



# What Staffing Problem?

How the Santa Cruz (CA) Consolidated 9-1-1 Center Solved Their Staffing Problem and Created a Less Than 1% Turnover Rate.

- Michael J. McDougall, General Manager
  - Lisa Martinez Sullivan, Support Services Manager
- 

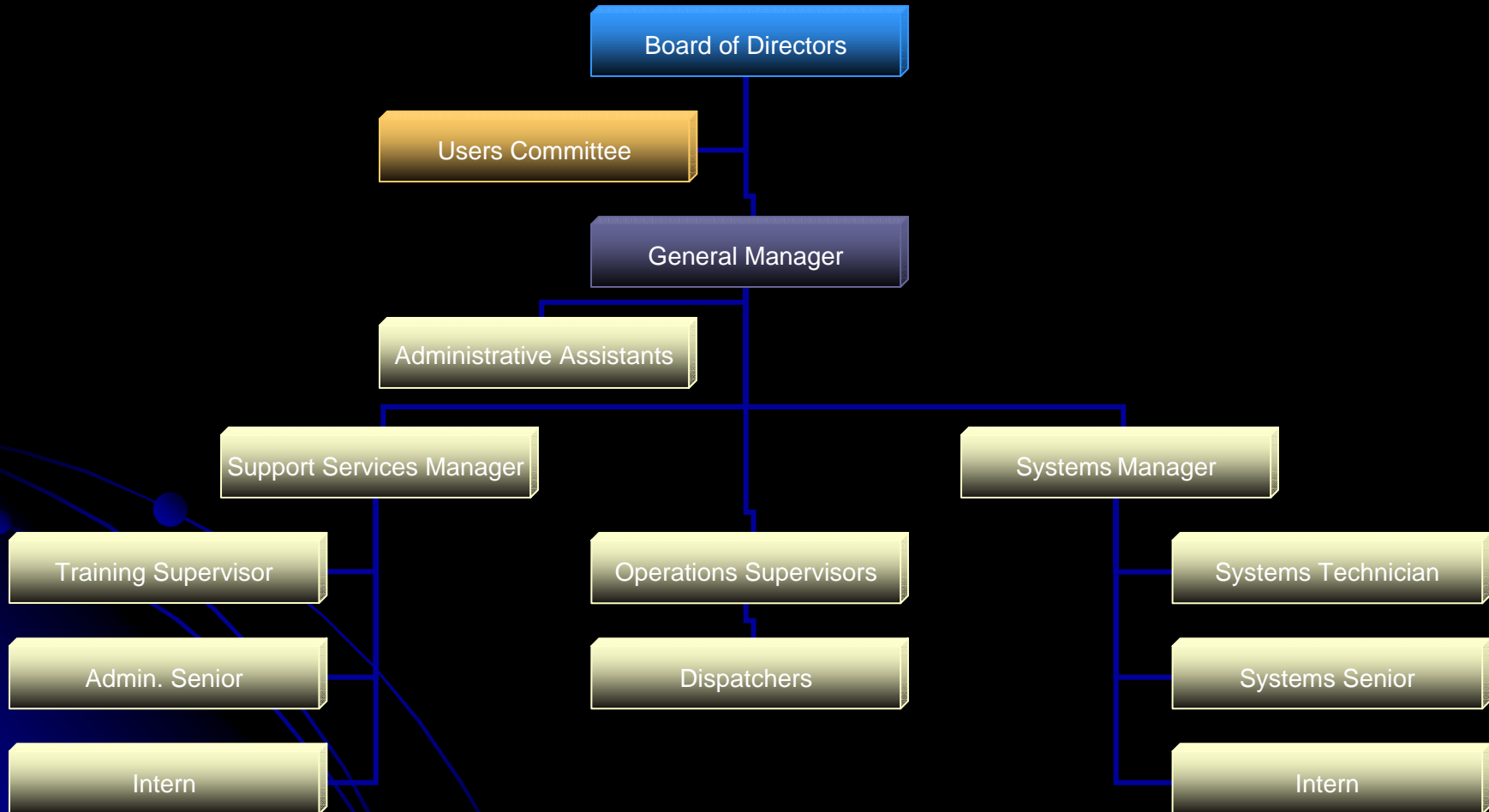
# What Staffing Problem?

- SCCECC Organization & Background
  - The Problem: Where We Were
  - What We Did: Traditional Reactions
  - What Was the “Real” Problem?
  - Findings & Solutions
  - Things That Worked & Didn't Work
  - Where Are We Now?
  - Byproducts of Success
  - Project RETAINS
- 

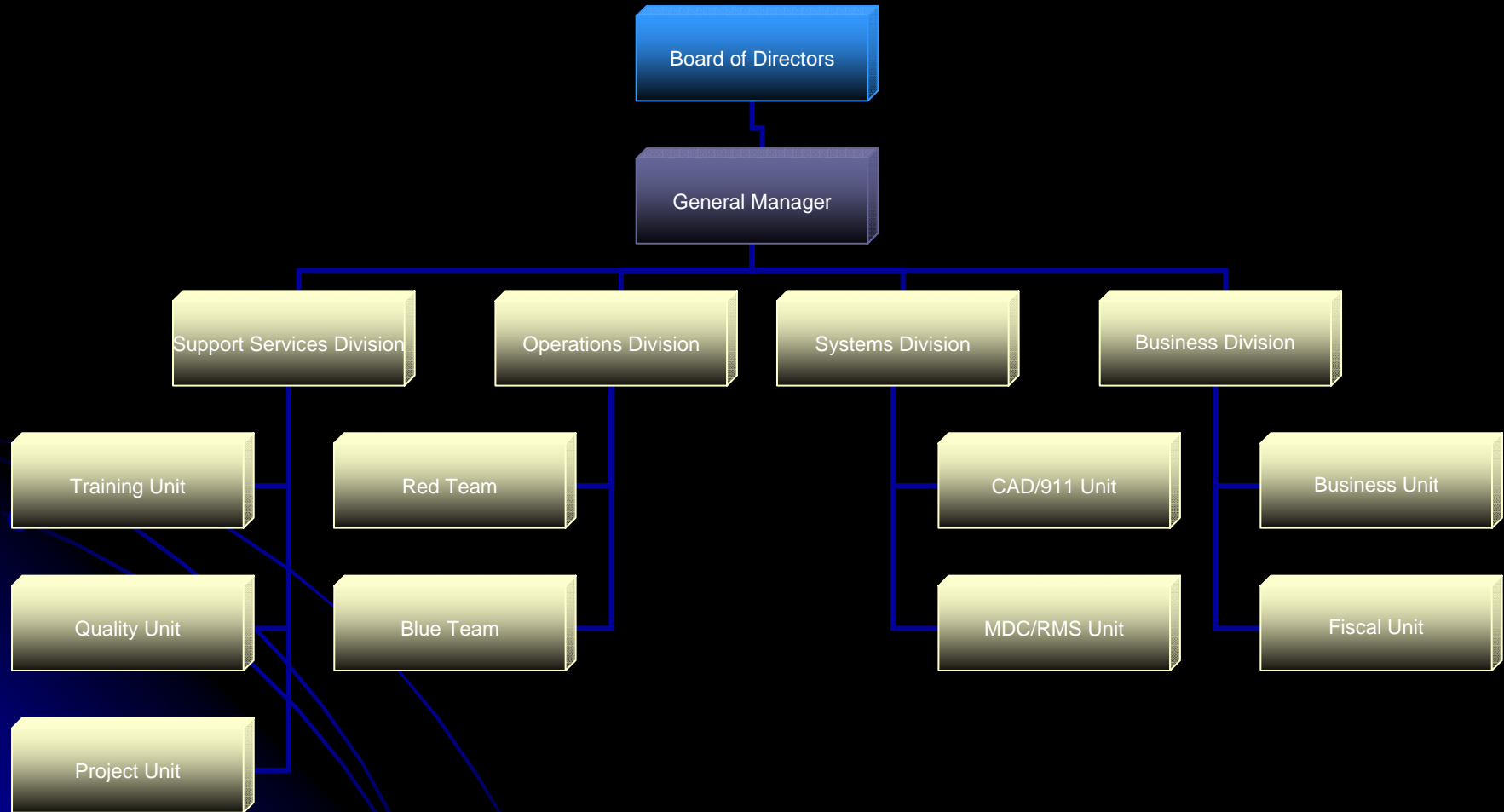
# SCCECC Organization

- **Governance & User Agencies**
  - Joint Powers Authority (JPA): special, single purpose government agency created by general governments of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and the County.
  - 4 member Board of Directors
  - 19 User Agencies
- **Demographics**
  - 250,000 population
  - UC Campus
  - Summers
  - Politics
- **Calls for Service**
  - Law Enforcement, Fire, & EMS
  - Approximately 600,000 phone calls; 275,000 calls for service annually
- **Size & Scope**
  - Manage City Police Records Management (RMS) and Mobile Data Computer (MDC) systems – Santa Cruz Metro Records System (SCMRS)
- **56 Employees**
- **\$5 million annual budget**

# SCCECC Organization Chart

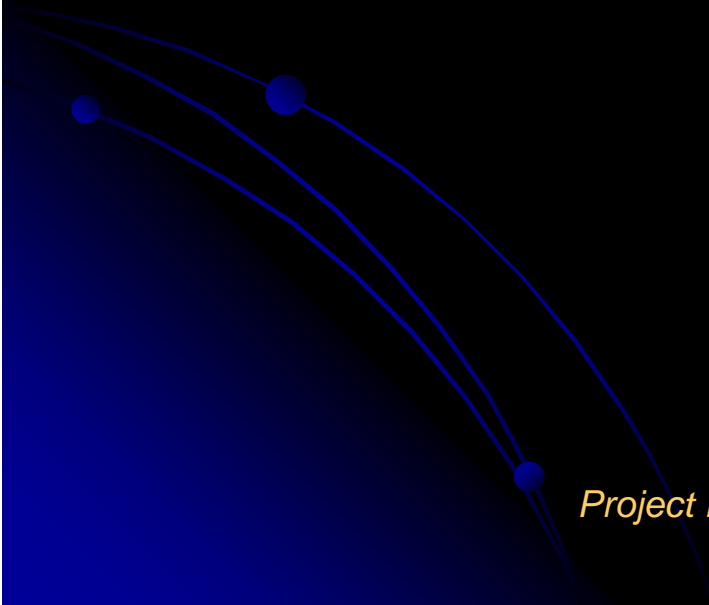


# SCCECC Program Structure



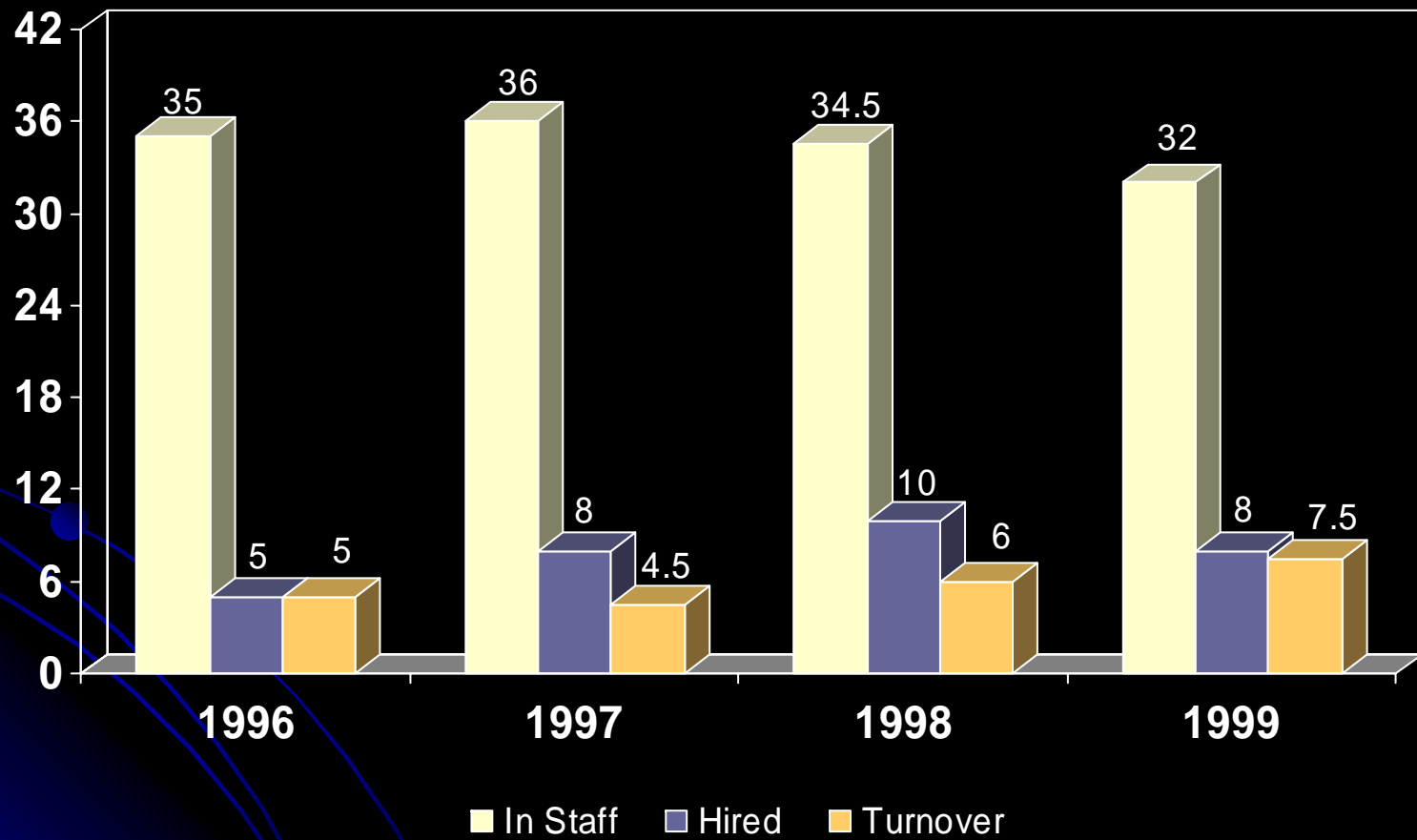
# The Problem: Where We Were

- 1991-1996 (pre-consolidation): 18% annual turnover
- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% annual turnover rate

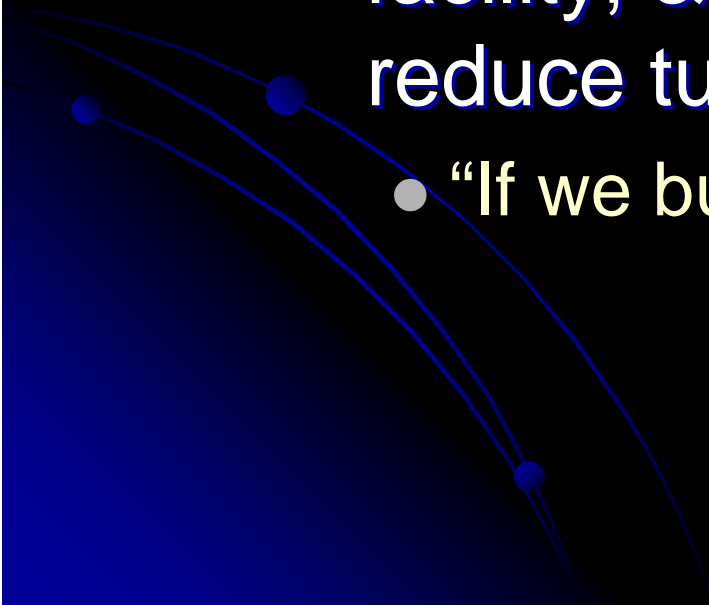


*Project RETAINS* → National turnover rate = 17%

# 1996-1999



# The Problem: Where We Were

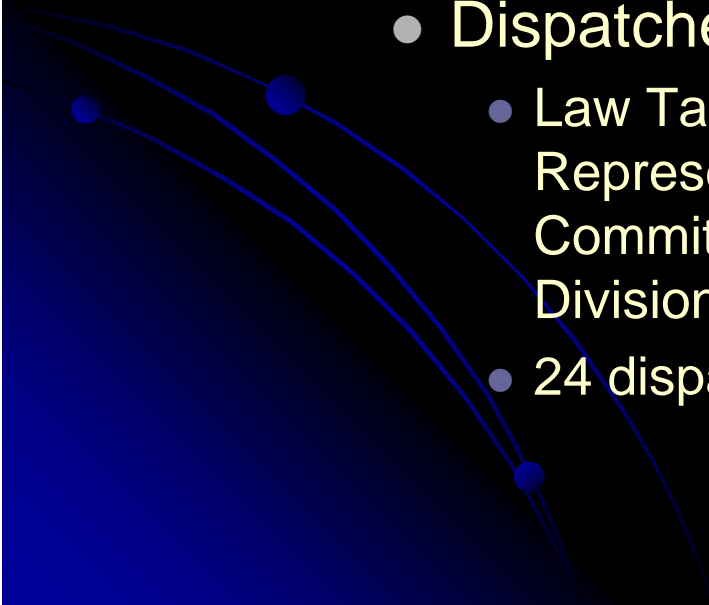
- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% turnover rate
  - Assumed new organization, facility, & equipment would reduce turnover
    - “If we build it, they will come.”
- 



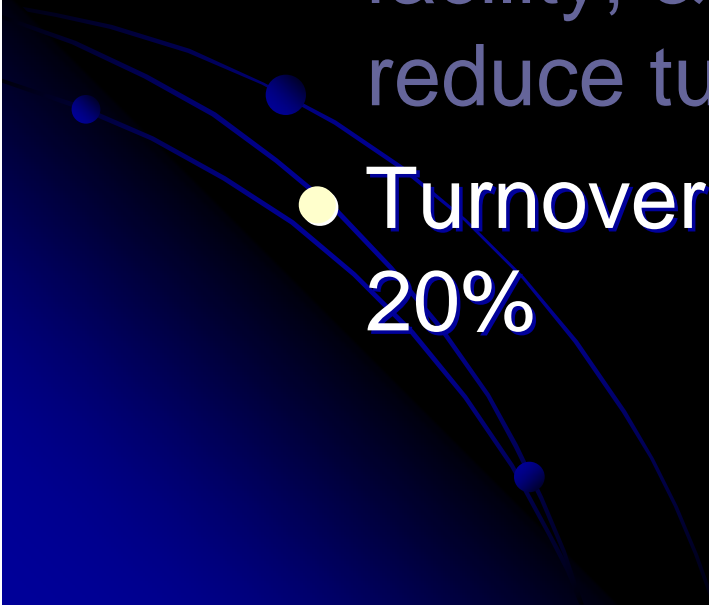
# “If We Build It, They Will Come”



# The Problem: Where We Were

- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% turnover rate
  - Assumed new organization, facility, & equipment would reduce turnover
    - Dispatcher participation
      - Law Task Team, Fire/EMS Task Team, Staff Representative, Standards Team, Safety Committee, ACE Team, TOAC, Operations Division meetings, CTO's, Instructors, etc.
      - 24 dispatchers (out of 42) participating
- 

# The Problem: Where We Were

- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% turnover rate
  - Assumed new organization, facility, & equipment would reduce turnover
  - Turnover rate remained steady at 20%
- 

# What We Did: Traditional Reactions

- Threw money at it – significant salary raises (1999)
  - Salaries circa 2000
    - \$29,827 - \$42,391 Dispatcher I/II
    - \$39,478 - \$50,472 Dispatcher III
  - 18.1%: 2003, 2004, 2005
    - Salaries circa 2005
      - \$37,981 - \$59,514 Dispatcher I/II
      - \$50,274 - \$70,827 Dispatcher III

*Project RETAINS* → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees earned more.

# What We Did: Traditional Reactions

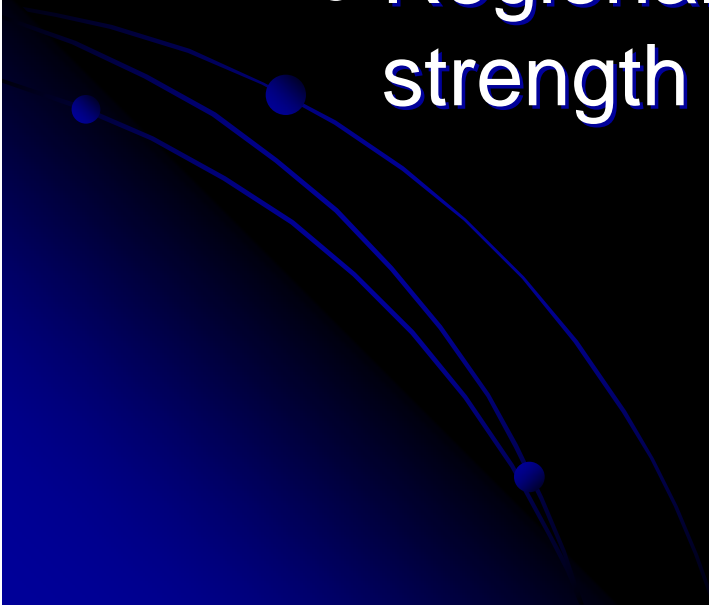
- Threw money at it – significant salary raises (1999)
- Created Dispatcher Assistant positions (1999)
  - Why?
    - No call takers
  - Scope of duties
  - Labor relations
  - Traded unfillable positions

*Project RETAINS* → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when staffed to handle work comfortably.

# What We Did: Traditional Reactions

- Threw money at it – significant salary raises (1999)
- Created Dispatcher Assistant positions (1999)
- Temporary over hire (2000)
  - 28.6% success rate
    - Hired 7; retained 2 (after 1 year)
  - Costs
    - 10% over hire costs = 2% of total compensation

# Summer, 2000

- End of 2000: no change, at 75% working strength (all positions, dispatchers & DA's)
  - Regionally: 53-93% working strength
- 

# July, 2000

Agency	Working Strength	Positions	FY 99/00 Turnover
Santa Rosa	93%	24	n/a
Sunnyvale	90%	22	20%
San Jose	79%	166	n/a
<b>SCCECC</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>22%</b>
San Francisco	66%	137	n/a
Marin	61%	30	48%
Monterey County	56%	62	n/a
Ventura County	53%	28	48%



# October, 2000

- End of 2000: no change, at 75% working strength (all positions, dispatchers & DA's)
- Regionally: 53-93% working strength
- **Re-evaluate**
  - DA program: helped
  - Temporary over hire: no help (sort of...)
  - Salary increase: no help

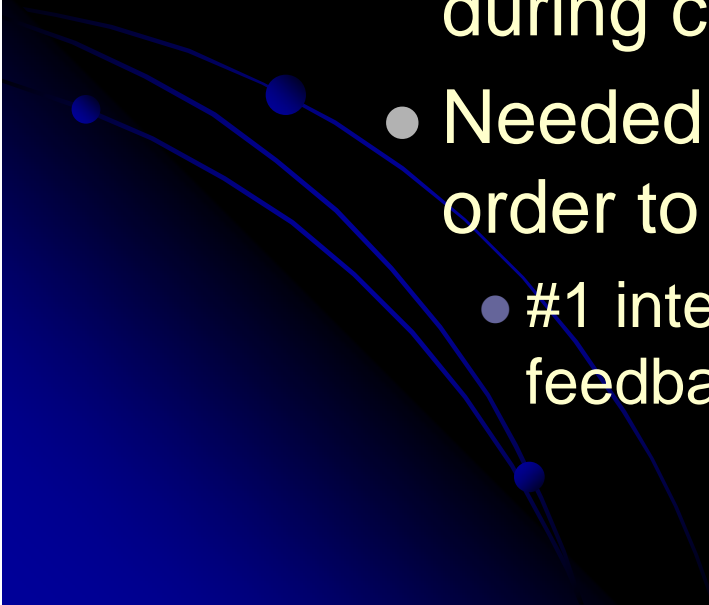
# What Was the “Real” Problem?

- Exit Interviews

- Seniority gap between 1 – 2 ½ years
- Why?
  - Too much overtime
  - Lack of shift selection

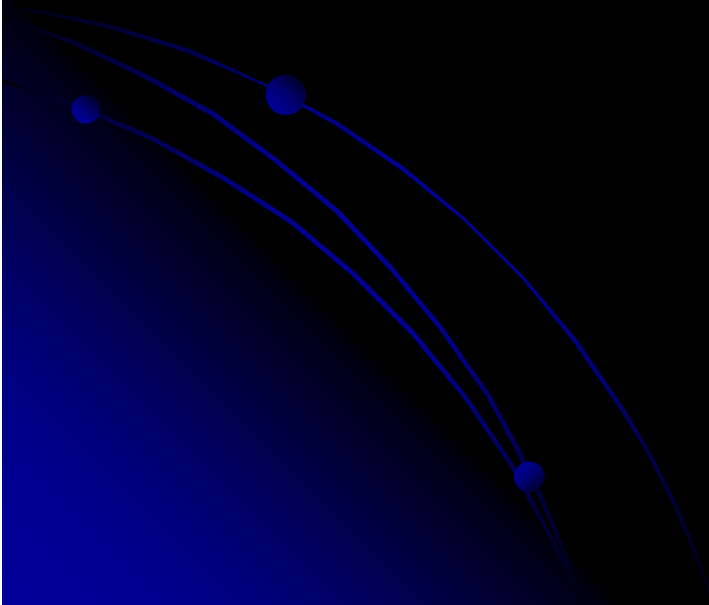
*Project RETAINS* → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when there is less overtime and OT is voluntary, not mandatory.

# What Was the “Real” Problem?

- Vision 2000: Organization Development Project
    - Follow up to previous OD project to improve Users service delivery during consolidation change project
    - Needed to solve internal issues in order to deliver better service
      - #1 internal issue = acceptance of feedback
- 

# Findings

- Shift selection process
- Overtime burden
- QI process changes



# Solutions

- Shift Rotation & Selection
  - Negotiated
    - 10's and 12's, Days and Nights
    - Rotation = Days vs. Nights; no more than 8 months on one, then off for 4 months, per year
    - 15 year employees exempt (but shifts may be unavailable)

*Project RETAINS* → Satisfaction with shift selection process is predictive of employee satisfaction.

# Solutions

- Shift Rotation & Selection
  - Negotiated
  - Shift Differentials
    - Up to \$5.00 per hour
    - \$3.00 per hour, 6 pm – 6 am
    - Additional \$2.00 per hour for weekend graveyard shifts, 1 am – 6 am, Saturday & Sunday
    - Total cost of weekend graveyard differential = \$5,200
    - Annual budget = \$5 million

# Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
  - Incentives
    - 2-step raises
    - Call Back = 3 hours, straight pay
    - On-Call = \$2 per hour
    - Bilingual = \$1.50 per hour
    - CTO = \$1.25 per hour
    - Instructor = \$1.00 per hour
    - CTO & Instructor = \$1.50 per hour
    - Law Enforcement Cross Training\* = \$1 per hour
    - Fire/EMS Cross Training\* = \$1 per hour
    - Retention Pay = 5% at beginning of 8<sup>th</sup> year

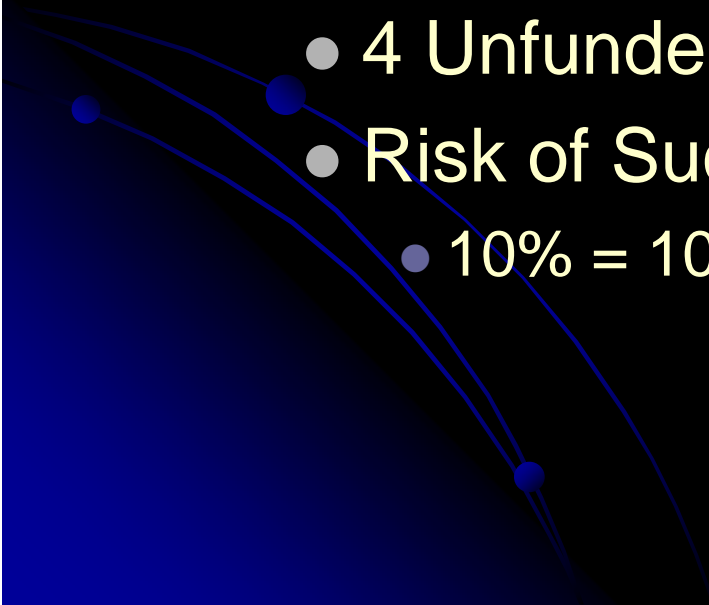
*Project RETAINS* → Job complexity and hourly base pay are predictive factors for employee retention.

# Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
- Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
  - Placement in Range
    - “...a new employee may be appointed at any step in the range...”
  - Sick Leave
    - “...be advanced up to 160 hours of sick leave upon their first day of employment.”
  - Vacation Accrual
    - “...accrue vacation time at an accelerated rate up to 160 hours annually in recognition of their service credit with a lateral agency.”



# Solutions

- Shift Rotation
  - Compensation Plan Changes
  - Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
  - **Permanent Over Hire**
    - 4 Unfunded Positions
    - Risk of Success
      - 10% = 10%
- 

# Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
- Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
- Permanent Over Hire
- **QI Process Changes**
  - Delivery of feedback
  - Meaningful rewards

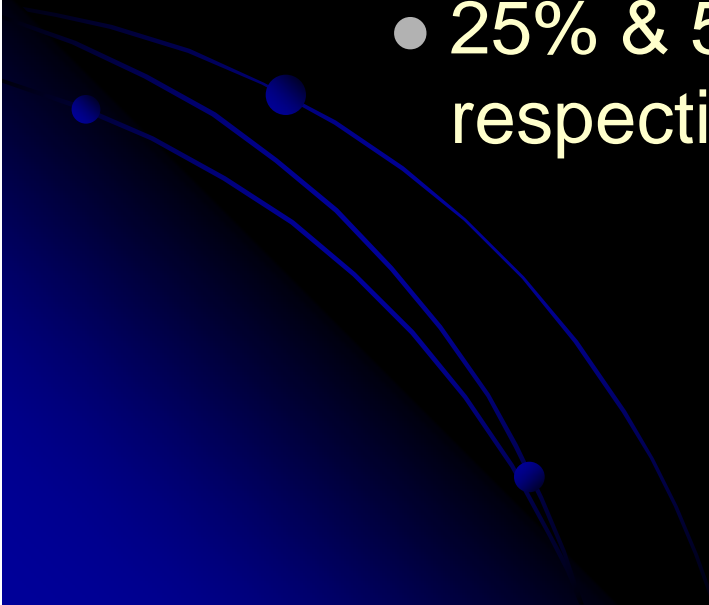
*Project RETAINS* → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees feel work is appreciated.

# Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
- Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
- Permanent Over Hire
- QI Process Changes
- Phased Training
  - 5 week entry-level Academy focused on systems & phones
  - Release to CTO program (6 weeks to 4 months)
  - 2 week Radio Academy focused on dispatching
  - Completion of CTO program
  - Release to Operations

*Project RETAINS* → Managers can increase retention and satisfaction by managing job training for success.

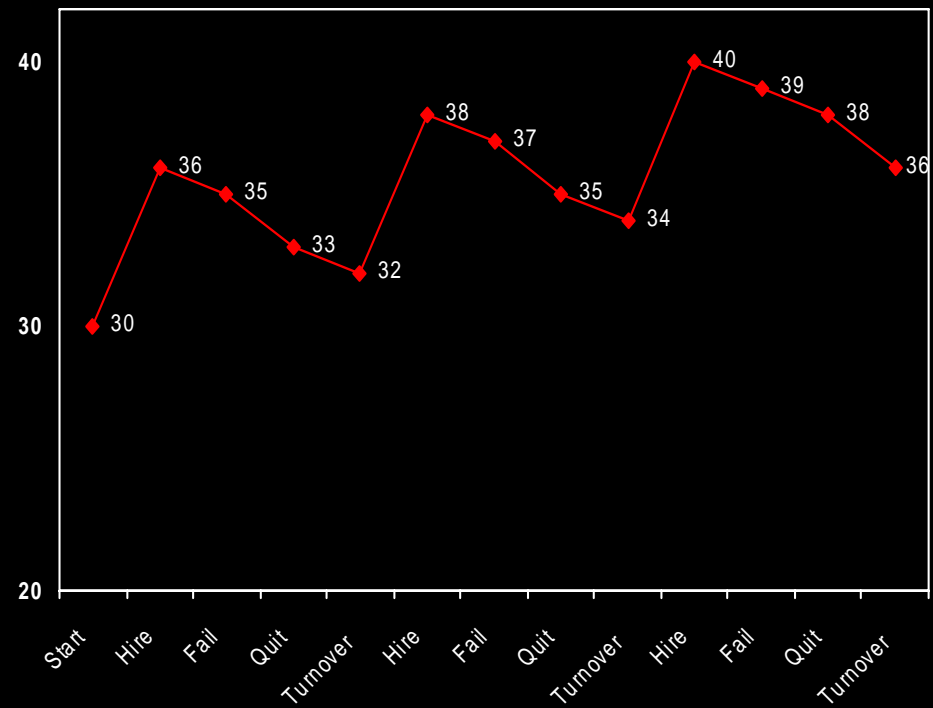
# July, 2001

- Implemented 3-year Recruitment & Retention Plan
    - 10 Dispatcher vacancies & 2.5 Dispatcher Assistant vacancies
    - 25% & 50% of authorized positions, respectively
- 

# July, 2001

- Implemented 3-year Recruitment & Retention Plan

- Continuous Hiring
- 3 Academies per year

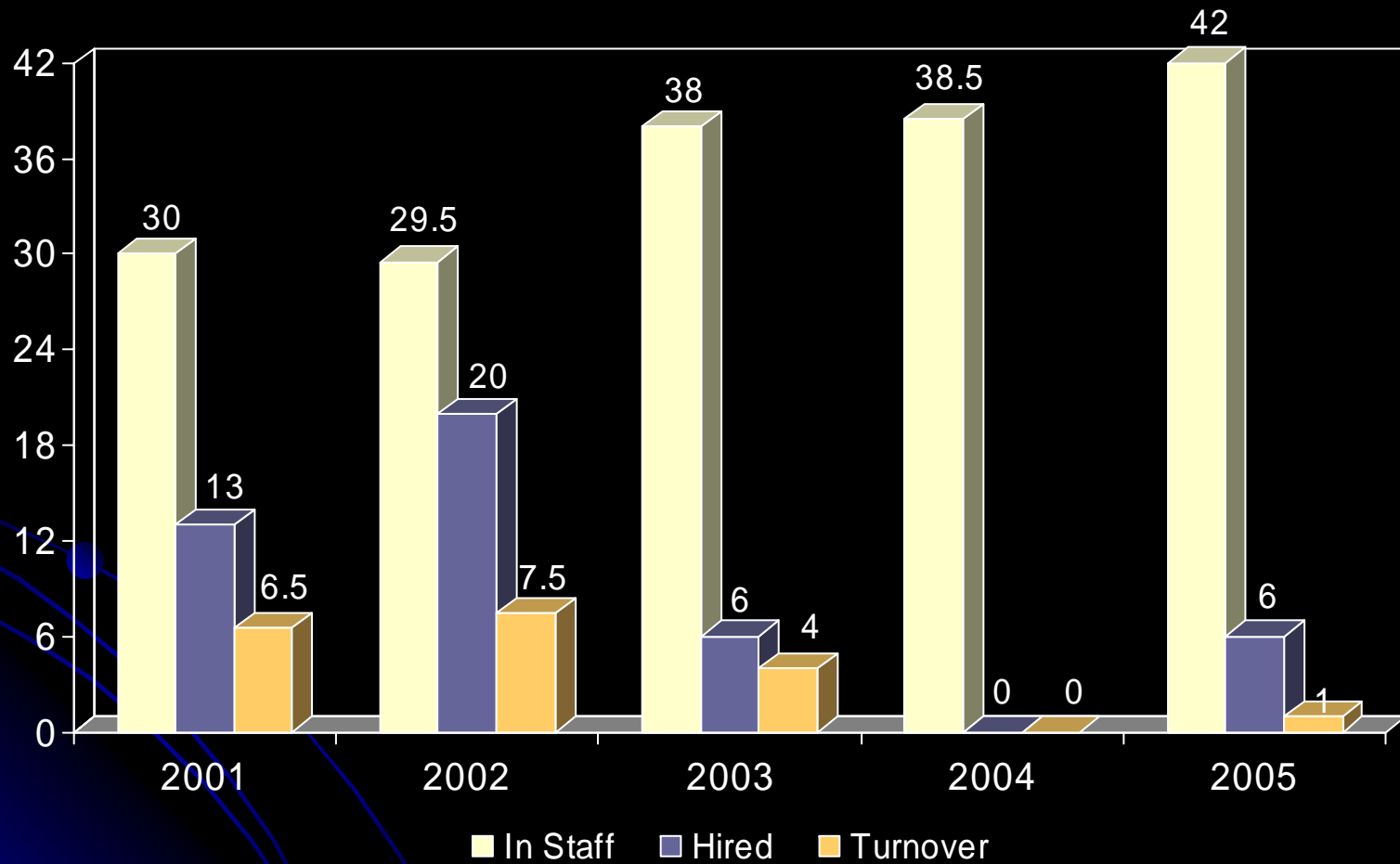


# July, 2001

- Implemented 3-year Recruitment & Retention Plan
  - Continuous Hiring
  - Improved Selection Process
    - Recruitment Team
    - Citizens' Academy
    - Revisited test score cut-offs
    - Background screening to front of process
    - Peer Review

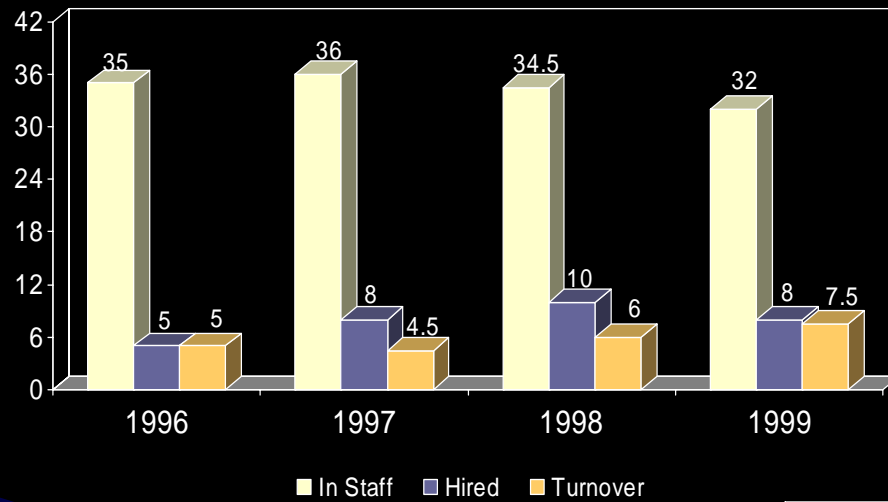
*Project RETAINS* → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees are satisfied with the screening process

# 2001-2005

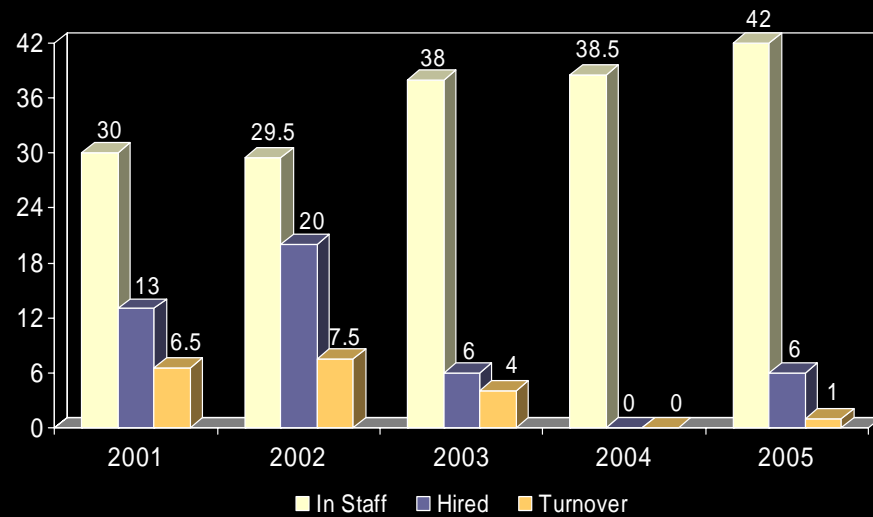


# Before & After

## 1996-1999



## 2001-2005

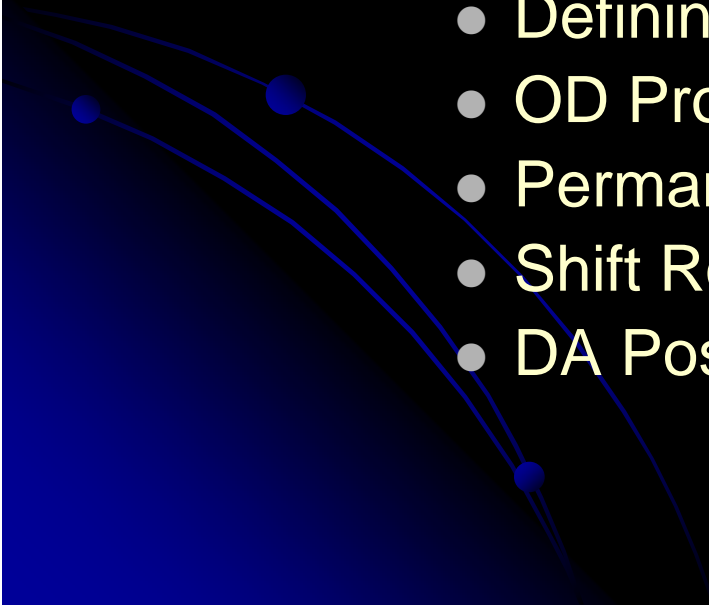




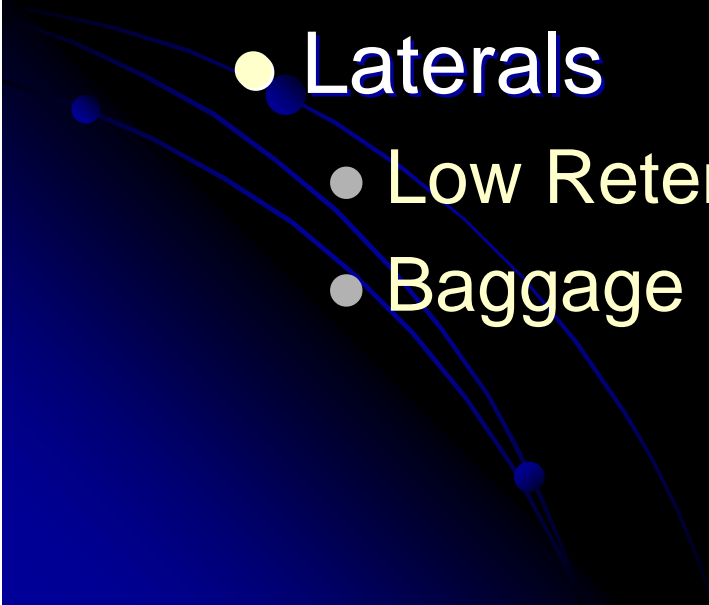
# Things That Worked

- Programmatic
  - Selection Process Changes
    - Recruitment Team
    - Citizens' Academy
    - Test scoring
    - Peer Review
  - QI Process Changes
  - Phased Training

# Things That Worked

- Programmatic
    - Selection process changes
    - QI process changes
    - Phased training
  - Organizational
    - Defining the Problem
    - OD Process
    - Permanent Over Hire
    - Shift Rotation
    - DA Positions (temporary solution)
- 

# Things That Didn't Work


- “New Stuff” fixes problems
  - Temporary over hire
  - Working faster & harder, not smarter
    - Just recruiting & hiring more
  - Laterals
    - Low Retention
    - Baggage
- 

# Where Are We Now?

- Overstaffed
- 1% turnover
- Entry level recruitment & Academy every other year

*Project RETAINS* → A center that is fully staffed (all authorized positions filled) is predictive of high employee retention.

# Byproducts of Success

- Organizational
    - Model for Other Organizations: SCMRS, ASA, Narrow Banding JPA
    - Employee Satisfaction
    - Stability of Workforce
    - Rotating Assignments (Admin. Seniors)
    - Labor/Management Relations
    - Cost Savings/Lower Overtime
    - Time off/ETO
- 

# Byproducts of Success

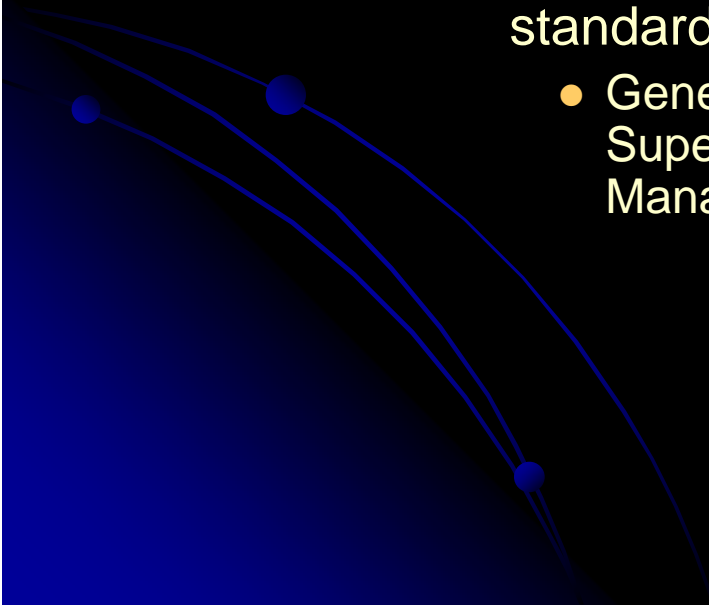
- Programmatic
  - Lower training success = keeping the best

CTO Program Performance

	Trainees	Success Rate	Retention Rate
FY 99/00	14	79%	60%
FY 00/01	21	81%	50%
FY 01/02	12	75%	77%
<b>FY 02/03</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>FY 03/04</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Project RETAINS* → Managers can increase retention and satisfaction by recruiting constantly and screening carefully to minimize turnover of new employees.

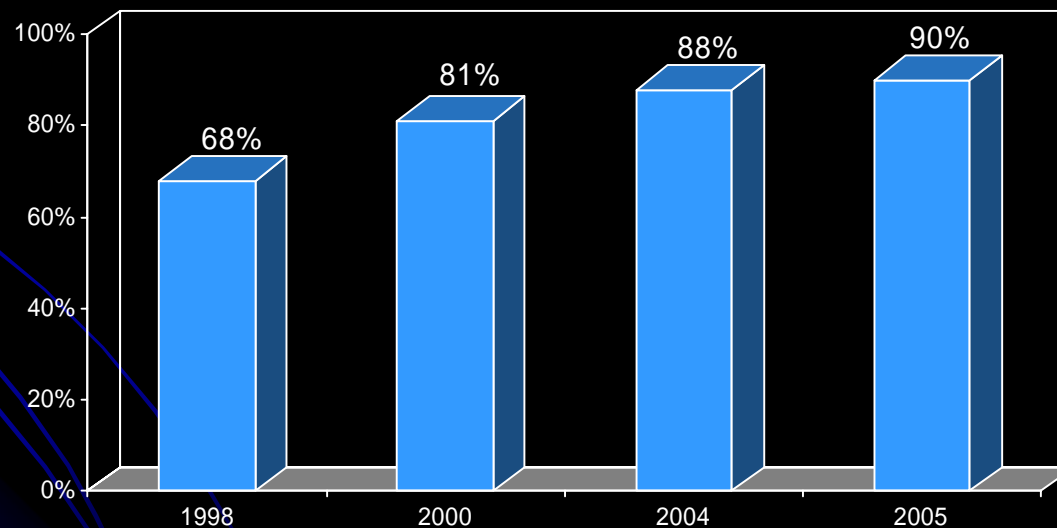
# Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
    - Lower training success = keeping the best
    - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
      - 13 employees directly participated in accreditation project
      - 11 employees participated in Panel Review (68 standards presented)
        - General Manager, Dispatcher II's & III's, Supervisors, Administrative Assistants, Managers
- 

# Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
  - Lower training success = keeping the best
  - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
  - Higher operational performance levels

Law Enforcement Call Taking

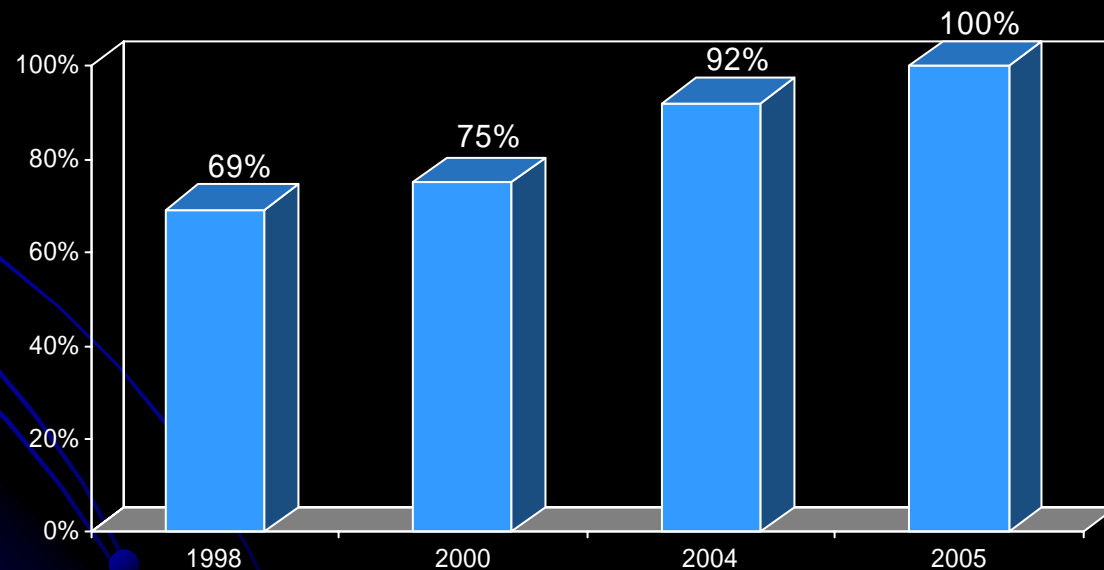




# Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
  - Lower training success = keeping the best
  - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
  - Higher operational performance levels

Fire/EMS Pre-Alerts



# Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
  - Lower training success = keeping the best
  - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
  - Higher operational performance levels
  - Benchmarking performance



*Project RETAINS* → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees rate overall performance of agency high.

# Questions

- Santa Cruz (CA) Consolidated Emergency Communications Center (SCCECC)
  - [www.sccecc.org](http://www.sccecc.org)
- Michael J. McDougall, General Manager
  - [mike@sccecc.org](mailto:mike@sccecc.org)
  - 831-471-1001
- Lisa M. Sullivan, Support Services Manager
  - [lisa@sccecc.org](mailto:lisa@sccecc.org)
  - 831-471-1003