

# CLARK REGIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY

ALWAYS HERE, ALWAYS READY



## 2 0 2 3 ANNUAL REPORT



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# FROM THE DIRECTOR

2023 was a year filled with challenges and opportunities. In May, we were able to finish our agency assessment and develop a long-term strategic plan based upon its findings. As our County population continues to grow at a rapid pace, so do the needs of our first responders and the community as a whole. As they grow, CRESA needs to grow with them. Currently, we are staffed as a medium sized agency performing the workload of a large agency.

At CRESA we recognized that our greatest asset is our employees, and we need to be able to provide them a healthy environment where they are not overworked. As part of the annual budget process, the CRESA Administrative Board approved the hiring of nine additional 911 operations personnel along with additional support personnel as part of the 2024 budget. Over the course on the next few years, we will be working towards our end goal of growing our 911 Operations Division from our original 70 Call-takers, Dispatchers and Supervisors to a total of 92. Our 2024 goal is to increase our 911 personnel by 12% up to 79.

As we work to grow, finding the right personnel to staff these critical positions continues to be a challenge. It is a crisis throughout the State and the industry as a whole with many 911 centers reporting current vacancy rates in excess of 20% and some as high as 50%, while at the same time having washout rates of new hires hovering at 40-60%. This is a concern that requires constant attention.

In 2023 we experimented with the use of "Dispatchers on Demand" (DoD) a temporary staffing agency that specializes in providing 911 call-taker and dispatch personnel. We utilized their services through the summer, and it was very helpful in meeting some of our staffing challenges and providing respite for some of our own personnel. In 2024 we will continue to keep DoD as an option in our toolkit to help meet our staffing needs.

Filling our vacancies and positioning ourselves to provide better working conditions continues to be our top priority. Being understaffed leads to mandatory overtime for our employees. We need to grow and expand to a point where individuals are not required to answer 911 calls while filling a dispatcher role. This will continue to be a primary focus until we have filled every budgeted position. Our Training Manager and HR manager have made fundamental changes in our onboarding process and continue to look at new ways to speed up training that allows us to put new employees to work in functional roles as early as possible.

As we grow we need to make sure that we are not only meeting the needs of our employees, but the needs of our user agencies and ensure that we have solid communication and change management strategies in place as we transition.

## **911 Operations**

Our 911 Operations Division continues to work diligently to provide service to our over 520,000 residents and our 27 Police, Fire and EMS user agencies. In 2023 they provided dispatch support for over 430,000 incoming law enforcement, fire and EMS events and placed over 83,000 outbound calls for a total of 513,827 calls.

The agency implemented several technologies in 2023 to help reduce the workload on dispatchers. In July, we went live with Amazon Connect to stand up a virtual 311 call center. The technology uses artificial intelligence (AI) to assist callers in processing non-emergency requests by directing them to landing pages where forms can be filled out and submitted, or to other sources where information can be obtained. In October we implemented ASAP to PSAP which allows alarm monitoring companies to pass along relevant data and alarm activity directly into our CAD system, eliminating or reducing the need for call-taking and telecommunicator action.

# FROM THE DIRECTOR cont.

In August we were able to recruit and hire a new Deputy Director who comes with a wealth of experience from a neighboring 911 center. The agency was able to recognize and present eight Life Saving Awards, eighteen EMD Excellence Awards, and two Childbirth Awards.

## **Technical Services**

A couple of highlights from 2023 include a network upgrade and additional security measures. CRESA worked with Clark County IT to replace all network switches within CRESA with a newer, more secure platform. This also allowed restructuring of our network into segments for each of our divisions: Dispatch, Administration, Emergency Operations, Security Systems, Backup Center, and Servers. In 2024 we are exploring the separation of the County and CRESA's networks to increase cyber security to our critical infrastructure.

In 2023 we also finished a project to increase our physical security with the radio department installing a new security camera system throughout CRESA and all radio tower sites. This project also included updating the door locks at each radio site with electronic key card access.

## **Emergency Management**

In 2023 we had significant turn-over in the CRESA Emergency Management Division as individuals moved to further their career development or retired. Based on user feedback and the results of the agency assessment, the focal areas of the five positions within the Division were changed. At the end of 2023 the EM Division was fully staffed with positions focused on the following areas:

- Internal/EOC Operations Coordinator
- Partner Planning Coordinator
- COOP Coordinator
- Mitigation and Recovery Coordinator
- Volunteer and Grants Coordinator

A focal point for the Emergency Management division continues to be the threat of wildfires and the increas-

ing Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) threat that continues to grow as the climate shifts towards hotter and drier summers in the Pacific Northwest and our population continues to expand.

EM staff started the fire season in June by issuing an evacuation alert at the request of Vancouver Fire Department in the Burnt Bridge Creek neighborhood due to a rapidly expanding brush fire. This was the first time a fire evacuation had ever been issued within Vancouver city limits.

The most significant response of the year was during the Jenny Creek Fire north of La Center in August. Around 1,000 contacts, many within La Center city limits, were put in evacuation Levels 1, 2, and 3 during the first night. CERT volunteers were activated to staff assembly areas to catch those evacuated from their homes and assist with coordinating sheltering needs. The Clark County Fire maps that were created during the 2022 Nakia Creek Fire by Clark County GIS were put into use again and were viewed tens of thousands of times.

CRESA is ***Always Here, Always Ready***, to serve. I am proud to be a part of this dedicated group of employees and committed managers at CRESA.

I hope you take the opportunity to review our 2023 annual report and learn more about our organization. If you have any questions visit us online at [www.cresa911.org](http://www.cresa911.org).



Dave Fuller  
Director

# OVERVIEW AND GOVERNANCE

Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) was originally established in 1976 under the Interlocal Cooperation Act of the State of Washington (RCW 39.34). CRESA provides 911 dispatch services, public safety radio system and services, and emergency management services for all incorporated and unincorporated areas of participating jurisdictions in Clark County, Washington. For a full list of agencies served, please see page 27 of this report.

CRESA is governed by an Administrative Board comprised of nine board members serving indefinite terms. The CRESA Administrative Board has the authority and responsibility to provide policy and legislative direction for CRESA and its administration. The CRESA Administrative Board convenes monthly in regular meetings open to the public in accordance with RCW 42.30 Open Public Meetings Act.

## CRESA ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD



Chair  
Representing Fire Chiefs' Association  
**John Nohr**  
*Chief, Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue*



Vice Chair  
Representing regional law enforcement  
**Wendi Steinbronn**  
*Chief, City of Washougal Police*



Representing Vancouver Fire Dept.  
**Brennan Blue**  
*Chief, Vancouver Fire*



Representing City of Vancouver  
**Lisa Brandl**  
*Deputy City Manager, City of Vancouver*



Representing Clark County Sheriff's Office  
**John Horch**  
*Sheriff of Clark County*



Representing Clark County  
**Kathleen Otto**  
*County Manager, Clark County*



Representing public EMS providers  
**Shaun Ford**  
*Division Chief of EMS, Camas-Washougal Fire*



Representing Cities of Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Washougal and Yacolt  
**David Stuebe**  
*Mayor of Washougal*

## HONORING DON CHANEY

*At the end of 2023, long-time CRESA Administrative Board Chair, Don Chaney, retired. As a former City of Camas Police Chief and Camas City Council Member, Don had served on CRESA's board in various capacities for 26 years, with the last 15 years as the Board Chair. CRESA is indebted to Don for his many years of dedicated service and leadership.*

*Thank you Don Chaney!*



*Don Chaney (Center) recognized for his service at his last CRESA Board Meeting in December 2023*

# MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Dave Fuller**  
*Director*

Oversees all CRESA Divisions and Programs



**Jason Fritz**  
*Deputy Director of Operations*

Oversees 9-1-1 Dispatch Operations Division and IT/CAD Technical Support Services.



**Scott Johnson**  
*Emergency Management Division Manager*

Oversees Emergency Management Division including the WA Region IV Homeland Security Office



**Rachael Young**  
*Finance Division Manager*

Oversees Finance Division including budget, accounts payable/receivable, payroll, financial statements and audits, and public records



**Greg Rossmiller**  
*Operations Manager*

Oversees 911 Supervisors, Dispatch Leads and all 911 Operations staff



**Leslie Chapman**  
*Human Resources Manager*

Manages human resources including recruitment, labor relations, performance management and HR training



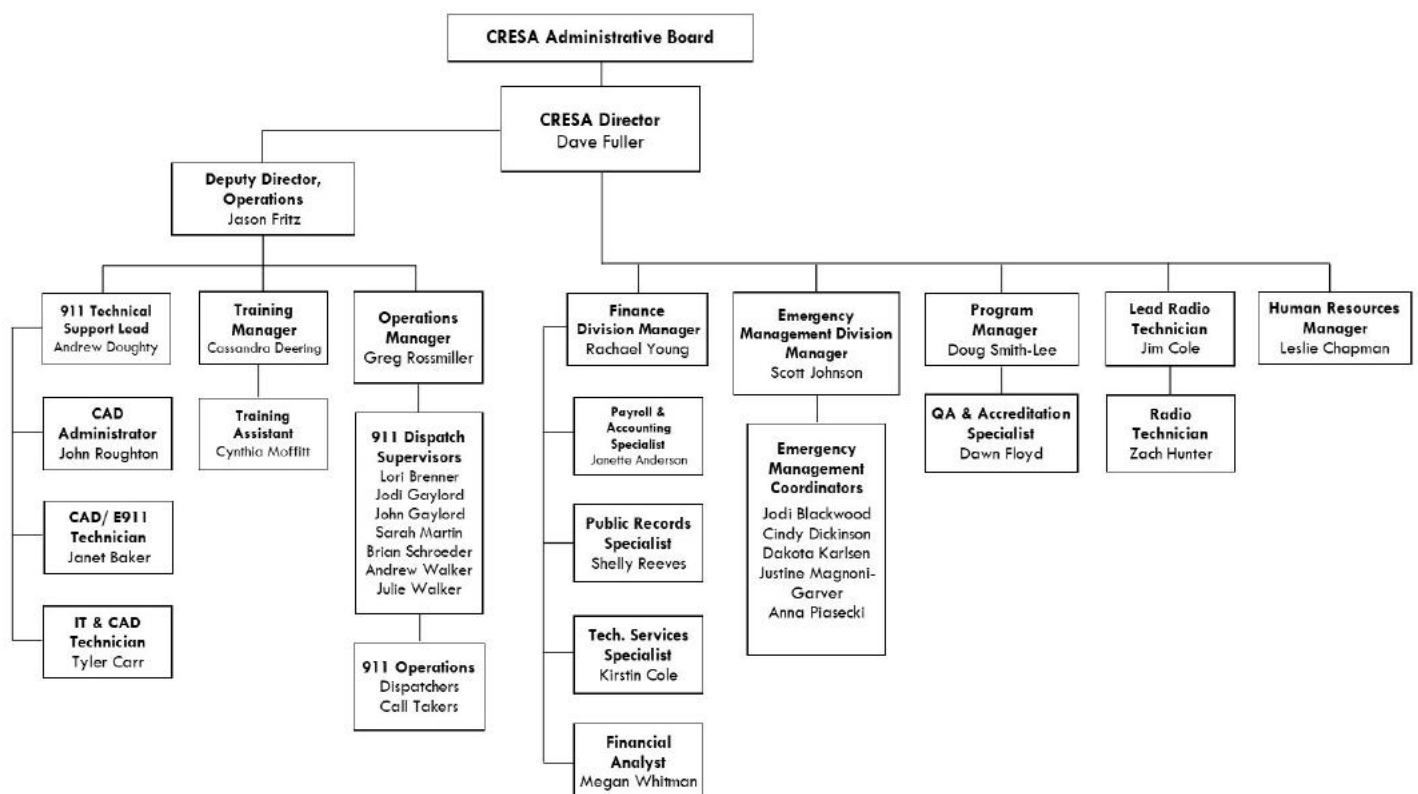
**Doug Smith-Lee**  
*Program Manager*

Manages planning and quality driven projects within five categories: Quality, Compliance, Innovation, Funding and Strategic Plan implementation



**Cassandra Deering**  
*Training Manager*

Manages the dispatch operations training program including development and implementation of on-going training and new hire academies



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CRESA strives to maintain positive community relationships through public education and to support opportunities for staff to represent the Agency and interact with the community they serve. In the past years, CRESA has been able to grow and build on our community engagement by partnering and attending events where people already congregate.

## SPECIAL OUTREACH AND PRESENTATIONS

Throughout the year, CRESA supported and participated in numerous public education events and activities, logging over 225 hours at outreach events in 2023.

- CRESA was able to partner once again with Clark PUD and the Race for Warmth providing items for race participants. This annual event attracts 1,600 participants, over 90% of whom are residents of Clark County.
- CRESA celebrated National Telecommunications week in April by sharing posts, videos and important messages regarding calling 9-1-1 on social media and the CRESA website.
- CRESA activated the Call Center for the Fourth of July holiday period to provide support for community members who were experiencing fireworks issues in their neighborhoods. A total of 1,492 calls were received from July 1 through July 4.
- CRESA again participated in National Night Out community activities by hosting tables at events in Ridgefield, Battle Ground, and Washougal. In addition, teams of CRESA staff members and CERT volunteers visited nine neighborhood events throughout the county. Information on emergency preparedness and wildfire safety were distributed to community members.
- CRESA partnered with the Clark County Sheriff's Office to share an informational booth for 10 days at the Clark County Fair.
- Throughout the year, CRESA made informative presentations on 911 and Emergency Preparedness to many of the county's neighborhood associations, church groups, civic groups, and several area schools. We also participated in Open

House and Safety Fairs hosted by area fire districts.

- CRESA utilized Social Media and our website to share information throughout 2023, with special emphasis on wildfire awareness.

Outside of these events, CRESA's Emergency Management staff provided support for community education inquiries, severe weather events, the evacuation of the Burnt Bridge Creek neighborhood in June due to wildfire, and the Jenny Creek wildfire in La Center in August. CRESA continued using social media platforms to help educate about 911 and Emergency Management throughout the year.

## CERT PROGRAM

Clark County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program increased the number of Basic Training classes to four, reaching out to Vancouver, Battle Ground, Camas, and Ridgefield community members. Our partnership with Washington School of the Deaf (WSD) has culminated in the development of "CERT-D", a training curriculum created to meet the needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Two classes of WSD staff and educators are now certified in CERT Basic Training. CERT volunteers were also trained in CRESA's public outreach and education practices, and provide staffing support at a number of our events.



*EM Coordinator Jodi Blackwood promotes the CERT program at Fire District Open House event*



Some of CRESA's 2023 community engagement and public education events

# 911 OPERATIONS

## DIVISION OVERVIEW

### Staffing

For 2023, CRESA's number one goal in the Operations Division was to increase staff and reduce dispatcher workload. The agency shifted its standard practice of only hiring 911 Dispatchers, a position that consists of both the 911 call-taking discipline and police/fire dispatch disciplines, to also hiring for 911 Call-Takers. This is allowing CRESA to increase its service capacity by letting Call-Takers answer and process calls, and Dispatchers focus on dispatch functions without the additional burden of answering phones. The agency currently has ongoing openings for 911 Call-Takers and Dispatchers.

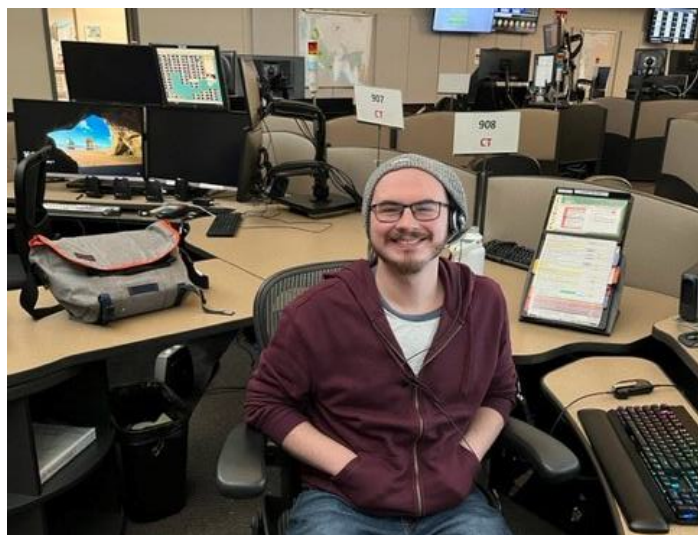
CRESA saw success with the use of Dispatchers on Demand (DOD) to help fill some of the interim staffing gaps. DOD has 911 Call-Takers, certified in the necessary disciplines required at CRESA, ready for short term deployments in order to help with staffing shortages. CRESA was able to use four of these individuals through the summer and fall of 2023 which provided some immediate relief to the overtime pressure on the dispatch floor. CRESA intends to use them again in 2024.

### 3-1-1 and AI

The agency implemented several technologies in 2023 to help reduce workload. In July, we went live with Amazon Connect to stand up a virtual 311 call center. The technology uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist callers in processing non-emergency requests by directing them to landing pages where forms can be filled out and submitted, or to other resources where information can be obtained. This keeps the caller from being directed to a 911 dispatcher for processing and tying up a vital resource for a non-emergent complaint. CRESA is seeing approximately 10% of its non-emergency calls being shifted from the dispatch floor with this technology. Non-emergent calls received through administrative lines (the majority of which come via 311) continue to account for a greater share of the overall call volume. In 2023, these calls represented over 40% of our total incoming call volume. It will be a priority in 2024 to find additional creative, resourceful ways to provide services and referrals for these callers.

### ASAP to PSAP

Both law enforcement and fire disciplines saw the benefits of ASAP to PSAP, when it was implemented in October. ASAP to PSAP allows alarm monitoring companies to pass along relevant data and alarm activity directly into CAD, eliminating or reducing the need for telecommunicator action. By the end of the year, 12 alarm companies were using ASAP to PSAP with more scheduled to begin in early 2024.



# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

**264,719** calls to 911

**164,181** calls to 311 & Administrative Line

**428,900** total incoming calls

**72,048** outbound calls

**500,948** total calls (incoming and outgoing calls)

**1,372** calls handled per day on average

**527,400** estimated population served

**1,891** calls utilized language interpretation

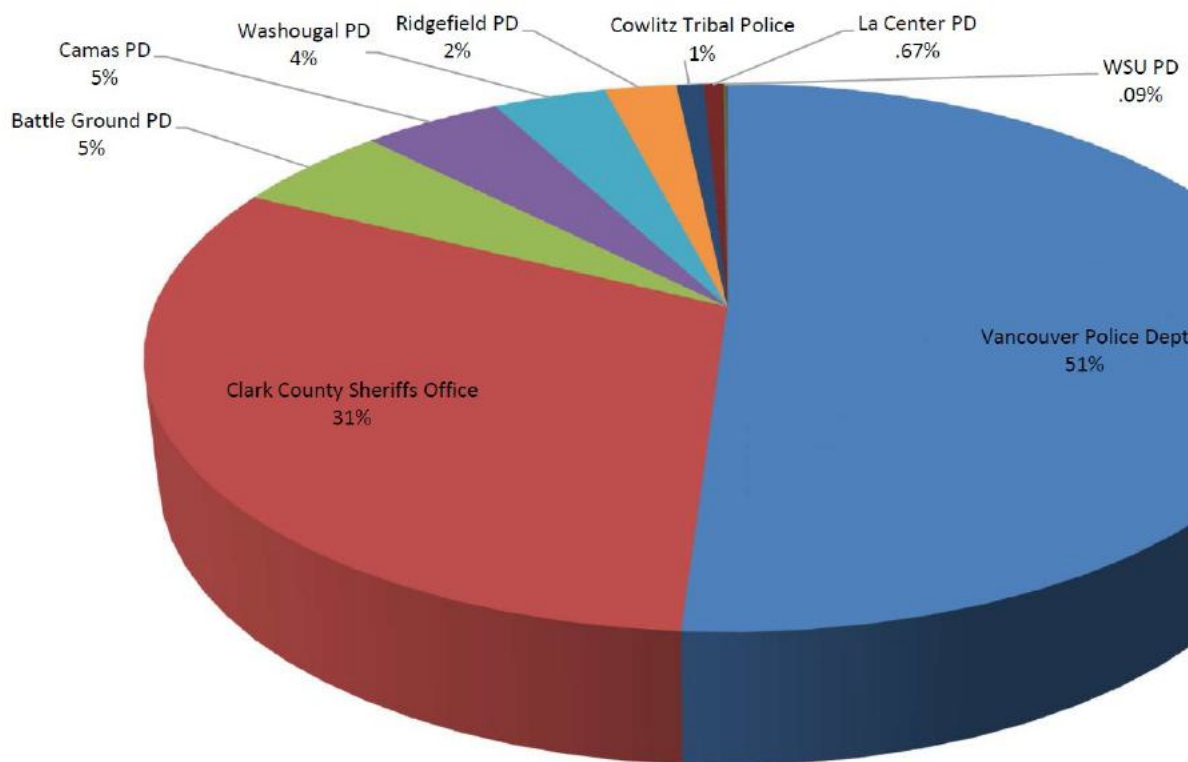
**25** identified languages spoken

**72%** of events Law Enforcement related

**28%** of events Fire / Emergency Medical related

# 2023 OPERATIONS STATISTICS - LAW

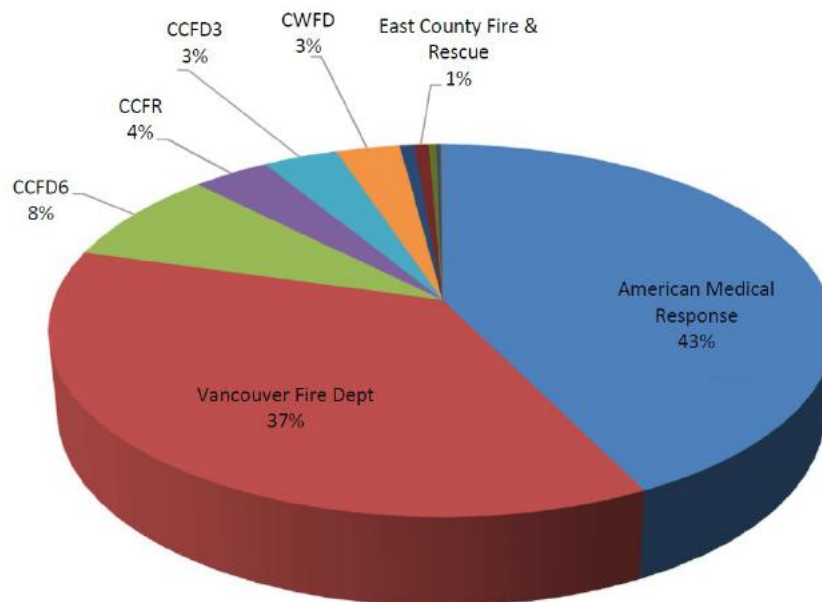
Agency	All Events Created	% of Total	Dispatched Events	Field Initiated	Field Created	Cancelled Events	Referred Events
Vancouver Police Dept	181,099	51.0%	91,137	11,032	16,271	56,695	5,966
Clark County Sheriff's Office	111,150	31.3%	47,487	10,952	8,695	38,186	5,830
Battle Ground Police Dept	18,432	5.2%	6,319	4,245	4,553	3,152	163
Camas Police Dept	16,367	4.6%	5,392	6,634	1,411	2,711	219
Washougal Police Dept	13,301	3.7%	5,854	2,926	1,842	2,472	207
Ridgefield Police Dept	8,429	2.4%	3,065	2,411	1,205	1,526	222
Cowlitz Tribal Police	3,188	0.90%	1,365	848	379	569	27
La Center Police Dept	2,365	0.67%	862	366	169	837	131
WSU Vancouver Police Dept	302	0.09%	27	10	0	259	6
Other Misc Law	127	0.04%	19	2	0	58	48
	354,760	100%					



# 2023 OPERATIONS STATISTICS - FIRE / EMS

Agency	All Events Created	% of Total	Dispatched Events	Field Created	Cancelled Events	Referred Events	Camas Amb Evts*	NCEMS Amb Evts*
American Medical Response	60,259	42.69%	54,518	1	5,016	266	0	0
Vancouver Fire	51,831	36.72%	38,189	10	13,035	371	171	2
Clark County Fire Dist 6	11,568	8.19%	9,750	0	1,668	69	1	0
Clark Cowlitz Fire Rescue	5,224	3.70%	4,867	1	280	29	1	89
Clark County Fire Dist 3	5,032	3.56%	4,785	0	176	18	1	160
Camas Washougal Fire	4,351	3.08%	4,121	0	138	19	3,270	0
Clark County Fire Dist 10	997	0.71%	951	0	37	0	0	759
East County Fire & Rescue	967	0.69%	920	0	34	7	694	0
Clark County Fire Dist 13	514	0.36%	481	0	17	2	1	392
Clark County Fire Dist 7	210	0.15%	200	0	7	2	1	173
Cowlitz Fire	140	0.10%	63	0	47	30	0	1
Skamania Fire	45	0.03%	29	0	13	2	3	18
North Country EMS	22	0.02%	12	0	4	0	0	18
Other Fire	3	0.00%	1	0	2	0	0	0
	<b>141,163</b>	<b>100%</b>					<b>4,143</b>	<b>1,612</b>

\*Camas Ambulance and/or North Country EMS responded as mutual aid for lead agency



# 911 RECOGNITION & AWARDS

The following employees were recognized with [Life Saving Awards](#) in 2023. This is achieved through providing cardiac/respiratory arrest instructions to a 911 caller that directly result in a life being saved.

***Laura (01/04/23)***

***Kim (03/22/23)***

***Crisa (04/14/23)***

***Robin (04/26/23)***

***Amber (05/25/23)***

***Amber (07/20/23)***

***Lucinda (07/26/23)***

***Shaylyne (09/25/23)***

***Jackie (10/27/23)***

***Kayla (11/23/23)***

The following employees were recognized with [EMD Excellence Awards](#) in 2023. This is achieved through providing excellent Emergency Medical Dispatch ProQA life support instructions.

***Jake (01/01/23)***

***Janeen (03/02/23)***

***Suzie (03/18/23)***

***Kim (03/22/23)***

***Robin (04/26/23)***

***Amber (05/25/23)***

***Amber (07/20/23)***

***Jake (08/17/23)***

***Julie (10/06/23)***

***Kayla (11/23/23)***

***Lindsey (12/15/23)***

***Lucinda (12/26/23)***

The following employees were recognized with [Childbirth Awards](#) in 2023. This is achieved through providing pre-arrival instructions that directly result in the successful birth of a child:

***Abby (03/03/23)***

***Misty (04/22/23)***

***Taylor (07/09/23)***

***Taylor (07/30/23)***



Some of CRESA's 2023 Dispatch Award Recipients

# QUALITY ASSURANCE & ACCREDITATION

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QA&A) Program leads the agency's planning and quality driven projects within five categories: Quality, Compliance, Innovation, Funding and Strategic Plan Implementation. Program staff includes the Program Manager and the QA & Accreditation Specialist.

The following agency programs were administered by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QA&A) Program in 2023:

- Strategic Planning
- IAED Accreditation
- CALEA Accreditation
- Agency Emergency Operations Planning
- Special Projects

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

On June 1, 2023, the CRESA Board approved the *Mission Critical Partners (MCP) CRESA 2023 – 2033 Strategic Plan*. This strategic plan was the result of a six month comprehensive assessment and a two-day workshop composed of representatives from CRESA and members of the Board.

The Strategic Plan concentrates on implementing strategies intended to help CRESA fulfill its **purpose**:

*“Making a difference in peoples’ lives with highly trained staff who are passionate about their work and use state-of-the-art technology to connect people with the resources they need.”*

The Strategic Plan developed a road map to reach the desired progress for the agency within the next five years to achieve the following:

- Staffing capable of carrying out a strategic training program plan
- Implement organizational structure to meet the volume and complexity of operations
- Staffing within 5% of authorized strength
- Adopt and maintain relevant agreed upon standards
- Increase baseline for employee engagement within 20% of the national average
- Adopted growth plan for facility and technology upgrades

- CRESA as an integrated part of the alternative response framework
- Administrative and information technology (IT) services strategy implemented
- Governance documents finalized

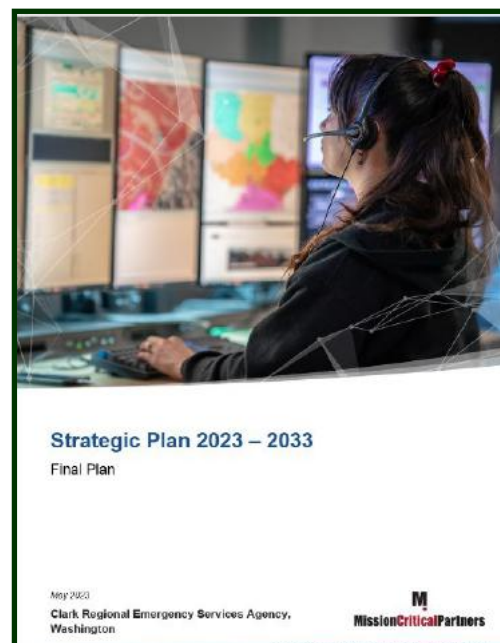
These nine key targets are essential to achieving CRESA's **long term goal** of:

*“By 2033, CRESA will serve a population of 700,000 to accredited industry standards through effective leadership, funding, staffing, and infrastructure.”*

To reach this goal, the Strategic Plan establishes annual commitments that started in the third quarter of 2023. These commitments are further broken down into three-month mini projects known as “Rocks”.

Major Rocks completed in 2023 include:

- ✓ Onboarding 16 new hires for 911 Operations
- ✓ Hiring a training assistant to support the training program's increased number of new hire 911 training academies
- ✓ Using “Dispatchers on Demand” to fill the gap in staffing needs over the summer
- ✓ Automating 311 call routing
- ✓ Executing contracts for the 911 Operations Floor to expand work positions
- ✓ Executing a kitchen remodel contract



## CALEA ACCREDITATION

The Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) was created in 1979 as a private, non-profit credentialing authority to develop a body of public safety standards of best practices and recognize professional excellence. To meet accreditation, public safety communication centers must meet over 200 standards covering: recruitment and selection; management and supervision; human resource practices, training and operations. CRESA was first awarded CALEA Accreditation in 2002.

CRESA is currently working on its 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive CALEA re-accreditation. These re-accreditations are on 4-year cycles that involve an annual review of standard proofs and an on-site review at the end of proof year 4. On November 18th, 2023, CRESA successfully completed the proof year 1 review.

## IAED ACCREDITATION

The International Academy of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) was established in 1988 as a private non-profit standard setting body for emergency call-taking protocols, training, certification and accreditation. CRESA's Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Accredited Center of Excellence by the IAED ensures the agency's 9-1-1 dispatchers determine appropriate emergency response and provide quality patient care over the phone. This is accomplished through an independent evaluation of CRESA meeting the IAED's "20 Points of Excellence" that are further broken down by over 60 specific standards.

CRESA originally received IAED Accreditation in 1993, becoming the 4<sup>th</sup> emergency dispatch center to do so in the world. Earning IAED Re-Accreditation demonstrates not only to each individual within the 91-1 center, but also the community that CRESA is committed to the international practice standards for emergency medical dispatch.

The table below shows CRESA's EMD protocol compliance to the random case reviews for 2023:

2023	IAED Standard	CRESA Performance	Number of Cases
High Compliance		66%	792
Compliant		22%	266
Partial Compliance	≤ 10%	5%	64
Low Compliance	≤ 10%	3%	30
Non-Compliant	≤ 7%	4%	46
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>1,198</b>



## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT 2023 PROJECTS

**Implementation of Frontline QA Tracker** – A key finding outlined by MCP was the absence of a formalized QA program for law enforcement and fire operations. In the fall of 2023, CRESA addressed this concern by implementing quality assurance for both of these disciplines utilizing Frontline QA Tracker. This proactive approach provides essential feedback to employees regarding performance and expectations and identifies training and policy needs. The process also highlights CRESA staff's continued commitment to exceed standards and promote a high quality product for our users and community.

**AI SkillLab** – In the fourth quarter of 2023, CRESA acquired AI SkillLab which is an AI call-simulation training module through Priority Dispatch. It allows staff to practice a variety of incident (EMD) scenarios bringing real life events into the training environment. This is an efficient way to train staff for any event and help them build confidence. AI SkillLab is one-on-one training that can be individual specific and, because it is AI facilitated, does not require additional training staff to execute.

**Stand Alone ProQA** – If extenuating circumstances result in 911 CAD becoming inoperable, call-takers and dispatchers now have access to Stand Alone ProQA for EMD medical triage, pre-arrival and post-dispatch instructions. As a seamless piece of technology, it continues the 'live' approach to EMD ensuring efficiency, timing and delivery of critical medical information and instructions continues when CAD is down.

**Change Management** - One of the high risk elements identified in the Service, Staffing and Infrastructure Assessment conducted by Mission Critical Partners was the need for CRESA to implement a formal change management program. As part of the CRESA Strategic Plan, this project was assigned to the QA&A program. Staff conducted an analysis of formal change management programs and recommended "Leading Change" developed by John Kotter. Staff then developed the 8-Step methodology to be used by CRESA for implementing change within the agency. This was approved by the management team with the recommendation to automate this process in 2024.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS 2023

**MPDS Version 14.0** – Staff coordinate implementation of the current version of the Medical Priority Dispatch System. This work included: 1) developing a cross-walk of new and revised call types for CRESA Technical Services to program into CAD; and 2) training 911 staff on the new version of the EMD protocol.

**GMRs Nurse Navigation** – Global Medical Response (GMR) worked with the Medical Program Director's (MPD) office, CRESA and local fire/EMS agencies to implement a Nurse Navigation (NN) program. The goal of this program is to reduce EMS response on certain low acuity medical calls and refer these patients to more appropriate resources (i.e., nurse advice, physician consult, clinic appointment coordination). To successfully implement this program, CRESA: 1) assisted the MPD's office in identifying appropriate low acuity medical calls eligible for the NN program; 2) coordinated the call flow process from 911 to NN; and 3) trained 911 staff on the process for triaging appropriate calls to NN.



*Dispatcher processes first Nurse Navigation call May 2023*

# FINANCE DIVISION

## FINANCE DIVISION OVERVIEW

The Finance Division provides vital support services for the agency in the areas of finance, budget, accounts payable/receivable, public records management, payroll and employee retirement plans. The program also provides staff support for the CRESA Administrative Board and the CRESA Management Team.

CRESA is audited annually by the Washington State Auditor’s Office in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

CRESA’s finances are reviewed by a five-member Finance Committee. The Finance Committee consists of financial representatives from Clark County, the City of Vancouver, other cities in Clark County, fire districts within the County, and CRESA management staff. The group meets several times each year to review CRESA’s long-range financial plan, funding resources, equipment replacement, and ongoing operations. The Committee, in turn, submits their recommendations to the CRESA Administrative Board for consideration.

## PUBLIC RECORDS

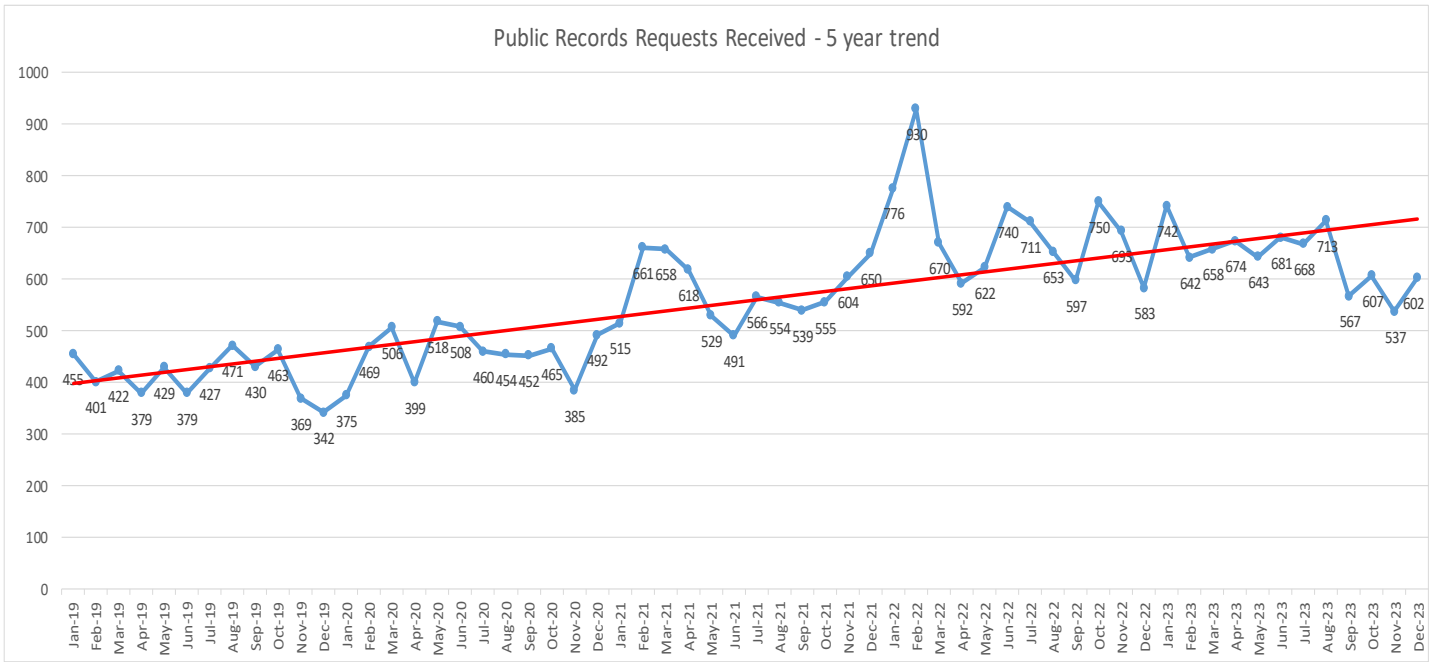
The Finance Division responds to all requests for 911 call records and other CRESA public records from user agencies, attorneys, media outlets, and the public. The most commonly requested records are CAD information and

911 call audio recordings. Over the last decade, CRESA has experienced a dramatic increase in requests for public records going from a total of 2,705 requests received in 2012 to over 7,700 in 2023. 2023 has been the first year we have seen any decrease in the number of requests since 2012. Although 2023 saw a slight decrease, we believe that we will stay in line with trends statewide, and anticipate the demand for public records to continue to increase over time. In 2023, the following was accomplished in the area of Public Records:

- Total of 7,734 individual requests for public records were received in 2023 representing a 7% decrease
- The average processing time to complete a request for public records in 2023 was six business days
- Online Public Records Request Portal continued to offer a streamlined process and greater accessibility to records for requesting parties

## CITIZEN SURVEY

The Finance Division mails out a monthly satisfaction survey to approximately 40-50 randomly selected citizens who called 911 or 311 for service. In 2023, the response rate was 15% with 92% indicating their interaction with 911 was positive. All returned surveys containing comments or negative scores are reviewed by the Director, Deputy Director and Operations Manager for follow up.

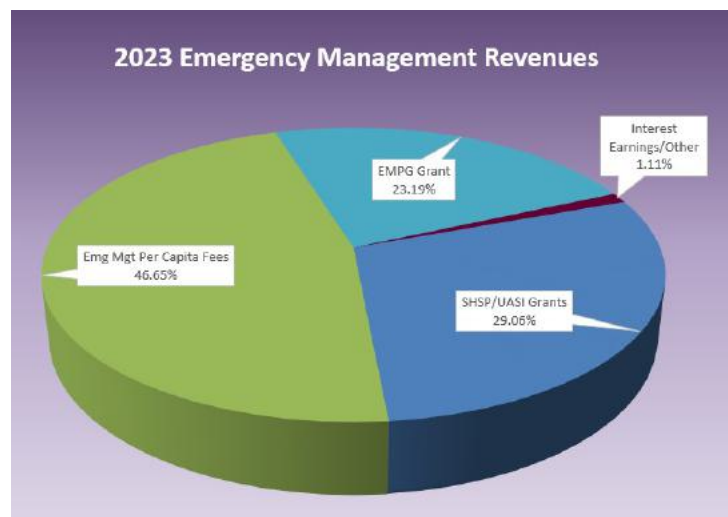


# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT - REVENUE



## Operations Fund Revenue

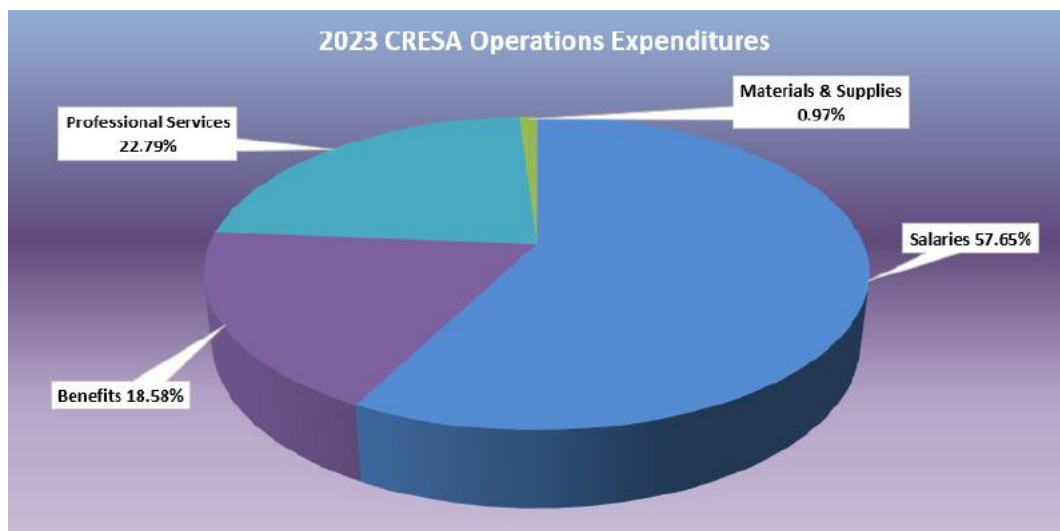
E911 Excise Tax	5,073,750	42.22%
Dispatch Fees	5,399,907	44.93%
Radio System & Equipment Fees	1,230,295	10.24%
Radio Site Leases	108,202	0.90%
Grants	61,829	1.51%
Interest Earnings	106,163	0.88%
Pass Thru/Other	37,531	0.31%
	<b>12,017,677</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Emergency Management Fund Revenue

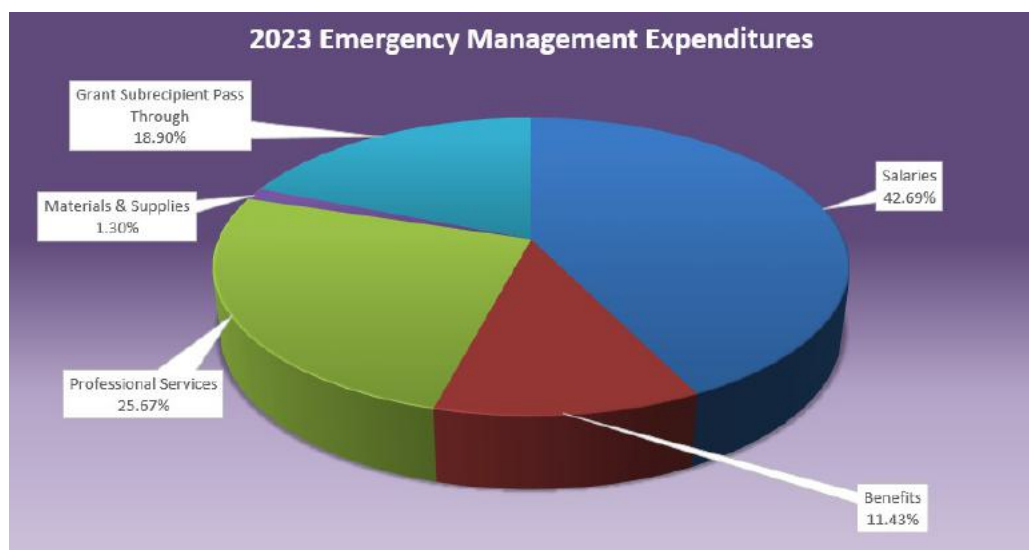
SHSP/UASI Grants	360,061	29.06%
Per Capita Fees	578,106	46.65%
EMPG Grant	287,336	23.19%
Interest /Other	13,711	1.11%
	<b>1,239,214</b>	<b>100%</b>

# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT - EXPENDITURES



## Operations/Radio Program Expenses

Salaries	7,449,183	57.65%
Benefits	2,417,579	18.58%
Professional Services	2,965,065	22.79%
Materials & Supplies	126,443	0.97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,008,270</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Emergency Management Expenses

Salaries	494,202	42.69%
Benefits	132,343	11.43%
Professional Services	297,188	25.67%
Materials & Supplies	15,010	1.30%
Grant Subrecipient Pass Through	218,822	18.90%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,157,565</b>	<b>100%</b>

# HUMAN RESOURCES

## HUMAN RESOURCES PROGRAM OVERVIEW

CRESA's Human Resources is responsible for a recruitment, compensation, benefits, leave programs, employee relations, labor relations, performance management, training and leadership development. Human Resources also supports our employee engagement and recognition programs and committees.

## STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES - 2023 PROGRESS & UPDATES

	<b>2023 Commitments/Tasks</b>	<b>2023 Completed</b>
<b>OBJECTIVE: Onboard 12 trainees (911 and 311)</b>	<b>Onboard goal of 12 new hires in 2023</b>	<b>Hired 16 trainees for 911 Call Taking and Dispatch</b>
	<b>Participate in more and larger variety of recruiting events</b>	<b>Attended 34 career fairs locally and 2 State job/career fairs</b>
	<b>Incentivize CRESA staff participation in recruiting events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased communication about recruitment events to all staff</li> <li>More employees participated in both career fair events and interview panels</li> </ul>
	<b>Enhance hiring process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online or virtual formats utilized for interview process</li> <li>Updated interviewing timeline to expedite process and allow for more flexibility</li> <li>Tours of CRESA provided to all applicants during initial Interview</li> </ul>

## OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

### Recruitment

The following recruitments were successfully completed in 2023:

<b>Position</b>	<b># of Applicants</b>	<b>Internal / External</b>	<b>Positions Filled</b>
<b>Deputy Director, 911 Operations</b>	28	External	1
<b>Finance Division Manager</b>	43	External	1
<b>Emergency Management Coordinator</b>	176	External	3
<b>CAD &amp; IT Technician</b>	58	External	1
<b>911 Training Assistant</b>	50	Internal / External	1
<b>911 Call Taker/Dispatch Trainee</b>	1594	External	13
<b>Lateral – 911 Call Taker and/or Dispatcher</b>	87	Lateral	3

### Labor Relations

Two Collective Bargaining Agreements were successfully negotiated and implemented in 2023 for the Clark County Dispatchers Guild and Clark County 911 Supervisors Guild.

# 2023 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION



## **JACQUELINE - EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

*Dispatcher*

*Jacqueline Piggott started with CRESA in 2013, as a 911 Dispatcher. Jackie, or “JP” as she’s often called here at CRESA, is a person that exemplifies the passion it takes to do your best every day. She demonstrates concern for all employees and displays immense dedication to her profession as a first responder. Jackie has demonstrated strong leadership and dedication in everything that comes her way. Her commitment to training is exceptional, she works hard to get to know her trainees and their learning style, and teach them in an encouraging manner. As her guild’s president, she has provided seamless communication to members, ensuring that issues are addressed, followed up on, and that all feel heard. In 2023, she received the following awards: Life Saving Award, EMD Excellence, December Perfect EMD Score, March and July High Achiever of the Month. Congratulations JP!*



## **CINDY DICKINSON - EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD**

*Emergency Management Coordinator*

*Cindy is an Emergency Management Coordinator, who started her career with CRESA in 2007. On July 2, 2023, CRESA received an urgent mutual aid request from the Skamania County Sheriff’s office. Having recently lost their only Emergency Management employee due to retirement, Skamania County was facing a rapidly growing and destructive wild fire with no Emergency Manager and little institutional knowledge on IMT coordination, mutual aid or state disaster declarations. Upon being informed of the situation by her managers, Cindy immediately canceled her plans for the holiday weekend and began making preparation to deploy to Skamania. For the next two weeks, Cindy logged over 500 miles traveling with Skamania County staff to conduct community meetings and coordinate response. She helped to focus the activities of the Skamania County EOC and provided, in the words of Skamania Sheriff Summer Scheyer, “invaluable and dedicated service to Skamania County when we needed it. She was great!”*



## **DAKOTA KARLSEN - EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD**

*Emergency Management Coordinator*

*Dakota is an Emergency Management Coordinator, who started at CRESA January 2023. Displaying a keen desire to learn about all facets of the EM program, he quickly established a firm understanding of his role and all of the functions of the EM Division. During the Jenny Creek Fire in August 2023, Dakota served as the remote PIO and situation unit lead. He was able to accurately and quickly update social media and the CRESA website with critical life safety information. His efforts in this area received praise from community members and response partners. Following this event Dakota led the effort, in conjunction with county GIS and the Clark County Fire Chiefs’ Association, to increase our alerting efficiency through the creation and implementation of a zone mapping system. Dakota’s willingness to accept new challenges, embrace new ideas and adapt to changing situations are examples of an exceptional dedication to the CRESA value of innovation and community service.*



## **DAWN FLOYD - EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD**

*Quality Assurance Coordinator*

*Dawn is the Quality Assurance Coordinator who started at CRESA in 1991 as a 911 Dispatcher. Dawn has brought CRESA’s quality assurance program to a new level. In 2023, Dawn took on implementing a new Quality Assurance application to enhance CRESA’s ability to provide QA reviews for police and fire call-taking and dispatch. Part of her ongoing responsibility with this application is pre-loading the calls for supervisors to review and generating monthly reports. She took this on along with all of her regular responsibilities with a constant positive attitude. Dawn has also taken on completing the training program to be certified as an IAED Quality Performance Reviewer which is a nationally recognized qualification. She is regarded as an expert by her peers, and they often seek her out for information and best practices.*



### **DELANEY- EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD**

#### **Dispatcher**

*Delaney started her CRESA career in 2021 as a 911 Dispatcher. In 2023, the key to two lives being saved all came down to Delaney asking the caller for their name. On March 3, 2023, based on the name provided, EMS was able to locate two patients and provide life-saving care. Her attention to gathering this information was critical to the timely response. Operations had recently provided training to staff that even on medical calls, the caller's name needs to be gathered. Embracing change and continually seeking to improve, Delaney incorporated this into her workflow. Her desire to make a difference and the ripple effect of her actions was monumental. Delaney is an employee that continually reaches out and seeks guidance and training resources to improve her already excellent skills as a dispatcher.*



### **MEGAN WHITMAN - EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD**

#### **Financial Analyst**

*Megan is the Financial Analyst, who started at CRESA in 2009. She has been the backbone to not only the finance team, but to CRESA this year. She kept a positive attitude during a huge wave of change in administrative staff over the course of 2023. She helped fill in the gaps for the position of Finance Division Manager for several months while it was vacant, then stepped up to train the new hire in that position. Shortly after, the Public Records Specialist position became vacant. She not only continued to mentor and train the new Division Manager, but also took on public records requests as well. She spent time to train the new Finance Division Manager and HR Manager on how to process public records. In addition, she also helped to train and bestow knowledge to the new EM coordinator on grant management and processes. She did all of this in addition to her own work load and with a team mindset.*

### **ANDREW DOUGHTY, TYLER CARR, ZACH HUNTER & JOHN ROUGHTON - EXEMPLARY SERVICE TEAM AWARD**

*At around 3:00 a.m. on October 21, 2023, Technical Services Lead, Andrew Doughty, received a call from dispatch that CRESA's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system was crashing intermittently. Andrew headed to CRESA and began trouble shooting with Clark County IT staff. After several hours the problem began to worsen and Andrew found himself unable to access critical systems. As dispatchers were coming on shift, they were not able to log in to computer systems. Eventually CAD completely crashed and dispatch began utilizing paper and manual processes to receive and dispatch 911 calls for service. At 6:45 a.m. CRESA was notified by the Department of Homeland Security that the cause was a sophisticated cyber-attack on Clark County systems. Within 30 minutes, Andrew had rounded up CRESA's Technical Services Team consisting of John Roughton, Tyler Carr and Zach Hunter to begin isolating systems from the County network. By 7:30 a.m. the team successfully isolated CAD and was getting dispatchers logged back in. With CAD, phone and radio now working, and able to process mission critical work, Andrew advised operations that they should inform user agencies to disconnect any equipment directly connected to CRESA to avoid further spread of the attack or damage to external equipment. Over the next several hours Andrew and his team work tirelessly to stabilize systems to a point where CRESA felt that essential functions could be completed through the night with no disruptions. After over 17 hours on the floor, the tech team left to get some rest for the evening, but was back at CRESA early the following morning to continue restoring applications and services needed for our customers. By 11:30 a.m. following the day of the attack, the tech team had most services back up and running by restoring networks and implementing extra security and protective measures. Had it not been for the Tech Team's timely response to the initial call for help and their commitment and dedication to CRESA's mission of "Always here, Always ready," this cyber event could have been much worse.*

# TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION

## DIVISION OVERVIEW

The Technical Services Division manages the agency's technology systems and equipment. Major systems include the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, Public Safety 800 MHz and VHF radio systems, Region IV radio system, NG911 telephone system, and voice logging recording system. The division also supports numerous other technical and software systems and all hardware and software components for the 911 dispatch operations center, back-up center, the EOC and administrative offices.

## PROJECT UPDATES

### CAD System

CRESA implemented ASAP-to-PSAP in 2023. This allows 12 of the major alarm companies to directly interface with CRESA's CAD system. Not only does this reduce call volume, but this also allows for quicker response times and helps eliminate the potential for miscommunication.

### Network Upgrade

CRESA worked with Clark County IT to replace all network switches within CRESA with a newer, more secure platform. This also allowed us to restructure our network into segments for each of our divisions: Dispatch, Administration, Emergency Operations, Security Systems, Backup Center, and Servers.

### 311 and AI

In July of 2023, CRESA implemented the use of Amazon Connect to field non-emergency phone calls. The system went live the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>, allowing us to direct all firework complaint related calls that came into 311 to our fireworks hotline. The hotline was staffed by volunteers through the Emergency Management division, taking these calls away from the 911 call-takers.

Since then, we have worked on building out the different call-type "buckets" directing even more calls away from dispatch. There was a total of 58,357 phone calls that went through Amazon AI in 2023. Of those, 5,407 were directed to the appropriate resource without human intervention. We continue to develop this technology to increase the number of calls that can be handled by the AI and not a 911 call-taker.

## OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

### Tech Services Staffing

At the end of 2023, CRESA said goodbye to Stacey Fritz, who after a 30-year career at CRESA, decided it was time for retirement. Stacey was a great asset to CRESA's Technical Services Division and is greatly missed.

### IT Service Metrics - Help Desk

CRESA's help desk system allows for categorization and prioritization of technology issues and requests tied to service levels and reporting. CRESA Help Desk Requests created by category in 2023 as follows:

### ***IT Service Metrics: 2023 Help Desk Ticket Summary***

Category	2023 Count	% of Total
CAD (I/Dispatcher, Map, ProQA, Response Plans etc.)	1,734	40%
Not Categorized	856	20%
Applications (PulsePoint, Equature, etc.)	642	15%
User Accounts	262	6%
Radio Projects/System	80	2%
Telephone	439	10%
Computer	154	4%
Interfaces (I/Page, Locution, Informer, etc.)	92	2%
Mobile for Public Safety	240	5%
All Others	187	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,354</b>	<b>100%</b>

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

## DIVISION OVERVIEW

CRESA's Emergency Management Division is the local comprehensive emergency management organization for Clark County and the cities of Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal and the Town of Yacolt, as required under RCW 38.52 and WACs 118-09 and 118-30.

2023 saw a 60% personnel turn-over in the CRESA Emergency Management Division with the Operations Coordinator and PIO/Pub Education Coordinator both leaving to take managerial positions in regional EM agencies, and the retirement of the Grants Coordinator. Based on user feedback and the results of the 2022 agency assessment, the focal areas of the five positions within the Division were changed. At the end of 2023, the EM Division was fully staffed with positions focused on the following areas:

- Internal/EOC Operations Coordinator
- Partner Planning Coordinator
- COOP Coordinator
- Mitigation and Recovery Coordination
- Volunteer and Grants Coordinator

Approximately 40% of the program is supported by federal grant funding, with the remaining 60% coming from a per-capita contribution from each of the eight participating jurisdictions in Clark County.

The Emergency Management Division also includes a State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) which receives and administers SHSP grants for Washington State Region IV comprised of Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania and Wahkiakum counties.

## EOC OPERATIONS

### Burnt Bridge Creek Fire

The Wildfire and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) threat continues to grow as climate change shifts towards a hotter and drier summer in the Pacific Northwest. EM staff started the fire season in June by issuing an evacuation alert at the request of Vancouver Fire Department in the Burnt Bridge Creek neighborhood due to a rapidly expanding brush fire. This was the first time a fire evacuation had ever been issued within Vancouver city limits.

### Jenny Creek Fire

The most significant response of the year was during the Jenny Creek Fire North of La Center in August. Around 1,000 contacts, many within La Center city limits, were put in evacuation Levels 1, 2, and 3 during the first night. CERT volunteers were activated to staff assembly areas to assist those evacuated from their homes and coordinate sheltering needs. The Clark County Fire map system that was created during the Nakia Creek fire by Clark County GIS was put into use again and was viewed 10s of thousands of times by members of the community. The Jenny Creek fire response lasted for three days and occurred at the same time as the TumTum fire in rural north Clark County. Fortunately, no evacuations were needed for the TumTum fire.



*Jenny Creek Fire North of La Center, WA 2023*

## DUTY OFFICER PROGRAM

CRESA Emergency Management staff members serve as Duty Officers for the Agency. Duty Officers monitor hazardous situations, conduct notifications as outlined in the emergency response plans and provide coordination assistance for hazmat, search and rescue, weather-related situations and any other emergency situation as requested.

### *Duty Officer Annual Recap:*

Search And Rescue	2023	2022	2021
Within Clark County	9	18	12
Mutual Aid	22	17	14
Dive Team	0	3	3
Police/Evidence	5	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>

HAZMAT Response	2023	2022	2021
Within Clark County	30	39	23
Outside Clark County	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>26</b>

Severe Weather Events	2023	2022	2021
Flooding	1	2	7
High Winds/Storm	1	2	2
Heat/Fire	0	1	4
Other Severe Weather	0	0	0
Winter/Cold	1	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>

Other Calls	2023	2022	2021
Public Health Support	0	2	2
Community Notification	8	7	8
Power Outage	0	0	0
Earthquake/Tsunami Debris	0	0	0
Landslide	1	0	0
Critical Infrastructure Support	0	1	0
Fire Support/Smoky/Burn Ban	8	8	7
9-1-1 Outage/Support	3	3	3
Law Enforcement Support	5	6	4
Communications/IT	0	0	0
Other	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>94</b>
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### Significant Events

- I-5 Woodland Slide
- Burnt Bridge Creek Fire
- TumTum Fire
- Jenny Creek Fire
- Evergreen School Incident
- Tornado Warning
- Nakia Creek Fire
- COVID-19

# OUR MISSION

*We serve as the vital link between our community and our public safety partners in providing reliable 9-1-1 call-taking and dispatch, regional public safety radio and emergency management.*

# OUR VISION

*Always here, always ready for our community and partner agencies, delivering excellent and innovative 9-1-1 and emergency services.*

# OUR VALUES

*Dedication, Integrity, Creativity, Passion,  
Communication, Concern*

# AGENCIES SERVED

American Medical Response  
Battle Ground Police  
BNSF Railroad Police  
Camas Ambulance  
Camas Police  
Camas Washougal Fire Dept.  
City of Battle Ground  
City of Camas  
City of La Center  
City of Ridgefield  
City of Vancouver  
City of Washougal

Clark County Fire District #10  
Clark County Fire District #13  
Clark County Fire District #3  
Clark County Fire District #6  
Clark County Fire Marshal  
Clark County Sheriff  
Clark-Cowlitz Fire Rescue  
Cowlitz Tribal Police  
Cowlitz/Skamania Fire District #7  
East County Fire and Rescue  
La Center Police  
North Country EMS

Ridgefield Police  
Skamania County Fire District #6  
Town of Yacolt  
Vancouver Code Enforcement  
Vancouver Fire Department  
Vancouver Police  
WA State Dept. of Corrections  
Washougal Police  
Woodland Fire Department  
WSU Vancouver Police