

MPD Operational Assessment

Minneapolis Police Department and Emergency Communications Center
Staffing and Operations Assessment and Review Of Problem Nature
Codes



Study context and background

December 2019 staff direction

Ellison, Schroeder, and Johnson moved to direct the City Coordinator's Department, along with Emergency Communications (911), the Police Department, and other departments as necessary, to contract with one or more consultants to undertake an analysis of services and workload in order to evaluate the efficiency of the tax dollars invested in the Minneapolis Police Department, and further explore the recommendations from the 911/MPD Workgroup—including but not limited to the reconfiguration of the priority system. The contract deliverables generally should include the following:

- a. Analyze the feasibility and potential implementation for the recommendations coming from the 911/MPD Workgroup—including but not limited to how to best categorize calls for service.
- b. Analyze which services the enterprise already performs that the Minneapolis Police Department duplicates, and which of those duplications should/could be folded back into the enterprise— including but not limited to MPD's approach to records and information management.
- c. Analyze key factors that would contribute to a more efficient performance from MPD staff, both civilian and sworn officers—including but not limited to exploring whether squad cars should be staffed by one or two officers.



Project timeline

Action	Dates
RFP issued*	March 2020
Vendor selected	Oct 2020
Scope amended	Jan 2021
Data provided by City	Feb – May 2021
Interviews & analysis	May – Nov 2021
Draft report	Dec 2021 – Jan 2022
Staff review of draft	Dec 2021 – Jan 2022

* The MPD Staffing and Efficiency Study RFP was issued in March 2020. A separate Problem Nature Code Prioritization Study RFP was issued in September 2020. No satisfactory vendors responded to the latter solicitation, and the contract was amended to include both scopes of services.



Today's presentation

Analysis, findings, and recommendations:

- Staffing analysis
- Operations review
- Problem nature code analysis
- Business process analysis



The report suggests action

Regarding staffing:

- Address needed staffing-related policies and procedures
- Implement alternative responses
- Consider effectiveness when re-staffing units

Regarding operations, processes, and problem nature codes:

- Continue or expand current activities
- Make adjustments
- Attend to staff capacity and wellbeing



Presentation of technical report



February 2, 2022

Minneapolis Staffing, Operations, and Problem Nature Codes Assessment: Briefing



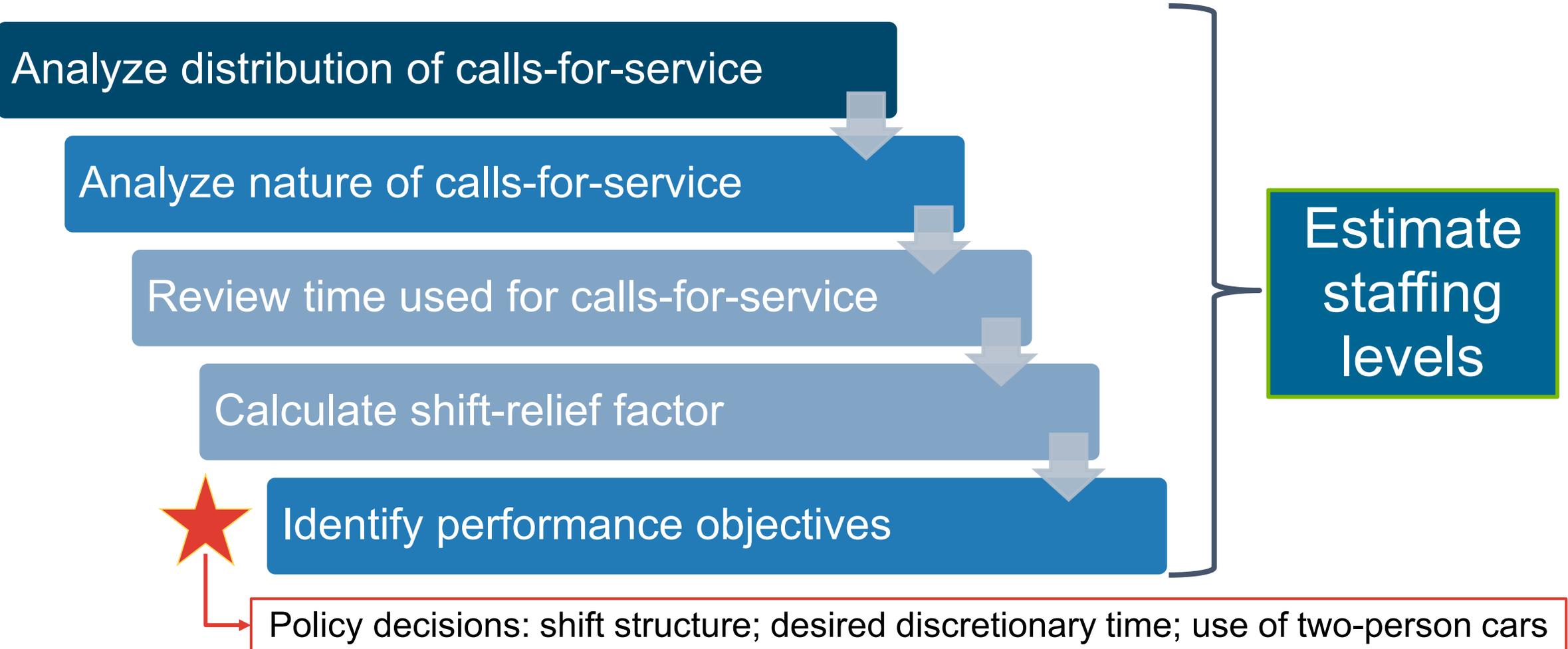
Purpose

- Recommend staffing resources that can effectively and efficiently meet the demand for service.
- Review internal business processes and identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- Inform needs for resource allocations that are aligned with City needs and demand for public safety services.
- Position the MPD for future success by providing the tools to further adapt staffing and processes to future changes in demand for service.

Approach

- Multi-method approach combining information from administrative data, literature, written documentation, and interviews
 - Staffing analysis: workload-based staffing estimation approach
 - Operations analysis: literature review and theme-identification from interviews
 - Problem nature code analysis: exploratory quantitative analysis
 - Business process analysis: process mapping and pain point identification

Staffing analysis: workload-based approach



Note: workload-based staffing analysis outside the patrol unit was not possible due to data limitations.

Deliverables

- Report: *Minneapolis Police Department and Emergency Communications Center Staffing and Operations Assessment & Review of Problem Nature Codes*
 - Analysis
 - Findings
 - Recommendations
- Staffing tool: Excel-based calculator to allow analysis of future staffing needs
- Presentations: as requested

Findings



Staffing analysis

Common suggested values in literature

	50% discretionary time	67% discretionary time
Patrol staffing required*	278	416

What is discretionary time? Time spent not responding to calls-for-service; used for administrative tasks, moving between calls, patrolling, traffic stops, informal community engagement, etc.

Policy levers: shift structure; desired discretionary time; use of two-person cars; (benefits)

* These results are for the four-day, 10-hour shift structure MPD currently uses. See report for alternate shift structures (pages 20-22). The current structure is (narrowly) the most efficient.

These results are for MPD's current use of two-person patrol vehicles (approximately half the time). See report for further discussion (page 19 and pages 38-40).

Staffing analysis: potential alternate response tactics

- With 50% discretionary time...
 - Behavioral health calls: could reduce patrol staffing needs by 23 officers
 - Theft reporting calls: could reduce patrol staffing needs by 32 officers
 - Other alternative responses: could reduce patrol staffing needs by 18 officers
- With 67% discretionary time...
 - Behavioral health calls: could reduce patrol staffing needs by 34 officers
 - Theft reporting calls: could reduce patrol staffing needs by 46 officers
 - Other alternative responses: could reduce patrol staffing needs by 26 officers

Caveats: implementation timing and time to full implementation; some alternate response calls will likely still require police presence at times; these reductions rely on other units in MPD being fully staffed; not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence to required non-sworn staff.

Operations review

- Civilianization: MPD would benefit from exploring more civilianization and from evaluating effectiveness of changes.
- Alternate response models: MPD would benefit from continuing alternate response models underway and expanding these programs when feasible.
- Centralization: Research is mixed and MPD's current decentralized investigations structure is viewed favorably, though requires full staffing.

For all operational changes, including restaffing of specialized units, process and impact evaluations should be implemented, to include community input whenever appropriate.

Problem nature code analysis

- Low-use PNCs: most should be retained due to specificity or severity of the incident type
- High-use PNCs: nearly all are appropriately specific, but the miscellaneous code should be reviewed and additional codes developed to capture some of these calls

Miscellaneous PNC Characteristics	Percentage
Related to a 9-1-1 call	19%
Unit arrived on scene	80%
Call cancelled	12%
Call disposition: Report	25%
Call disposition: Information	17%
Call disposition: All OK	14%
No call disposition	11%

Note the above table summarizes the Miscellaneous code across a number of unconnected variables, thus the percentages do not sum to 100%.

Problem nature code analysis: priority levels

Initial Priority	Problem Nature Code	Average Response Time (minutes)	Count	Average Time for Priority Level	Difference	Direction
1	Domestic (P)	26.8	1,114	12	+14.8	Longer
2	Burglary Business - Report (P)	79.4	1,541	38	+41.4	Longer

See report for complete table of PNC priority level alignment on pages 54-55.

Business process analysis

- It was difficult to disentangle process pain points and delays from those due to understaffing
- Key takeaways
 - MECC personnel would benefit from more health and wellness support
 - Patrol personnel welcome alternate response models for mental health calls, which are typically lengthy calls
 - Investigative personnel feel particularly strained by understaffing, as it increases case backlogs

Conclusion

- Appropriate staffing levels will require careful consideration of policy choices
 - Current patrol staffing is reliant on substantial reductions in staff in specialty units
- Implementation and restaffing of units, as well as new programs, will require careful evaluation monitoring to ensure effectiveness and efficiency
- Problem nature code use is largely aligned with best practices, though some minor adjustments could be helpful
- Alternate response models and civilianization should play critical roles in public safety response in Minneapolis

Questions?

Appendix



Recommendations: Staffing

- Recommendation 1: The MPD and the City should identify a performance objective for the percentage of time officers spend responding to calls for service. As depicted in the analyses above, applying common metrics such as one-third or one-half results in very different recommendations for staffing levels. To that end, the City should consider how much time it would like MPD officers to engage in other typical police functions, such as patrolling the streets in their precincts or engaging in community policing activities. Although these activities may not be as critical as responding to calls for service, they are considered core functions in many police departments.
- Recommendation 2: After identifying this objective, the MPD should consider the staffing levels for its patrol precincts. The staffing analyses revealed that, under the current 4-day, 10-hour shift assignment, the MPD's current staffing levels are appropriate if patrol officers are expected to spend one-half of their time responding to calls for service (i.e., the 50 percent performance objective). However, if the MPD or the City expects these officers to spend more of their time on undirected patrol, community engagement, or other activities, the MPD would need to consider increasing its patrol staff or otherwise reallocating personnel to best meet the demand for service in each precinct and the City at large.

Recommendations: Staffing

- Recommendation 3: If further efficiencies are needed in the short term, the MPD could consider reducing the number of two-officer squad cars dispatched to calls in favor of one-officer squad cars. As noted in Figure 6, nearly half of all calls that occurred during the study period involved a two-officer response. Research has generally shown that one-officer squads are not less safe for officers than two-officer squads, whereas one-officer squads can improve overall staffing efficiency (e.g., Anderson & Dossetor, 2012). However, the ability for the department to make this change may vary across shifts and precincts. For example, shifts that put officers at greater risk might require more two-person patrols than other shifts. Likewise, the necessity for two-person patrols may vary across the department's precincts.

Recommendations: Staffing

- Recommendation 4: The City should examine the feasibility of implementing nonpolice response options for the PNC subgroups described above or expanding existing programs that serve this purpose (such as the behavioral health response teams). As noted in Table 6, the department could free up between 73 and 106 patrol positions if all these calls for service were handled by community groups or other nonpolice agencies.
Likewise, the MPD could examine how it uses its own personnel to respond to some nonemergency calls for service. As noted in Figure 7, most calls for service were lower priority calls for which no immediate threat of harm existed. Some of these calls could possibly have been handled without a patrol officer responding to the scene. For instance, in some police departments, patrol officers who are unable to participate in patrol duties (e.g., those on limited duty or other administrative assignments) address these calls by phone, thereby reducing the need for an officer to be dispatched on scene. MPD has implemented such a system, but its staffing levels have been inconsistent.

Recommendations: Staffing

- Recommendation 5: The current analyses focused on developing staffing estimates specifically for patrol officers, but CNA was unable to produce similar estimates for the department's other divisions (e.g., investigations). If the MPD would like to create similar staffing estimates for these divisions, it would need to collect additional data, specifically detailed information on how much time investigators spend on relevant activities throughout their day, such as driving to crime scenes, interviewing suspects or witnesses, analyzing evidence, and so forth. Note that this data collection would be a complex undertaking; these data are not commonly collected by other police departments, so there are no standard approaches for creating staffing estimates outside of patrol.
- Recommendation 6: When developing a patrol performance metric to guide the deployment of uniformed officers, this model cannot factor in the several units staffed by uniformed officers that have been greatly reduced or eliminated because of staffing constraints. These include Community Response Teams, the Community Engagement Team, the Crisis Intervention Team, the Police Activities League, school resource officers, bicycle patrols, and foot beats. All at one time had strong support from segments of the community and had a role in crime prevention, mental health–related calls, community outreach, and fear reduction. We strongly recommend that, in the aftermath of the recent referendum, the City inventory these programs for their prior effectiveness and level of community support and determine whether the recommended number of call-response officers is sufficient to reproduce some of these services and activities or whether these units could potentially be staffed by civilian personnel (see Section 2 for more discussion of civilianization).

Recommendations: Staffing

- Recommendation 7: The reintroduction or reactivation of any special unit, or, for that matter, foot and bicycle beats, depends on the development of appropriate metrics and the ability to assess the effectiveness and support of these units. Business districts, for example, may highly value foot and bicycle beats for their fear reduction and order maintenance capabilities. This information could be ascertained through targeted community surveys. Separate metrics (and the ability to extract relevant data from information systems) must be applied to units such as Community Response Teams, the Community Engagement Team, and the Police Activities League. Their effectiveness and support should be measured to inform current and future staffing needs.

Recommendations: Operations

- Recommendation 8: The MPD should continue to expand the use of civilian personnel to fulfill positions as appropriate within the agency, particularly in units such as community outreach, forensics, and information technology.
- Recommendation 9: The MPD and the City should explore the possibility of implementing civilianization in additional roles outside the patrol function; however, the City and MPD should remain mindful that civilianization outside the roles listed in the previous recommendation is not (yet) widespread and little-to-no information is available about best practices or outcomes and effects. It would be beneficial to both the MPD and the broader field to carefully document such civilianization efforts and perform process and impact evaluations of them.

Recommendations: Operations

- Recommendation 10: The MPD and MECC should develop recruitment strategies specific to civilian personnel and by role and focus area. These strategies should include mechanisms for reaching qualified applicants; considerations for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the hiring process; and proactive methods for promoting the MPD and MECC as progressive, fulfilling workplaces with opportunities for career advancement. We recommend reviewing COPS Office publications for specific guidance on these topics.
- Recommendation 11: The MPD and MECC should collect data allowing for workload-based analysis of civilian roles within their organizations to ensure that these positions are staffed appropriately based on organizational priorities and activity levels. Please refer to Recommendation 5 for more details on the type of data required for this task.

Recommendations: Operations

- Recommendation 12: Recognizing that MPD personnel may still be required to respond to some mental health crisis calls (those with threats of violence or those in which officers respond initially while mental health response teams are dispatched), the MPD should continue to maintain crisis intervention and other applicable training programs and ensure all officers have basic competency in these areas, as is the current practice in the department.
- Recommendation 13: The City should commit resources to undertake an objective, rigorously designed evaluation of Canopy's mental health crisis team response model, including a process and impact evaluation as well as an analysis of costs and staffing implications.
- Recommendation 14: Based on personnel input, the current practice of decentralizing property crimes investigations at the precinct level seems to operate well and have no noted drawbacks. These personnel, as with others at the MPD, are currently challenged by workloads and understaffing. Because the assessment team was unable to conduct a formal staffing analysis for this role, we cannot recommend a specific staffing level quantitatively, but we recommend increasing staffing and continuing to gather feedback from personnel in this role.

Recommendations: Operations

- Recommendation 16: The MPD should formalize policy and structure regarding the use of two-person patrol units. Committing entirely to one-person or two-person patrols is not a typical practice; instead, the MPD should weigh various factors to develop a policy for when two-person patrols will be used. Specific factors that should be considered are time of day, day of week, and time of year (and related volume and types of responses); location (and related volume and types of responses); community engagement priorities and strategies; officer safety; and special circumstances (such as preplanned events, disasters, and other crisis situations). Such a policy will allow for more predictable staffing requirements and ensure that supervisors and officers understand when they will and will not be assigned in two-person units.
- Recommendation 17: Based on the determined policy, the MPD should review the staffing analysis and revise the required staffing if needed to adjust for the predicted rates of two-person patrol units. The MPD should ensure sufficient sworn positions are filled to adhere to policy.

Recommendations: Operations

- Recommendation 18: The MPD should determine an appropriate level of discretionary time, and ensure staffing levels sufficient to support patrol officers in having that level of discretionary time on most or all shifts. It may be the most appropriate to allow a relatively higher level of discretionary time for shifts covering late afternoon and early evening (when most community engagement activities take place) as opposed to overnight and early in the morning. In addition, the MPD may wish to prioritize additional discretionary time availability in the near term as the agency focuses on reprioritizing community engagement and relationship building.
- Recommendation 19: As the MPD is able to return to higher levels of discretionary time and, in turn, increased levels of proactive officer activity, it is critical to document and assess the use of discretionary time. To that end, the MPD and MECC should collaboratively develop processes and procedures to assign a priority code to these activities and create protocols for dispositions, metrics for effectiveness, and protocols for supervisory oversight. These are necessary to verify that these activities occur and have the desired effects.

Recommendations: PNC analysis

- Recommendation 20: The MECC should revise the Emotionally Disturbed Person PNC title and description to reflect recent changes in preferred language for describing these situations (e.g., “Individual Experiencing Mental Health Crisis”). These changes should be reflected throughout policy and practice in both MECC and MPD documents. A working group including MPD, Minneapolis Fire Department, EMS, and MECC personnel is currently working to address this issue.
- Recommendation 21: The City should work to better classify incidents currently captured in the Miscellaneous PNC, particularly those incidents with dispositions of “Report” or “Information.” This practice would considerably reduce the use of the Miscellaneous code.
- Recommendation 22: The MECC and MPD should review communication protocols associated with officers going on directed patrol to reduce or eliminate initial coding of that activity into the Miscellaneous PNC.

Recommendations: PNC analysis

- Recommendation 23: The MPD should review its response process for Domestic PNC calls, identify the underlying cause for the lengthy response time for these calls, and address it to ensure that these calls are responded to efficiently.
- Recommendation 24: The City should consider recoding the Burglary Business – Report PNC to priority level 3.
- Recommendation 25: Community members are generally satisfied, in nonemergencies, with a predictable response rather than a rapid response. Whenever possible, the MECC should have protocol and a script to provide callers with an estimate of the response time given call prioritization. This practice can also work well in parallel with alternative response models (such as self-reporting of minor vehicle accidents and property crimes).

Recommendations: Business processes

- Recommendation 26: The MECC and MPD should review whether some of the automation processes used by Fire can be modified and applied to police calls for service. In the absence of automation, development of a decision tree outlining various scenarios could increase standardization.
- Recommendation 27: The MECC should consider streamlining processes for emergency and nonemergency lines because the same people are answering both.
- Recommendation 28: The MECC and MPD should define or develop standard processes or criteria for the deactivation of a call to ensure standardization across the unit.
- Recommendation 29: The MECC should look for opportunities to simplify and consolidate information presented to dispatchers. This practice will help reduce the number of systems that need to be used and streamline the overall process.

Recommendations: Business processes

- Recommendation 30: Health and wellness are acute concerns in the dispatcher community. Dispatching is a sedentary yet highly stressful occupation, particularly during times of severe staffing shortages. Mental and physical health are key factors in retaining personnel. Accordingly, steps should be taken to address these issues. The MECC should consider offering time for short walks (outside or on a treadmill) and providing snacks with healthy options. The MECC should also make stress-related counseling regularly accessible to personnel. Given the lack of natural light in the current location, thought should be given to investing in lighting more conducive to a healthy environment.
- Recommendation 31: The MPD, and particularly precinct leads, should clearly define response priority based on the staffing level available. This priority needs to be clearly defined and communicated both internally to the MPD and externally to callers and City leadership because general frustration is felt across the board.

Recommendations: Business processes

- Recommendation 32: The MECC should identify permanent leadership. At the time of CNA's interviews, the MECC did not have permanent leadership. Identifying permanent leadership positions can help create stability in the agency and serve as a basis for implementing additional improvements.
- Recommendation 33: MECC and Command Center personnel have developed effective mechanisms for coordinating during regular operations as well as emergencies and crisis response, despite being located in different physical locations. These practices should be continued and regularly reviewed in case adjustments are necessary to continue to effectively operate collaboratively and under a unified command structure.