question is asking only if your CAD system has those functionalities. It is NOT asking if you actually use those functions. The answer to this question for practically everyone who uses a true CAD system will be YES.

LOGGING RECORDER SECTION - Questions 19 through 21

Questions in this section have a YES / NO drop-down selection and require no additional explanation and no supportive documentation. However, many of these will require PSAP assessor observation while on site.

POWER INFORMATION - Questions 22 & 23

Questions in this section have a YES / NO drop-down selection and require no additional explanation and no supportive documentation. However, many of these will require PSAP assessor observation while on site.

Question 23 - Is the UPS annunciated in the operations room? [(09 NCAC 06C .0210(b)(11)(B)]

Ideally, this consists of a monitoring panel that is installed on the dispatch floor that annunciates in the room with the Telecommunicators. PSAP's that have such a panel installed in their server / equipment room will be found deficient for this question. There are a few acceptable work- arounds for this. If the PSAP has a generic email that is running at all times at each console position that will receive an automated email from the UPS should a fault or failure occur, that will meet the criteria. Assessors will verify there is a system in place for annunciation in the absence of an annunciator panel.

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There is also a missing question regarding the generator also being annunciated on the dispatch floor as set forth in Rule 09 NCAC 06C .0210(b)(2). This question was not included on the assessment form; however, the assessors will make note of it for future assessments. Failure to have this in place for this round of assessments will not constitute a deficiency.

BACKUP PSAP PLAN – Questions 24 through 29

Question 24 – Does the PSAP have a backup plan approved by local government and by the Board? [(09 NCAC 06C .0206(b))]

This is a YES / NO drop-down selection and requires no additional explanation. However, please place a copy of the approved agency Backup PSAP Plan in the assessment binder. If your agency does not have a Board approved Backup PSAP Plan, please place a draft copy of that plan in the binder. If your plan has been submitted for approval but is not yet approved, please place a copy of the email submission in the binder as well.

Questions 25 - Provide annual backup plan testing documentation. [(09 NCAC 06C .0205(b); 09 NCAC 06C .0206(b))]

This should be addressed in your Backup PSAP Plan. Simply highlight that section in the plan and reference that section of your plan in the assessment binder. There is no need to make duplicate copies of your Backup PSAP Plan.

Question 26 - Please show how the failure of the primary dispatch system will not affect the backup dispatch system. Assessment team may obtain this information from the backup plan. [(09 NCAC 06C .0212(c))]

This should be addressed in your Backup PSAP Plan. Simply highlight that section in the plan and reference that section of your plan in the assessment binder. There is no need to make duplicate copies of your Backup PSAP Plan.

Question 27 - Does the PSAP test all systems at least once per year? Assessment team may obtain this information from the backup plan. [(09 NCAC 06C.0205(b); 09 NCAC 06C .0214)]

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This should be addressed in your Backup PSAP Plan. Simply highlight that section in the plan and reference that section of your plan in the assessment binder. There is no need to make duplicate copies of your Backup PSAP Plan.

Question 28 - Do Telecommunicators who dispatch calls have a backup means to dispatch calls? [(09NCAC 06C .0212(b))]

Most agencies accomplish this with a portable or other secondary radio. It is recommended that the backup means of dispatch is available at each Board approved position.

Question 29 – Provide CEMP and testing documentation, along with certification from the PSAP that testing has been completed in the appointed time frame. Certification should include results and any action plans as a result of testing. [(09 NCAC 06C .0205)]

This is referring to your Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP is simply a document that establishes a comprehensive framework of policy and guidance for circumstances that may adversely impact the communications center personnel from receiving, processing, dispatching and monitoring emergency calls for assistance. It is meant to work hand in glove as a companion document with your Backup PSAP Plan. It is possible that you have such a plan with a different name, as we have recently seen this document in PSAP's that are being called something else.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

GENERAL PSAP INFORMATION – Questions 30 through 35

Questions in this section are generally self-explanatory. We receive questions from time to time regarding question 31, diverse routing. Sometimes this is not an option for a PSAP due to infrastructure limitations. A NO response here does not indicate a deficiency.

COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH – Questions 36 through 45

Questions in this section are generally self-explanatory.

LOGGING RECORDER INFORMATION – Questions 46 through 48

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Questions in this section are generally self-explanatory.

CONSOLE RADIO INFORMATION – Questions 49 & 50

Questions in this section are generally self-explanatory.

EMERGENCY CALL PROCESSING EQUIPMENT – Questions 51 & 52

Questions in this section are generally self-explanatory.

POWER INFORMATION – Questions 53 through 65

There are a lot of observations in this section. The assessors will spend some time verifying the responses given, but most responses in this section should be very straightforward.

Regarding the facility generator, be sure that it is secured and locked, as the assessors will check that. Ensure that it is in good working order as well.

The citation to the Administrative Code for Question 63 regarding the UPS bypass switch was transposed in error. The citation should be to 09 NCAC 06C .0210(b)(11) (A).

BACKUP PSAP PLAN – Questions 66 through 68

Question 66 - What is the CAD backup method? Assessment team may obtain this information from the backup plan. [(09 NCAC 06C .0213(b))]

Typical responses to this question include punch cards, agency forms, or even a simple database program developed by the agency. Any of these options are acceptable. If your agency uses anything similar, it will most likely be acceptable as well. Assessors will check to make sure you have it available.

Question 67 - Does the CAD server have failover? Assessment team may obtain this information from the backup plan. (09 NCAC 06C .0213(a)(3)(A) and (a)(3)(D))]

What the assessors are looking for here is some sort of failover for your CAD server. This means a tape or offsite backup that runs automatically. This should be an automatic failover to another server either on site or at another site within the county or in another county. Some PSAP's have their redundant server at their backup PSAP, and many identify this server in their backup plans. A single server, no matter how much hardware redundancy it has, does not meet the requirement of this question.

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GENERAL PSAP INFORMATION – Questions 69 through 77

Question 69 – Annual 911 call volume from previous calendar year. Data can be obtained from Data Analytics System. [(09 NCAC 06C .0207(d)(2))]

This question requires the PSAP to access the following Eclipse Report – **Call Volume by PSAP Report – Generate the report for a full year.**

Question 70 - Abandoned call volume from previous calendar year. Data can be obtained from Data Analytics System [(09 NCAC 06C .0207(d)(2))]

This question requires the PSAP to access the following Eclipse Report – **Call Volume by PSAP Report – Generate the report for a full year.**

Question 71 - Call time (90/10 Rule) from previous month. Data can be obtained from Data Analytics System. [(09 NCAC 06C .0209(a))]

This question requires the PSAP to access the following Eclipse Report – **Call Taker Answer Time Statistics Report – Generate the report for the previous month.**

Other questions in this section are speaking to specific items that should be found in your agency's standard operating procedures. Simply print off the appropriate sections of the SOP manual and include them in the assessment binder. Reference the appropriate section or page of the agency SOP manual that satisfies the requirement of each question in the assessment binder. There is no need to print multiple copies of the SOP manual for the binder.

Questions 78 through 82 all require copies of maintenance contracts / agreements for all mission critical systems. Simply place copies of these agreements in the assessment binder

Question 83 - Please show the installation, maintenance, and test records available for the dispatch system. (09 NCAC 06C.0215(b))

This question sometimes causes confusion. For installation, the assessors are looking for the "punch" list or testing list for any new equipment installed by a vendor. For example, if you had a new CAD system installed, the vendor had a checklist that they ran through with that system after its installation to make sure

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it was working properly. Often this is signed by the agency and a copy is typically left with someone in that jurisdiction.

For maintenance and testing, the assessors are looking for annual or periodic maintenance records and testing documentation for all mission critical systems. As examples, this can include firmware updates on the agency recording system, CAD software upgrades, console radio software or hardware updates, etc. and any subsequent testing that occurs to these systems. A log of the testing of all critical systems is also acceptable here and meets the testing requirement. At minimum, we are looking for the records pertaining to phone, CAD, radio and recorder.

EMERGENCY CALL PROCESSING EQUIPMENT – Questions 84 & 85

Questions 84 & 85 are self-explanatory.

PSAP RECORDS – Questions 86 through 90

Question 86 - Does the PSAP keep maintenance records for all system functions for at least five (5) years? [(09 NCAC 06C .0215(a))]

This appears to be the question that a majority of PSAPs struggle with. If you do not have these, reach out to your vendors ahead of your assessment and have them provide you with copies of these records. Going forward, replace these documents in your assessment as each year passes by. If you have a piece of equipment that has not been in place for 5 years, then you must provide maintenance records for whatever time frame that piece of equipment has actually been in place. For the years prior to that piece of equipment being put in service, please provide the maintenance records for the piece of equipment that was replaced.

Question 87 - Does the PSAP have records that include dates and times for test, 911 calls, and dispatch signals, circuit interruptions, equipment failures, abnormal and defective circuit conditions? [(09 NCAC 06C .0215(d)(3))]

This is another question that seems to create a lot of questions. The assessors are simply looking for whatever method the PSAP uses to track hardware and software issues when they occur. This could be a software system that your jurisdiction's IT department uses or some other platform. One method for tracking these occurrences is to simply add them as a call type to CAD and have a written procedure that requires a call for service to be entered into the system each and every time a failure occurs. You will need a printed copy of a report generated to

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show these occurrences as well as copy of the SOP or General Order that requires it to happen in order to meet the criteria using this method.

Question 88 - Please show the approved access control plan. [(09 NCAC 06C .0207(a)(3)]

This can be a part of a much larger document. Typically, agencies have a section in the SOP manual that addresses this. Just print a copy and place it in the assessment binder.

Question 89 simply requires a roster of the agencies EMD certifications. In the case of a secondary PSAP or other PSAP that does not provide EMD service, the correct response is “Not Applicable.”

Question 90 simply requires a roster as well as copies of the Basic Telecommunicator training certificates for each agency Telecommunicator. These certificates can be through the following Board-recognized and accepted training institutions: APCO, Priority Dispatch, Sheriff’s Standards, NENA and PowerPhone

QUALITY ASSURANCE – Questions 91 & 92

A quality assurance program is required for each recognized PSAP, not just the ones who provide EMD service. A written quality assurance plan is required as well as Telecommunicator performance review documents as well as other forms of documentation. These should all be placed in the assessment binder.