

# Alarm Verification and Response: A New Paradigm Through an ANSI Standard Developed in Partnership Between Public Safety and the Alarm Industry

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Every day, multiple times a day, multiple times an hour, the call from an alarm Central Station reporting an intrusion alarm requiring law enforcement response is received and dispatched by Emergency Communications Centers (ECCs). Often, these calls come with limited information that can guide law enforcement response priority. ECCs are tasked with dispatching a response to the alarm without having important critical details to aid response logistics and provide officer safety information. Telecommunicators are often unable to answer questions that would provide a safer and more strategic police response. Public safety is frustrated, as is the alarm industry. A new approach is needed and essential.

The problem is clear. There is no **standard** on how the myriad of alarm monitoring centers across the nation provide information to the ECCs. Supplemental information may indicate the severity of alarms and provide situational awareness for officers. An alarm

is not just an alarm. It has many intricacies and complexities, which can mean life or death to occupants and responding officers. **Standard** protocols that can be implemented to provide timely information to responding officers are ESSENTIAL! **Standards** that can be trained and implemented in alarm company Central Stations, ECCs, law enforcement in-service programs, and police academies across the country are critical! Technology developments provide us with the opportunities to create a new paradigm of alarm protocols through a public-private PARTNERSHIP! Public Safety needs this and has for many, many years.



David Holl

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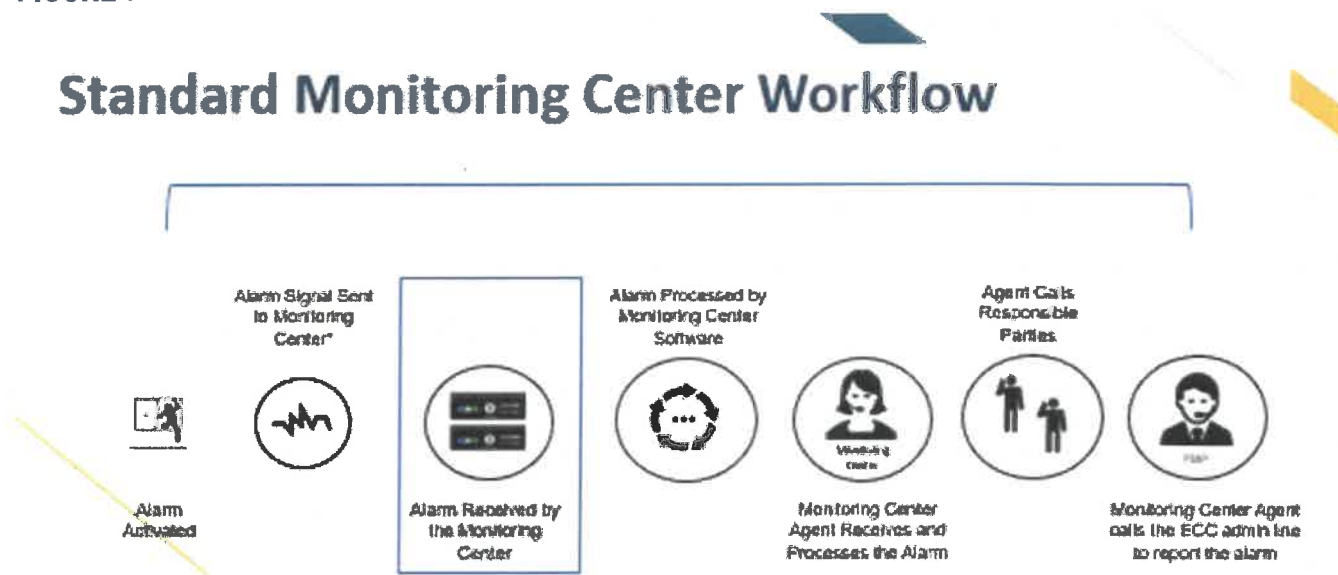


Bob Finney

**ABOUT PPVAR:** The Partnership for Priority Verified Alarm Response (PPVAR) was established to promote the value of verification and validation of alarm events during the emergency response process using video, audio, and other emerging technologies along with proven best practices. For more information, visit our website [www.ppvar.org](http://www.ppvar.org) or contact [Communications@ppvar.org](mailto:Communications@ppvar.org)

The current standard Central Station monitoring center workflow is limited and linear, as illustrated below:

**FIGURE 1**



This current workflow does not take advantage of the plethora of data available from sensors transmitted from the alarm site. It also does not value-add the technological ability of algorithms and artificial intelligence models that can rapidly analyze and report the data.

To solve the problem, The Monitoring Association (TMA), as an authorized ANSI standards developer, and the Partnership for Priority Verified Alarm Response (PPVAR) partnered with public safety and began developing an alarm ANSI standard. That standard is designed for Central Stations to evaluate sensor data received from an alarmed premise and score that data into levels to better determine verification, validity, and response priority of the alarm.

The standard, known as the 'TMA-AVS-01 Scoring Standard', was initiated by a committee formed from the alarm industry, the Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL), public safety (including law enforcement), and the ECC community.

The foundational argument for alarm scoring was that alarm scores could be transmitted to law enforcement through ECCs in a standardized manner to minimize additional workflows. Alarm scores will further allow law enforcement to take advantage of the data without the burden of receiving and analyzing it themselves. Additionally, the standard will enable processes for data relative to a 'Call for Service' to be transmitted or 'pulled' by an ECC on demand, especially through proven services like ASAP to PSAP.

Sensor innovation driven by technological advances has raised the quantity and quality of data collected by alarm systems. The increasing use of data by Public Safety has had a positive impact on the services they provide to the public. Datasets generated by commercial sources, such as the alarm industry, can be a valuable data source to law enforcement. Real-time data from security providers will improve situational awareness and first responder safety.

With this partnership, alarm monitoring Central Stations can use the data to estimate the verification and validity of an alarm event, enabling the creation of standardized "alarm scoring" metrics. Calls for Service to Emergency Call Centers/Public Safety Answering Points that include a standardized scoring metric can assist public safety departments that opt-in to the program. Similar to how vehicle Location Accuracy and Crash Severity scoring are used, improvements to alarm response policies may be realized.

Adding alarm event scoring to information provided to the ECC from an alarm Central Station would provide additional data to enhance available dispatch information to responding law enforcement. The TMA-AVS-01 workflow is illustrated on page 35.

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PENNSYLVANIA CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

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