

► Bulawayo City Council



Bulawayo City Council's (BCC) call centre was awarded the Service Excellence Award in the public sector, local authorities and utilities category at a ceremony held on 5th October 2012 in Harare.

In making the award to the city, the Contact Centre Association of Zimbabwe (Caaz) noted that Bulawayo's customer service initiatives were considered outstanding in the local authorities' category.

The Service Excellence Awards is organised and managed by Caaz in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Consumer Council of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority as part of the international Customer Service week celebrations.

Bulawayo, the second largest city in Zimbabwe and its industrial and commercial centre, is the first municipality to launch a call centre service to provide a centralised system for receiving customer complaints, responding with feedback and allowing management to track the performance of services with the aim of improving response times.

The Council's call centre started operating in August 2012, receiving water and sewer faults, and rolled out a month later to include fire and ambulance operations.



As at November 2012 it had received 3,400 calls involving water and sanitation, 5,290 ambulance calls and eighty-eight fire calls.

The call centre is fully equipped with state of the art PABX and two-way radio equipment for instant, reliable communications and is the first of its kind in Zimbabwe.

The Kenwood NEXEDGE® based digital two way radio system was designed and supplied by Kenwood's South Africa distributor, Global Communications and installed by Instalite Contracting. The system employs a ZETRON system infrastructure and has the capability of providing direct radio to radio communication, texting/paging as well as GPS integration.

Base stations have been sited at various Council properties to provide full coverage of the City of Bulawayo while NEXEDGE® mobile radios have also been installed on fire engines, ambulances and other service vehicles. Calls coming into the call centre can be radioed directly to relevant water and waste engineers, fire personnel or ambulance technicians for rapid response. The PABX equipment has VOIP capabilities and is integrated to the radio equipment allowing phone calls to be routed directly to radios where necessary.

With the use of the rapidly growing Bulawayo City Council GPS system and maps, locations for all radios can be detected at the touch of a button giving management the ability to direct resources faster and more efficiently, especially important in the case of emergencies.