CASE STUDY:

EAST MIDLANDS AMBULANCE SERVICE

At a Glance:

Situation:

- Needed a contact center solution with automatic call distribution functionality
- Wanted to upgrade to a more reliable and resilient communications system
- Solution had to be scalable to grow with the organization when required

Solution:

- MiVoice Business
- MiContact Center Management Suite

Results:

- Achieved a 20% performance gain due to handling 20% more calls at the same pick-up speed with the same number of people through ACD functionality
- Average answer time dropped below 5 seconds
- New possibilities for integrations with applications, such as radio and patient record systems

Summary

East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) was using an old command and control communications system to manage emergency services that lacked necessary functionality, but saw their performance soar after switching to Mitel systems, with huge productivity and customer service gains.

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Company

East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) provides emergency and urgent care, patient transport, call handling and clinical triage services for 4.6 million people across the six counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire (including North and North East Lincolnshire), Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland.

Situation

EMAS employs 3,000 staff at 70 locations – including three A&E control rooms – with the largest staff group employed in accident and emergency services. Their accident and emergency crews respond to 500,000 emergency calls every year, while patient transport staff and volunteer ambulance drivers provide care and transportation for 5,000 people each day.

For years, EMAS used an old command and control communications system to manage emergency services. It had one critical drawback: it lacked automatic call distribution (ACD) functionality. An ACD system is used to validate callers, provide basic call routing to the first available agent, deliver skills-based routing, forward calls to the right party, allow callers to record messages, gather usage statistics and balance the use of phone lines.

The limitations of this system meant EMAS could not accurately monitor call flow and was unable to determine the number of 999 call agents they needed. This led to great inefficiency and a waste in resources due to under- and over-staffing—and put the people they served at undue risk.

The development of a new, state-of-the-art ambulance control center for EMAS created an opportunity to redefine the technology being used and find more effective communications solutions.

Solution

After a thorough needs analysis, EMAS determined that the deployment of MiVoice Business, a Mitel communications platform featuring voice, messaging, mobility, presence, conferencing, collaboration, apps and ACD functionality, was the best option. The solution also complemented the Mitel MiContact Center Management

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Suite and Cybertech (Activa) Call Recording, which met all the emergency services' contact center requirements.

Before going live, EMAS conducted an extensive soak test. This is the process whereby every possible scenario is tested to ensure the system works reliably. The command center deals with life and death situations, and the communications platform needed to be 100% reliable, resilient and safe.

The new command center went live without a hitch, delivering the communications system EMAS needed to better serve its constituents.

Results

Prior to the introduction of Mitel's call flow management system at Nottingham Control, the average answer time for a 999 call was eight seconds. With a 20% increase in call volume, which came with the addition of Northamptonshire's 999 calls, that average answer time was maintained. Essentially, this means EMAS achieved a 20% performance gain while answering the same amount of calls in the same time.

However, as staff familiarized themselves with the Mitel system and leveraged the productivity-boosting capabilities, they were able to then drop the average answer time to just under five seconds. Those extra few seconds saved mean the world to the citizens contacting EMAS in a crisis.

"When a 999 call is made, every second counts; it is mission-critical that we have the right communications technology to help get us to patients as quickly as possible," comments Neil Brennan, Control Communications Manager at EMAS. "MiVoice Business has the features we need to deliver emergency services."

EMAS is also in the progress of developing their requirements for integration between the MiVoice solution and applications such as radio and patient record systems. With their Mitel technology, a new world of technology and application possibilities has opened up for EMAS.

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