Kansas NG911 Interim Text-to-911 Policy and Standard Operating Procedure for (your agency name goes here)

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Document Change Log

Date	Author	Change	Reason
09/16/16	Josh Michaelis	Original release	
8/5/2020	Melanie Bergers	Language Translation	Technology upgrade – capabilities changed
12/03/2020	Angela Murphy	SMS Procedure Details	Include Rapid Deploy examples, ECaTS Record Retention, W3W

Contents

Introduction

Next Generation 911 (NG911) is the future technology for processing emergency calls by texting. The ability to send a Short Message Service (SMS) Text-to-911 is just one of several upcoming key NG911 components. Having the ability to text 911 is very important for the hearing and speech impaired community. It is equally important for domestic violence advocates. The Kansas 911 Coordinating Council has developed the following policy regarding texting 911. This policy serves as a basic interim policy on SMS text-to-911.

Identified Solutions - Definition

VESTA® 9-1-1 Call Handling System - 911 calls are sent into the Vesta equipment for processing. Voice/text is combined with (ALI) Automatic Location Information and displayed to the 911 call taker (on their computer screen) so they can manage the call event and assist in locating the 911 caller to resolve an emergency. VESTA combines Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) call handling with advanced VESTA Solutions call control technologies to support the emergency and administrative call taking needs of PSAPs. It also includes standard telephony features, e.g., Automatic Call Distribution (ACD), one-button transfer and dynamic conferencing.

RapidDeploy's RadiusPlus - solution provides situational awareness tools, advanced cloud-based mapping solutions, and location accuracy capabilities. Accessible via web browser, RadiusPlus offers the following:

1. Displays the location of wireline, wireless, and VoIP 9-1-1 calls using traditional location services such as landline ANI/ALI and Phase 1 and Phase 2 wireless ANI/ALI, obtained automatically from our 9-1-1 call handling system
2. Displays automatic supplemental 9-1-1 locations from IoT devices, Google's Android ELS (Emergency Location Services), and Apple's EED (Enhanced Emergency Data)
3. Visually compares locations from various sources by displaying the correlation of traditional ANI/ALI and supplemental 9-1-1 locations to help determine the real 9-1-1 call location and efficiently track Caller location

RapidLocate – assist with finding callers quickly. Automatically display ALI/ANI location and supplemental location data side-by-side, helping you determine incident location and track callers in motion. Everything is integrated with your 9-1-1 phone system, with no need to manually enter a number. Perform searches for addresses, points of interests and place names.

What3words is a geocode system for the communication of locations with a resolution of three meters. What3words encodes geographic coordinates into three dictionary words; the encoding is permanently fixed.

Policy

It shall be the policy of the (your agency name here) to follow the procedures set forth in this (written directive, policy, standard operating procedure) for the processing of calls received via Short Message Service (SMS) text messaging.

Text calls are accepted to provide the best service to the public when a voice call to 911 is not possible, such as due to a speech or hearing impairment or when the caller's physical safety would be in jeopardy by making a voice 911 call.

Procedure

In lieu of voice communications, callers may opt instead to contact the (your agency name here) via SMS Messaging, also called "**texting**".

Calls received via SMS Messaging will come into the Center on a designated queue labeled as "TXT-2-911".

If appropriate, when processing a SMS Messaging call, a Telecommunicator may place himself/herself as "**Not Ready/Busy**" on the phone system until the SMS Messaging call has been handled. (Agency policy in this regard may vary according to the to the Interim Text-to-911 solution adopted by the PSAP, staffing levels, etc.)

To initiate a two-way conversation, the Telecommunicator will answer the call coming in on that queue like any other 911 call. A window will appear allowing two-way conversation between the Telecommunicator and the caller.

If pre-set messages are available, the Telecommunicator may choose to use those messages as appropriate. (See Appendix A)

If it is determined that a field unit response is indicated, the Telecommunicator will generate the call in Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) using the (**New Event/Incident**) function or fill out the appropriate card(s) if on a manual system. Initial information will be gathered in the following order:

1. The caller will be greeted with the same script that voice callers receive:
   Example: "Anywhere 911, where is your emergency?"

2. The Telecommunicator should ask the caller if they can call in by voice. (If it is safe to do so).

3. (Enter here your agency policy of verifying information that displays during a 911 call).

4. The nature of the call will be asked for and the appropriate call-types entered in the call. Once a call is classified it will be routed for dispatch to the appropriate unit(s).
   (NOTE: Below are two examples from actual SOP documents of how EMD could be handled. Please insert your agencies policy here.)

   a) Medical calls will not be processed using the EMD protocol. These calls will only be assigned a Chief Complaint.
   b) The Telecommunicator will provide the same level of service regarding Emergency Medical Dispatch for text calls as they do for voice calls. Telecommunicators will follow the same protocol they do for voice calls, by gathering the same information, dispatching the appropriate units, and providing the same post-dispatch instructions.

5. If the Telecommunicator does not understand the caller's question or response the Telecommunicator should seek clarification.

6. Telecommunicators will ensure that all scene-safety information is obtained to ensure that bystander and responder safety issues have been addressed.

7. All scene-safety and any other pertinent information will be recorded and relayed to the responders as appropriate. Before ending of the call, the Telecommunicator will inform the caller that the requested assistance is being sent to the address that the caller initially requested. This will help confirm that the address of the incident is correct.
Example: "EMS will be dispatched to 505 W. Chapel Hill St (or as per your Agency policy)".

Ending a call is accomplished by using the *Release* button or however your agency ends a SMS call. (Note that Agency policy in this regard may vary according to the Interim Text-to-911 solution adopted by the PSAP). Once a call is released, a system generated message will be sent to the caller indicating that the session has ended. A SMS Messaging session cannot be restored/initiated by the 911 Center again unless the caller messages 911 again in a new session.

General

At no time will a Telecommunicator use 'texting' lingo, shortcuts, acronyms, or emoji's. All correspondence from the Telecommunicator will be in full-length form, except for common acronyms, which include, but are not limited to:

- **St** for Street
- **Rd** for Road
- **Hwy** for Highway
- **EMS** for Emergency Medical Services
- **KS** for Kansas
- **US** for United States
- **I-xx** for Interstate Highways

Auto correct may change words the caller did not intend to type so clarification is only necessary if the meaning of the message cannot be determined. If a caller uses emoji's it sometimes comes in the form of skewed characters or symbols.

The caller should be encouraged not to use 'texting' lingo, shortcuts, acronyms, or emoji's to help eliminate any confusion on the part of both parties; however, callers are not required to oblige. In the event it becomes difficult to understand a caller's need due to the use of these shortcuts, the Telecommunicator will ask the caller if they can call in by voice.

If appropriate, the *Class of Service* source field should be changed in CAD to "TEXT" as a Text-to-911 call may not automatically populate correctly with the appropriate class of service (i.e., landline, wireless, etc.). This is done to facilitate searching for text-to-911 messages.

Language Translation

The Kansas 911 Coordinating Council provides language translation using the Rapid Deploy' s SMS Chat Functionality as it recognizes the native language of text calls. If a text call is received in a non-English language, Rapid Deploy will translate the text to English and then will send a message back to the caller in their texted language. This is the preferred method for processing non-English Text-to-911 calls.

If Rapid Deploy is unsuccessful, and when appropriate, non-English text-to-911 callers can be asked to call 911 and be handled in the same manner as voice calls (i.e., according to PSAP policy). If the Telecommunicator is unable to explain to the caller that they need to call 911, the Telecommunicator can initiate a voice call to the originating number and attempt contact.

A caller should not be called back in cases where their safety, or the safety of another, is in question; however, if a responder requests that a callback be made on a request for service that was initially received via SMS Messaging, the Telecommunicator will inform the officer of such. If the officer still requests a callback at that point, the callback request will be honored.
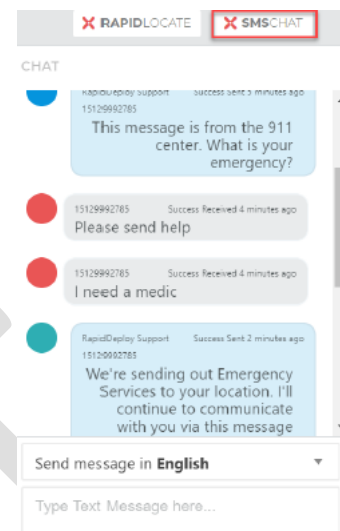
Non-response from Texter

Response to this would depend upon the initial text that is received. If there is language within the message to indicate it might be a legitimate 911 text, then text message back "If you have an emergency, text or call 911". If there is still no response, enter your agency's policy for hang-up or silent 911 calls.

If the language within the text is garbled and might indicate a "misdialed or accidental text" then text message back "If you have an emergency, text or call 911". If there is still no response enter your agency's policy for hang-up or silent 911 calls.

Tracing Anonymous Text

Currently no anonymous text can be sent. However, if they are through another carrier, any traceable information provided should be handled as it would for voice calls. If there is no information, no action can be taken.

Multiple Text Handling

Multiple text sessions will be prioritized in the same manner as 911 calls. The highest priority Text-to-911 call will be determined by the nature of the emergency. Make sure you respond to each message and ensure, if multiple texts are received about the same call, that they are indeed the same and not a different call.

Telecommunicators will need to make others in the room aware of multiple text sessions to ensure multiple calls are not entered.

Misdirected Text

If technically possible, transfer to the proper agency. If not technically possible, take pertinent information and relay to the proper agency. Maintain contact with the complainant and handle as appropriate for call type. Release the caller when appropriate for the situation according to policy or when unit(s) is on-scene. The Telecommunicator may have to provide contact information for the proper agency upon end of session or when appropriate.

Improved Location Accuracy

In the event a text 911 session does not provider caller location (ALI), the call taker has two resources (what3words and RapidLocate) available within the hosted solution:

What3Words
What3Words is an easy way to identify exact locations. Every 10ft square in the world has been given a unique three-word identifier. Now you can find, share, and navigate to precise locations using just three words.

If 911 callers do not have the application downloaded, call takers can send a text via RapidPlus and obtain the what3words address. Sharing locations internally what3words addresses can be used to communicate locations within the team while retaining precision. Sharing locations externally what3words provides a universal standard that can be used to share locations between teams that may be operating on different systems. what3words addresses are automatically displayed when a call is received. If a 911 caller provides a what3words address, the call taker can search the what3words address directly in the system. If the call location data is not good enough, the call taker can send a text using RapidLocate, which will supply an updated what3words address.

RapidPlus/SMS - Initiating a Text Session via Rapid Deploy
SMS Chat functionality within Radius Plus allows you to initiate communication with a Caller via the SMS Chat window to the number provided by Ani/Ali or by a caller. Clicking the SMS Chat button will open a separate Chat panel to the right of your Map.

As an additional resource, if the caller drops or abandons the call, you can enter in their phone number manually (via Create New Call in RapidPlus) and in some cases get a location.

Reasons to initiate a text session:
- You receive a second-hand report of a possible suicidal subject, and need to locate the person or communicate via SMS chat
- Cell phone has inadequate call service/reception, but can still receive text messages
- Caller is hiding and cannot safely communicate verbally
- Caller called on the non-emergency line and cannot provide their location
- Caller disconnects on a 9-1-1 call
- Other similar emergency situations where communicating via SMS chat may provide resources to the citizen in need
- Other similar emergency situations where using Rapid Locate will assist in location citizen in need

If any of these circumstances are present, create a new SMS session in RapidPlus and attempt to contact the caller using the same language you would for a voice call. If unsuccessful, the call taker takes whatever action he/she deems appropriate for the situation, or as dictated by established agency policy or procedure.

Once an SMS has been sent, the receiver will be able to respond directly to the SMS. Sent and received messages will display within the chat window. For RapidLocate to work properly, the Caller must have their GPS / Location Settings turned on. Once the location has been successfully shared, the details will be available automatically within Radius Plus. The call taker will follow local policy for the remainder of the call based on the incident time. Be sure not to close the call session until you are finished with the incident as it will eliminate the parties' ability to communicate with 911.

Text for Non-emergency
(Enter here your agency policy for non-emergency call processing.)

Priority Voice vs Text
Calls shall be prioritized based on the nature of the call, whether voice or text.

Tracking Moving Text-to-911 Callers
Depending on the Text-to-911 solution adopted by the PSAP, the Telecommunicator shall use the rebid feature to obtain a current location of the caller. If the caller leaves the agency jurisdiction, the Telecommunicator will transfer the text session to the agency responsible for that jurisdiction, only if they can receive text sessions and are on the Kansas Hosted Solution. If the receiving agency does not have the capability of receiving text, the original Telecommunicator will maintain the session and relay information to the appropriate agency by voice. If there is a session in progress, it will need to be passed on to any relieving personnel.

Text-to-911 Solutions:

1) TDD/TYY system - you can transfer to the appropriate agency using the Vesta transfer if the receiving agency is on the Kansas Hosted Solution.
2) Over the top text solution (example Intrado Text29-1-1) you cannot transfer the SMS session.
3) IP Direct Connect to the TCC (offered on the Kansas Hosted Solution) can be transferred using the Vesta transfer to surrounding PSAPs on the Kansas Hosted Solution.

NOTE: you can only transfer text sessions that have come into the 911 Center not text sessions initiated outbound by the telecommunicator via Rapid Deploy.

Shift Change
The passing on of text sessions at shift change between operators must include information related to the open sessions. All queues are to be checked at shift change.

Retention of SMS Messages

The content of all SMS Messages to/from the 911 Center are public record and are available upon request of any citizen or media. All communication from the 911 Center shall be of a professional nature and work-related.

The retention of all SMS Messaging will be in accordance with the current *(enter in your agency's policy for the retention of records).*

To access SMS messages from ECaTS visit the ECaTS portal. Transcripts of the messages usually appear within 4 hours after the session. To access SMS messages from Rapid Deploy you will need to make a formal request through the AT&T Resolution Center who will obtain the files from Rapid Deploy.

Testing

Monthly tests shall be completed by each employee. Testing should consist of answering a call with the help of a partner and asking several questions. Transferring to another agency is recommended to become more familiar with the process. Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring testing is completed by their team members.

Policy Enforcement

Failure of an employee to comply with any of the provisions set forth in this policy may result in disciplinary action. The 911 Director reserves the right to alter this policy at any time. Employees will be notified of any updates to this policy including the effective date of any changes.

Appendix A – Canned Message List for PSAPs

First Canned Questions

911, What is the address of your emergency?

What City?

What is your Emergency?

What is your Phone Number?

What is your Name?

What is happening now?

Instructional Canned statements

Please use full, simple words

Do not use abbreviations

Do not Text and drive, please pull over

Get out now!

Wait outside for First Responders

Please wait, you are being transferred

Stay calm, help is on the way

Please call our non-emergency number to report this non-emergency (XXX)XXX-XXXX

Ending session if you need more help contact 911

Secure or put away your animals

Unlock the door

Turn the outside light on

Subsequent Canned Questions

Are you driving?

Are you traveling on foot?

Are you on public transportation?

Are you in a vehicle?

Location of suspect?

Are there any weapons?

Is anyone hurt?

What does the person look like?

What are they wearing?

What is the nature of the injuries?

Is the person breathing?

Is the person awake?

How old is the person?

What kind of house?

Where is the fire?

What floor is on fire?

Are there any people inside?

Do you need the Police?

Do you need Fire Trucks?

Do you need an Ambulance?

Do you have any further information, or need additional help?

An ambulance will be / has been dispatched.

A fire/rescue crew will be dispatched.

Law enforcement will be dispatched.