

Roanoke County

Emergency Communications Center



2018 Annual Report



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Manager's Introduction

It is my pleasure to present this Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center (ECC) 2018 Annual Report. The women and men of our department serve as first responders together with Emergency Medical Service, Fire, and Law Enforcement personnel to save lives, protect property and stop crime. I anticipate that you will find the included facts regarding our department informative and comprehensive.

In the last year, we focused on retention efforts. As retention increased, the ECC's turnover rate was less than half of the previous fiscal year. We attribute this decline to increased employee recognition, better opportunities for professional growth and improvements in compensation.

We continued the rookie, employee and supervisor peer recognition for monthly and annual awards. Based on feedback from our staff, we initiated an annual trainer award and continued the attendance award program. Community appreciation programs are a new aspect of employee recognition which have been well received by our staff. The staff is recognized for years of service in the Milestone Program. Beginning in January, we highlighted the top four call takers for their availability on our telephone system. We nominate employees on a quarterly basis for Roanoke County Special Merit Awards.

Our department provided various opportunities for learning. Several employees were afforded the opportunity to attend international, state and local conferences. Department staff participated in offsite classes, webinars and training certifications. Additionally, staff led 63 (sixty-three) proactive platoon training sessions. Supervisory staff received human resources, software, and leadership training from guest instructors.

ECC management successfully advocated for an increase in monetary standby compensation. We continue to receive a cost of living pay increase annually during County Administrator Thomas Gates' tenure. In conjunction with Human Resources, the ECC conducted a salary study to reclassify the Chief of Emergency Communications position. Human Resources increased Wellness benefits to include employee spouses.

As staffing has stabilized, my focus shifts to surpassing ECC goals and objectives benchmarks.



Aleta G. Coleman

Emergency Communications Manager

Department Overview

VALUES

We affirm the importance of individual empowerment. We strive to create a just, safe, and welcoming environment for all, while continuously improving our quality services.

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

Excellence

Endeavor to meet or exceed national public safety standards

GOALS

Service

We build confidence, integrity, and impartiality by serving our community in a professional, honest and compassionate manner.

Safety

We improve safety for our community, organizations we serve and our own employees.

Relations

We form working relationship with multiple organizations within Roanoke County to better serve our citizens.

Employee Care

We solicit ideas from each employee to maintain a healthy working environment. Teamwork and timeliness are essential to our success. We support employees and our community.

Goals and Objectives

OBJECTIVES

Service	Target	Actual
Average 911 Call Answer Times	5 seconds	5.358 seconds
Average Administrative Call Answer Times	2 seconds	1.433 seconds
Average Call Processing Time	1 min 15 sec	1 min 26 seconds

Safety

Quality Assurance	Target	Actual
ECC Serious Errors	185	89
CO Error Rate	554	171

Relations

Educational Outreach	Target	Actual
Community Events	5	4
Citizen Observers	5	4
911 Center Tours	2	9
Educational Contacts	1	9

Referrals

	Projected	Actual
Fire and Rescue Calls for Service	14,000	13,372
Law Enforcement Calls for Service	90,000	138,296
Western Virginia Water Authority	4,000	2,975

Goals and Objectives

OBJECTIVES

Employee Care

Communications Officers Education

91 external training opportunities were offered during this fiscal year.

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

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

Professional Contributions

	Target	Actual
Professional 911 Boards Service	1	2
Professional 911 Certifications	2	4
National Training Certifications	6	13
State Instructor Certifications	2	1

PROGRESS REPORT

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

The majority of the employees have successfully competed the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Communications Training Officer (CTO) certification. Supervisory staff surpassed expectations for APCO and National Emergency Number Association (NENA) with their professional involvement. The Quality Assurance (QA) Program demonstrated a downward trend in serious errors and non serious errors. The ECC changed policy regarding calls for service which resulted in more accurate call counting.

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

We established standardized definitions for classification of Outreach activities to ensure targets and actual data align. Our focus on employee retention is reducing turnover which will lead to a more senior staff processing calls. As seniority increases, the average call processing time is expected to decrease.

Specialized Assignment Review

Accreditation Coordinator

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) Accreditation Coordinator 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 (QA) while maintaining electronic CALEA documentation in PowerDMS. We are on task to complete our third successful Compliance Service Manager (CSM) review electronically next fiscal year.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Manager

The Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (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 Emergency Medical Dispatch (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 another EMD Quality Assurance evaluator was trained and selected to assist with reviews and course instruction.

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. We anticipate in selecting a new Outreach Coordinator in the next fiscal year which would alleviate additional responsibilities for the Communications Training Coordinator. The position works closely with Roanoke County Police Crime Prevention and Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Public Education.

Quality Assurance Manager

The QA Manager ensures minimum standards for emergency communications services are met and exemplary service is recognized. Currently, the position uses Excel spreadsheets to tabulate exceptional individual performance and error trends. Supervisory staff is responsible for reviewing quality assurance data and providing targeted training and coaching to their staff.

Training Coordinator

The Communications Training Coordinator (CTC) 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, this position has been impacted by staffing needs. The position has delegated continuing education opportunities to the shift supervisors, allowing more time to be devoted to new hire training and retention. The CTC uses PowerDMS to provide online training during employees' normal working hours.

Agency Improvement Reviews

GRIEVANCES

Summary by Resolution Level

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

Analysis of Actions

The review of grievances revealed that one was filed during this fiscal year. The grievance alleged a failure to follow policy. The grievant stated platoon assignments were not distributed by seniority. Communications officers were assigned to platoons based on a combination of seniority, experience and skills. Director Hunter, Assistant County Administrator Caywood, and County Administrator Gates found no violation of policy. The grievant accepted the decision of the County Administrator.

Policy & Procedure Review

A new Roanoke County Employee Handbook, which includes the Grievance Policy, was drafted this fiscal year. We reviewed Form B, which is used to file grievances, and recommended no changes to Roanoke County Human Resources staff. The form will remain available through direct contact with Human Resources staff, so accountability in the filing and processing of grievances can be maintained.

Conclusions

In our policy and procedure review, we noted the procedure is rarely used. The County onboarding process was revised this fiscal year to ensure standardized training of all new employees. Orientation training now includes a review of the Grievance Policy. In an effort to ensure seasoned employees are familiar with the policy, training is provided in the ECC.

Agency Improvement Reviews

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

Summary by Disciplinary Action

Supervisory Referral — 0

Counseling / Oral Reprimand — 0

Written Reprimand — 1

Suspension — 0

Demotion / Transfer — 0

Dismissal / Resignation — 0

Summary by Conclusions

Unfounded — 0

Not Sustained — 0

Exonerated — 0

Sustained — 1

Analysis of Actions

One serious complaint was received by the ECC during this fiscal year. Three courtesy complaints and one failure to properly operate equipment complaint were handled by Communications Team Supervisors. One internal investigations was conducted which consisted of six separate charges.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 concerning Disciplinary Actions and Internal Investigations was reviewed in January 2018. The Internal Investigation Advisement and Conclusion forms were reviewed this fiscal year and no revisions were needed.

Conclusions

In reviewing these complaints, we recognized that two courtesy complaints were filed against the same employee. The Communications Team Supervisor provided coaching and subsequently counselled the employee regarding telephone etiquette. Reference the internal investigation, of the six charges, two were sustained, one not sustained, one exonerated and the two others were unfounded. This resulted in a Written Reprimand.

Agency Improvement Reviews

LIABILITY EXPOSURE REPORTS

Summary by Risk Category

Obtaining Information - 12
Documenting Information - 15
Relaying Information - 9
Outside Scope - 5
Other - 13

Summary by Action Category

Policy - 1
Inattention to Detail - 40
Other - 13

Analysis of Actions & Conclusions

The majority of the inattention to detail errors were minor. Half of the errors were corrected through informal individualized refresher training and the other half required no supervisory action. Remedial training was provided on one occasion as a result of the Liability Exposure Report. Disciplinary actions were provided to four individual communications officers with recurring similar errors. Platoon training was provided for Priority One Dispatching and Call

Type Selection. The E-911 Technical Analyst was tasked with resolving administrative telephone line failures and headset battery failure. The E-911 Technical Analyst continues to work with the CAD vendor regarding scheduled calls which resulted in liability exposure reports outside the scope of the ECC. Supervisory staff will make recommendations concerning additional staff training, policy changes and CAD procedure changes. Supervisory staff recommends the transition to an automated secure alarm protocol interface for CAD, which would eliminate address verification for hold up, burglar, fire, and medical alarms.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 2, which includes liability exposure reporting, was reviewed in February 2018. The Liability Exposure form was reviewed, but no changes were recommended.



Agency Improvement Reviews

PERSONNEL EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Summary by Review Category

<i>Referrals</i>	1
<i>Attendance</i>	7
<i>Behavior</i>	1
<i>Initiative</i>	3
<i>Leadership</i>	2

Analysis of Actions

The review of the PEIP program with supervisory staff demonstrated that nine employees were identified prior to disciplinary action in permanent personnel file records or liability exposure. These employees were provided with coaching, counseling and minor corrective action. Eight of these employees continued working for the Department through the end of the fiscal year.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 regarding disciplinary action and Standard Operating Guideline regarding Guardian Tracking software were reviewed this fiscal year.

Conclusions

The PEIP Program has benefitted the organization for retention and served as an effective early intervention tool. ECC management restructured the quarterly PEIP reports to more accurately monitor employee performance. The report aligns with defined employee behaviors and actions; trigger levels for reviews; reviews of identified employees and expectations for agency reporting.

Agency Improvement Reviews

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Summary by Serious Error Category

Incident Location - 11

Call Type / Severity - 19

Pertinent Questions (i.e. weapons) - 16

Appropriate Dispatch Procedure - 9

Appropriate Units Dispatched - 5

Relayed Safety Information - 1

Clear, Concise, and Complete Call Narrative - 24

Analysis of Actions

The majority of serious errors related to narrative entry by call takers. Remedial training and disciplinary actions were provided to the small number of individual communications officers with recurring serious errors. Platoon training was provided for general call taking, Mountain Valley Pipeline call types, EMD call types and assist call types to address the most common errors. Supervisory staff discussed recommendations for call type dispositions as well as goals and objectives specific to call type entry within 60 seconds.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 11 was reviewed in November 2017. No changes were recommended to the current procedures of Communications Team Supervisors (CTS) assisting the Accreditation Coordinator with the completion of Quality Assurance (QA) evaluations and an additional APCO EMD instructor assisting the EMD Manager with EMD QA evaluations.

Conclusions

We continue to build call taking skills in our communications officers. Communications Team Supervisors continue to identify trends in QA evaluations and respond with platoon refresher training and individual remedial training for three employees, as needed. The Communications Training Coordinator offered training courses in: Motor Vehicle Crashes, Scene Safety for Structure Fires, EMD Refresher and CAD Recommendations as a direct result of quality assurance data analysis.

Agency Improvement Reviews

RISK MANAGEMENT

Summary of Incidents

Number of Reported Incidents - 0

Issues / Conditions Affecting Risk

On January 25, 2018, Roanoke County held a community meeting to provide information regarding the construction of the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP). The community meeting addressed issues with security, protection of water resources and emergency response in rugged terrain. Roanoke County public safety partners worked around the clock to ensure the safety of citizens and MVP workers during the initial phase of the project. The ECC provided trained tactical dispatchers to document the events. All ECC staff were trained in large scale event response.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Worker's Compensation

In December 2017, VACORP completed an annual review of our facility to ensure compliance with facility safety and security. The annual review evaluated the following topics: Management Practices, Physical Safety, Safety Preparedness, Emergency Response, Accidents, and OSHA. Two action items were identified in the report and rectified within a week. The First Aid and Safety Coordinator updated OSHA posters as well as removing medications from the first aid kits within the ECC. The report suggested that all communications officers receive annual fire extinguisher training. A new First Aid and Safety Coordinator was chosen in June 2018.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Liability

In Winter 2018, Respect at Work training was offered by Carilion Employee Assistance Program (EAP) staff at various County facilities as well as online. The training incorporates modules on respect, civility, sexual harassment and diversity. We are committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.

CALEA Accreditation

New Reaccreditation Process

VACAP Triannual Meetings

Accreditation Manager Mary Martinez and Communications Training Officer Teresa Blackwood participated in VACAP training conferences in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. They received additional direction and support regarding the transition to a four year reaccreditation process, as well as networking with other Virginia public safety agencies.

External Annual Review Process—January 2018

Compliance Service Manager (CSM) Jay Murphy completed an electronic review of agency documentation. CSM Murphy had no suggestions for agency improvement, after looking at 48 areas of agency operations and administration. The ECC will undergo two more annual reviews by CSMs during this reaccreditation cycle.

External Annual Review Process—November 2018

Compliance Service Manager (CSM) J. Rob Sofie was selected from CALEA staff to review agency written directives and standard compliance electronically. This highly trained and experienced law enforcement employee will submit recommendations for agency quality improvement. The ECC will incorporate these recommendations in future documentation.

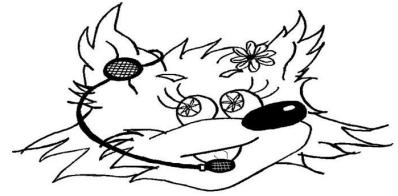
Future Reaccreditation Review —July 2019

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





Community Outreach



Events

In August 2017, CTC Paige DeSilvey and Officer R. Crosier educated 45 individuals from a variety of age groups regarding 911 at the Alpha Christian Daycare. This same month, we also attended the National Night Out reaching approximately 100 adults and children from the area. Other events included: TRIAD Meeting, Tons of Fun and 2018 Spring Career and Lifestyle Fair.

Observers

During this fiscal year, the ECC hosted 4 citizen observers and 11 applicant observers. We also hosted observers from Roanoke County Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Roanoke County Police Department and Roanoke County Sheriff's Office.

Tours

This year, the Roanoke County Crime Prevention Office was transitioned between Officer D. Bruch to Officer T. Butts. Both officers brought several tours to the Center. The guests included the Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Character Academy, Roanoke County Citizen Police Academy, ECC Open House and Green Valley Elementary School.

Other tours included law enforcement/ communications from: Mecklenburg County, South Hill, Campbell County, Salem and NRV 911.

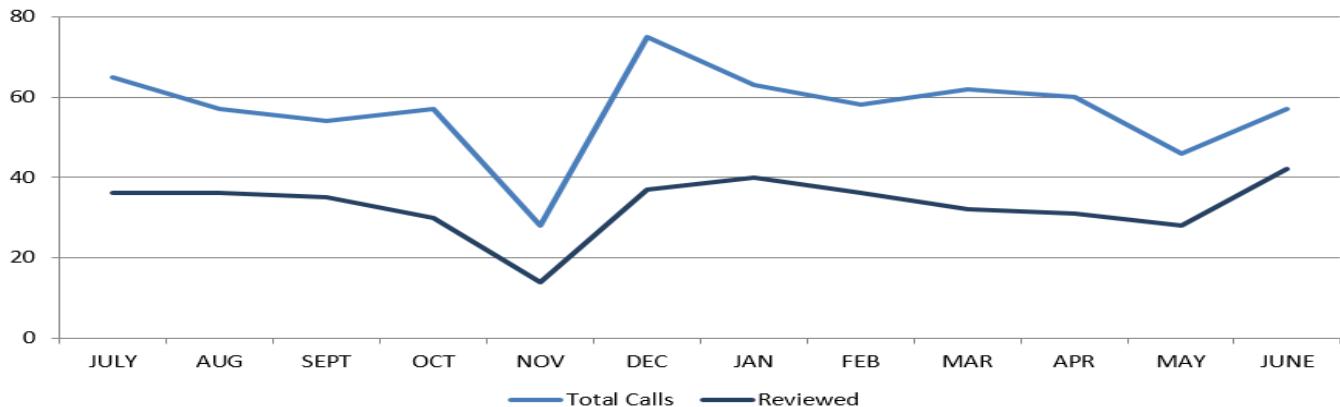
Education

During this fiscal year, we attended 2 Career Expos at high schools and explained to them the skills necessary to become a communications officer. We look forward to continued partnerships with Roanoke County Police Department's Crime Prevention Officer, Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Public Education Specialist, and Roanoke County Sheriff's Office Outreach Deputy in the next fiscal year. We hope to provide each 1st and 2nd grader in the Roanoke County Public Schools system with a 911 educational activity booklet, as well as continue educational programs with elderly & special populations.

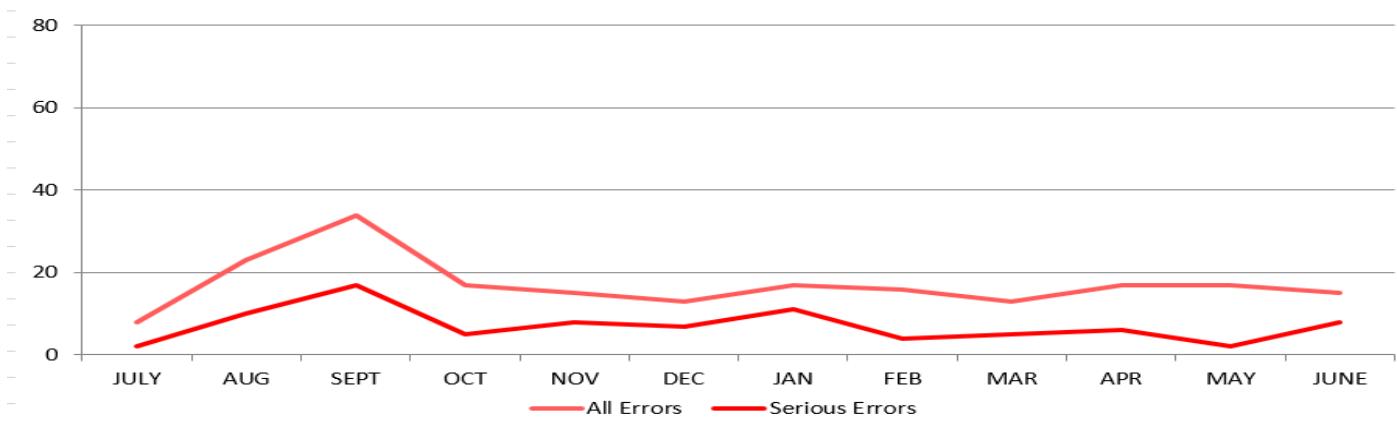
Emergency Medical Dispatch

Quality Assurance

Emergency Medical Dispatch Calls for Service



Emergency Medical Dispatch Areas for Improvement



Training

4 Communications Officers I completed EMD certification this fiscal year with instruction by CO Mandy Moore and CO Taylor Ralph. Our EMD instructors taught a minimum of 12 hours this year to maintain their certification.

Employee Awards

Rookie of the Year



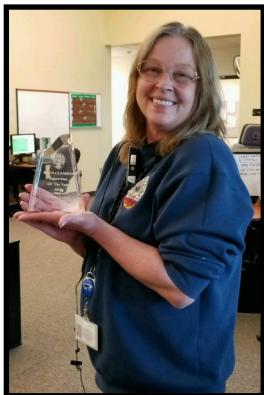
CO-II Sierra Dailey received the Rookie of the Year award for the Emergency Communications Center. Sierra had been taking calls on her own for 5 months at the time of the award, but had already demonstrated skill, aptitude and a willingness to expand her daily tasks. While in training, she shined on Fire and Rescue especially. Sierra maintains her cool and displays a calm, professional demeanor while handling multiple TAC channels and a high call volume.

Employee of the Year

CO-II Debbie Robertson served our community for over 29 years in the ECC. She was a consistent team player and part of the winning platoon this year. She was specifically nominated for her positive, humorous and calming attitude. Debbie maintained a calm demeanor to quickly get information in to her calls. Her experience has been invaluable to the Center.



Supervisor of the Year



CTS Beth Clemson received multiple nominations this year. This is the 3rd consecutive year she has won this award. Beth is a patient supervisor who encourages her platoon to work together as a team. She is a straight forward and honest person, but also empowers her team to think independently and be prepared for challenges. Beth was also nominated for her willingness to build team morale as evidenced by her platoon winning the Teamwork Award this year. She is consistently thinking of ideas to improve morale on her platoon.

Employee Awards

Training Officer of the Year



CTO Monica Bond has consistently trained new communications officers for several years. Many of those communications officers have been promoted to training officers. She is timely in submitting training paperwork which includes daily observation reports and task sheets. Monica is willing to assist experienced CO's with questions or issues as they arise. Monica inspires confidence in her trainees and displays a patient attitude while training.

Platoon of the Year

During 2017, B Platoon won the monthly teamwork award five times. They were consistently nominated each month. The experience on the platoon ranges from almost thirty years to less than one year. Throughout the year, they had new personnel join the team. The platoon welcomes and supports new communications officers willingly. The platoon consistently works well together and helps each other. The Communications Team Supervisor frequently provides shift training to reinforce skills and refresh on the topics that the ECC does not deal with on a regular basis.



Roanoke County Merit Awards

Roanoke County honored multiple Emergency Communications Center employees for their work over the past fiscal year. Seventeen employees were individually recognized regarding their service to the community.

Employee Awards

Red Cross Hero Award



Two platoons shared the accolades for their combined efforts on a technical rescue call from Dragon's Tooth where an elderly gentleman was having a heart attack. The incident occurred on October 24, 2017 which drew extensive resources from the County of Roanoke and included the Lifeguard helicopter. Roanoke County personnel found the male and provided him with lifesaving medical aid as they brought him down the mountain and transported him to the hospital.

ECC Employee Recognition Programs

We continue to recognize employees with exemplary attendance. This year 9 employees had perfect attendance and they received gift cards for dinner and a movie with their family. We have also implemented the ability for peers to recognize their fellow employees through the Guardian Tracking software. When an employee sees their coworker going above and beyond, they are encouraged to make a note in Guardian recognizing their partner's efforts.

Additionally, we continue to do our monthly communication officer and team awards from nominations submitted by platoon members. The Awards Committee, headed by CTO Monica Bond, goes through the nominations submitted and selects a winner for the categories : CTO of the Month and Platoon of the Month. At the end of the year, they are responsible for the selection and awarding of platoon, CO, CTO and CTS of the year.

Heart Alert Award

Lewis Gale Medical Center recognizes first responders who make a difference in a patient's life with their Heart Alert Program. Heart Alert is the notification process that triggers a rapid chain of events leading to the activation of the Cardiac Catheterization Lab (Cath Lab) team and the interventional cardiologist on-call to the Cath Lab for acute treatment of a patient with symptoms of a heart attack. Time is of essence during this type of medical emergency. 7 communications officers were recognized for their participation this fiscal year.



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 3% of the service population that self-identifies as Black Non-Hispanic. While there are a lower number of males available for the workforce, the underutilization of male employees stands at 25%. The agency has reduced this percentage from 42% the previous fiscal year.

Management is committed to continuing a pre-planned classroom and on-the-job training schedule for all new employees, based on feedback from recent hires. Management continues to provide workplace harassment and diversity awareness training biennially for all employees. All employees involved in recruitment received Equal Opportunity Employment, workplace diversity, and job benefits training as well. In early 2018, Human Resources provided training regarding Respect in the Workplace to all Roanoke County employees. Management continues to encourage minority staff participation in the recruitment process, publicized agency photographs, and public education videos.

The Outreach programs targeting older, special and minority populations were successful this fiscal year. Outreach staff worked with Seniors and Law Enforcement Together (SALT) to attend Triad meetings at County facilities. The ECC provided tours of the Emergency Communications Center to special needs groups. Billboards on Valley Metro buses traveled through inner city areas which are more diversely populated.

Hiring

Initial Testing - 29

Conditional Offers - 6

Additional Screening - 6

Final Offers - 6

Hired - 6

Retention

Completed Training - 11

Retained 3 years - 21

Retained 5 years - 14

Training Program

APCO Courses

Communications Training Officer

Emergency Medical Dispatch

Emergency Medical Dispatch Manager

PowerDMS Courses

Academy	80
Mandatory	89
New Hire	43
On the Job	92
Promotional	4
Refresher	60
Remedial	4
Specialized	55

CTC Paige DeSilvey serves as our Communications Training Coordinator. She continues to provide monthly training in PowerDMS to our platoons through our Communications Training Officers (CTO) Committee. This committee absorbed the functions of the ECC Training Committee. She provides quarterly continuing education to our Communications Training Officers and manages our biannual training academies for new hires.



Upcoming Projects

Tyler New World Systems (now Tyler Technologies) Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Upgrade

The Emergency Communications Center has completed an upgrade to the current version of Enterprise Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) to fix problems, enhance features and improve functionality. The prior problems affected workflow and records which slowed the response times to the citizens of the County. This upgrade has improved emergency services to our customers.

Overall, the transition has been successful.



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 PSAPs. 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

