

# APCO

## MEMBER CHAPTER SERVICES Committee

Happy Holidays  
from the MCSC



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## An 'Unpleasant Casino:' the Effects of High Priority, Low Frequency Calls

By Margie Moulin—From PSC Magazine/Digital

**W**orking in an emergency communications center, you already know that the worst call your center has ever taken is just one ring away. Many of us have policies, guidelines and protocols to help walk us through the process when a high risk, low frequency call comes into the center, whether it's a natural disaster or a human-

caused tragic event. We train for these, and we focus on the details of how to follow the process quickly and correctly to ensure help gets to where it is needed in the most expeditious manner.

But are we prepared for what it does to us as we wait for that call? Or even what it is doing to us if we never take that call at all?

As I began this article, I reached out to one of my own department counselors, Elissa Denton,

MSW, CSWA, to ask her about the impact of these calls on our profession. Elissa is a counselor specializing in public safety professionals and their families. During our conversation, Elissa described how she likened dispatch centers to an "unpleasant casino." She explained it to me this way. "Dispatch is a bit like an unpleasant casino. There are lots of screens and lights, it's open 24 hours and it can be a time warp. Every time the phone rings, it's like pulling a slot lever, except the potential of winning big is replaced with the potential of a really bad call."

How do you prepare yourself, (or your employees if you are in management) for that time in the "casino" prior to the call?

Consider this: people drawn to this career typically want to be really good at their jobs. You want to be the best and to feel confident and competent. When a high risk/high priority call comes in, that confidence can be shaken, particularly if you lack

**"Because high priority calls are infrequent, it is hard to develop a sense of competence and confidence, contributing further to stress and anticipatory anxiety. This can become a never-ending cycle".**

training or do not feel competent in your skills. This can also lead to questioning what *could* happen, even before the call ever comes in.

"Anticipatory anxiety" is a term for worrying about something before it happens. This state of anxiety can become chronic and add even more stress since a person is always waiting for the "what if." Lack of experience, or lack of training and preparedness, can leave otherwise competent people doubting their abilities and focusing instead on all that could go wrong.

Because high priority calls are infrequent, it is hard to develop a sense of competence and confidence, contributing further to stress and anticipatory anxiety. This can become a never-ending cycle.

This is where training and practice can be helpful. It is important that the training environment not focus on fears or perfection but instead focus on building both competence and confidence. The better we train, the more confident and competent we become, reducing stress, keeping us healthier and adding to job satisfaction. Practicing high priority events without the "real world stress" provides this opportunity in a safe environment, further increasing competence and confidence.

One final thought. Sometimes we focus solely on the negative aftermath of high priority/low frequency calls for individuals (i.e. trauma), but it's important to recognize the sense of confidence that can come after difficult calls as well. Post-traumatic growth is when our abilities or strengths improve following and due to a traumatic event. Recognize the things you did well, acknowledge how the training helped, and use that success as a reminder to pursue further training. If you are in management, watch for these events, and be sure to recognize and acknowledge a job well done.

A big thank you to everyone, whatever your position, working in the "unpleasant casinos" out there. I wish for you many stress-free hours with your loved ones throughout the holiday season.

*Margie Moulin, RPL, CPE, is the Director of Emergency Communications of Southern Oregon (ECISO) in Jackson County, Oregon. She has worked in public safety communications for 30 years and is proud to serve as President, part of the leadership team of APCO International.*

**Free Webinar**

**ONGOING RECOGNITION PROGRAMS FOR MEMBERS 2020**

 How to use your website and social media to establish ongoing recognition

★ The Challenges of Our Time

★ Even during the Covid-19 Outbreak

Made with PosterMyWall.com



**APCO**  
International

Leaders in Public Safety Communications®

**Zach Dykes**  
APCO Missouri Chapter

**Wednesday  
December  
9th**

**2:00-3:00  
EST**

## Chapter Officer Toolkit

APCO Membership Services have been working diligently to update the Chapter Officer Toolkit. The Toolkit is located in the Membership section on the APCO International Web Page. The Toolkit contains resources for chapters. This month we want to highlight a new resource for virtual conferences.

Under the Chapter Events Tab we have added the information from the Chapter Leader Workshop last month. The presentation given by Jennifer Kirkland of the Colorado Chapter, as well as the 2020 Colorado APCO/NENA Virtual Conference Guide have been posted. We thank the Colorado Chapter for being so willing to share their after action review.

The last resource in this category is the ability to send promotional items directly to your attendees. The Chapter can choose and personalize promotional items to be sent to each of their virtual attendees.

Have you had a virtual conference or event? We would love to share your experiences with other chapters. Share your information with your Member and Chapter Services Representative for publication.





## Membership Information

Member Type	11/1/2019	11/1/2020
Associate Members	3,033	2,602
Full Members	4,897	4,592
Full Group Members	6,750	8,302
Online Group Members	19,714	19,198
Commercial Members	539	509
Commercial Group Members	295	219
<b>Total Number of Members</b>	<b>35,228</b>	<b>35,422</b>
Total Number of Group Agencies	1,1356	1,277
Commercial Groups	55	45



### APCO Membership Renewal

Your membership will expire on December 31st. Log into [myapcointl.org](https://myapcointl.org), click on My Invoices, to print or pay your invoice.

## Share Your Best Ideas With Thousands of Your Peers

APCO invites you to submit a proposal to be considered for a one-hour presentation within our [APCO 2021](#) professional development program. Our goal is to offer relevant, timely education and training to our attendees to help them do their jobs more effectively and make their agencies more successful. We are seeking innovative, engaging, inspiring and informative presentations that fall within one of our [ten educational tracks](#). Join us for APCO 2021, taking place August 15-18 in San Antonio, TX.

[Submit proposal](#)

Submissions are due by 12 midnight (ET) on December 18, 2020.

## Commercial Advisory Council (CAC)

The APCO Chapter Commercial Advisory Member (CCAM) provides a liaison between the Chapter's Board of Officers and vendors. Additionally, the CCAM acts as a liaison with the APCO Commercial Advisory Committee (CAC). Relationships are invaluable in this industry, and with the added connectivity and insight provided by involvement at this level, the CCAM is a crucial link. Financial support through sponsorship of meetings, training sessions, and chapter conferences are also key to a Chapter's success and viability, especially in these times. The CCAM can provide a more direct chain of communication with Commercial Members of the Chapter who may be in a position to provide this and other types of support. In these ways, as well as continued networking opportunities, APCO encourages each Chapter to embrace involvement across its entire membership base.

Within the CAC is the CCAM Liaison subcommittee that interfaces with the CCAMs across the Association. This interaction is meant to help encourage commercial involvement at the chapter level; share ideas as to what is working and what is not working as well as find out how we can assist as an advisory council and spark energy within the industry.

If not already contacted, a member of the CAC CCAM Liaison subcommittee will be in touch with your Chapter President, Vice President, and/or CCAM about what is working within your chapter and how the CAC can help to support your efforts in our advisory role within APCO.

If you would like to discuss anything regarding CCAM activities, feel free to contact Bill Behar at (940) 231-0655 or [billb@comelectronics.com](mailto:billb@comelectronics.com) or Tina Jackson at (858) 484-8502 or [tina.jackson@thespectrumfirm.com](mailto:tina.jackson@thespectrumfirm.com)





## From the Idaho Chapter



### **2020 Idaho APCO NENA Outstanding Achievement Award Winners**

**Telecommunicator of the Year– DeLisa Orren  
Idaho State Police Meridian.**



**Trainer of the Year– Trisha Marosi–  
Idaho State Police Coeur d'Alene**



**Communication Center Director of the Year–  
Robin Stellers– Ada County**



**Line Supervisor of the Year–  
Linda Lane Kootenai County**



**Radio Frequency/Information Technologist of  
the Year– Joseph Sevenans– Ada County**



**IT/RF Team of the Year– Alan Mallory  
and Collin McRoy Kootenai County**



## From the Washington State Chapter



Connie Tolson, Valley Communications Center

Telecommunicator of the Year for Sustained Performance



Pam Schilling, Klickitat County

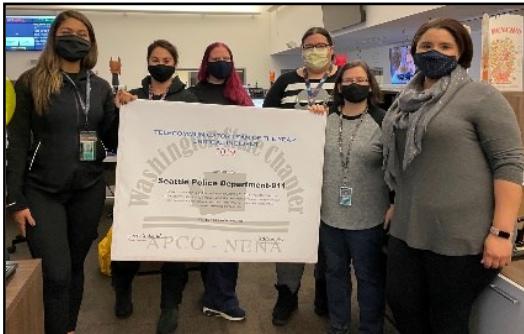
Telecommunicator of the Year for Critical Incident



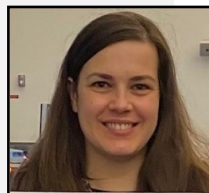
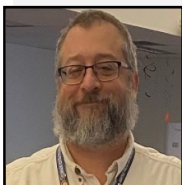
Chad Bennett, Kitsap 911

Technician of the Year

Team of the Year, City of Seattle



CONGRATULATIONS  
to our Annual Award  
Winners



Team: Mikaila McLane, Traci Mikolasy,  
Ashley Shager, Cat Hernandez, Megan  
Marocco-Spearman, Sara Owens, Tom  
Coonradt, Cheryl Palyu, Joel Espazara, Cherie  
Thomas, Chelsea Rigger, Kristin Frederick,  
Raz Collins and Kyla Gibson



## Upcoming Conferences 2021

### North Carolina State Conference & APCO WRC—Idaho



# Save The Dates!

## NC Public-Safety Communications Conference MAY 2-5, 2021

Wilmington Convention Center | Wilmington, NC

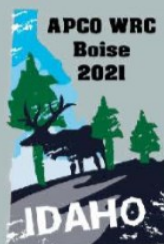


North  
Carolina  
APCO



NORTH  
CAROLINA  
NENA  
9-1-1

[NC911CONFERENCE.COM](https://www.nc911conference.com)



## Registration is NOW Open!

Join us in Boise, Idaho March 31st-April 2nd, 2021.

We are busy planning excellent training tracks and events.

Do not miss out on the Early Bird Pricing! APCO Members see  
PSCONNECT for discount code. <https://www.2021apcowrc.org>

Special Room Rates \$137 will go fast:

[APCO Western Region Conference Block](#)

Call for Papers will be out shortly. Do know a  
great speaker? Send them our way.

Travel discounts also available on our website.

Questions? [IdahoAPCOWRC@gmail.com](mailto:IdahoAPCOWRC@gmail.com)



## APCO Announcements

### Upcoming Webinar

[The FirstNet App Ecosystem – A Powerful Way to Connect with First Responders in the Field](#)

December 9 | 1:00 p.m. ET

Sponsored by FirstNet, Built With AT&T

[Register](#)

### Illuminations Program – New Topics Added Through 2021

Earn CDEs and stay up to date on relevant topics with [APCO's Illuminations Program](#). Register now for one of three online training tracks: [EMD](#), [CTO](#) or [General Illuminations](#) and enjoy a year-long subscription service. Start your subscription now or register ahead for courses beginning in 2021. [Learn more](#)

### APCO Guidecards and Guidecard Software

APCO offers [fire](#), [law enforcement](#) and [EMD guidecards](#) that are customizable with protocols and response codes specific to your agency. And if you haven't seen it yet, [schedule a demo](#) of [APCO IntelliComm](#), guidecard software that is

### Final Approval of Two Standards: Best Practices for the Use of Social Media and Key Performance Indicators

APCO received final approval from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) on October 30, 2020, for two American National Standards (ANS). Best Practices for the Use of Social Media in Public Safety Communications is a revision of a current standard, and Key Performance Indicators for Public Safety Communications Personnel is a newly created standard. [Continue](#)

### Current Executive Search – Cass County

APCO Executive Search is currently conducting a search for an Executive Director for Cass County Emergency Service

### Important Dates Coming Up

- CPE scholarship application period is January 1 - February 15
- General scholarship application period is January 1 - March 31
- PSAP Award nominations open January 1, 2020  
Last day to [declare APCO International officer candidacy](#) is January 15, 2020  
[Life Member nomination](#) deadline is February 1, 2020

[Committee sign-ups](#) begin February 1, 2020

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