

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: April 19, 2024
To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
From: Cassandra Libal, Director
Subject: OEM 2023 Annual Report
File Type: Informational Report

This informational report provides a report on how Office of Emergency Management set and achieved its 2023 goals.

POLICY

This report aligns to Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health.

Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	Chapter 108: Achieving Racial Equity & Health
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BACKGROUND

[File 22-104](#) amends Chapter 108 to require that “annually, by April 30 of each year or sooner, each Milwaukee County department leader and/or their designee(s) shall provide a written and oral report outlining their year-end results to a Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors committee. The reports shall, at a minimum:

- (a) Indicate the year-end goals the department set in the prior year.
- (b) Share the rationale and relevance of the department’s performance metrics (i.e. explaining why they are “SMART” goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, and extending) and how they align to the county’s racial equity strategy, if applicable)
- (c) Report the department’s year-end results relating to the goals it had set, and
- (d) Provide a thorough analysis clearly articulating why goals were significantly exceeded, met, or not met.
- (e) Explain the department’s progress in creating a departmental-level strategic plan that aligns to the countywide strategic plan and provide an update about future plans to revise and enhance the departmental-level plan in the year ahead.”

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

- 1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government
- 1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across County government
- 1C: Increase the number of County contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses
- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
- 2B: Break down silos across County government to maximize access to and quality of services offered
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions
- 3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
- 3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability
- 3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

Alignment to the above strategic goals is articulated in response to the questions below.

BODY

1. What were the top 3 goals of your department/office 2023? Please explain why they are “SMARTIE” goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, inclusive, and equitable) and how they align to the county’s racial equity strategy.
 - o Goal 1: (1B, 2A, 2C & 3A)

S - Implement Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) into our 911 services to ensure all emergency calls receive prompt medical triage by trained EMD professionals.

M - Achieve a 100% EMD integration rate into our 911 services, as evidenced by internal audits and performance metrics tracking the number of emergency calls triaged by EMDs.

A - Provide comprehensive training to existing staff or recruit new personnel trained in EMD protocols and procedures. Collaborate with medical professionals and regulatory bodies to ensure compliance with industry standards and legal requirements.

R - By incorporating EMD into our services, we aim to enhance the quality of emergency medical care provided to residents, establish ourselves as a leading 911 call-center, and attract smaller municipalities seeking similar services, thereby potentially bolstering revenue, and competitive standing.

T - Complete the integration of EMD into our 911 services by the end of the fiscal year, allowing sufficient time for training, implementation, and adjustment. Conduct regular progress reviews to ensure timely completion and address any challenges that arise.

I - Promote diversity and inclusivity in the recruitment and training of EMD personnel, ensuring representation from diverse backgrounds and communities. Implement cultural competency training to facilitate effective communication and support for all residents, regardless of their background or identity.

E - Ensure equitable access to opportunities for advancement and recognition within our EMD team, promoting fairness and inclusivity in all aspects of our implementation process.

- Goal 2: (2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B)

S - Fully launch county-wide electronic patient care record (ePCR) software, consolidating 15 EMS agencies into one shared reporting system.

M - Success will be measured by the number of EMS agencies that join the consolidated ePCR system.

A - OEM is equipped to support this project with allocated funding in the operating budget for ongoing support and enhancement. Streamlining data with common nomenclature will ensure more reliable data analytics, informing EMS system decisions.

R - The deadline, set by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services office of EMS, to upgrade to National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) v3.5 was the end of 2023. OEM integrated this goal into the project in mid-2023, aligning efforts and preventing duplication of work.

T - This project addresses timely reporting needs and offers opportunities for better data integrations and automation, reducing the demand for manual data entry.

I - Inclusive input from all agencies ensures their needs and desires are considered. Population choices have been expanded to include demographic information options like transgender and non-binary identities as well as racial and ethnicity options to better understand patients served.

E - Equitable pricing is based on municipality size and system utilization.

Equitable access to tools, such as Continuum for data analytics, ensures that all agencies can benefit, regardless of their initial financial capacity.

- Goal 3: (1B, 2A, 2B, 2C & 3A)

S - Enhance communications continuity and cybersecurity resilience within the Organization of Affiliated Secure Interoperable RF Subsystems (OASIS) radio system, encompassing municipal Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), ensuring reliable emergency response operations.

M - Achieve a 100% completion rate of the microwave backhaul replacement project, funded by the Capital Project allocation (\$3,588,433) secured in 2023. Additionally, ensure full implementation and compliance with cybersecurity plan across all Milwaukee County 911 PSAPs and OEM Radio division equipment.

A - Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including 911, IMSD, and County authorities, to execute the microwave backhaul replacement project and implement the cybersecurity plan. Allocate resources effectively and engage in comprehensive training programs to equip personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge.

R - The initiatives aim to bolster the reliability of the OASIS radio system, ensuring equitable and equal emergency response services for all communities served. By mitigating the risks of cyber and ransomware attacks, the plan contributes to a smooth transition into the new statewide 911 ESInet call handling system, safeguarding critical infrastructure, and elevating safety, security, equity, and equality within the OASIS network.

T- Complete the microwave backhaul replacement project and fully implement the cybersecurity plan by the end of 2024. Conduct regular progress

assessments and milestone reviews to ensure timely execution and address any potential challenges promptly.

- I- Ensure that all stakeholders, including diverse communities and personnel, are involved in the planning, execution, and evaluation of initiatives related to communications continuity and cybersecurity resilience within the OASIS network. Promote diversity and inclusivity in decision-making processes and allocate resources to address the unique needs and concerns of underserved populations.
- E- Ensure that the enhancements made to the OASIS radio system and cybersecurity measures benefit all communities served equally, regardless of their geographic location or demographic characteristics.

2. To what extent were these goals accomplished in 2023? Please explain.

- Goal 1: In 2023, we made significant progress towards achieving our goals. We successfully signed the contract and established a comprehensive training timeline, scheduled to commence in Q1 of 2024 and culminate in completion just in time for the RNC. This proactive approach ensures that our team will be fully equipped and prepared to implement the Next-Gen 911 technology and integrate Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) into our services effectively.
- Goal 2: The EMS Division successfully launched the consolidated patient care reporting software for all Fire/EMS agencies in Milwaukee County. At the same time, the National EMS Information System required a significant upgrade to the reporting requirements for data collected in the field during an EMS encounter. Consolidating this reporting system has created significant cost savings of more than \$100,000 collectively to each of the municipalities, allowed better integration of field operations and data flow, and unlocked additional technology that is now available to all agencies. This migration provides significant opportunity to further leverage EMS data to improve the system and service delivery to our patients.
- Goal 3: In 2023, significant progress was made towards accomplishing our goals. Funding was secured, contracts were signed, and project timelines were established, laying a solid foundation for future initiatives. The planned completion of SUA-II radio cybersecurity services and infrastructure hardware in Q2 of 2024 demonstrates substantial advancement in enhancing cybersecurity resilience within the OASIS network. Furthermore, with the OASIS Microwave Backhaul replacement slated for completion in Q2 of 2024, we will be on track to achieve our objectives of enhancing communications continuity and cybersecurity protection. Overall, these accomplishments signify substantial strides towards fortifying our emergency response operations and ensuring the reliability and security of critical infrastructure.

3. What factors *enabled* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

- Goal 1: The significant progress we've achieved in advancing toward our goals

can be attributed to several key factors, with the approval of ARPA funds standing out as a pivotal enabler. These funds (\$195,430) have provided the essential financial backing necessary to propel our initiatives forward, allowing us to secure resources, invest in technology upgrades, and implement crucial training programs. This financial support has not only facilitated our progress but has also reinforced our commitment to delivering high-quality emergency services to our community.

- Goal 2: In 2022, the EMS subsidy was increased to \$3M and in partnership with the Fire Chiefs, it was decided that OEM would retain part of that increase to invest back into the system with a focus on system improvements. \$500,000 was retained annually to stand up and provide ongoing support of this software transition. This allowed for additional tools and technology to be provided to all agencies at no additional cost. This also increased the reimbursement to the Fire Departments as they were no longer hosting their data or paying their billing company to host their data. Finally, the National EMS Information System pushed out a mandatory upgrade to version 3.5 which required all agencies to transition to by the end of 2023. We were able to incorporate this transition to v3.5 into our overall project of consolidating the electronic patient care record.
- Goal 3: Progress towards accomplishing these goals was facilitated by several key factors. Firstly, collaboration with vendors and municipal partners played a crucial role. Working closely with these stakeholders allowed for effective coordination and resource allocation, ensuring smooth project execution and timely completion of tasks. Moreover, securing capital project funds for one project proved instrumental. This provided the leverage needed to negotiate a package deal with the vendor, allowing for the inclusion of additional security features. By maximizing available resources and capitalizing on opportunities for cost-effective solutions, we were able to enhance the scope and effectiveness of our initiatives. Overall, the combined efforts of collaboration with stakeholders and strategic financial planning enabled significant progress towards achieving our goals in bolstering communications continuity and cybersecurity protection within the OASIS network.

4. What factors *hindered* progress toward accomplishing these goals?

- Goal 1: In Q2 of 2022, OEM pursued a state grant aimed at offering financial assistance to one emergency communication center per county. The grant aimed to support projects facilitating enhancements in preparation for Next-Gen 911 technology, including the implementation of Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD) within a three-year timeframe. Additionally, it aimed to incentivize cost-sharing and the consolidation of multiple centers. Unfortunately, in Q3 of 2023, Milwaukee County was not selected following a vote among ICC members. Consequently, we began exploring alternative funding sources, leading to a delay in the project's timeline.
- Goal 2: There was originally some concern from the fire departments about the ability to retain some of the control over the forms and fields within each of their patient care record. OEM was successfully able to mitigate that concern by purchasing an additional software solution that enabled the agency level control, additionally OEM established a data subcommittee of the EMS system to allow

for a workspace of collaboration to occur make sure that needs were met across the EMS system as well as state requirements federal requirements and billing requirements. Additionally, the NEMSIS 3.5 upgrade occurred in the middle of this project which further delayed our end goal until we were able to fully understand the exact impact on our local EMS system.

- Goal 3: Once funding was secured, no significant factors hindered progress towards accomplishing these goals.

5. What is the status of your Department/Office in developing its strategic plan? If complete, please upload your plan with this report.

The Office of Emergency Management has developed a draft strategic plan in alignment with the overall Milwaukee County Strategic Objectives. The three Departmental goals that we have identified are:

1. Build Organizational Strength - Enhancing internal capabilities, resources, and resilience through training, talent development, and streamlined processes for effective emergency response. (1A, 1B, 2B, 2C)
2. Increase Partnerships - Expanding collaborations with government agencies, nonprofits, businesses, and residents to improve coordination, resource sharing, and community support during emergencies. (1B, 2A, 2B, 2C, 3C)
3. Maximize use of data and IT - Leveraging advanced technology and data analytics for better situational awareness, decision-making, and communication during emergencies, enhancing overall response effectiveness. (2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B)

6. If not addressed in #5, what are your Department/Office goals for 2024?

In 2024, our primary objectives include ensuring the safe and successful execution of the Republican National Convention and the completion of the OEM Strategic Plan. Additionally, we aim to finalize the comprehensive Microwave overhaul and WiPSN migration by transitioning the OASIS core to a cloud-based solution in Q2 2024. This transition will be achieved using a zero-cost model to preserve capital improvement funds for future system enhancements. Motorola will lead a complete hardware refresh, guaranteeing a 100% renewal of the OASIS system core.

Regarding the Microwave Backhaul Upgrade, the OEM Radio Division has recognized the critical need to replace the aging OASIS Microwave Backhaul network. With the assistance of ARPA federal funding (\$3.6M), we are upgrading the network and integrating MPLS data to enhance system redundancy and extend infrastructure longevity. Unit shipments have already commenced, and installation is scheduled for completion by June 2024.

FISCAL EFFECT

The report is informational only and there is no fiscal impact.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

PREPARED BY:

Cassandra Libal, OEM Director

APPROVED BY:

Cassandra Libal, OEM Director

ATTACHMENTS:

OEM Strategic Plan

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk