



Virginia Chapter

Representing Virginia's 9-1-1 / Public Safety Communications professionals since 1959

September 6, 2011

All Virginia Chapter APCO members:

In a few days the 10th anniversary of 9-11 will be recognized throughout the nation and around the world. Those that lost their lives that day and subsequently will be remembered. The public safety personnel who responded in New York City, Arlington County, Virginia and Shanksville/Somerset County, Pennsylvania will also be praised...all rightfully so.

There is however a small group of public safety personnel who, because they are seldom seen, will unfortunately not be recognized publicly, if at all, even though they played an incredibly significant role on 9-11...beginning before the first units were dispatched until the last unit was back in service. They are the 9-1-1 call takers, dispatchers and supervisors in New York City, Arlington County and Summerset County who fielded the thousands of 9-1-1 calls received from those in the Twin Towers, Pentagon and aboard United Airlines Flight 93; which were both highly emotional and heart wrenching. This was followed by the thousands of radio transmissions with those they dispatched...transmissions which were often the last transmission a person made.

Also, forgotten by most is that before September 11th was known as 9-11, it was already called 9-1-1 Day; a day set aside to recognize the contribution to the public's safety by 9-1-1 and all the personnel that staff it. It is ironic that 9-11 should be the day that established 9-1-1 dispatch personnel as the *First of the First Responders*...everyday, 260,000 times a day...95 million times a year.

So as we remember and honor those that lost their lives on 9-11 and those that responded on 9-11, please also remember the unsung heroes of 9-11, who, not only on that fateful day, but everyday - 24/7/365 - respond first from "under the headset"...you.

Thank you, God bless and *Never Forget.*

Steve

Steve Souder, President
Virginia Chapter APCO

