



APCO

MEMBER CHAPTER SERVICES Committee

Member Chapter Services Monthly Poll

This month's poll will be focused on Chapter Conferences. We request a member from each Chapter to PLEASE participate in answering our poll questions. It will only take a few minutes and the results will be shown in next month's newsletter.

[MCSC January 2024 - Chapter Conferences](#)

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Membership Information

Member Type	12/1/2022	12/1/2023
Associate Members	2,495	2,428
Full Members	4,403	4,359
Full Group Members	8,961	9,471
Online Group Members	22,203	24,093
Commercial Members	480	482
Commercial Group Members	396	339
Total Number of Members	38,938	41,172
Total Number of Group Agencies	1,523	1,680
Commercial Groups	57	52

APCO Membership Renewal

Your membership will expire on **December 31st**. If you have not renewed, log into myapcointl.org, click on My Invoices, to print or pay your invoice.



Cybersecurity Committee

Phishing and Cybersecurity

The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) defines Cybersecurity as “the art of protecting networks, devices, and data from unauthorized access or criminal use and the practice of ensuring confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information” (CISA, 2023). While cyber-based attacks are possible on just about any connected device, a large percentage of these attempts are likely focused on business and government networks, due to the anticipated value of the data or information accessed. Even more disturbing, most “breaches now originate with the users of internal and external resources.” (Security Magazine, 2023). Why is this the case? Quite simply, because “80-95% of all attacks begin with a phish.” (Security Magazine, 2023). What does that mean to public safety leaders responsible for ensuring the integrity of their networks? Essentially, it means your team members are unknowingly opening the door for bad actors.

Phishing is “the practice of sending fraudulent communications that appear to come from a legitimate and reputable source, usually through e-mail and text messaging.” (CISCO, 2023). The primary reason phishing attempts are so successful is because the communication will very closely mimic the appearance of other communications the victim receives on a regular basis, complete with company logo’s, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers. The sender might appear to be from a well-known local or national bank, a utility company, or even a healthcare provider. The very best phishing attempts have carefully worded language in the narrative, instructing the victim to e-mail confidential information (i.e. passwords, date of birth, social security number, etc.) to a certain e-mail address, or click an embedded hyperlink which takes the victim to a completely different webpage where the same information is requested. Network security specialists have even seen Artificial Intelligence (AI) being used to initiate phishing attacks, leveraging AI language models. (Microsoft, 2023)

Since the simple act of opening and reading e-mails by your employees is the greatest gateway for nefarious actors into your organization, even with security applications running on your agency network, education appears to be the most effective deterrent to phishing attacks. Talk to your team about the types of e-mails or text message communications they should be keeping an eye out for. Is the message unsolicited or unexpected? Does the communication ask for confidential or personal information? Is the recipient asked to click a link within the e-mail to go to another website and complete a form? Finally, have a process in place for your team members to notify an internal security contact or IT person if/when they receive a suspicious e-mail or communication. Employees want to do the right thing and not inadvertently expose the network or organization they work for to cyber attackers. A little education goes a long way.

Sources:

<https://www.cisa.gov/news-events/news/what-cybersecurity>

<https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/99696-between-80-and-95-of-cyberattacks-begin-with-phishing#:~:text=Between%2080%2D%20and%2095%25%20of,begin%20with%20phishing%20%7C%20Security%20Magazine>

<https://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/security/email-security/what-is-phishing.html>

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365-life-hacks/privacy-and-safety/how-ai-changing-phishing-scams>

Health & Wellness Committee

JANUARY

EAT SEASONAL

WITH AHEALTHYLIFEFORME.COM

BRUSSELS SPROUTS
GRAPEFRUIT
KALE
LEEKs
LEMON
ORANGES
PARSNIPS
POTATOES
SWEET POTATOES
TANGELOS
SUNCHOKE
TANGERINE
TURNIP
WINTER SQUASH



HEALTHY LIFE
FOR ME

Health & Wellness Committee (continued)

NEW YEAR'S Resolution

THINGS TO DO BETTER:

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NEW SKILLS TO LEARN :

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NOTES:

 

DEVELOPGOODHABITS.COM

Health & Wellness Committee (continued)

The Science of Hydration: Importance and Tips for Staying Hydrated in Winter

As we bundle up for the winter season, it's easy to underestimate the importance of staying properly hydrated. Often, the cooler temperatures might trick us into believing that our bodies require less water. However, staying hydrated in the winter months is just as crucial as it is during the heat of summer.

Understanding the Science of Hydration

Hydration is not solely a response to hot weather or physical activity; it's an essential aspect of maintaining overall health. Our bodies are composed of about 60% water, emphasizing the significance of adequate hydration for bodily functions. During winter, we tend to lose moisture through breathing, increased urination due to consuming warm beverages, and sweating caused by layered clothing.

Why Hydration Matters in Winter

Maintaining Body Functions: Water is vital for regulating body temperature, aiding digestion, and transporting nutrients throughout the body. Proper hydration supports our immune system, helping to fend off winter illnesses.

Preventing Dehydration: The cold weather can mask the body's thirst signals, leading to potential dehydration. Dehydration can cause fatigue, dizziness, headaches, and decreased cognitive function, affecting productivity and overall well-being.

Tips for Staying Hydrated in Winter

1. **Consistent Water Intake:** Aim for a consistent water intake throughout the day. It's easy to forget to drink water when it's cold, so setting reminders or using apps to track water consumption can be helpful.
2. **Hydrating Foods:** Incorporate foods with high water content into your diet. Fruits like oranges, grapefruits, and vegetables such as cucumbers and tomatoes are excellent hydrating choices.
3. **Warm Beverages:** Sip on warm, non-caffeinated beverages like herbal teas, warm water with lemon, or broth. These not only hydrate but also provide a comforting warmth during the chilly season.
4. **Moisturize Skin:** Cold weather can lead to skin dehydration. Using moisturizers and humidifiers at home can help maintain the body's hydration levels.

Monitor Urine Color: Keep an eye on the color of your urine. Light yellow or clear urine indicates

Health & Wellness Committee *(continued)*

adequate hydration, while darker urine might signify dehydration. Remember, staying hydrated during the winter months is just as important as it is in the summer. By consciously maintaining water intake, incorporating hydrating foods, and being mindful of the body's hydration signals, you can support your overall health and well-being even in the coldest of seasons.

Submitted by: **Alicia Williams, MA**



Silent Key

Blake T. Haskell
Atlantic Chapter

We have learned that Blake Haskell passed away on September 30th, 2023

For more information, his Silent Key can be found here:

[https://
www.apointl.org/psc/
silent-key-blake-t-haskell/](https://www.apointl.org/psc/silent-key-blake-t-haskell/)



Paul Linnee
Minnesota Chapter

We have recently learned that Paul Linnee passed away.

For more information, his Silent Key can be found here:

[https://
www.apointl.org/psc/
silent-key-paul-linnee/](https://www.apointl.org/psc/silent-key-paul-linnee/)

Teammates In Action



DAILY ACTIONS
BY HEADSET
HEROES.



WE'RE
WORKING TO
BRING THESE
MOMENTS TO
LIGHT AND
NEED YOUR
NOMINATIONS!

<https://www.apcointl.org/membership/awards-recognition/teammates-in-action/>

<https://www.apcointl.org/membership/awards-recognition/teammates-in-action/>

Teammates In Action *(continued)*

The Member Chapter Services Committee is pleased to announce our next recipients of the Teammates in Action Award.



On October 22, 2023, Telecommunicator Misty Reid with the Metro Nashville Department of Emergency Communications received a 911 call for a 79-year-old female who had fallen due to being short of breath. During the call, the patient became unconscious and stopped breathing. CPR was required.

Telecommunicator Reid provided outstanding customer service during this incident. Her level of professionalism, compassion, and empathy was absolutely outstanding. Misty consistently provides high-quality customer service on her calls. She also tries to spread positivity on the operations floor and shares her smile with everyone.

Please join us in congratulating Telecommunicator Misty Reid for her exceptional performance and awarding her the “Teammates in Action Award.”

Thank you, Misty, for your commitment to providing exceptional customer service and spreading positivity to all around you.



Teammates In Action (continued)



On November 21, 2023, Communications Operator, Crystal Mazeika-Pahl fielded a phone call from a mother who reported her eleven-month-old infant had drowned in the bathtub. These types of calls can unnerve the best of us. The first thing Crystal did to gain control of this situation was to develop a rapport with her caller. Crystal realized that if she was going to provide lifesaving EMD instructions and have the mother comply she needed to shift the mother's focus to her questions.

Crystal provided the caller with EMD Infant CPR instructions for approximately four and a half minutes until the caller disconnected. Crystal knew how essential and important the pre-arrival instructions were for the patient, so she made phone contact with the mother and explained that they needed to continue with the CPR instructions until help arrived. An additional five and half minutes of infant CPR was provided to the infant until the scene was turned over to the first arriving deputy.

Crystal understood how imperative persistence was in this situation and how vital the information was that she was providing. It is not that often that we hear from the personnel in the field on either an outcome or a compliment on the care that was provided prior to their arrival. In this situation, the EMS crew contacted dispatch to thank Crystal for her excellent work. They also wanted to bring light to the fact that they saw how EMD in collaboration with the EMS system really works!!!

Please join us in congratulating Communications Operator, Crystal Mazeika-Pahl for her exceptional performance and awarding her the "Teammates in Action Award."

Thank you, Communications Operator Crystal Mazeika-Pahl, for your commitment to providing exceptional customer service and patient care.



Teammates In Action *(continued)*

On August 22, 2023, at 21:26, an Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Communications Officer processed an EMS call for a male patient who advised he had alcohol poisoning and wanted to go to detox. The call occurred in a remote area, so the EMS response time was extended. This was a 17-minute phone call until responders arrived on the scene. Our CO was professional with this caller. She established a rapport with the caller early on and assured him several times that help was on the way. Once our CO provided EMD instructions and attempted to end the call with the closing statement, the caller asked if our CO would stay on the line with him. The caller asked for our CO’s name, which she provided. The remainder of the call was spent with our CO showing compassion for the caller in his time of need. This allowed the caller to open up and express his feelings to our CO, to which the caller thanked her several times.

Our dedicated Communications Officer displayed great professionalism and compassion above the call of duty, which resulted in the caller feeling heard and understood. In a fast-paced environment where our jobs always have us "on to the next emergency", she took the time to stay on the line with the caller and loan him an empathetic ear until EMS arrived.

Please join us in congratulating this Eastern Shore of Virginia Communications officer for her exceptional performance and awarding her the "Teammates in Action Award."



Humor Under the Headset



The first call for a fire I ever took after being released from probation was a gentleman who stated his grill was on fire. I asked where he was and he gave me an address and that the grill was on the back deck. I asked if it was a house or apartment, how close to the house, what kind of fuel, and if anyone had been injured -- then dispatched the call. I thought I had rocked it because I said the location within a location, gave them exposures and all the other normal details of the call despite being wound up like a newbie would be.

The Fire Department gets there, says they see smoke and fire showing from the rear of the house and are stretching a line. I now get really amped up because I'd never dealt with a house fire before. A few seconds later, the Lt in command says "Stretch another line through the house, this one is useless" and I get confused. Now I'm starting to get that sinking feeling that I waited too long and it had gotten really out of control. Or maybe the hydrant was dry and I needed to find another one. As I'm sitting there sweating for what felt like forever but really was only about 3 minutes later, Command says "Fire is out" and they can clear the scene.

As I'm sitting there wondering what happened, the LT gets back and comes into the room. This is what he said: "Great job on that fire, you did phenomenal on your first. Next time, however, it would be really helpful to know that the deck is 13 feet off the ground." Apparently, they went hard charging around the corner because they saw the flames and thought the back of the house had gone up, luckily it was just the caller's steaks just below the roof line. They turned the corner, looked up, and laughed as the homeowner looked down and asked what the hell they were doing down there because the fire was up here. To this day over a decade later, I still tell that story to new hires so they can understand location, location, location.



MCSC Monthly Survey Results

In November's Member & Chapter Services Committee survey, we focused on Reclassification. We received 61 responses.

We asked you, "At a state level, are public safety communication professionals in your community still classified as clerical?" 60 respondents answered, with one abstaining. 25 said "Yes", 25 said "No", three were unsure, and seven answered with "Other", with the following responses:

- Defined as first responders, but not reclassified.
- Legislation passed allowing telecommunicators to move into a protective class retirement system, with the definition in the bill referring to telecommunicators as first responders.
- No classification for telecommunicators.
- Only when a state of emergency is declared under emergency management.
- Protective service, not first responders.

In question #2, we asked, "If yes, are there any reclassification bills in state legislation currently?" 43 respondents answered, with 18 refraining, summarized below.

- Yes (9 responses)
- No (20 responses)
- Unsure (7 responses)
- Other (7 responses)
 - Reclassification efforts failed.
 - Working on the inclusion of telecommunicators into a PTSD bill that will classify them as first responders.

Question #3 asked, "What is the purpose of public safety reclassification efforts?" 59 respondents answered, with two abstaining. Responses are summarized as follows:

- Classify public safety telecommunicators as protective service (51 responses)
- Decrease public safety partnerships (0 responses)
- Improve the working conditions and benefits of telecommunicators (41 responses)
- Increase center funding (17 responses)
- Other (6 responses)
 - Focus on mental health.
 - Grant fund availability.
 - Recruitment of career-minded and qualified individuals.

MCSC Monthly Survey Results

(continued)

- Step towards influencing federal reclass and step towards getting a better retirement in state.
- To include Police, Fire, EMS telecommunicators as first responders.
- Updating to a more accurate classification with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics due to the more advanced nature of this job past just being clerical.

In question #4 we asked, "Protective services classifications often bring higher employment requirements. Should these carry over to public safety communications professionals once reclassified?" 60 respondents answered, with one skipping the question. Answers are summarized as follows:

- Unsure (4 responses)
- Yes (47 responses)
- No (6 responses)
- Other (3 responses)
 - Split, with current staffing an increase in employment requirements would not be beneficial. In an ideal world and culture... yes.
 - The requirements are already in legislation but having proper classification would help to streamline them.
 - Union state - all contractual employment requirements.

Question #5 asked, "Does your state currently have training standards or training requirements?" 60 respondents answered, with one skipping the question. Responses are summarized as follows:

- Unsure (2 responses)
- Yes (42 responses)
- No (9 responses)
- Other (7 responses)
 - In the process of creating the requirements
 - Kansas APCO & NENA had started a steering committee in collaboration w/ KLETC (where officers/deputies train) to develop a "Dispatch Academy" however that has come to a standstill. The hope for developing this "academy" was to have more standardized training so that citizens and those traveling through Kansas would have a better standard of care. Many counties cannot give basic medical care over 911, like CPR.

MCSC Monthly Survey Results

(continued)

In question #6 we asked, "Should reclassification bring higher state training standards or national standardized training requirements?" 60 responded, with one not providing a response. Responses are summarized as follows:

- Unsure (3 responses)
- Yes (48 responses)
- No (5 responses)
- Other (4 responses)
 - I believe our training standards/requirements are adequate, but this may not be the case in all states.
 - We have recently revamped our training standards.
 - Maintain and update existing standards.
 - Citizens have an expectation of what they are going to receive when they call 911. There are too many places in the country where those expectations fall drastically short of what basic care should be. I feel that there also needs to be consideration given to the very rural counties that don't necessarily have the luxury/ability to have extended training. There needs to be levels of training standards based on several things, there can't be just a blanket level of higher training standards.

Question #7 asked, "What is the most valuable long-term benefit to telecommunication professionals after reclassification efforts?" All respondents answered. Responses are summarized as follows:

- Unsure (0 responses)
- Access to mental health resources, increased wages, retirement benefits, etc. (31 responses)
- Professional recognition and respect for the profession (16 responses)
- Recruitment and retaining skilled and career-minded ECC professionals (7 responses)
- Other (7 responses)
 - All of the above
 - 1 and 2 (mental health resources and professional recognition)

Thank you to those who responded to this survey. We appreciate your time and the detail you provided, as this will help the Member & Chapter Services Committee to better assist you and your Chapters.

This month's survey will be focused on Conference Planning. Please visit [MCSC January 2024 - Chapter Conferences](#)

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