

Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center



2015 Annual Report

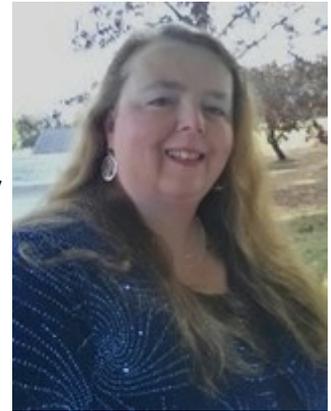


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Chief's Introduction

It is my pleasure to present this Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center (ECC) 2015 Annual Report. In March 2015, Chief of Emergency Communications Officer, Pat Shumate, retired and I transitioned to the position. The men and women in our department serve as first responders together with Emergency Medical Services, Fire, and Law Enforcement personnel to save lives, protect property and stop crime. It is my anticipation that you will find the included facts about our department informative and inclusive.



Over the course of the year, we have increased our staffing by eight (8) Probationary Communications Officers. Other than the Chief of Emergency Communications promotion, there have been many other promotions : Communications Training Coordinator, two Communications Team Supervisors, five Communications Training Officers, and two Communications Officers.

During the second quarter, we purchased Keyboard, Video and Mouse (KVM) switches for each position in the ECC to allow staff to be able to control multiple computers from one keyboard and mouse. We also added two additional consoles and we participated in a Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Pre-Mock Assessment. Next, during the third quarter, we participated in a CALEA Mock Assessment, upgraded to Motorola MCC7500 radio consoles, and we tested and deployed one major carrier, AT&T Mobility, to TXT2911. Finally, during the fourth quarter, we transitioned from MEMEX to Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LInX), began using Netmail archiving for email, upgraded to the "WORKS" purchasing card program and conducted our annual Citizen Alerting test. During this period, we also tested and deployed other cellular telephone carriers to TXT2911: Sprint, US Cellular, T Mobile, and Verizon Wireless.

The evolution of emergency calling beyond the traditional voice 9-1-1 call has caused the recognition that our current E9-1-1 system is no longer able to support the needs of the future. Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) networks replace the existing narrowband, circuit switched 9-1-1 networks which carry only voice and very limited data. Currently, there are difficulties in supporting such things as text messages for emergencies, images and video (including support for American Sign Language users), and easy access to additional data such as telematics data, building plans and medical information over a common data network.

My goal is to increase staffing in the center and to retain the staff that we currently have to bring us into the next phase of NG9-1-1.

Aleta G. Coleman

Chief of Emergency Communications

Department Overview

MISSION

Members of the Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center serve as first responders together with Emergency Medical Services, Fire, and Law Enforcement personnel to save lives, protect property, and stop crime.

VALUES

Preserve and Advance the Values of the Republic

Preserve life, individual freedoms, and justice for all persons

Improve the Quality of Community Life

Understand, respond to, and encourage expansion of community values

Safety

Ensure a safe and healthy work environment for public safety personnel while mitigating injury and loss of life within our service community

Compassion

Respect the dignity of all persons

Professionalism

Engage in behavior reflective of the integrity of the profession

Pride

Demonstrate care and ability as public safety employees

Teamwork

Strive to cultivate effective public and private sector working relationships

Commitment

Devote time and attention to effective job performance

Excellence

Endeavor to meet or exceed national public safety standards

Quality Service

Exhibit the highest service quality in emergency communications

Goals and Objectives

GOALS

Provide our service community with emergency responses, education, and referrals.

Educate Communications Officers to better assist the public.

Improve and contribute to our profession as a whole.

OBJECTIVES

Service Community

Emergency Responses

	Target	Actual
Average 911 Call Answer Times	5 seconds	4.831 seconds
Average Administrative Call Answer Times	15 seconds	1.129 seconds
Individual Call Taker's Calls by Platoon	14%	10.4%
Average Call Processing Time	1 min 20 sec	1 min 22 sec

Educational Outreach

	Target	Actual
Community Events	15	13
Citizen Observers	20	23
911 Center Tours	4	9

The ECC biennial public service announcement was completed with assistance from local radio.

Referrals

	Target	Actual
Fire and Rescue Calls for Service	14,000	14,088
Law Enforcement Calls for Service	90,000	75,882
Western Virginia Water Authority	4000	4,159

Goals and Objectives

OBJECTIVES

Communications Officers Education

Carrie Eakin and Chelsea Hogan were selected to attend the International APCO Conference.

1 individual was referred for remedial training during this fiscal year.

50 refresher courses on a variety of topics were offered to all employees.

Professional Contributions

	Target	Actual
Professional 911 Boards Service	1	3
Professional 911 Certifications	2	2
National Training Officer Certifications	6	9
State Instructor Certifications	2	0

Roanoke County Criminal Justice Academy consolidated their physical location with Roanoke City to enhance learning experiences during this fiscal year.

PROGRESS REPORT

The Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center is pleased to report that we have met or exceeded our objectives in the following areas:

Our average call answer times far exceeded our target. The outreach coordinator position has allowed us to meet the majority of our educational outreach targets. During this fiscal year, we changed procedures to place all responding apparatus from various agencies on the same call to improve communication; therefore, we met the majority of our referral targets. We far exceeded our targets for refresher training of communications officers through the implementation of on-shift training through PowerDMS.

We have implemented the following changes to ensure superior performance next fiscal year:

The Quality Assurance errors trended downward during this fiscal year. We attribute this agency-wide improvement to an increase in communication of documentation and progressive disciplinary actions. Due to decreased staffing, we were unable to meet some of our targets.

We are continuously accepting applications to attract more qualified candidates.

Specialized Assignment Review

CALEA Manager

The CALEA Accreditation Manager manages the CALEA assessment process and the departmental written directives system. The purpose of the position is to obtain the CALEA reaccreditation. The position has expanded to include Quality Assurance while maintaining CALEA documentation in PowerDMS. We are on task to complete the upcoming CALEA reaccreditation.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Manager

The CPR Manager oversees the ECC American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) training center and ensures minimum CPR standards for emergency communications services are met. The position provides classroom instruction and has obtained agency certification as a Training Center. We are now able to independently certify our employees.

Computer-Aided Dispatch Administrator

The CAD Administrator provides routine maintenance, updates, training, and reporting for the departmental CAD system. During this fiscal year, the position has been impacted by staffing needs. The position works closely with other Public Safety personnel to improve interoperability. We are exploring different options to ensure that information is updated in CAD in a timely manner.

Emergency Medical Dispatch Manager

The EMD Manager ensures minimum EMD standards for emergency communications services are met and reports on data collected from EMD calls. During this fiscal year, the position began providing monthly statistics to the platoon supervisors to identify individual performance trends. During the majority of this fiscal year, calls were evaluated and information was retained for APCO compliance.

Specialized Assignment Review

Outreach Coordinator

The Outreach Coordinator manages departmental education of our service community, news media contact, and recruitment. During this fiscal year, the position has been impacted by staffing needs. The position works closely with Roanoke County Police Crime Prevention and Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Public Education. Despite a dramatic increase in public education activities, the position has yet to impact our recruitment.

Quality Assurance Manager

The QA Manager ensures minimum standards for emergency communications services are met and exemplary service is recognized. During this fiscal year, the position has been impacted by staffing needs. The position has developed paperless reporting documentation. We are considering additional staffing to review more calls for service.

Technical Contact

The Technical Contact tests new software, attends informational meetings, tracks Department computer inventory, and submits System Access Forms (SAFs) for employee status changes. The Technical Contact serves as the first point of contact for technical problems, acting as a liaison to Roanoke County Information Technology. The position has encountered challenges due to twelve (12) hour shifts as well as staffing needs.

Training Coordinator

The Communications Training Coordinator manages the new hire and continuing education training programs. The position inputs training records into an electronic system allowing for automated reporting. The electronic system allows employees to complete training while working a shift which has greatly reduced the need for training overtime. We have increased training hours.

Agency Improvement Reviews

GRIEVANCES

Summary by Resolution Level	
<i>Meeting with Step 1 Official</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Meeting with Top Level Official</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Meeting with County Administrator</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Panel Hearing</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Circuit Court Petition</i>	<i>0</i>

Analysis of Actions

The review of grievances revealed that none were filed during this fiscal year.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 concerning Disciplinary Actions and Internal Investigations was revised in January 2015 and an additional review was conducted in June 2015. Chapter 7 of the Roanoke County Handbook, which concerns grievances, was reviewed in June 2015. We expect a revised handbook to be published in the next fiscal year. We reviewed Form B that is used to file grievances and recommended no changes to Roanoke County Human Resources staff.

Conclusions

In our review of policies and procedures, it was apparent that the procedure is rarely used.

Because the procedure is uncommon, employees are not familiar with the process. As a result, platoon training was offered on the grievance process and grievance form in Fall 2014 and Spring 2015. Refresher training on grievances was provided to all employees in Summer 2015 through our PowerDMS software.

Agency Improvement Reviews

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

Summary by Disciplinary Action

Supervisory Referral—0
Counseling / Oral Reprimand—0
Written Reprimand—0
Suspension—1
Demotion / Transfer—0
Dismissal / Resignation—1

Summary by Conclusions

Unfounded—0
Not Sustained—1
Exonerated—0
Sustained—1

Analysis of Actions

The first internal investigation neither exonerated the Communications Officer nor sustained the complaint. However, the investigation concluded that the CO would be required to obtain verification of unavailable status from a supervisor prior to leaving a console in the future. No further complaints of this nature were received. However, a second investigation was initiated a few weeks later for a 911 call mishandled by the same employee. Management suspended the employee until the internal investigation was concluded. Upon conclusion, the employee resigned in lieu of termination. No other liability exposure was found during the course of these investigations.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 concerning Disciplinary Actions and Internal Investigations was revised in January 2015 and an additional review was conducted in June 2015. The Internal Investigation Advisement and Conclusion forms were revised in March 2015.

Conclusions

No internal investigations had been conducted for several years so management received refresher training regarding internal investigations in January 2015 to ensure adherence to policy. Internal Investigation training was offered to all employees in Fall 2014 on their platoons and Summer 2015 through our PowerDMS software.

Agency Improvement Reviews

LIABILITY EXPOSURE REPORTS

Summary by Risk Category

Training Deficiencies—7

Failure of Policy—3

Inattention to Detail—20

Other—14

Analysis of Actions

All of the training deficiencies and the majority of the inattention to detail errors were minor and corrected through informal individualized refresher training. The three areas where a policy failure was identified were reviewed by the Interagency Team. ECC Management revised the appropriate policies to prevent future issues.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 2 was reviewed in June 2015 regarding Liability Exposure Reports. The liability exposure form was revised in March 2015 based on feedback from supervisory staff.

Conclusions

Supervisory training on liability exposure form completion was offered to platoon supervisors in March 2015. Liability Exposure training was provided to all employees in June 2015.



Agency Improvement Reviews

RISK MANAGEMENT

Summary of Incidents

Number of Reported Incidents—0

Issues / Conditions Affecting Risk

In 2013, Roanoke County Unified Hostile Committee was formed. The committee was tasked with improving communication and multi agency responses to public safety events. The Emergency Communications Center continues to participate in multiple table top exercises throughout the year to ensure all supervisory staff are comfortable with incident command.

All new employees participate in Workplace Violence Training through Roanoke County Human Resources. This training provides clear categories of unacceptable behavior and procedures for employees to follow. All current employees have been educated on Roanoke County's zero tolerance policy for workplace violence and harassment.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Worker's Compensation

Roanoke County maintains its commitment to employee safety and recently hired, Safety Officer, Matthew Ledford. The Safety Officer has scheduled an annual review of our facility to ensure compliance with facility safety and security. The annual review will evaluate the following topics: First Aid, Fire Protection, Building Security, Machinery and Equipment, Materials Storage, Safety: Policy and Procedures, Hazards, Illumination and Wiring, Physical Facility, Housekeeping, Vehicles, Tools and Regulatory Administrative Issues.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Liability

In 2015, the Emergency Communications Center participated in an ISO rating review. The ISO rating included: Emergency Reporting, Telecommunicators Education, and Dispatch Circuits.

The Emergency Communications Center received a favorable review in all categories.



CALEA Accreditation

2015 GOLD STANDARD REACCREDITATION

Initial External Review—December 2014

Three Roanoke County police officers with accreditation experience conducted a review of 50 files. They evaluated policies, procedures, and proofs of adherence to CALEA standards.

Mock Assessment—January 2015

Six accreditation managers and CALEA assessors reviewed all agency information for compliance with CALEA standards. A Gold Standard CALEA assessor provided mock interviews with all Communications Officers to ensure a full understanding of the CALEA on-site process.

On-site Assessment—July 2015

Our agency will complete a gold standard on-site evaluation by two CALEA assessors at the beginning of the next fiscal year. We elected to apply for a gold standard assessment, as this style of assessment focuses on interaction with agency employees and quality improvement.

Our agency's application for a gold standard assessment was approved in January 2015.

CALEA Commission Review—November 2015

Our Assistant Director and Accreditation Manager will appear before a CALEA Commissioner

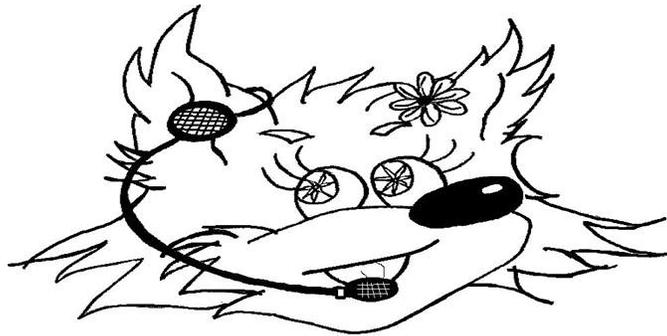
Review Panel next fiscal year to speak on behalf of our agency. The Commissioners will determine if the agency will receive full reaccreditation until our next review in Summer 2016 and our next on-site assessment in July 2019.



Community Outreach

PUBLIC EDUCATION

9,056 citizens were reached by the Outreach Program this year. Media contacts included RvTv, K92 Radio, and the Roanoke Times newspaper.



The Emergency Communications Center reached a variety of age groups this year. The Outreach Coordinator directed eighteen 911 public education presentations at several off-site locations. The Outreach Coordinator and other Emergency Communications Center recruiters spoke to elementary age children during their school day. They also made contact with local families at Tanglewood Mall's annual Tons of Fun event as well as several Salem Red Sox baseball games. By participating in TRIAD group meetings through the Roanoke County Libraries, the Emergency Communications Center staff built relationships with the elderly.

The Outreach Program had several successes this year. The Outreach Coordinator developed new educational materials, including a BINGO game and Ferra Fox coloring book. Emergency Communications Management obtained a Roanoke County vehicle for the transport of outreach materials, including the Ferra Fox costume, to various events. The Outreach Program expanded its focus with participation in local high school and area college career fairs.

The Outreach Program is committed to rising above budget challenges. Monetary concerns include office supplies, ECC-branded items, personnel overtime for event attendance, transportation costs for events, biennial registration for the national 911 education conference, and the purchase of a 911 call simulator for use with elementary schoolchildren. The Communications and Information Technology Department is committed to addressing these concerns through realignment of budget priorities and pursuit of grant monies. The program has partnered with other departments for reduced cost in job advertisements. The Outreach Coordinator has posted the Ferra Fox coloring book online to reduce printing costs.

Community Outreach

CITIZEN OBSERVERS

The Emergency Communications Center allows citizens to gain a realistic view of 911 daily operations. In prior years, the Emergency Communications Center focused on inviting Town of Vinton police and Roanoke County fire and rescue officers for observation periods. This fiscal year, the Emergency Communications Center provided this opportunity to 3 Roanoke County Sheriff's Office deputies. The Emergency Communications Center continues to assign applicants for observation periods prior to a final offer of employment. The citizen observer program is a vital community education tool.

CENTER TOURS

Guided tours of the Emergency Communications Center were provided to a variety of groups in our local service community. Civic group tours included Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops with their adult chaperones. Individuals with special needs, including Project Lifesaver participants, elderly, and handicap people, received tours as well. Tours were provided to 911 professionals in other Virginia agencies during the Public Safety Communications Conference and Exposition.

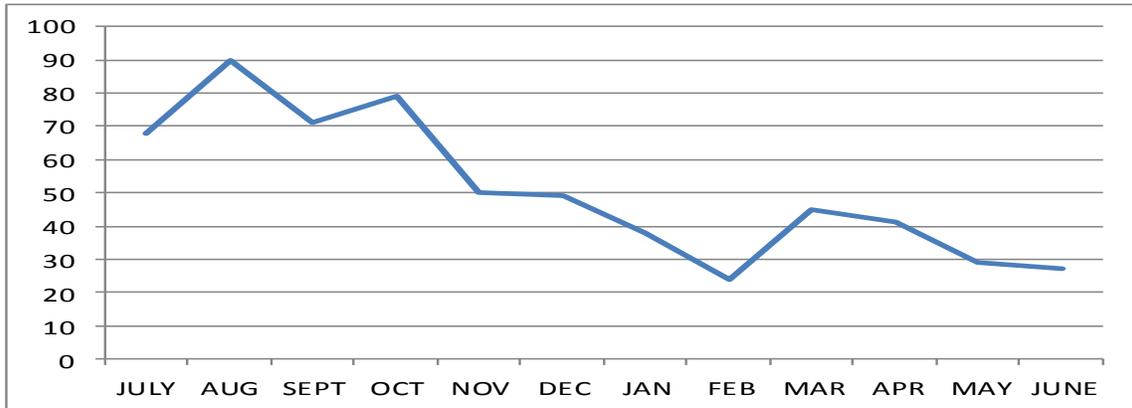


Emergency Medical Dispatch

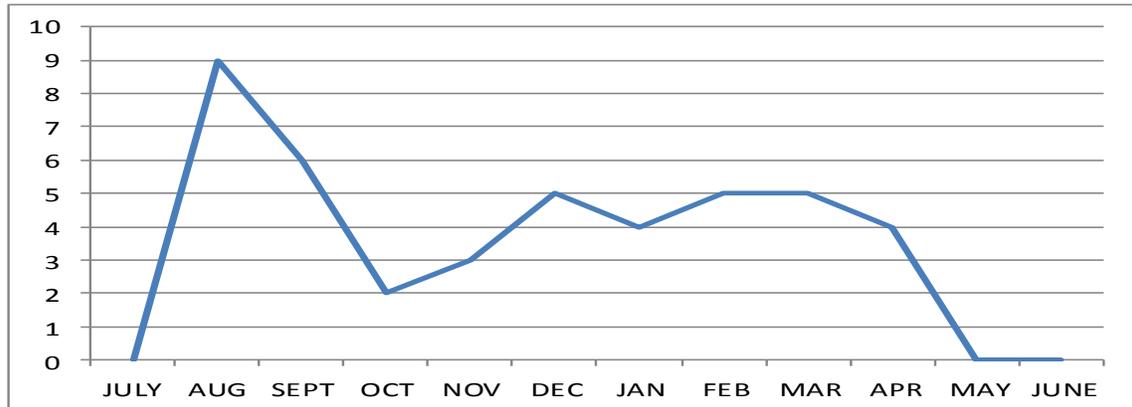
QUALITY ASSURANCE

EMD Instructions were provided 875 times during this fiscal year. 291 calls were reviewed.

Average Number of Errors 50.9



Total Number of Serious Errors 43



TRAINING

6 Probationary Communications Officers completed EMD certification this fiscal year with instruction by CO Emily Totten. In November 2014, CTS Roy Davis provided refresher training to all Communications Officers regarding EMD for unconscious patients. CTO Lauren Oliveira completed Advanced Medical Life Support Training in April 2015, to become an EMD instructor. EMD instructors have taught a minimum of 12 hours this year to maintain their certification.

Employee Awards

PROBATIONARY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER OF THE YEAR



Chris White pays attention to detail and strives to do his best. Chris was recognized for a call involving a suspicious vehicle with the door hanging open. The officers were unable to find the owner's information. From the owner's address on his concealed weapons permit, which didn't match the vehicle registration or the driver's license, Chris was able to contact another jurisdiction and track down a valid phone number for the individual. If it weren't for Chris thinking outside the box, this individual may not have been tracked down for several days because he was a truck driver out of the state.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Carrie Eakin was individually recognized in June for her professionalism on a working structure fire. There were several different tasks to be accomplished along with heavy radio traffic. Carrie remained very calm, clear and concise in her radio traffic. She was again recognized in October, when she was filled in as a trainer and received a call from a kayaker who had found a body face down on the rocks. Carrie notified her co-workers of the situation and took over the call. This didn't stop her from dispatching several other calls while still on the phone with the caller.



COMMUNICATIONS TEAM SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR



Chase Ferguson has done an outstanding job with handling difficulties in schedules, high stress calls and maintaining moral on his shift. He regularly gets feedback from every member of his platoon and constantly seeks to improve efficiency and accuracy. He is always willing to work with CO's to allow needed time off during a time when we are very understaffed. His good attitude, positive influence and situational thinking has allowed C platoon to not only run smoothly but excel. Chase's shift has been nominated for shift of the month several times which show the dedication and commitment of a true leader.

PLATOON OF THE YEAR

C platoon was recognized as team of the year for working together as a team. Always pulling together and helping not only their shift out in times of need for staffing situations but other shifts as well. C platoon was recognized in July for an active shooter call that came into our center C platoons team pulled together to go above and beyond your normal call of duty. C platoon as a whole did an excellent job of pulling together and achieving success in a deadly situation for many defenseless people.

Employee Recognition

RED CROSS HERO AWARD

Monica Bond was selected as the recipient for the Red Cross 911 Hero Dispatcher Award. A five-year-old child was located outside wearing only a diaper and tee shirt. It was 41 degrees and windy. The child could not provide an address or last name. Using several different resources, CO Bond was able to locate the parents. Roanoke County Police Department Sergeant Kuyper stated, "If not for CO Bond's deductive reasoning and investigative ability, we would not have found the child's family as quickly as we did."

SMART911 TELECOMMUNICATOR NATIONAL FINALIST

Chelsea Hogan was selected as a national finalist for her work with local law enforcement, especially as a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) peer. As many of us know from personal experience, CISM provides short-term psychological intervention to support people exposed to traumatic events. In June 2014, Chelsea used her vacation time and money to travel to the Virginia Post Critical Incident Seminar and serve on their peer support team. She continues to respond to debriefings on very short notice, using her own time and money, so that she can help other first responders stay mentally healthy. Whether it is a line of duty death, a suicidal first responder, or a traumatic infant death, she brings compassion and experience to every call for help.

VA APCO PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS TEAM NOMINATION

On July 14th, 2014, the Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center encountered an active shooter incident, the first one ever for Roanoke County. C Platoon was at minimum staffing. A male in his late 50's went to the Friendship Health and Rehab community in Roanoke County with the intent of it being a "suicide mission." The male was armed with a rifle and a semi-automatic pistol. The suspect called 911 to notify us of his intentions in addition to his complaints about the care his mother was receiving at this facility. The suspect entered the building and fired shots, none of which resulted in injury to staff. The suspect then came to the front door of the building where Roanoke County Police waited. The suspect put his weapons down as ordered by the police officers. He then picked one weapon back up, aimed it at the police officers and was subsequently neutralized by Roanoke County Police.

Recruitment Program

RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

CTC Paige DeSilvey - Chair

CTO Beverly Orange - Outreach Coordinator

CO Mary Martinez - Accreditation Manager

This committee was formed originally in 2009 to improve retention of seasoned Communications Officers. Since that time, the Emergency Communications Center has developed positive employee recognition and increased continuing education opportunities.

The committee's focus has changed in recent years to center on retention of Probationary Communications Officers and recruitment of a diverse, competent workforce. With feedback from Communications Training Officers and recently promoted Probationary Communications Officers, the recruitment committee has developed a structured new hire training program.

Newly hired personnel can receive their classroom training and initial six month schedule, when the Emergency Communications Center extends a final offer of employment. Through monetary employee incentives, Communications Officers are rewarded for recruiting applicants that successfully complete the ECC training program. Additional incentives are provided for bilingual applicants to encourage ethnic diversity within the Emergency Communications Center. Roanoke County also offers employees a tuition incentive program to encourage the pursuit of higher education and attract more driven applicants.

RECRUITMENT PLAN

Targeting Male & Minority Applicants

All employees received biennial cultural diversity and harassment training to ensure the ECC fosters a welcoming work environment. ECC recruiters receive additional training in Equal Opportunity Employment from Roanoke County Human Resources staff annually. The recruitment committee will coordinate with Emergency Communications Center management to actively advertise and recruit at local Veterans Affairs offices and other military installations in the upcoming fiscal year. The recruitment committee is exploring advertisement and 911 public education with local minority civic groups. The recruitment committee utilizes, reviews, and annually updates the Emergency Communications Center Recruitment Plan to ensure relevant objectives and a realistic plan of action.

Training Program

APCO Courses

	Certifications	Recertifications
Communications Training Officer	1	3
Emergency Medical Dispatch	6	10
Fire Service Communications	4	2

PowerDMS Courses

Academy	70
Mandatory	46
New Hire	19
On the Job	129
Promotional	4
Refresher	2
Supervisory	22

In March 2015, Paige DeSilvey was selected as the new Communications Training Coordinator.

PowerDMS courses reduce overtime, increase training hours, provide accountability of documentation of platoon training and on shift training for the ECC. All communications officers were provided training in nine (9) high liability areas this fiscal year.



Upcoming Projects

CAD2CAD

Shared Services Project with Roanoke City E911

The CAD2CAD project sought to provide faster response and communication times for mutual aid calls with a real time interface that allows backup of CAD information from one of the two locations. A VITA grant was awarded to finance this project. In response to our request for proposal, the vendor was unable to comply with the project requirements. Roanoke County ECC and Roanoke City E911 remain committed to fostering a collaborative work environment.



CAD UPGRADE

New World Systems: Enterprise

The Emergency Communications Center will upgrade their existing CAD next fiscal year. This new version of the ECC's current CAD system will completely change the graphic user interface, and consequently the end user experience. As a result, a second ECC CAD Administrator will be selected in the upcoming fiscal year to provide additional support during the transition. All communications officers will receive extensive training regarding the new tools available to them.

The upgrade to Aegis Enterprise .NET will include a framework for Next Generation 911.



Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center



Dial **911** for Emergencies

Call (540) 562-3265 for non-emergencies

Visit our website: www.roanokecountyva.gov/ecc

