

Roanoke County

Emergency Communications Center



2022 Annual Report



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Manager's Introduction

It is my pleasure to present the Roanoke County Emergency Communications Center (ECC) 2022 Annual Report. This year's annual report covers the fiscal year of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

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 inclusive.

In the last year, we have focused on our recruitment efforts. We hired seven (7) Communications Officers (COs), providing them with structured classroom and on-the-job training modules. During this year, three (3) employees were promoted to Communications Officer II positions. During the first quarter, several of our software programs received updates. We held DCJS Basic Dispatch Academy 21-02. Previously planned installation of shared 9-1-1 phone equipment between Roanoke County and Salem was installed and implemented.

During the second quarter, we successfully completed revisions to the MOA between Roanoke County and Roanoke City 9-1-1 Centers to add in the City of Salem. We held a second DCJS Basic Dispatch Academy 21-03, while we continued to work through the challenges posed by "COVID-19" pandemic.

During the third quarter, our Outreach efforts started to increase after the reduction and eventual lifting of COVID-19 lockdown requirements. And DCJS Basic Dispatch Academy 22-01 was held.

During the fourth quarter, we implemented a Step Plan for all ECC personnel from the Emergency Communications Manager down to the newly hired Communications Officer I. Our Outreach efforts continued to increase, including speaking in the schools and making our personnel available for job fairs and media interviews.

As staffing increases, my focus will shift to retention.



Rebekah Craft

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	4.694 seconds
Average Administrative Call Answer Times	2 seconds	0.345 seconds
Total Text Message Sessions	100	361

Safety

Quality Assurance

	Target	Actual
CO Serious Errors	168	148
CO Non-Serious Errors	190	90

Relations

Educational Outreach

	Target	Actual
Community Events <i>(Small/Large Groups)</i>	5	4
Observers	5	6
911 Center Tours	2	0
Educational Contacts <i>(Media/Schools)</i>	1	10

Referrals

	Projected	Actual
Fire and Rescue Calls for Service	14,000	17,693
Law Enforcement Calls for Service	90,000	106,576
Western Virginia Water Authority	4,000	2,344

Goals and Objectives

OBJECTIVES

Employee Care

Communications Officers Education

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

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

Professional Contributions

	Target	Actual
Professional 911 Boards Service <i>NENA/APCO</i>	1	1
Professional 911 Certifications <i>NENA/APCO</i>	2	0
National Training Certifications <i>CTO/EMD</i>	6	10
State Instructor Certifications (<i>not recerts</i>)	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 offered more internal refresher training opportunities to staff through the dedication of our state certified instructors and communications training officers who developed targeted training modules for their platoons; therefore, increasing the number of platoon trainings.

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

We are continuing to evaluate our CTOs and training program in order to enhance their strengths and help them improve their skills to better train new hires. Our CTOs are continuing to develop detailed notes for each Task Sheet item and we continue to review all high impact items (regardless of the frequency) with each platoon to obtain a more consistent level of work performance throughout the center as a whole.

Specialized Assignment Review

Accreditation Coordinator / Quality Assurance Manager role

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 were awarded with Excellence for our re-accreditation in November 2019. We are on task to complete our third successful Compliance Service Manager (CSM) review electronically at the end of this year. The Accreditation Coordinator also fulfills the Quality Assurance Manager role in that they ensure 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.

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.

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 continued to be impacted by COVID-19. Near the end of the third quarter (March), we were able to start firing up our outreach efforts again. The position works closely with Roanoke County Police Crime Prevention and Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Public Education. We are working to increased the number of applications, the number of candidates tested, and the number of personnel hired.

Training Coordinator

The Communications Training Coordinator (CTC) manages the new hires 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 dramatically impacted by COVID-19. The position has delegated continuing education opportunities to the shift supervisors, allowing more time to be devoted to the new hire training and retention.

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

This year we had no employees file a grievance through the County's grievance process. We believe that this is due to the steps taken by administration during disciplinary actions and other decisions that could result in a grievance to ensure that we are following departmental and county policies and doing our due diligence to prevent any situations that could result in a grievance.

Policy & Procedure Review

The Roanoke County Employee Handbook, which includes the Grievance Policy, was last reviewed July 2017. 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 review of policies and procedures, it was apparent that the procedure is rarely used. The County onboarding process was revised 4 years ago to ensure standardized training of all new employees. Orientation training now includes a review of the Grievance Policy. It was concluded that recurring refresher training should be provided to all employees to make the grievance process easier to access as well as visible to employees of all levels.

Agency Improvement Reviews

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS AS A RESULT OF A COMPLAINT

Summary by Disciplinary Action

Supervisory Note — 1
Counseling / Oral Reprimand — 3
Written Reprimand — 0
Suspension — 0
Demotion / Transfer — 0
Dismissal / Resignation — 0

Summary by Conclusions

Unfounded — 4
Not Sustained — 0
Exonerated — 0
Sustained — 3

Analysis of Actions

There were seven official complaints this fiscal year, that resulted in internal investigations being completed by ECC staff. Three of the complaints were found to be Sustained and four were determined to be Unfounded. Two resulted in remedial training and one resulted in a mandatory referral to EAP.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 concerning Disciplinary Actions and Internal Investigations was reviewed and revised in November 2021 to show that employees personnel files were confidential.

Conclusions

In reviewing these complaints over the fiscal year, we only reviewed those that were official complaints (these could be from our first responder partners or from the citizens in the communities that we serve). With four complaints being unfounded and three being sustained, an analysis of the effectiveness of our current complaint process is still inconclusive due to the small number of data to be reviewed.

Agency Improvement Reviews

LIABILITY EXPOSURE REPORTS

Summary by Risk Category

Obtaining Information - 14
Documenting Information - 19
Relaying Information - 5
Outside Scope - 7
Other - 4

Summary by Action Category

Policy - 0
Inattention to Detail - 32
Other - 13

Analysis of Actions & Conclusions

The majority of the inattention to detail errors were minor and corrected through informal individualized refresher training. Of note, during the fall of 2021 and through the remainder of the fiscal year we were at an all time low for staffing, with an average of 12 vacancies. We believe the majority of the liabilities were a result of diminished staffing levels and stretching personnel to not only work at or below minimum but to also to train our new hires. Remedial training and disciplinary actions were provided to individual communications officers with recurring similar errors. Platoon refresher trainings continue to be provided, we as a center review the Task List that is issued to all new employees. This is a review for all employees and consist of Call Taking, CAD, Police, Fire and Rescue, VCIN.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 2, which includes liability exposure reporting, was reviewed and revised in August of 2021 and up for annual review in November 2021. The Liability Exposure form was reviewed and revised in July 2021.



Agency Improvement Reviews

PERSONNEL EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM (PEIP)

Summary by Review Category

<i>Referrals</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Attendance</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Behavior</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Initiative</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Leadership</i>	<i>0</i>

Analysis of Actions

The review of the PEIP program with supervisory staff demonstrated that two 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. One of these employees ended up being placed on an action plan. Both of these employees continued working for the Department through the end of the fiscal year.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 14 regarding disciplinary action was reviewed in November 2021, with a minor change.

Conclusions

The PEIP Program has benefitted the organization for retention and served as an effective early intervention tool. Due to the restructure of the quarterly PEIP reports, we are accurately monitoring 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 - 12

Call Type / Severity - 14

Pertinent Questions (i.e. weapons, COVID-19) - 21

Appropriate Dispatch Procedure - 36

Appropriate Units Dispatched - 1

Relayed Safety Information - 3

Clear, Concise, and Complete Call Narrative - 41

Analysis of Actions

The majority of serious errors are related to narrative entry by our call takers. Additionally, asking pertinent questions and following all of the steps to properly dispatch a call for service have become an issue. Some of this may be due to the critically low staffing levels and dispatchers answering radio traffic while on the phone. Remedial training and disciplinary actions were provided to communications officers when necessary to address recurring serious errors for Call Taking. Platoon training was provided for the center to help with decreasing errors.

Policy & Procedure Review

General Order 11 was reviewed in November 2021 with no changes needed.

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, as needed.

Agency Improvement Reviews

RISK MANAGEMENT

Summary of Incidents

Number of Reported Incidents - 0

Issues / Conditions Affecting Risk

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" for workplace violence and harassment.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Worker's Compensation

In spring of 2022, 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. There were no concerns notated.

Issues / Conditions Affecting Liability

County harassment training was completed by all ECC employees. The program gives the employees a thorough overview of the protected groups, sexual harassment, prevention techniques and retaliation. In addition, the training covers current topics such as text messaging, email and bullying. Along with Harassment, Diversity Awareness and Workplace Ethics, a variety of legal topics are taught to the new hires in the Basic DCJS Academy. Some of the legal topics include, but not limited to, liability, duty to act, negligence, and personal vs department responsibility.

CALEA Accreditation

Reaccreditation Process

Changes During This Year

Accreditation Manager Taylor Ralph left the agency and Assistant Accreditation Manager Teresa Blackwood stepped back into the role of Accreditation Manager in the middle of this year. Due to significant staffing shortages, Teresa continued to work in her primary role as a Communications Training Officer while working on the assessment, policy and procedures and the quality assurance program on overtime hours each week.

External Annual Review Process— July 2019

Compliance Service Manager (CSM) Brad Fraser completed an onsite review of agency documentation. CSM Fraser had a suggestion for agency improvement involving recruitment. He stated we should research and determine if the agency could benefit from expanding social media presence to showcase agency successes and employment opportunities. He also had a suggestion regarding retention; continue the proactive approach in maintaining a positive working environment for employees.

CALEA Accreditation with Excellence Award— November 2019

According to CALEA Chairman Anthony Purcell and Director Craig Hartley, the ECC was awarded CALEA Accreditation with Excellence. This award demonstrates a commitment to professionalism and CALEA Accreditation. The ECC became an institutionalized management model for the organization.

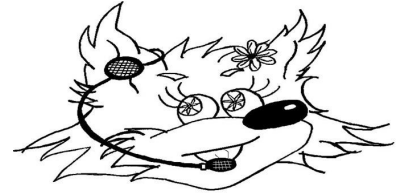
Future Reaccreditation Review —July 2023

CALEA assessors will conduct a site-based accreditation review of the ECC in July 2023. 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

The ECC did not participate in any events this fiscal year due to COVID-19 until lockdowns were lifted in March of 2022. We are slowly getting back out into the community and schools.

Observers

During this fiscal year, the ECC did not host any citizen observers due to COVID-19, we did have 6 applicant observers.

Tours

This year, we continued to work with Roanoke County Crime Prevention Officer Benton. Due to COVID-19 lockdown there were not tours that came into the center.

Education

During the late part of this fiscal year, once COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, we participated in several school events and the KIC Program with Roanoke County Parks and Rec.

Employee Awards

Rookie of the Year

COII Ashton Waid

Communications Officer of the Year

COII Maddy Hanes

Communications Training Officer of the Year

CTO Sienna Hebert

Supervisor of the Year

CTS Nikki Crush

Platoon of the Year

C Platoon

Mentor of the Year

COII Ericka McDonald

911 Champion of the Year

COII Chelsie Reed

EMD Award

COII Brandon Smith

Call Taker of the Year

COII Brandon Smith (nights)

COII Kristen Vierrether (days)

Employee Awards

County Milestone Awards

The County of Roanoke recognizes years of service to their employees. During the fiscal year, the following individuals received recognition:

20 Years: Monica Bond

5 Years: Gethin Kapoor, Alex Mundy

1 Year: Kristen Vierrether, Megan Caudle, Kelsey Hart,
Taylor Painter, Bekki Craft, Maddy Hanes

ECC Employee Recognition Programs

The Awards Committee is chaired by CTO Monica Bond .

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 1% 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 24.3%. This is up nearly 3% from 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. Management continues to encourage minority staff participation in the recruitment process, publicized agency photographs, and public education videos.

The Outreach programs targeted older populations this fiscal year. Due to continued lock down from COVID-19 much of this fiscal year, the Outreach Program reached a lesser number of individuals. The ECC provides tours of the Emergency Communications Center to citizen groups; however, we did not have any requests this fiscal year.

Hiring

Initial Testing - 43
Conditional Offers - 7
Additional Screening - 7
Final Offers - 7
Hired - 7

Retention
Completed Training - 3
Retained 3 years - 12
Retained 5 years - 12

Training Program

PowerDMS Courses

Academy	62
Mandatory	39
New Hire	44
On the Job	146
Promotional	1
Refresher	149
Remedial	2
Specialized	74

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 . She provides quarterly continuing education to our Communications Training Officers and manages our biannual training academies for new hires.

The ECC personnel received approximately 2,835 hours of training hours during the fiscal year.



Upcoming Projects

Tyler New World Systems Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)

Software System

Completed a CAD software update to version 2021.2 SP2 the beginning of the fiscal year.

Hardware

Windows was upgraded to the newest version.



Intrado

Telephone System

Upgrade to the next version of Intrado Software and plan a hardware refresh.



Upcoming Projects

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Periodic mapping updates were made as the GIS group completed their changes/updates.
Pictometry scheduled Fly-over completed Fall of 2022.



NICE Recording System

No new upgrades to NICE Inform during this fiscal year.



Roanoke County

Emergency Communications Center



Dial **911** for Emergencies

Call (540) 562-3265 for Non-Emergencies

