

Me....a dispatcher of 15 years in Williston...I've seen a lot of changes over the years. I am very worried about what's going to take place in the next few months. I've felt the after effects of consolidation years ago. Funny thing is....many who worked as dispatchers before the first consolidation have said they too were told consolidation was going to save money....however, they all have told me they worked little to no overtime. But after consolidation, they all worked overtime every week. Easy to believe considering there is never a week where I have worked only 40 hours. UNLESS, it's my vacation! I am annoyed at the fact that the powers above refuse to acknowledge that question when asked "how are we saving money with this consolidation"? In 15 years, we here in Williston have been FULL STAFF for MAYBE a TOTAL of 2 years, if that! It's a high stress job with a revolving door. One of the reasons I am annoyed....my fear, and there is NO doubt in my mind that this WILL happen. Let's say this (an example)....we gain the 8 positions at Williston that "they" say we are gaining (keep in mind, we are already down 3 positions, thus all the overtime), giving us a total of 11 positions that are vacant. We get (and this is just a number, no truth known to it), we are lucky enough to get 3 dispatchers from Derbym who are already trained. Now we are only down 8 positions. Right now there is a "hiring freeze" for dispatch. So no one can hire anyone now to start the ball rolling. Even if there was no "freeze" it takes a minimum of 2 months to hire someone for this job as there is an extensive background check done, credit check, fingerprinting etc...then, if you're lucky enough to find even 3 people out of 100 applicants, it's a MINIMUM of 6 months (some take as long as 9 months) to train someone so they are a stand alone dispatcher. Even after 6 months they are very green and need a lot of assistance. So....we are going to be down 8 positions, and having to train a lot of new people all at the same time. Keep in mind, being down that many positions opens up a much larger amount of overtime that MUST be filled. This isn't the kind of job where we can just run short staffed and say "Oh well, no one can answer the radio or phones today". It doesn't work like that...if it did, people would be hurt and or god forbid, killed. The way it works is the vacant shifts MUST be filled before anyone can be approved a day off for that same day. SO, will all the overtime that will need to be filled, a ton of the leave we all ask for will be denied. Yup, sorry folks, no vacations....or sure, you can get the 1st 2 days you want off, but days 3 and 4 you have to work, but you can have day 5 off. WOW, thanks! Yes folks, we get denied. Many of us will get ordered to work more overtime. I've been ordered many times. I can remember one summer where we were getting ordered weekly. We can be ordered to work our day(s) off, or to work 12 hours vs 8 etc or more.... When you are ordered, you work it, or you have no job. Period. You don't get a choice. So...now, people won't get approved their time off, already be working overtime, and then on top of that, being ordered to work even more overtime. Moral is going to sink so low....so even the good workers you have here busting their back sides will be getting burnt out (more burnt out than

the norm). There will start to be more sick leave as people are going to get run down, therefore creating a chain reaction....they get sick...and even if they're not sick, they only way they will get some time off is to call out sick, so that will happen a lot more as well. I've seen this happen. It has in the past, and it will again....very soon. That's not even talking about the fact that we (for real) are losing 2 more spares (who currently work full time hours) in the next 3 months, and 1 full timer may be leaving to work the admin position, so add on 3 more vacant positions yet again, leaving us back at 11 VACANT POSITIONS!!!! Then add on the fact that even more will jump ship from being so tired, so stressed, so unappreciated, and seeing no light at the end of the tunnel. Does NO ONE who CAN make a decision on consolidation get this???????? It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see this for the future. Oh yea, and those of us who are here to pick up the slack will also be training others at the same time. Then we have to PRAY that the few we are able to hire make it, and or like it. There is talk of making our training program shorter, as some from command staff think it's too long. Well, I have trained at least 20 people in my 15 years, and I've had TWO dispatchers who were exceptionally quick learners...but even with that, they still were not ready to be on their own before 5-6 months. So...now you wanna make our training program shorter. How does this NOT jeopardize the safety of the officers and the public???? This is not the kind of job that you can just "wing it" and "do the best you can". Emergencies don't work that way. I am disgusted by this. I realize, I am one of the lucky ones who's job is safe, so for that I should be, and am thankful. However.....at what cost????? When you lose that much experience and replace it with all new people, it's not good. It makes the job that much harder. This is opening up a much larger amount of liability. For the public, for the officers, for US dispatchers. You can only ask a person, a human, to work so much, to do so much, to sleep so little, and to operate without burning out and snapping! Anyone up the chain who denies that this will happen...well shame on you, because you are lying to yourself and all of us around you. Really gives off the vibe that we (dispatchers) are the red headed step kids that no one cares about. Who has our back???? Well, all I can say is Best of luck to all of us AWESOME dispatchers who deserve so much more respect than this! End of rant....

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Sent from my HTC