District of Columbia Implements
New "ASAP" Alarm Response Program

OUC launches new system that streamlines notifications for emergency dispatch from alarm monitoring companies

(Washington, D.C.) - The Office of Unified Communications (OUC) has implemented an innovative computer-aided dispatch system (CAD) interface enhancement - the Automated Secure Alarm Protocol (ASAP). ASAP streamlines notifications for emergency dispatch from alarm monitoring companies and helps to reduce 9-1-1 processing time significantly. This interface, which is an American National Standard, was developed through a partnership between the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International and the Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA).

"ASAP is another tool, coupled with other programs implemented by the OUC, in our continuing efforts to provide quality public safety communications services for the citizens of the District of Columbia," said the OUC's Director, Jennifer Greene.

As the primary 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) serving the capital of the United States, the OUC is often at the forefront in identifying innovative technological trends and deploying such enhancements. Accordingly, the execution of ASAP at the OUC in step with recent similar implementations throughout the country including those in York County (VA), the City of Richmond (VA), Houston (TX), and others, who have taken this innovative step toward more efficient alarm call management.

On October 26, 2012, Pittsburgh-based Vector Security began transmitting alarm notifications directly to the OUC's CAD system. Two more alarm companies will be on-line by January, 2013, with dozens

more joining the program during calendar year 2013. Collectively, these alarm companies account for more than 55,000 alarm notifications annually to the OUC. Over 6,500 alarm-related data exchanges between the OUC and the participating alarm companies have been processed.

Stephen Williams, the OUC's Chief Operations Officer, states that calls generated via ASAP are managed more accurately due to the reduction of miscommunication. "It will help reduce the workload of the 9-1-1 call takers, allowing them to focus more on handling emergency 9-1-1 calls from our citizens," continued Williams.

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) President, Terry Hall, conveyed that APCO is very pleased that the OUC stepped up to take advantage of this proven program. "The ASAP program is an automated system that streamlines the delivery of alarm data between the alarm monitoring central station and 9-1-1 PSAPs, reduces 9-1-1 processing by minutes, and reduces the chance of human error, thereby reducing the risk of loss of life and property," reiterated Hall, who piloted the ASAP program in York County (VA) that lead to it becoming a national standard.

According to CSAA President Robert Bean "ASAP is an example of a public-private partnership at its best. The professional alarm monitoring industry has invested in this technology to promote their partnerships with the public safety industry. By utilizing this technology, public safety resources previously devoted to receiving these calls can be reassigned to other lifesaving tasks. ASAP is a prime example of the win/win that only happens when everyone works together."

Alarm companies that participate in the ASAP program connect to a secure Message Broker and Nlets, the International Justice & Public Safety Network. Nlets links the majority of the nation's 6,500 PSAPs to international, federal and state criminal justice and public safety-related databases. Nlets' role in ASAP is to provide the secure transport facility for cooperative data exchanges.

According to Bill Hobgood, project coordinator for APCO International, "Implementation of ASAP for our nation's capital is an exciting accomplishment and outstanding milestone for the project."

The development of the ASAP ANSI-approved standard was made possible in part by funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Edward Byrne Memorial Discretionary Grants Program for the Public Safety Data Interoperability Project co-managed by the IJIS Institute and APCO International.

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911 calls that occur in the District of Columbia each year, the OUC carries tremendous responsibility. In addition to fielding these life-dependent calls, the OUC also oversees all land and mobile radio systems tied to the response network. www.ouc.dc.gov. **For more information, contact Wanda Gattison, Public Information Officer, (202) 730-0503 wanda.gattison@dc.gov.**

About APCO International *— The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International is the world's oldest and largest professional organization dedicated to the enhancement of public safety communications. APCO International serves the professional needs of its 15,000 members worldwide by creating a platform for setting professional standards, addressing professional issues and providing education, products and services for people who manage, operate, maintain and supply the communications systems used by police, fire and emergency medical dispatch agencies throughout the world. www.apcointl.org.* **For more information, contact Meghan McCluskey, Marketing & Communications Manager, (571) 312-4400 x 7009 mccluskeym@apcointl.org.**

About CSAA *— The Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA) is an internationally recognized non-profit trade association. It represents central station monitoring companies that are certified by a CSAA-approved Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory, such as FM Global, Intertek/ETL or UL, in the burglar and fire alarm, CCTV and access control industries. CSAA is legally entitled to represent its members before Congress and regulatory agencies on the local, state and federal levels, and other authorities having jurisdiction (AHJs) over the industry. Since its incorporation in 1950, CSAA has served its members' interests through education, online training, meetings and conventions, certification, insurance, and industry standards. www.csaaul.org.* **For more information, contact Monique C. Talbot, IOM, Director of Marketing and Communications, (703) 242-4670, ext. 16, Communications@csaaintl.org.**