



Fire and Police Commission

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Memorandum

To: Honorable Members of the Milwaukee Common Council

From: Leon W. Todd, Executive Director
Barbara Cooley, Research and Policy Analyst

Date: October 9, 2023

RE: MPD and MFD Response Times

This memorandum is a response to a Public Safety and Health Committee request for information regarding response times from emergency 911 call to dispatch and from dispatch to appearance on scene. Data was provided by MPD's Office of Management, Analysis and Planning (OMAP) and by MFD's Support Bureau.

MPD RESPONSE TIMES

MPD Priority Categories

Until the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is operational, MPD categorizes calls as follows:

Priority E (Emergency) is for emergency situations and non-pre-emptable assignments (e.g., assists, officer down, park and walks). [A Park and Walk is when the officer notifies dispatch they are on foot patrol outside of their squad and are walking in a specific area.]

Priority One calls are for situations involving life-threatening conditions:

1. All calls for service regarding life threatening incidents that:
 - a. Are in progress;
 - b. Are not in progress, but the suspect is on the scene;
 - c. Just occurred (5 minutes or less) and it is reasonable to assume that the suspect may still be in the area (e.g., armed robbery just occurred, burglary - unknown if suspect(s) are still on the scene).

2. Any incident of an emergency nature that threatens human life or great bodily harm (e.g., gas leak, explosive device, sniper).
3. Any criminal incident to which an ambulance is sent (e.g., battery, sexual assault).
4. All gunshot detections via ShotSpotter (verified detections will be immediately broadcast upon receipt by dispatchers on the radio talk group of the district involved).

Priority Two calls are for situations involving major property threatening conditions, accidents involving injury, or incidents reporting a non-specific complaint of injury or illness not as a result of criminal actions:

1. All calls for service regarding major property threatening incidents that:
 - a. Are in progress (e.g., entry to autos in progress);
 - b. Are not in progress, but the suspect is on the scene;
 - c. Just occurred (5 minutes or less) and it is reasonable to assume that the suspect may still be in the area (e.g., theft that just occurred).
2. Any felony or misdemeanor which did not involve life threatening conditions, that recently occurred and the logical probability exists that the suspect is near the scene, in the area, or a high probability of apprehension exists (e.g., burglar alarm, drug dealing, entry to auto).
 - a. Accidents involving injury (e.g., personal injury traffic accidents, industrial accidents)
 - b. Any non-specific complaint of personal injury or illness not as a result of criminal actions (e.g., injured/sick person, check the welfare).

Priority Three calls are for situations not requiring an immediate response to prevent personal injury or property loss/damage and situations indicating criminal activity for report purposes only:

1. Any incident that does not require immediate police response to prevent personal injury or property loss/damage (e.g., crash – property damage only, trouble with subject, shoplifter).
2. Any recent incident wherein the preservation of evidence or protection of the crime scene is not of an urgent nature (e.g., property damage, entry, battery).
3. Any felony or misdemeanor not in progress that does not require immediate investigation (e.g., theft, violation of restraining order).

Priority Four calls are for situations of a minor nature that do not fall within the above priority categories.

1. Any incident that involves an apparent minor violation or offense (e.g., noise nuisance).
2. Any incident that involves non-criminal police services (e.g., escort, notifications).

- Any incident of a minor nature, not in progress, that requires follow-up investigation (e.g., recovered property, 911 abuse).

Priority Five Differential Police Response¹ (DPR) is any call serviced by a DPR officer with no squad response.

Callers referred to DPR operations will have their call entered and documented by the DPR officer receiving the call.

Pending calls for service referred to DPR operations will be changed to a priority 5 if DPR is able to service the call with no squad response. If the DPR referred call is determined to require a squad response, it will be classified as a priority E – 4, depending upon the circumstances of the call.

Priority Six calls involve 911 abuse with no squad response. This includes any 1801 – 911 abuse call for service received through the Technical Communications Division that does not require a squad response.

OMAP issues quarterly reports of response times from call received to presence on scene for Priorities One through Four and E. The results for the first six months of 2023 are as follows:²

Dispatched Calls for Service	Jan-Mar 2023		Apr-June 2023	
	Priority	Total	Median (mins:secs)	Total
1	16,482	11:02	20,135	11:11
2	22,750	18:57	26,140	20:31
3	18,480	39:23	20,342	48:57
4	3,763	23:55	4,491	28:11
E	18	09:43	18	07:26
Total	61,493	18:52	71,126	19:46

¹From the DPR Standard Operating Instruction (SOI): The purpose of the Differential Police Response (DPR) program is to eliminate squad responses to situations, which do not require the immediate presence of an officer. This allows officers to remain in the areas to which they are assigned and to engage in pro-active policing activities. Selected non-emergency calls will be serviced by telephone intervention generally by limited duty police officers.

In summary, this program provides an additional method of providing police service and intervention into problems reported by callers by supplementing already existing department policies and practices. It is not the intention of the DPR program to in any way lessen the law enforcement services provided by the Milwaukee Police Department. The DPR officer is an intervener, much the same as a field officer is, but with different tools (internet access, telephone, etc.).

² Data obtained from Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD). Dispatched calls for service exclude: Priority 5 calls, misdials, training units and training calls, calls that have no primary unit assigned, and calls with a disposition of: Cancelled, Differential Response Unit (DRU), License Investigation Unit (LIU), Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office (MCSO), or Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD).

Additional exclusions are made to calculate response times, which results in fewer dispatched calls for service. Response times exclude any dispatched calls for service with a negative response time (due to daylight savings), calls with a response time greater than 24 hours, and calls that do not contain an on scene time.

Created Date/Time represents the moment a 911 call is made to and received by Technical Communications Division (TCD).

MPD PRIORITY ONE CALL-TO-DISPATCH AND DISPATCH-TO-ON SCENE RESULTS

The data analyzed was taken from the CAD system and consists of 102,705 Priority One calls made during the eighteen-month period from January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Calls as defined in Footnote 2 above were excluded.

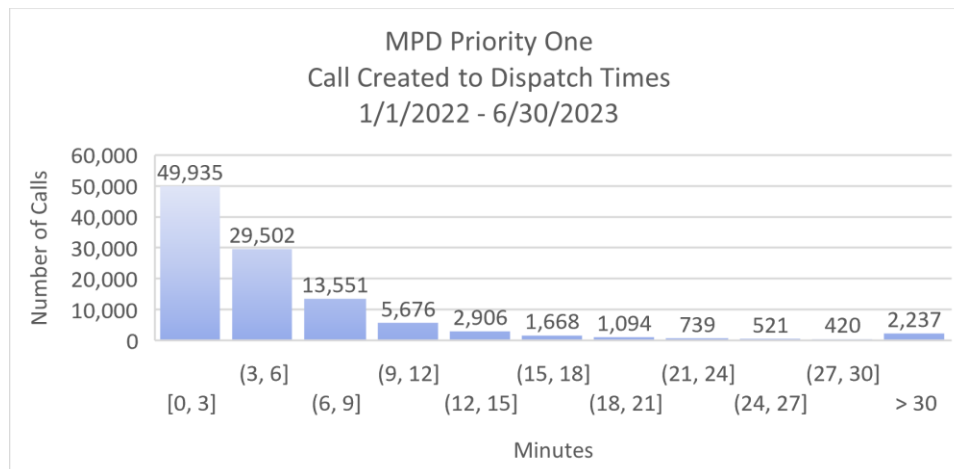
In addition, a considerable number of calls (5,200 of the total 108,250 in the 18-month period) are recorded as taking zero seconds from call created to on scene. According to OMAP, “This may be due to the fact the squad went out with the call for service and were then immediately dispatched (e.g., they may have been flagged down by the caller, they were on scene immediately, they observed the crime in progress, or they saw the call for service pending and went out with it right away before being dispatched).” As the intent of this report is to monitor the full call-to-dispatch-to-on-scene process, these have been excluded as well, leaving a total of 107,894 calls in this analysis.

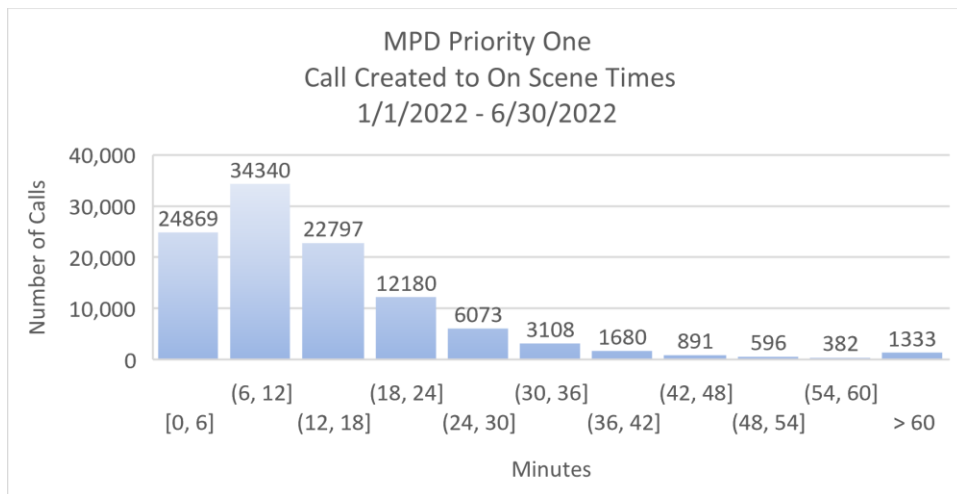
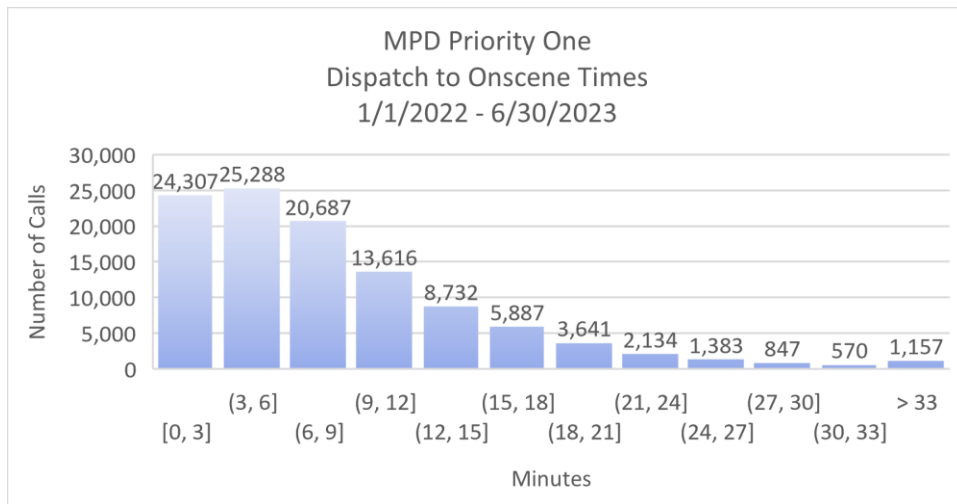
Average call times for the 18 months studied are as follows:

Average Priority One Response Times January 2022 - June 2023		
	Mean	Median
Call to Dispatch	8 minutes	3.5 minutes
Dispatch to On Scene	9 minutes	7 minutes
Call to On Scene	15 minutes	12 minutes

The median (at which the number of smaller and larger results is equal) is lower than the mean (average) and is a more meaningful measure of response times generally because the few extremely high results skew the mean upward. Note that the call to on scene mean and median times are not equal to the sums of means and medians for call to dispatch and dispatch to on scene. This results from omitting zero times from each. Some calls have a zero call to dispatch time, some have a zero time for dispatch to on scene, and some have zero time from call to on scene. The number of calls remaining in each category differs, so the categories are not additive.

The distribution of response times is as shown in the histograms below. The notation (a,b] on the intervals can be read “from a to b”.





By police district the average (mean and median) priority one response times are:

Call to Dispatch Response Times January 2022 – June 2023			
District	Total Calls	Mean (minutes)	Median (minutes)
1	4,141	6	4
2	13,398	5	4
3	21,055	6	6
4	14,551	8	5
5	22,794	5	3
6	5,232	6	4
7	21,472	6	3
Overall	102,643	6	4

Dispatch to On Scene Response Times

January 2022 – June 2023

District	Total Calls	Mean (minutes)	Median (minutes)
1	4,064	8	6
2	13,185	8	6
3	20,624	9	7
4	14,423	11	9
5	22,159	8	6
6	5,201	9	7
7	21,099	9	7
Overall	100,755	9	7

Call to On Scene Response Times

January 2022 – June 2023

District	Total Calls	Mean (minutes)	Median (minutes)
1	4,738	12	11
2	14,148	12	10
3	21,888	14	11
4	15,353	18	15
5	23,758	13	10
6	5,650	13	12
7	22,359	14	12
Overall	107,894	14	12

MFD RESPONSE TIMES

MFD categorizes its calls for service by type of call rather than by priority. Calls analyzed here are grouped as All Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Building Fires (first vehicle on scene), and All Fires (first vehicle on scene). For the period studied there were 190,444 EMS calls for service, 924 1st alarm building fire calls for service, and 3,820 total fire calls for service including all alarm building fires.

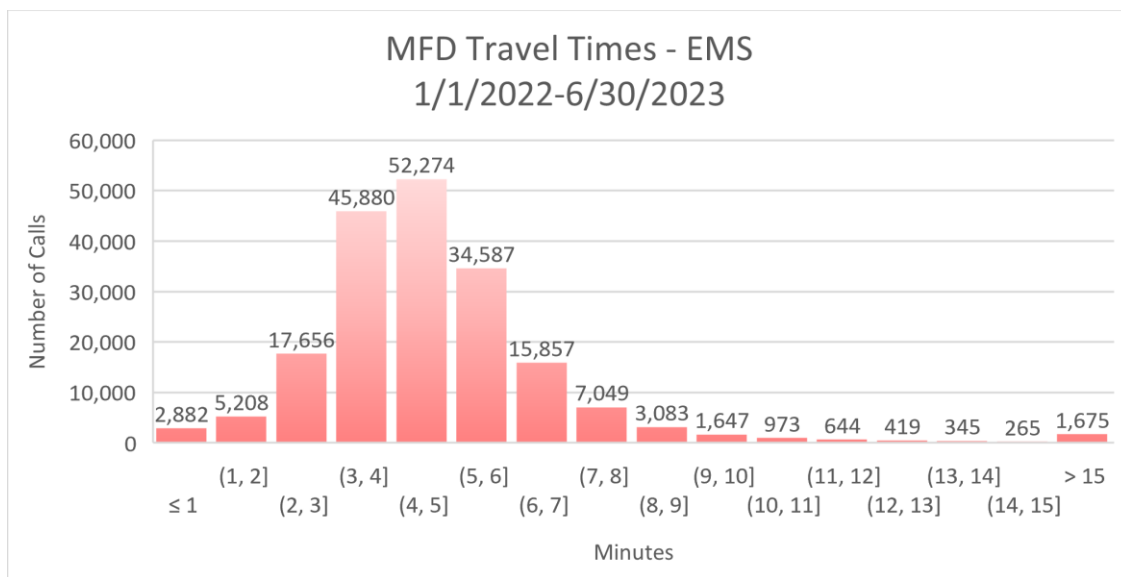
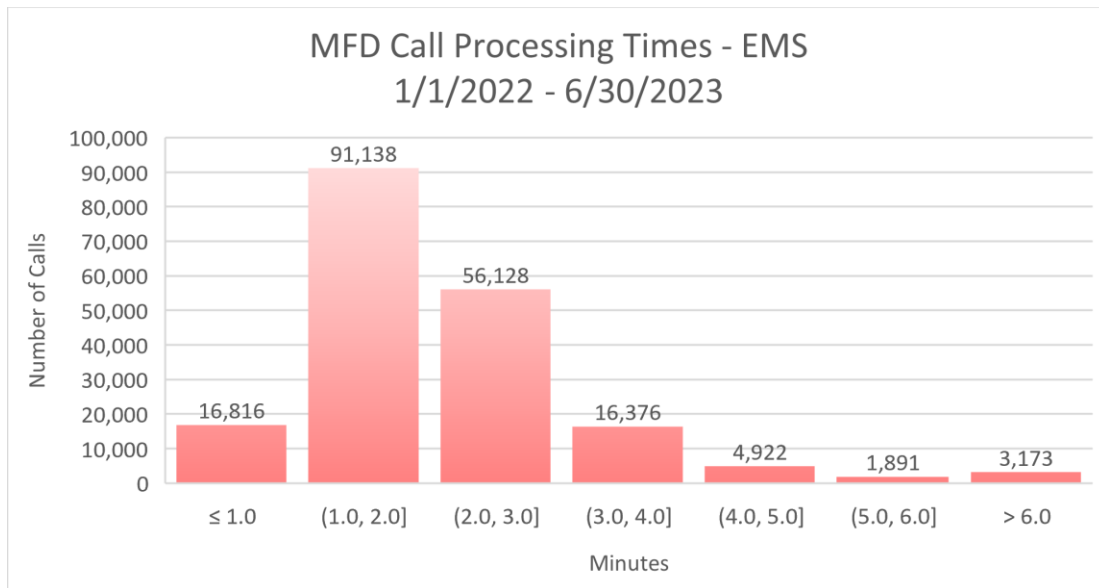
MFD EMS CALL PROCESSING AND TRAVEL TIME TO ON SCENE RESULTS

In these results, the medians are more meaningful than the means because the means are skewed by relatively few extreme examples:

Average EMS Response Times
January 2022 - June 2023

	Mean	Median
Call Processing	2.6 minutes	1.8 minutes
Travel Time	5.7 minutes	4.5 minutes

The distribution of EMS call processing and travel times for the entire 18-month period analyzed is as shown in the histograms below. The notation (a,b] on the intervals can be read “from a to b”.

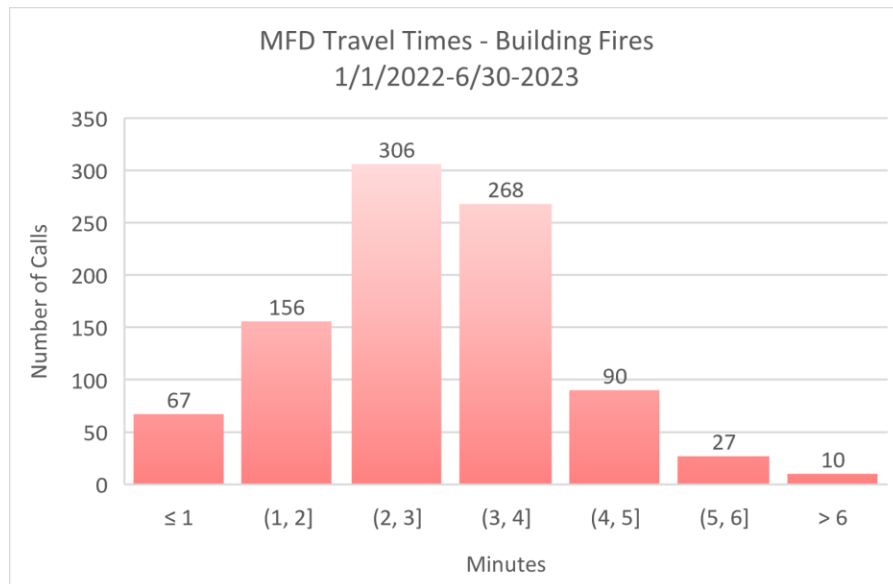
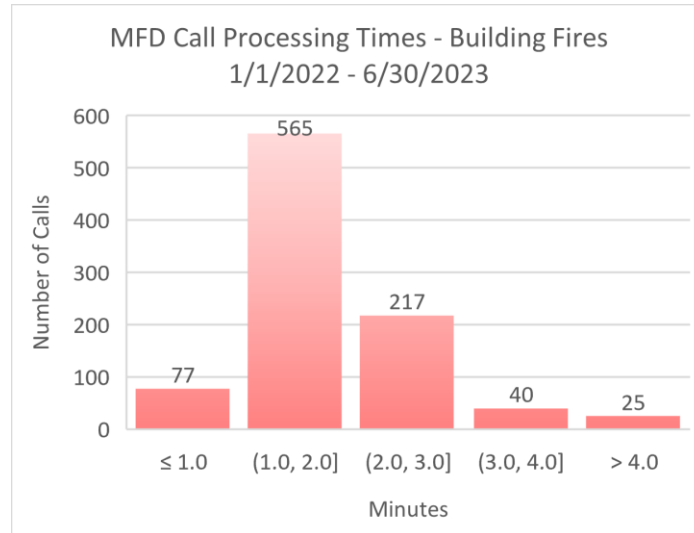


MFD BUILDING FIRE RESPONSE TIMES (1ST Vehicle on Scene)

Average Building Fire Response Times January 2022 - June 2023

	Mean	Median
Call Processing	1.8 minutes	1.6 minutes
Travel Time	2.8 minutes	1.7 minutes

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RESPONSE TIMES ALL MFD FIRES (1st Vehicle on Scene)

Average Response Times – All Fires

January 2022 - June 2023

	Mean	Median
Call Processing	1.7 minutes	1.5 minutes
Travel Time	3.2 minutes	3.6 minutes

The distribution of response times for all fire calls, including 2nd and 3rd alarm building fires, is as follows:

