

Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center



2016 Annual Report



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Chief's Introduction

It is my pleasure to present this Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center (ECC) 2016 Annual Report. 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 eleven (11) Probationary Communications Officers. Our staffing remained fairly consistent over the course of the year. Five personnel were released from County probation. Five Probationary Communications Officers were promoted to Communications Officers and one employee was promoted to Communications Training Officer.

During the first quarter, we had several ongoing projects including the Tyler Technology Enterprise CAD Kick Off meeting, ISO Rating Review, CALEA Assessment for reaccreditation, TXT2911 "Go Live" for several carriers, Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) "Go Live" and the Wells Fargo Purchasing Card implementation.

During the second quarter, in conjunction with local news media, we provided TXT2911 public education. We deployed our sixth carrier to TXT2911. The ECC received the CALEA Gold Assessment Reaccreditation award. While collaborating with our departments, we responded to the Homeland Security First Net Broadband Data Collection Initiative.

During the third quarter, we implemented the RightFax software to improve communication with the Roanoke County Police Warrants Division. ECC supervisory staff participated in training opportunities, including Ethical Leadership, with other County departments.

During the fourth quarter, we created a second supervisor console for large scale operations and to improve daily shift change. A new quad was installed with two telephone and radio positions. The annual RoCo Alert test was performed to check for accuracy of the system. We celebrated National Telecommunicator's Week with the theme "Dispatchers Helping Save Lives One Call at a Time."

I remain committed to my goal to increase staffing and to retain the quality staff that we currently employ in the Emergency Communications Center.

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	4.845 seconds
Average Administrative Call Answer Times	2 seconds	1.164 seconds
Call Distribution Among Call Takers	12.5%	11.5%
Average Call Processing Time	1 min 20 sec	1 min 23 sec

Educational Outreach

	Target	Actual
Community Events	15	14
Citizen Observers	20	18
911 Center Tours	4	8
Educational Media Contacts	2	4

Referrals

	Target	Actual
Fire and Rescue Calls for Service	14,000	14,784
Law Enforcement Calls for Service	90,000	97,792
Western Virginia Water Authority	4,000	3,037

Goals and Objectives

OBJECTIVES

Communications Officers Education

114 external training opportunities were offered during this fiscal year.

12 internal refresher training courses on a variety of topics were offered during this fiscal year.

5 individuals were referred for remedial training during this fiscal year.

Professional Contributions

	Target	Actual
Professional 911 Boards Service	1	3
Professional 911 Certifications	2	3
National Training Officer Certifications	6	10
State Instructor Certifications	2	0

PROGRESS REPORT

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

We were able to offer more external training opportunities to the staff because we did not send Communications Officers to the APCO International Conference or to the Virginia DCJS General Instructor classes. We exceeded all of our other professional contributions for this fiscal year.

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

We provided remedial and refresher call taking classes to lower the average call processing time. We lowered our educational outreach targets for next year to be more realistic in light of our staffing constraints. We are also taking weekly applications online and providing applicant testing monthly to increase our staffing.

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 undergo annual reviews and obtain CALEA reaccreditation. The position has expanded to include Quality Assurance while maintaining electronic CALEA documentation in PowerDMS. We are on task to complete our first Compliance Service Manager review electronically next fiscal year.

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 maintains agency certification as a Training Center. We continue to independently certify our employees, allowing flexibility in class scheduling.

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 continued providing monthly statistics to the platoon supervisors to identify individual performance trends. During this entire fiscal year, calls were evaluated and information was retained for APCO compliance. The EMD Manager is able to focus more attention on managerial duties, as an additional Quality Assurance evaluator was selected to assist her.

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. We increased the number of applications received, the number of candidates tested, and the number of personnel hired.

Quality Assurance Manager

The QA Manager ensures minimum standards for emergency communications services are met and exemplary service is recognized. During this fiscal year, five additional Quality Assurance Evaluators were trained and began conducting QAs. The position is exploring a new paperless database for documentation.

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. During this fiscal year, the Communications Training Coordinator began overseeing the hiring process. This position has not been dramatically impacted by staffing needs. The position has delegated continuing education opportunities to the shift supervisors, allowing more time to be devoted to the new hire training and retention. This has resulted in three more personnel completing training and being released from probation compared to last fiscal year.

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 December 2015. Chapter 7 of the Roanoke County Employee Handbook, which concerns grievances, was reviewed in April 2016. 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. The Accreditation Coordinator has been recommended to participate in the County Administrative Review Policy Committee, so that our department can advocate for Countywide changes in this area. In our review of the grievance policies and forms, it was concluded that that Form B should be accessible to all employees on the intranet site. It was also determined that the policy is lengthy so recommendations will be made to make it less intimidating to employees.

Agency Improvement Reviews

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

Summary by Disciplinary Action

Supervisory Referral—2

Counseling / Oral Reprimand—0

Written Reprimand—0

Suspension—2

Demotion / Transfer—0

Dismissal / Resignation—0

Summary by Conclusions

Unfounded—0

Not Sustained—0

Exonerated—0

Sustained—4

Analysis of Actions

The first internal investigation concluded the Communications Officer conducted themselves in an unprofessional manner. Another internal investigation determined that several communications officers on a platoon caused a delay in Fire & Rescue response. Both of these investigations required remedial training. The third investigation sustained a complaint of failure to dispatch requested apparatus and resulted in suspension. The fourth investigation reviewed a communications officer's failure to create a call for service to document an officer's self-initiated incident and also resulted in suspension. None of the investigations involved the same communications officers so there was no indication of negligent hiring or additional liability exposure.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 concerning Disciplinary Actions and Internal Investigations was revised in December 2015. The Internal Investigation Advisement and Conclusion forms were used in Summer, Fall, and Winter and no revisions were needed.

Conclusions

In reviewing these internal investigations, we recognized that one platoon had less seasoned employees than the other three platoons. When subsequent probationary communications officers were released from training, they were placed on other platoons to gain experience.

Agency Improvement Reviews

LIABILITY EXPOSURE REPORTS

Summary by Risk Category
<i>Obtaining Information - 4</i>
<i>Documenting Information - 27</i>
<i>Relaying Information - 4</i>
<i>Outside Scope - 8</i>
<i>Other - 4</i>

Summary by Action Category
<i>Policy - 0</i>
<i>Inattention to Detail - 37</i>
<i>Other - 10</i>

Analysis of Actions & Conclusions

The majority of the inattention to detail errors were minor and corrected through informal individualized refresher training. Remedial training and disciplinary actions were provided to individual communications officers with recurring similar errors. Platoon training was provided for call taking, police dispatch and protective orders. The E-911 Technical Analyst was tasked with resolving telephone software issues which resulted in liability exposure reports outside the scope of the ECC. Supervisory staff is reviewing the large number of liability exposure reports related to inattention to detail regarding incorrect addresses and landmark entries. Supervisory staff will make recommendations concerning policy changes, CAD procedure changes and use of mapping resources.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 2 was revised in July 2015 regarding Liability Exposure Reports. The Liability Exposure form was reviewed in August 2015.



Agency Improvement Reviews

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Summary by Serious Error Category

Incident Location - 18

Call Type / Severity - 16

Pertinent Questions (i.e. weapons) - 31

Appropriate Dispatch Procedure - 37

Appropriate Units Dispatched - 7

Relayed Safety Information - 7

Clear, Concise, and Complete Call Narrative - 46

Analysis of Actions

The majority of serious errors related to vague narrative documentation. Remedial training and disciplinary actions up to termination were provided to the small number of individual communications officers with recurring serious errors. Platoon training was provided for call taking and priority one police dispatching to address the most common errors. Supervisory staff make recommendations concerning policy and procedure changes for identified trends.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 11 was revised by management in July 2015, to ensure agency procedures adhered to agency policies regarding quality assurance evaluations. The General Order was reviewed by management again in September 2015.

Conclusions

In reviewing quality assurance documentation, we recognized that daylight platoons had more seasoned employees than the night platoons. When subsequent probationary communications officers were released from training, they were placed on daylight platoons to gain experience for several months before transitioning them to night platoons.

Agency Improvement Reviews

RISK MANAGEMENT

Summary of Incidents

Number of Reported Incidents - 0

Issues / Conditions Affecting Risk

The InterAgency Team is comprised of all public safety stakeholders served by the ECC. The purpose of the team is to review any prior gaps in policy or communication. The team rectifies situations to avoid future problems. The ECC hosts these roundtable discussions several times a quarter. 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 employees have been educated on Roanoke County's zero tolerance policy for workplace violence and harassment.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Worker's Compensation

In July, Roanoke County Safety Officer completed an annual review of our facility to ensure compliance with facility safety and security. The annual review evaluated 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. Ambiguous hazardous chemical storage labeling and expired fire extinguisher tags were identified in the report. These problems were corrected by the newly selected First Aid and Safety Coordinator.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Liability

Roanoke County remains committed to retaining the highest caliber of employees. As such, all supervisory staff were provided with Ethical Leadership training during the third quarter of this fiscal year. ECC supervisory staff is engaged in ongoing professional development through "The Carrot Principle Project." In addition to reducing liability, these supervisory training programs target employee retention.

CALEA Accreditation

New Reaccreditation Process

CALEA Commission Review—November 2015

Assistant Director Susan Slough, Chief of Emergency Communications Aleta Coleman, and Accreditation Manager Mary Martinez appeared before a CALEA Commissioner Review Panel to answer questions about our agency's participation in the accreditation process. The Commissioners recommended our agency's reaccreditation during the Fall CALEA Conference. We were recognized with the Gold Standard award.

Internal Annual Review Process—Summer 2016

Accreditation Manager Mary Martinez and Communications Officer Chelsea Hogan completed an internal review of all supporting documentation for compliance with CALEA time-sensitive and high liability standards. Accreditation staff developed a plan to ensure supporting documentation for all CALEA standards would be uploaded, labeled, and available for review by CALEA staff.

External Annual Review Process—Fall 2016

A Compliance Service Manager (CSM) will be selected from CALEA staff to review agency documentation electronically. This highly trained and experienced law enforcement employee will submit recommendations for agency quality improvement. The ECC will undergo three more annual reviews by CSMs during this reaccreditation cycle.

Future Reaccreditation Reviews —July & November 2019

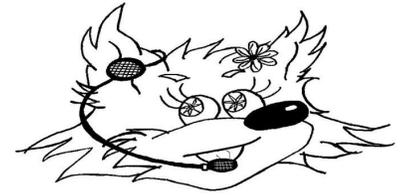
CALEA assessors will conduct an on-site accreditation review of the ECC in July 2019. A few months later, the Assistant Director and Accreditation Manager will attend a CALEA Commissioner Review Panel at the Fall CALEA Conference.





Community Outreach

Education



Our Outreach program reached almost 3,000 preschool & elementary students. We contacted numerous high school students through our career tables at football games as well. We worked with several special populations, including youth on the autism spectrum in our Project Lifesaver program. We educated senior adults through our programs at local assisted living facilities, TRIAD/SALT meetings at local libraries, and neighborhood watch groups.

Our Outreach program has expanded this year to focus on education about 911 as a career choice. We developed relationships with local news media, minor league baseball, and Roanoke County Parks and Recreation to increase the number of people hearing about a career in 911. We also hosted or attended career days with Roanoke County Schools, Roanoke City Schools, local colleges, and the Virginia Employment Commission. We look forward to an increase in applicants through these community recruitment events.

We have reached more groups since last year and have obtained several different resources to help better the Outreach program for the citizens of Roanoke County in the future. We have used our Outreach vehicle to reach the community at large events, like Tons of Fun and Dogwood Festival. We have partnered with other public safety departments during National Night Out, Citizens Police Academy, and other events. We hope to include Roanoke County Sheriff's Office in these community outreach efforts in the coming years.

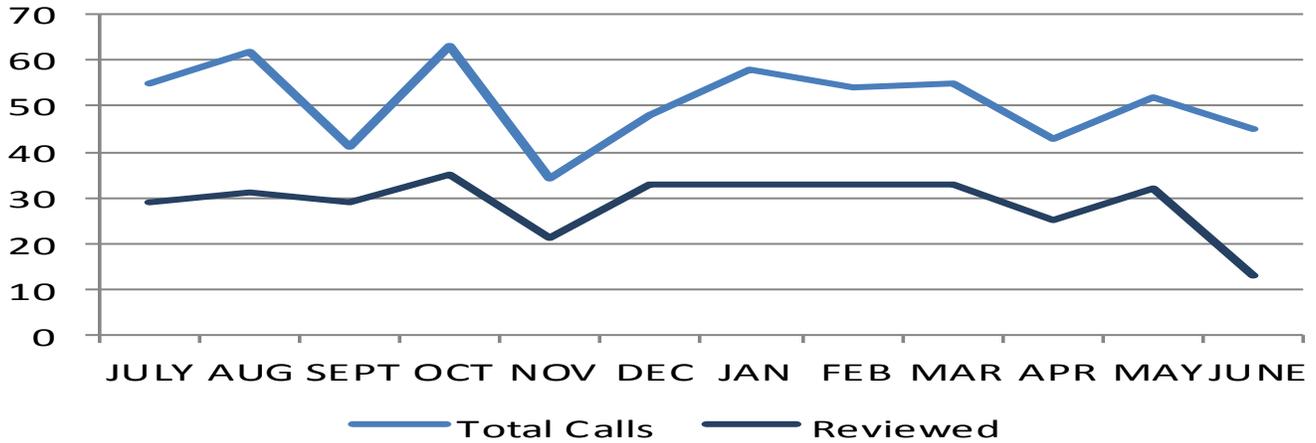
To combat staffing constraints, we will continue to offer overtime for outreach activities and ensure that all platoons have at least one person with recruiter training. To encourage signups for recruiter training through PowerDMS, we will personally invite Communications Officers to attend the training and remind them that they will be eligible for overtime when they participate in outreach activities. We plan to work with the Web Content Manger to promote our career opportunity through advertising on Facebook as well as encouraging our employees to hand out recruiter business cards with job-related information.

We hope to take input from our citizens and identify training needs within the ECC. We have noticed an increase in the number of subjects with mental illnesses that public safety interact with. Therefore, we are working towards getting CIT training for all of our Communications Officers. We are reaching out to senior living facilities' staff to identify training needs within their small communities.

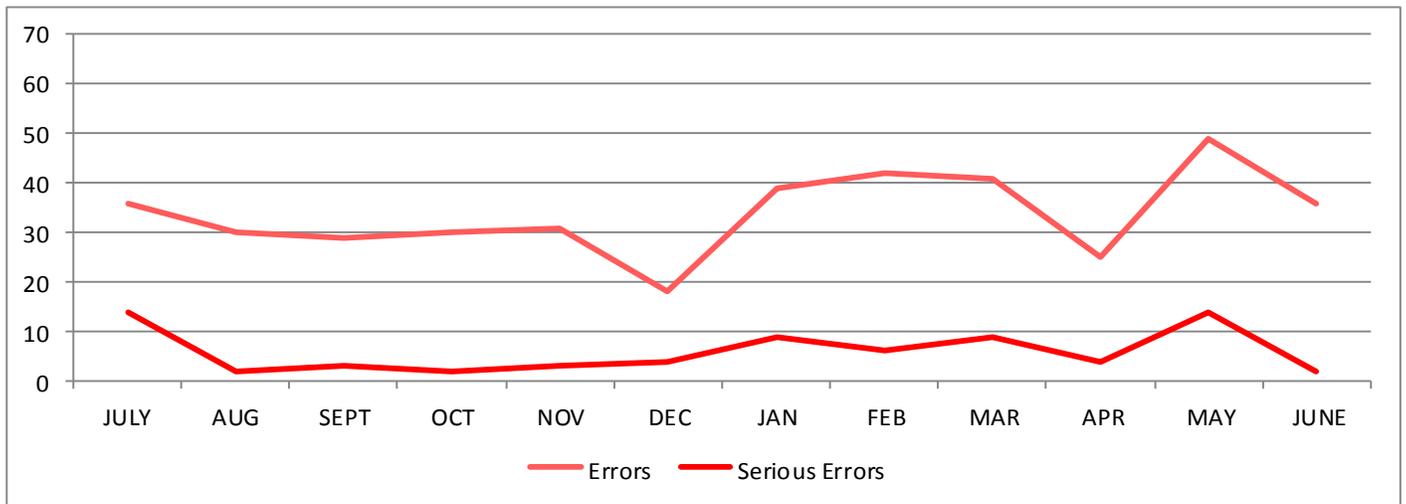
Emergency Medical Dispatch

Quality Assurance

Emergency Medical Dispatch Calls for Service



Emergency Medical Dispatch Areas for Improvement



Training

7 Probationary Communications Officers completed EMD certification this fiscal year with instruction by CO Emily Totten, CO Mandy Moore, and CTO Lauren Oliveira. In Fall 2015, CTO Oliveira became our newest EMD instructor upon completion of APCO and ECC courses. CTO Oliveira went on to complete the APCO EMD Manager course in February 2016. Our EMD instructors taught a minimum of 12 hours this year to maintain their certification.

Employee Awards

Probationary Communications Officer of the Year



PCO Lisa Charles shows good qualities of a dispatcher. She pays attention to detail and strives to do her best. Lisa took a call from a lost hiker; she stayed on the phone with this young caller for over an hour. She provided reassurance to the caller to keep the caller from descending into complete hysterics. Lisa sang songs with her and provided sincere care for her caller. She obtained critical location information and rebid the call multiple times to help fire and rescue search teams. Lisa also documented the call narrative well, ensuring that the dispatcher had all the necessary information to relay to first responders at the command post and to the search teams.

Communications Officer of the Year

CO Barry Light has been a team player in several calls that have come into the center; Barry is always ready on the phone and eager to work. One example of Barry's skills coming into play is when he received a 911 hang up call. When he called back, a frantic female answered the phone. She was screaming and yelling that 6 people were outside with guns and there were children in the house with her. She stated that shots were fired. Barry remained calm and was able to obtain pertinent information from the caller. This was a tough call but Barry stayed very professional during the whole call and helped the citizen.



Communications Team Supervisor of the Year



CTS Beth Clemson continually demonstrates excellent leadership skills, especially in team building and interpersonal communications. Her emphasis on building a positive atmosphere in our 911 center is critical, as it directly impacts the physical and mental health of each CO on her platoon. Beth shows interest in individual COs on her platoon, tailoring her feedback to encourage career development and commend exemplary actions. Her empowerment of COs enables them to act autonomously during day to day operations.

Beth is known for her honest nature. But, as a true team player, Beth shares credit for her successes. Beth's self-awareness and ability to delegate tasks allow her to maximize her talents. She remains dedicated to our new hire training.

Platoon of the Year

B Platoon is recognized for working together as a team throughout the year. They have pulled together and helped each other during several incidents in 2015. Highlighted incidents throughout the year included calls with armed subjects, multiple jurisdictions, large scale weather events, school system involvement, and equipment failures during hosting of a simulated evacuation training exercise.

Recruitment Program

Recruitment Plan

A comparison of the Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center service population to our employees demonstrates approximate proportions regarding most minorities. However, our agency currently employs less than the 5% of the service population that self-identifies as African-American. Although local statistics show that there are a lower number of males available for the workforce, the underutilization of male employees stands at 46%.

The recruitment and selection process were reviewed by management, with input from prior Probationary Communications Officers, to ensure a pre-planned classroom and on-the-job training schedule for all new employees. Management conducted workplace harassment training for all employees in Fall 2015. All employees involved in recruitment received Equal Opportunity Employment, workplace diversity, and job benefits training as well. Management continues to encourage minority staff participation in the recruitment process, publicized agency photographs, and public education videos. In November 2015, an employee from an underrepresented group was filmed for our public education video regarding TXT2911. Also in November, the ECC Outreach Coordinator established a relationship with local Veterans Affairs Medical Center staff in Salem, Virginia and recruitment materials were provided to them.

Due to budget constraints, management has not utilized websites and publications with high male and minority readership for advertising and recruiting this year. Management also suspended some of the monetary incentives provided to employees for referral of bilingual applicants and other applicants that successfully complete their initial probationary period. Due to staffing constraints, the ECC Outreach Coordinator was unable to attend any career fairs or visit any colleges during the first half of this fiscal year.

Hiring

Initial Testing -

Conditional Offers -

Additional Screening -

Final Offers - 12

Hired - 11

Retention

Completed Training - 5

Retained 3 years - 23

Retained 5 years - 18

Training Program

APCO Courses

Active Shooter Incidents for Public Safety Communications

Communications Supervisor

Communications Training Officer

Disaster Operations and the Communications Center

Emergency Medical Dispatch

Emergency Medical Dispatch Manager

Fire Service Communications

PowerDMS Courses

Academy	74
Mandatory	24
New Hire	9
On the Job	76
Promotional	0
Refresher	10
Remedial	12
Supervisory	17

CTC Paige DeSilvey has completed her first year as our new Communications Training Coordinator. She has empowered our Training Committee members to develop training modules based on Tox Talks topics. She has rolled out various continuing education courses to all employees using PowerDMS. She has scheduled biannual training academies for new hires.



Upcoming Projects

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, the new E-911 Technical Analyst position was developed to provide additional support during the transition. All communications officers will receive extensive training regarding the new tools available to them. The Aegis Enterprise .NET platform will include a framework for Next Generation 911.



GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Roanoke Valley NG-911 Shared Services Project

The goal of this project is to create a new Real-Time NG-9-1-1 valid dataset for City of Roanoke, County of Roanoke and City of Salem PSAP. The data will have the following feature datasets Road Centerlines, Address Building Points and/or Polygons, Emergency Service Zones, PSAP Boundaries, Authoritative Boundaries and County / Municipal Boundaries. This project will support PSAP readiness for future technology and enhance the current efficiency of each PSAP.



Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center



Dial **911** for Emergencies

Call (540) 562-3265 for non-emergencies

Visit our website: www.roanokecountyva.gov/ecc

