

May 29, 2018

To: Mayor and Members of City Council
 From: Patrick A. Duhaney, Acting City Manager *PAO*
 Subject: Plush Family Questions

REFERENCE DOCUMENT # 201800813

On May 14, 2018, the Law & Public Safety Committee referred the following item for report:

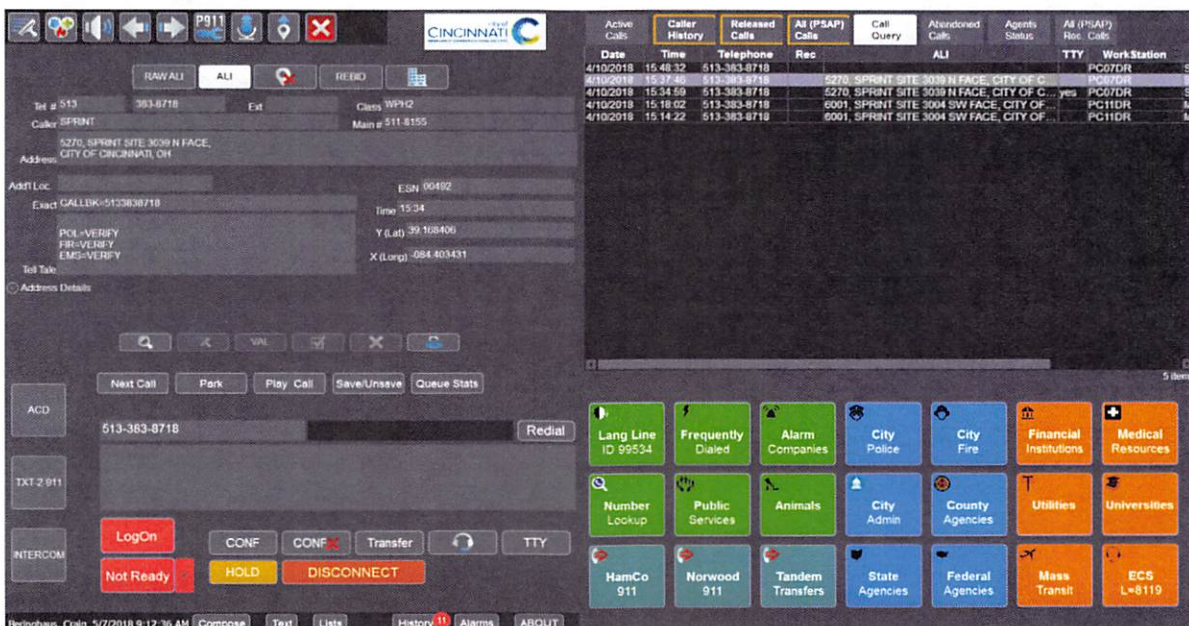
COMMUNICATION, submitted by Vice Mayor Smitherman from Ron Plush, regarding the Plush family questions.

The following report answers the Plush Family Questions in the order that they were received on May 14, 2018. We have made every effort to respond to their questions as succinctly as possible while providing detail where needed. In addition, please note that we have indicated corrective actions as appropriate.

PLUSH FAMILY QUESTIONS (5-14-18)

1. It was reported that the first 911 attendant had the approximate GPS location of Kyle's phone and therefore his Van, is that true?

ANSWER: Yes. The call attendant had the approximate GPS location by longitude and latitude of Kyle's phone. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires that wireless carriers provide this information within an accuracy within 150 meters.



2. By approximate GPS location do we mean within 5-10 feet of where Kyle was later found?

ANSWER: Yes. Although as stated above wireless carriers are required to provide location accuracy within 150 meters, in this case the approximate location was within 5 to 10 feet of where Kyle was later found.

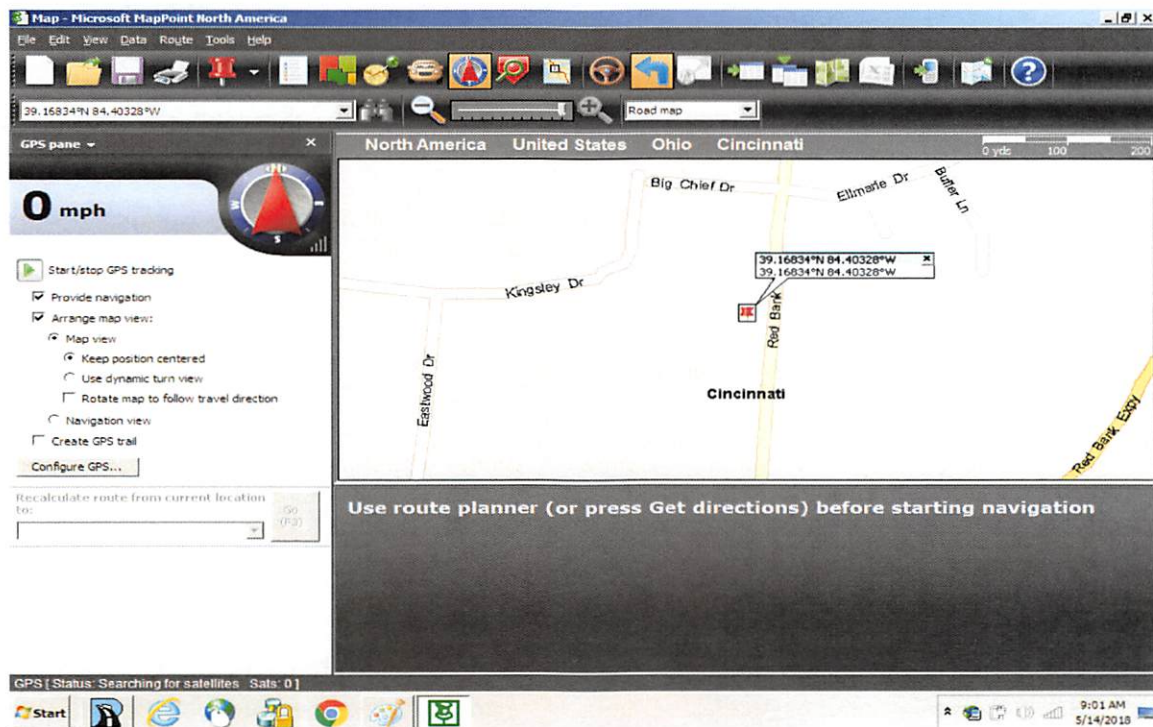
3. If true, should that information have been transmitted to the investigating officers?

ANSWER: Yes. Under current policy, the call taker has longitude and latitude coordinates which the dispatcher inputs into the system. The system then automatically provides this information in the form of an address to the responding officers.

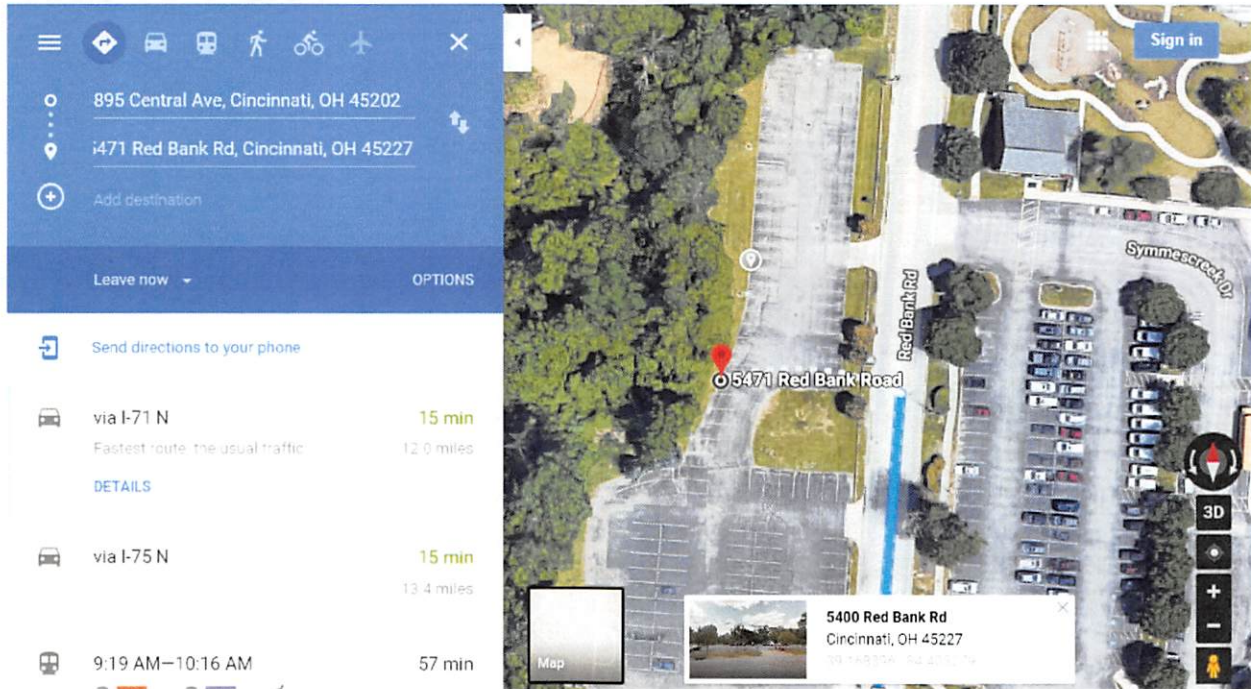
PLANNED CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

- a. We are preparing a plan to update the software and improve the in-car mapping capabilities such that officers will see a more detailed map in their vehicles by this summer.
- b. We are also evaluating purchasing an Automatic Police Vehicle Location and GPS based dispatching system for every Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) vehicle. This option would have allowed the dispatcher to have known the exact location of the CPD officers in relation to the location of the caller. If the officers had the capability they would have been able to get driving directions to the exact location of the caller.
- c. CPD IT is field testing an application for use in vehicles that will provide enhanced mapping capabilities for officers.
- d. In the interim, an SOP change is being prepared to ensure all available information is communicated to the responding officers, including GPS coordinates.
- e. Officers will be trained to call and ask for additional information if they cannot locate the caller.

NOTE: If the officers had or attempted to enter the GPS coordinates on their current Mobile Data Computer the map below would be presented:



NOTE: After the planned corrective actions the following map will be available in the police vehicles:



4. The media reports that the officers were sent to the wrong address, is that true?

ANSWER: No, the officers were sent to 5471 Red Bank Road. Kyle's vehicle was found within 5 to 10 feet of that location.

5. Did the 7 Hills security films verify whether anyone looking for Kyle ever entered the parking lot as shown in the GPS pinpoint information possessed by the call attendant number 1?

ANSWER: No. The films do not verify that anyone looking for Kyle entered the parking lot as shown in the GPS pinpoint information possessed by the call attendant number 1.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

CPD officers had the options of verbally requesting the GPS coordinates via radio from the dispatcher and manually entering them by using the mapping software in the vehicle. They could also have requested additional GPS location information from the dispatcher verbally via the radio.

As a result of the lessons learned through this tragedy, CPD and the 911 Center are updating standard operating procedures to ensure additional requests for caller information are made. We are also evaluating technology improvements to ensure there is a seamless exchange of information between dispatch and the responding units.

Additional training will be provided for call takers, dispatchers and first responders to ensure they are equipped to fully utilize all of the tools available to them. This training will be completed by the end of this summer.

6. And is the media correct when they reported the approximate GPS location information was also known by the #2 call attendant?

ANSWER: Yes. However, when the coordinates were imported on her CAD computer the second call attendant only saw partial information due to a connectivity related error.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

- a. Reducing and eliminating CAD failures is critical to public safety. Therefore, in the future whenever there is a system glitch the dispatchers will be trained to pass that call on to a nearby dispatcher who can pull up the incident on a working system. There's upgrade schedule in early June to address reported CAD issues.
 - b. We will be utilizing our ServiceNow technical support system to track all reported system problems and the time to repair. These reports will be reviewed on a regular basis in our ECC Stat and Governance Meetings.
 - c. Standard operating procedures will be updated to ensure that we have a consistent manual work around for the delivery of critical information from the caller to the first responders in the event of a technical failure.
 - d. Standard operating procedures will be updated to ensure urgency is elevated when multiple calls from the same number are received and to also ensure that all tools are 100% functional and utilized at all times.
7. Should we assume that the officers on the scene were aware that 911 call taker would have had or the ability to provide the approximate GPS location of the caller?

ANSWER: Yes. In fact, the officers were given the approximate GPS location of the caller in the form of an address. Faced with a busy student parking lot with a lot of activity, the officers were looking for signs of distress but saw no one flagging them in order to get their attention and saw nothing indicative of an emergency.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Beginning immediately officers will be trained to re-confirm the incident with dispatchers and request additional information, including GPS coordinates if not already provided.

8. Was it her responsibility to transmit that GPS location to someone?

ANSWER: No. Current standard operating procedures require her to provide an address.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

- a. We are seeking improvements to the technology available to the police officers in the vehicle that will enable the transmission of the latitude/longitude coordinates and improve the map capabilities in the vehicle as already noted.
 - b. Standard operating procedures will also be updated to ensure the dispatchers are providing and the officers are requesting any and all available information.
9. What purpose does the ALI longitude and latitude information derived from the 911 call have other than to determine the location of the caller?

ANSWER: The only purpose of the ALI longitude and latitude information is to provide the dispatcher with the location of the caller.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN: Policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated to ensure call takers and first responders utilize all resources to ensure the available caller information is communicated to the first responders.

10. If #2 attendant's system was not working, did she have other forms and manners of communication to give the caller to the first responders?

ANSWER: Yes. Manual dispatch cards are available to the call takers to relay caller information to the dispatcher in the event of a system failure. The card will then be relayed to the dispatcher for necessary action.

Also, the call taker can initiate a call back, verbally ask the other call takers to enter the incident for them, or ask a Supervisor for assistance.

Unfortunately, in this incident the dispatcher did not complete a manual card because she thought the information was saved to CAD.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Standard operating procedures will be updated immediately to require the call taker to confirm data was entered successfully into CAD.

11. Did the second call attendant actually make a documented report of a computer and system failure at the time?

ANSWER: No documented report was made of the system failure. However, the attendant notified her supervisor immediately who notified the ECS IT support team. They responded within 15 minutes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

- a. Standard operating procedures will be updated to ensure urgency is elevated when multiple calls from the same number are received and to also ensure that all tools are 100% functional and utilized at all times.
- b. We will also be utilizing the ServiceNow technical support management system to track all system failures.

12. Or even that day?

ANSWER: Yes. The ECS IT support team was notified that day.

13. Are outages of 911 call-ins that are dropped supposed to be documented spontaneously?

ANSWER: Dropped 911 calls (i.e. abandoned, inadvertent calls) are not spontaneously documented by the call takers. They are automatically logged by the 911 phone system. Standard operating procedure requires that all dropped 911 calls are called back by the call takers. Majority of dropped calls are not due to emergency communication system failing. Most are due to user error, accidentally calling 911, people changing their minds after calling and are afraid to speak with the police. Many times, the situation resolves itself or there is bad cellular service due to location or coverage. However, the majority of dropped calls are resolved by a call back to the number.

14. If the system fails, is there someone at 911 Center to give emergency assistance?

ANSWER: In the event of a technical problem the 911 center's IT staff are notified by a Supervisor and respond immediately. IT staff are onsite Mon – Fri during business hours and on-call after hours. In the event of a catastrophic 911 system failure the City's 911 calls are automatically routed to Hamilton County.

15. The media reports that call attendant #1 was given a 90% acceptable rating of her conduct relating to this 911 call for help. Is this true?

ANSWER: Yes. Call taker #1 received a 90% rating on her handling of the first call based upon current QA requirements.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Following the tragic outcome of this incident the City's 911 call quality review procedures will be amended to reflect the impact of technological problems (i.e. equipment volume levels, use of playback when caller volume is low, etc.), the delivery of critical information to first responders, and the overall call outcome.

16. Did the high marks in that evaluation include any additional rating for leaving out key information that Kyle provided in his call such as "the banging, screaming, and the knocking that could be heard on the call?"

ANSWER: The call taker in this instance did not hear those sounds. Had she heard them she would have typed them into the system and provided that additional information to the officers. The reviewer was able to hear the information on the digital recording which is what resulted in the low rating in this area. This indicates that the call taker's call volume may have been turned down.

The call taker received negative marks in the Call Processing category for missing pertinent information. The following comments were listed on the QA review information:

ECS Training Manual - III.Telephone Procedure-C. Answering the Telephone Guidelines 3.Be prepared. Be ready to write down or enter into CAD all of the pertinent information. If you answer a non-emergency line and the caller is reporting an emergency, it may catch you off guard. 6.Use common courtesy. The most courteous thing you can do with a caller is to actively listen.
Five Functions for Effective Call taking 1.Listening – the job is mostly verbal communication between the public and you or the public safety units and you. It is an essential skill. Not only must you listen to the words of your caller, you must listen to their tone of voice, background noise, signs of struggle, etc. The two types of listening skills required are: a)Content - what is actually being said. b)Context - what the caller is not saying, but what is implied or is determined from the background noise.

Standard Operating Procedure #210 re: Call Taking Guidelines on Interviews and Incident Mask Completion, states 1. Conduct an efficient and thorough interview for each call received and be mindful to obtain all necessary information. 2. Input clear and concise information that is easily understandable by dispatchers and responders.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Call takers will receive additional training related to adjusting their call volumes up and down based upon the need of the call. They will also be asked to flag their supervisors for immediate

assistance in obtaining critical information. They will also be trained to review the audio immediately, particularly when there are repeat calls from a number.

17. What about the phrases of "I'm going to die here," and "I'm in need of desperate help?"

ANSWER: The call taker in this instance did not hear those phrases. Had she heard them she would have typed them into the system and provided that additional information to the officers. The reviewer was able to hear the information on the digital recording which is what resulted in the low rating in this area. This indicates that the call takers call volume may have been turned down.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Call takers will receive additional training related to adjusting their call volumes up and down and reviewing digital recording immediately based upon the need of the call. They will also be asked to flag their supervisors for assistance in obtaining critical information.

18. Are leaving out any of those items considered "acceptable"?

ANSWER: No. As stated above, the call taker received negative marks in the Call Processing category for missing pertinent information. Leaving this information out is not acceptable and the omission was noted on the QA and discussed with the employee. The total score was on the overall handling of the incident.

The Quality Assurance call information is graded on 24 separate questions. Each question is assigned a point value. The total points of all questions are added to give a final score for the call.

CORRECTION ACTION TAKEN:

Following the subsequent grading of this call, the Quality Assurance program is now under complete review. This review will be complete by the end of this summer. This review will focus upon the call takers utilization of technology, TTY, call volume, review of digital recording, etc.

19. I understand the second call attendant knew at the time that of the failure that this was a follow up 911 call. Is this true?

ANSWER: Yes. The second call taker was alerted by the 911 phone system that this was a repeat caller based on the phone number, and attempted to view the first call taker's created incident in the Computer Aided Dispatch system. Due to the connectivity issue referenced previously we cannot confirm that she was able to successfully view the incident details of the previous call.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

We will be updating standard operating procedures to heighten awareness and urgency when repeat calls are made from the same number.

20. If so, she would have known what the first call attendant knew?

ANSWER: Yes. Had the connectivity issue not occurred the second operator would have known the information (text) that was entered on the first CAD incident. However, the second call taker indicated that her Computer Aided Dispatch system screen froze while attempting to view the incident and enter additional information. Therefore, we cannot confirm exactly what was displayed when the previous incident was viewed.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Fixing and improving technology is crucial, to help mitigate the risk of similar issues, all of the 911 center's critical systems are currently being analyzed with vendor assistance to ensure our technology is stable and performing optimally.

21. Since the second call is very high quality that can be heard even today on playback, is the recording only available after there is no time to respond to an emergency situation? When did the call audio actually come available?

ANSWER: The call audio was immediately available. The call taker did not hear anything and initially thought it was a silent call. As such, the TTY was enabled in case it was a hearing impaired caller. Unfortunately, because the second call taker did not initially hear anything, she didn't go back and listen to the recorded audio.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

The entire TTY procedure is being reviewed to ensure that activation of TTY does not prevent call takers from hearing audio. Procedures will be updated immediately such that if the TTY is activated the call taker will go back to ensure volume is adjusted properly. They will also be trained to review the digital recording immediately, particularly when there are repeat calls from a number.

22. Is one of the reasons the documented report is to be made at the time of the failure to further ensure it actually occurred?

ANSWER: A documented report of a system failure would serve to notify the IT staff and the system vendors of what occurred, how long it lasted, and when the system failure started so that the cause of the failure can be resolved.

23. And specifically how long it lasted?

ANSWER: Yes

24. And exactly what time it started?

ANSWER: Yes

25. Has any system failure actually been verified by anyone other than the call attendant?

ANSWER: The IT staff confirmed that multiple Computer Aided Dispatch workstations experienced performance problems throughout the day. The second call taker's workstation experienced confirmed problems around the time of Kyle's call. Below are the error messages from the event logs on the second call takers workstation:

15:24	Windows Event on CAD PC07	From Windows event log on PC07 CAD computer: "Windows detected your registry file is still in use by other applications or services. The file will be unloaded now. The applications or services that hold your registry file may not function properly afterwards."
15:25	Windows Event on CAD PC07	From Windows event log on PC07 CAD computer: "The sites where the computer resides cannot be resolved. Check that the subnets in your network are configured correctly in Active Directory Domain Services and that each site is configured with the appropriate subnet."
15:28	Windows Event on	From Windows event log on PC07 CAD computer: "Message Queuing could not resolve the name 'escscadrep1' to an IP address. Try to ping the recipient computer, and check this computer's DNS settings. This event is logged at

	CAD PC07	most once per 600 seconds. To change this setting, set \HKLM\Software\Microsoft\MSMQ\Parameters\Event2184 registry value to desired time in seconds.”
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26. Any repairs made?

ANSWER: Yes. IT staff responded and did a second level of troubleshooting and repair.

27. Is it standard protocol that the first responders don't get out of their vehicle to check for a victim when dispatch gives them detail of someone, "stuck in a vehicle" (van in this case)?

ANSWER: There is no standard protocol dictating how an officer should respond to a report of someone stuck in a vehicle. Further, there is no standard protocol for when an officer should investigate on-foot or in-vehicle. It is expectation that when information is relayed that an individual is stuck in a vehicle and not immediately observable that officers will leave the vehicle and visually inspect the area when provided with the right information on the proximity of the caller.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

- a. Standard operating procedures will be revised and officers will be trained that if they are not able to locate the caller they will request additional GPS coordinates from the dispatcher in order to get more accurate information on the location of the caller.
- b. We are also preparing to update the software and improve the in-car mapping capabilities such that officers will see a more detailed map in their vehicles by this summer. This will help officers to get a more accurate location of the caller.
 - While we wait for the software update, CPD IT is currently field testing an application for use in vehicles that will provide enhanced mapping capabilities for officers. This will help officers get a more accurate location of the caller.
- c. Items a. and b. from above, will greatly enhance the capabilities of officers to get a more accurate location of the caller, which in those instances where the call is related to someone stuck in a vehicle and the individual is not immediately observable, officers will receive needed information to narrow search parameters. Given greater location tracking resources that more precisely narrows the search parameters, the expectation will be that officers will leave the vehicle and visually inspect the area when they are within appropriate distance to the location of the caller according to coordinates.
- d. We are also evaluating purchasing an Automatic Police Vehicle Location and GPS based dispatching system for every Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) vehicle. This option would have allowed the dispatcher to have known the exact location of the CPD officers in relation to the location of the caller. If the officers had the capability they would have been able to get detailed driving directions to the exact location of the caller.

28. In the event a first responder makes a comment "I didn't expect we would find anything" is it safe to assume that the level of urgency they use during the response cycle is somewhat low?

ANSWER: The level of urgency for any call for service is dictated by the coding of the call and the facts conveyed. The level of urgency of the officers is reviewed by the actions they took when responding to and managing the incident. Here, the officers arrived on scene within three minutes of dispatch and searched multiple lots looking for the woman stuck in the van. When unable to locate the woman in the van, one of the officers attempted to call back the phone number listed

in the run using his personal cell phone. Finally, the officers located and spoke with another law enforcement officer to gather and share information regarding the run. Unable to locate the situation described by ECC in the run or anyone else needing help, the officers closed the run.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

- a. Standard operating procedures will be revised and officers will be trained that if they are not able to locate the caller they will request additional coordinates from the dispatcher.
 - b. We are also preparing to update the software and improve the in-car mapping capabilities such that officers will see a more detailed map in their vehicles by this summer. This will help officers to get a more accurate location of the caller.
 - While we wait for the software update, CPD IT is currently field testing an application for use in vehicles that will provide enhanced mapping capabilities for officers. This will help officers get a more accurate location of the caller.
 - c. Items a. and b. from above, will greatly enhance the capabilities of officers to get a more accurate location of the caller, which in those instances where the call is related to someone stuck in a vehicle and the individual is not immediately observable, officers will receive needed information to narrow search parameters. Given greater location tracking resources that more precisely narrows the search parameters, the expectation will be that officers will leave the vehicle and visually inspect the area when they are within appropriate distance to the location of the caller according to coordinates.
 - d. We are also evaluating purchasing Automatic Vehicle Location and GPS based dispatching system for every Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) vehicle. This option would have allowed the dispatcher to have known the exact location of the CPD officers in relation to the location of the caller. If the officers had the capability they would have been able to get detailed driving directions to the exact location of the caller.
29. Do first responders have the authority to conclude that a call is a prank or do they treat every call with the same level of seriousness?

ANSWER: The nature of police work is that they respond to calls and provide an assessment of situations and related actions based upon their best professional judgement and training. There could be, and have been instances where prank calls are received, and the officers have determined as such after responding to and assessing the situation. Call takers and dispatchers do not have the authority to conclude a call is a prank and all calls are treated with the same level of seriousness. All dropped (abandoned) 911 calls are required to be called back.

30. The dispatch was put out for “unknown trouble” at 3:22 on 4/10. Is the specific detail from the 911 caller provided to the first responder if the call is classified as “unknown trouble?”

ANSWER: Yes, the specific details from the 911 caller are provided to the first responder even if the call is coded as unknown trouble. The “unknown trouble” call code represents a call type with factors that are not able to be confirmed by the call taker for the responding officer. All information received by the call taker from the caller is entered into the CAD incident and sent in shortened text form to the responding officers’ Mobile Data Computer after the unit is notified and dispatched via radio. Below is the text of the information sent to the officers Mobile Data Computer:

15:22:25	Radio	District 2 dispatcher contacts Car 2232 by radio, dispatches to "unknown trouble" at 5471 Red Bank Rd described "It's a female caller, call taker could hear a female yelling help me I'm stuck inside my van, I'm in Seven Hills parking lot. We got this location from the phase 2. Complainant kept stating she was unable to hear the call-taker. She hung up, voicemail on callback. She's possibly in the thrift store parking lot across from the school there, 5471 Red Bank, copy?"
15:23	MDC	1 st Call Dispatcher (CPD1143/22747) 15:23 Data received from CAD on MDC: {1} PCO heard female stating "Help Help I'm stuck inside my van, I'm in Seven Hills Parking Lot (Location from Phase 2), Comp kept stating she was unable to hear PCO, Caller, hung up, VM on call back – number provided to officers {2} Poss in thrift store parking lot across from school.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Following the outcome of this incident, the ECS code for "unknown trouble" will be re-evaluated to consider adding additional subcategories that more specifically relate to this incident. For example, adding an additional subcode to unknown trouble to send both fire and police resources to the scene of future similar incidents. When there are multiple calls from the same number and it appears from the available data that there may be a medical emergency, Fire/EMS will be dispatched to the scene. Fire vehicles have more equipment to extract individuals trapped in vehicles. Fire vehicles are also currently equipped with Automatic Vehicle Location and GPS based dispatching system. This option would have allowed the dispatcher to have known the exact location of the CFD vehicle in relation to the location of the caller. This information gives first responders the capability to get detailed driving directions to the exact location of the caller.

We are also evaluating purchasing Automatic Vehicle Location and GPS based dispatching system for every Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) vehicle.

31. The call documentation calls out details "stuck in van outside of 7 hills parking lot," "help, Banging, I'm gonna die here. Would this be something other than unknown trouble and if so why not?"

ANSWER: The call code of "unknown trouble," is a general call type description for an incident that is received without certainty and dispatchers are unable to confirm pertinent information, such as location and nature of the emergency. The first responder will typically focus more on the incident details than the call type in the event of an unknown trouble run.

The call was dispatched as a CODE 2, which is the second highest response urgency below an officer involved shooting.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Following the outcome of this incident, the ECS code for "unknown trouble" will be re-evaluated to consider adding additional subcategories that more specifically relate to this incident. For example, adding an additional subcode to unknown trouble to send both fire and police resources to the scene of future similar incidents.

32. When a call taker hears a phrase in a call that references something about dying does that in any way change the classification level of the call?

ANSWER: Had the call taker heard the phrase about dying she could have changed the classification priority of the call. Unfortunately, it appears that this information was not heard by the call taker.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

Standard operating procedures regarding the use of TTY, adjusting call volumes and double-checking availability of audio will be reviewed and revised effective immediately. When there are multiple calls from the same number and it appears from the available data that there may be a medical emergency, Fire/EMS will be dispatched to the scene. The responding officers will also be trained to request additional location data.

33. Is it true the 2nd call was terminated (term “disconnected by agent”) by Amber Smith after 2:43? If so why?

ANSWER: Yes. The time stamp on the call log for the 2nd call is 15:34:59. A TTY session was initiated by the call taker at 15:35:21 because she could not hear anything. That session lasted until 15:37:42, after which the session and the call were released, disconnected, terminated, and logged as completed by the system per policy. These actions are necessary to ensure the highest number of call takers available to continue taking emergency calls.

CORRECTIVE ACTION TAKEN:

The policy related to the use of the TTY will be revamped. The current thinking is that after a certain period of time the call taker will review their call volume and ensure there is no audio available. When there are multiple calls from the same number and it appears from the available data that there may be a medical emergency, Fire/EMS will be dispatched to the scene. The responding officers will also be trained to request additional location data.

Conclusion

As a City government we remain committed to ensuring ECC works for everyone, every time it is needed. We owe it to the general public, and especially the Plush family, to get this right. On behalf of the City Administration we continue to keep the Plush family in our prayers during this difficult time.