

Table 25. Dispatch functions of local police departments, by size of population served, 2003

Population served	Percent of agencies dispatching calls for —	
	Police services	Fire services
All sizes	38%	23%
1,000,000 or more	81%	6%
500,000-999,999	76	5
250,000-499,999	81	17
100,000-249,999	77	33
50,000-99,999	77	46
25,000-49,999	74	44
10,000-24,999	70	41
2,500-9,999	40	27
Under 2,500	14	8

All but a few small local police departments regularly responded to citizen calls for service. An estimated 38% of agencies dispatched calls as well (table 25). This included at least 70% of the departments in each population category of 10,000 or more.

Nearly a quarter (23%) of local police departments dispatched calls for fire services. Fire dispatch responsibilities were most common among departments serving 10,000 to 99,999 residents, where more than 40% performed this function.

About in 1 in 10 departments used sworn personnel as communications technicians such as call-takers and dispatchers (table 26). This included about a quarter of those serving 500,000 or more residents. Among departments having sworn communications technicians, the average number of such personnel was 7, ranging from 2 in the smallest departments to more than 30 in those serving 250,000 to 999,999 residents. Overall, local police departments had an estimated 8,675 full-time sworn personnel serving in this capacity.

Table 26. Full-time sworn personnel in local police departments serving as communications technicians, by size of population served, 2003

Population served	Percent of agencies using	Number of officers	
		Total	Average*
All sizes	10%	8,675	7
1,000,000 or more	25%	84	20
500,000-999,999	27	362	34
250,000-499,999	7	101	33
100,000-249,999	12	312	14
50,000-99,999	15	845	14
25,000-49,999	16	1,409	11
10,000-24,999	15	2,524	9
2,500-9,999	9	2,287	6
Under 2,500	7	752	2

*Excludes agencies not employing technicians.

9-1-1 emergency telephone system

In 2003, 92% of local police departments participated in a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system (table 27). At least 89% of departments in each population category were 9-1-1 participants, including all of those serving 100,000 to 999,999 residents.

Seventy-three percent of departments had an enhanced 9-1-1 system, capable of automatically displaying information such as a caller's phone number, address, and special needs. This included more than 90% of those serving a population of 50,000 or more.

Table 27. Participation in a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system by local police departments, by size of population served, 2003

Population served	Percent of agencies participating in a 9-1-1 phone system		
	Total	Enhanced	Basic
All sizes	92%	73%	19%
1,000,000 or more	94%	94%	0%
500,000-999,999	100	97	3
250,000-499,999	100	98	2
100,000-249,999	100	94	7
50,000-99,999	97	93	4
25,000-49,999	97	89	8
10,000-24,999	98	85	13
2,500-9,999	92	75	16
Under 2,500	89	61	27

Note: Participating agencies are those whose units can be dispatched as result of a call to 9-1-1. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Sixty-one percent of departments in jurisdictions with fewer than 2,500 residents had enhanced 9-1-1.

Among the enhanced 9-1-1 systems in use during 2003, 63% had the ability to display the phone number of wireless callers, and 19% could display the location of wireless callers.

In 2003, 98% of all local police officers worked for a department with 9-1-1, compared to 60% in 1987 (figure 10). Ninety percent of officers were employed by a department with enhanced 9-1-1 in 2003, compared to 26% in 1987.

Local police department participation in a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system, 1987-2003

Percent of officers employed by departments with 9-1-1

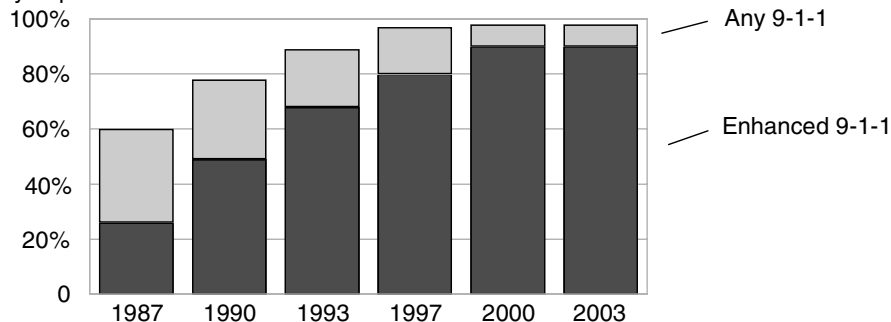


Figure 10