



William Gruber

On business

Melamed on call for 911 overhaul

Leo Melamed, who spearheaded the development of electronic trading systems at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, has been asked by Mayor Richard M. Daley to overhaul the city's 911 emergency communications system.

Melamed will be an unpaid consultant to the project. He'll oversee a team of telecommunications experts from various city departments, plus "two or three" technical people from the Merc. They also will work free on the project, he says.

The 911 system has come under widespread criticism recently because of alleged delays by the police and fire departments in responding to emergency calls.

"Our 911 system is probably as antiquated as any in the U.S.," says Melamed. "It needs a complete overhaul. The mayor said he wanted to get some people like me with expertise from the private sector to help out."

Melamed describes the project as "a big undertaking" and says he can't estimate how long it will take.

But it won't be as complicated as Globex, a worldwide electronic trading system that Melamed is creating for the Merc and the Chicago Board of Trade. Melamed, who is chairman emeritus of the Merc and heads a trading firm, is also chairman of Globex Corp.