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Memorandum

To: Nicki Neal
Director

Thru: Keith Murry 
Class Studies Supervisor

From: Carolina Russell 
Class Studies Analyst

Date: October 1, 2013

Subject: Emergency Services Dispatchers Salary Ranges

Preamble:

The Emergency Services Dispatcher I, Emergency Services Dispatcher II, and Emergency Dispatch Supervisor have been reexamined under the parameters established by the August 15, 2013 memorandum on determining the internal alignment of job classes that provide or directly enable the main emergency service functions of police, fire, and emergency medical first response duties.

Analysis:

Per the August 15th memorandum, in order to ensure that salary ranges assigned to job classes provide appropriately fair and reasonable compensation under AS 39.25.150(2)(B), the alignment of job classes that provide or directly enable the main emergency service functions of police, fire, and emergency medical first response duties shall give greater weight to:

- working conditions;
- impact on life and safety; and
- essentialness to State operations.

The memorandum further clarified that "Provide, or directly enable provision of" means:

- 1) positions or classes that are dispatched in response to emergency calls (911) and have as essential duties completing specialized training in fire or emergency medical response (above common CPR/First Aide training), practicing with equipment and personal protection gear in periodic response drills, regular and recurring responsibility to "stand ready" for alarms, and responsibility for immediate reaction to alarms; and
- 2) the positions or classes that answer emergency calls (911), initiate alarms, and dispatch appropriate first responders.

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The criteria stipulated under 2) above is met by the Emergency Services Dispatcher I and Emergency Services Dispatcher II job classes, which are characterized by their responsibility to provide both emergency and non-emergency dispatching/communication services for airports, State and local law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency medical services, and the public to minimize the loss of life and property.

In addition, the new guidelines are applicable to the Emergency Dispatch Supervisor job class through a particular clarification in the August 15, 2013 memorandum which stated that: "supervisory job classes that are defined and distinguished by their primary duty of supervising positions or classes providing or directly enabling main emergency service functions shall have such responsibility given sufficient weight in internal alignment to provide a reasonable differential above the classes supervised."

The August 15, 2013 memorandum also clearly defined the boundaries of its application by specifying other emergency services work that does not meet the criteria stipulated, and thereby defines job classes that cannot be impacted as a result of this weighted re-alignment. More specifically, it precludes job classes in emergency management, wildland fire suppression, marine or wilderness search and rescue, removal of hazardous materials, bomb disposal, disaster relief, community emergency response, and so on.

As established in the Radio Dispatcher Study, the retitled Emergency Services Dispatcher I, Emergency Services Dispatcher II, and Emergency Dispatch Supervisor all perform work under Occupational Group PD: Government Management and Infrastructure and more specifically these job classes fall within the Emergency Planning and Response Job Family (PD04). This job family includes positions that administer, supervise, or perform work related to disaster planning, mitigation, response, and recovery and emergency service dispatch. Therefore, in analyzing and determining the salary range for the classes under review, comparisons were again made to job classes within the PD04 job family.

As the recent Radio Dispatcher Study memorandum examined in great detail the comparative similarities and differences between the Emergency Dispatcher job classes and suitable job classes for an un-weighted internal alignment. Those conclusions will be held valid and provide a basis for a revised *weighted* internal alignment focusing primarily on pertinent factors under the reviewed parameters.

The Radio Dispatcher Study concluded that the journey-level work of the Emergency Services Dispatcher I best aligns with the Wildland and Fire Dispatcher series that receive reports of incidents and initiate the initial response of appropriate fire resources to support wildland fire preparedness and suppression activities. The current work of the Emergency Services Dispatcher I was aligned to the Wildland Fire Dispatcher II, at range 13. This was based on a strong correlation between the two job classes in their comparable performance of the full range of technical duties while ensuring compliance with standard methods, established contracts, rules, policies, procedures and guidelines; and also based on incumbents routinely taking action or making decisions without prior approval from higher level staff.

In similar fashion, the shift-lead level work performed by Emergency Dispatchers II was determined best aligned at range 14, in comparison to job classes that perform advanced level technical tasks such as the Emergency Management Specialist I (Range 14) or Wildland Fire Dispatcher III (Range 15). The latter, who performs at a comparable lead level, was recognized as an anomaly in its unduly

high alignment at range 15 and resulted in the settlement of the Emergency Dispatcher II at range 14.

A few differences applicable to the journey levels and correspondingly to the lead levels in both class series are highlighted by the new guidelines, revealing some noteworthy differences in terms of focus and scope. Wildland Fire Dispatchers II and the Wildland Fire Dispatchers III (in their lead-capacity) are centered on recording and relaying information with the objective of providing logistical coordination of resources (such as mobilizing personnel, equipment, aircraft, and supplies etc.). These responsibilities are performed in a *supportive role*, assisting those that perform the primary response duties. In contrast, Emergency Services Dispatchers I, and also Emergency Services Dispatchers II (in their lead capacity) have direct responsibility over 911 phone lines, initiate alarms, and dispatch appropriate first responders, having regular and recurring direct interaction with the public. They additionally exercise responsibility to monitor, transmit, and receive information over telecommunication systems during client contacts and vehicle stops to ensure the safety of field personnel through established protocols to detect emergencies. While some of these duties may also be present with Wildland Fire Dispatchers, it is the frequency and direct responsibility for life and safety as opposed to the logistical coordination and provision of resources to support them that distinguishes the separate class series. This also stresses the wider and more varied scope of Emergency Services Dispatchers. Unlike Wildland Fire Dispatchers who specialize on wildland fires only, Emergency Services Dispatchers I and II process and prioritize incoming calls for police, fire, and emergency medical services assistance and provide both emergency and non-emergency dispatching/communication to services such as airports, State and local law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency medical services, and the public to minimize the loss of life and property. These differences have a significant effect on the potential impact on life and safety; and essentialness to State operations.

In accounting for the new weight given to the responsibility for answering emergency calls (911), initiating alarms, and dispatching appropriate first responders according to the impact on working conditions, impact on life and safety; and essentialness to State operations, as described above, Emergency Services Dispatchers I will now align two pay ranges higher than the Wildland Fire Dispatchers II, and will be aligned at pay range 15. Emergency Services Dispatcher II will similarly align two ranges higher than the Wildland Fire Dispatcher III, and will be aligned at pay range 16.

Lastly, the Emergency Dispatch Supervisor was originally aligned at range 16; two ranges higher than the Emergency Services Dispatcher II whom it supervises. This was the result of comparative analysis and alignment with the Emergency Management Specialist II (Range 16) and State Logistics Coordinator (Range 16) which are two other job classes of comparable nature, variety, and complexity in their supervisory decisions. Following the same line of reasoning, the supervisory responsibility remains a defining and distinguishing primary duty, but given the role over other positions or job classes providing or directly enabling main emergency service functions the Emergency Dispatch Supervisor will be aligned two ranges higher than the Emergency Management Specialist II and State Logistics Coordinator, and is aligned at pay range 18. This is also consistent with the new guidelines to have the supervisory responsibility given sufficient weight in internal alignment to provide a reasonable differential above the classes supervised.

An increase of two pay ranges is consistent with the determination on Mechanics with Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting duties (ARFF) done on August 26, 2013. Under the new parameters, a one pay range increase was applied to the Mechanics, Rural with ARFF duties to reflect the performance of an essential but infrequent duty. This element in the Emergency Service Dispatchers I, II, and

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Emergency Dispatch Supervisor is both essential and preponderant and supports a greater range change.

Conclusion:

The Emergency Services Dispatcher classes are properly aligned at a higher range under the guidelines for aligning job classes that directly enable emergency services.

The salary range of the Emergency Services Dispatchers I is changed from 13 to 15.

The salary range of the Emergency Services Dispatchers II is changed from 14 to 16.

The salary range of the Emergency Dispatch Supervisor is changed from 16 to 18.

The overtime eligibility of employees in these job classes is not altered by the salary range change.

The new pay ranges are effective October 1, 2013. Separate correspondence on the affected positions is being redistributed to Payroll Services.

cc:

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Director

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