Using Data to Map and Measure Long Beach Fire Department's Homelessness Outreach Program

After receiving two-times the standard amount of calls for homeless cases in one year, Long Beach (Calif.) Fire Department organized an outreach program to better serve the city's homeless population and more efficiently allocate public safety resources. Learn how Deccan's software solutions helped LBFD use meaningful data to track and plan for the implementation of this new effort.

The Long Beach Fire Department (LBFD) in Long Beach, California, services the seventh largest city in California with 470,000 people. With a growing population, and service area of 52 square miles, LFBD responded to nearly 4,400 homeless-related 911 calls in 2016 — a value equivalent to two engine companies with a normal call volume.

Typically, the subject of the 911 call did not require, or refused, medical treatment. The department soon recognized valuable resources – including fire engines and BLS & ALS transport units – were unnecessarily occupied with homelessness related calls and could be deployed to more critical cases.

In an effort to maximize resources and improve responses to better serve the city's homeless population, LBFD organized the Homelessness Education and Response Team, or HEART program, employing two firefighter-paramedics to intercept calls and respond quickly, freeing up traditional response units to deploy to other calls and incidents.

HEART 1

Homelessness Education and Response Team, or HEART program.

A proactive community outreach program, employing two firefighter-paramedics to intercept calls and respond quickly, freeing up traditional response units to deploy to other calls and incidents.

"Deccan allows the HEART Unit to use data, in near real-time, in order to more efficiently deploy this limited resource where it's needed most"

Ray Toohey, Deputy Chief
Long Beach Fire Deparment

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With only one mobile unit in action as part of the HEART effort, it was important to use data to plan where and how the team should operate to maximize the resources allocated. In order to put a trusted, evidence-based plan in place, LBFD used Deccan International's Apparatus Deployment Analysis Module (ADAM) software to:

1) Analyze historical CAD information and GIS map data of calls related to homelessness cases,

2) Track frequent location and time of calls to establish patrol areas for the specialized response team, and

3) Map the optimal deployment plan for HEART to respond quickly throughout the city.

LBFD fire chiefs were able to visualize the data with color-coded maps generated by ADAM to display different deployment scenarios. This visual output allowed for easy communication of the approach, rather than asking city leaders to decipher charted data.

The ADAM analyses were vital to LBFD's development of a strategic plan to ensure the HEART program would be a successful investment for Long Beach. The HEART team provides needed care to the city's homeless population by reserving critical response resources for critical incidents, serving as a cost-effective solution to address homelessness-related call volume.

SUCCESS BY NUMBERS 2016-2017

650 EXECUTED RESPONSES TO EMS PATIENTS AND HOMELESS CASES

95% OF CASES INVOLVED THE HEART TEAM AS FIRST RESPONDERS ON SCENE

43 HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS WERE CONNECTED WITH CONTINUUM OF CARE RESOURCES