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# Preface

**T**his report is a best practices review of 9-1-1 public safety dispatching in Minnesota. It is the fourth in a series of best practices reviews conducted by the Office of the Legislative Auditor.

The 1994 Legislature established best practices reviews as a way to identify practices that aid in delivering local government services efficiently and effectively.<sup>1</sup> Our approach is similar to one used by the British Audit Commission in England and Wales to determine the state of the art in the delivery of local services.

Best practices reviews identify quality in the design and delivery of services. This focus distinguishes best practices reviews from traditional auditing, which identifies compliance and performance deficiencies. The Legislature intended that best practices reviews would help communities improve their service delivery by learning about effective and efficient methods used by jurisdictions similar to them.

When the Legislature created the best practices reviews program, it also established a local government advisory council to recommend topics for review to the Legislative Audit Commission. By law the best practices advisory council consists of three members appointed by the Association of Minnesota Counties, three by the League of Minnesota Cities, two by the Association of Metropolitan

Municipalities, and one by the Minnesota Association of Townships. Appendix A provides a complete list of current council members. This advisory council recommended 9-1-1 public safety dispatching to the Legislative Audit Commission, which approved the topic in May 1997.

We acknowledge and appreciate the help of many directors of public safety answering points, call takers and dispatchers, sheriffs and other law enforcement personnel, emergency response agencies, and local elected officials who provided us with information through interviews and surveys. The public safety community cooperated with this effort and its many contributions enhanced the final report.

The report was researched and written by Jody Hauer (best practices coordinator), Jennifer Moenck Feige, and Valerie Bombach, with technical assistance from Glen Morrow. For those with access to the Internet, this report and related material may be found over the World Wide Web at: <http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/pe9806.htm>.

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*Our best  
practices  
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<sup>1</sup> Minn. Stat. §3.971, subd. 4.