

A publication of the Virginia Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communication Officials

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Show us how you celebrated Telecommunicators Week at your PSAP!

Take a picture and post to Instagram or Twitter using the hashtag-

#vaapcotw



## A Message from Our President

Virginia APCO Membership,

Wow! What a 2016 it has been so far.

NG-911 Legislation, DCJS Regulatory review on the Minimum Training Standards for Dispatchers, Regional Advisory Council, and the 2017 Grant guidelines...the list goes on. Exciting, I'd say! The VA APCO Board has taken an extremely active role in the Commonwealth, providing comments on many of the topics.

But what I am most pleased with is the increase in our outreach to our membership. Weekly, VA APCO is sending out messages via PSConnect, Facebook, and our

ListServ. We work diligently to keep our members informed with everything that is happening in the State with 911.

Over the next several weeks, VA APCO will be going to Richmond to provide public comment on the DCJS regulatory process. We are also formulating public comment for the Training Standard. In May, we will be hosting a Town Hall, inviting all our membership to join us at our Board Meeting. We will continue to develop

our strategic plan and publish proposed by-law and procedural changes.

I encourage each of our more than 1,000 members to Like us on Facebook, or subscribe to the PSConnect VA APCO email list.

Together, we can make a difference.

Thank you for all you do.

Nicola Tidey, Virginia APCO President



## SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week:

April 10-16, 2016

2016 Virginia NENA/APCO Conference:

May 4-6, 2016

Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront, Virginia Beach

Virginia APCO Awards Luncheon

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 @ 11:00 a.m.

2016 APCO/NENA Interoperability Conference:

October 25-28, 2016

Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, Roanoke



## Center Spotlight: Eastern Shore VA 9-1-1 Center

The Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Communications Center is located at the heart of the Eastern Shore in the rustic town of Accomac, Virginia. They are a small and humble agency packed with hardworking and talented Telecommunicators. The agency employs twelve full-time employees and fifteen part-time employees. The 9-1-1 Center serves the counties of Accomack and Northampton (including the town of Chincoteague), and

their more than 45,000 permanent residents and countless visitors.

The ESVA 9-1-1 Center receives all incoming 9-1-1 calls and text messages from Eastern Shore residents and visitors, dispatches fire and EMS services for 22 different agencies, and processes countless transfers, including transfers to three secondary law enforcement dispatch centers on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and other non-emergency calls for service.

The agency has a minimum staffing of 2 personnel at night and 3 personnel during the day.

In 2015 the agency completed an extensive radio project that entailed the reprogramming of all mobile and portable radios in both counties and the addition of two new region wide-simulcasted channels. This year the agency will shift their focus to the replacement of their call handling equipment.

*“You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together we can do great things.”*  
-Mother Teresa

## Virginia APCO Committee Updates

### Membership & Outreach:

The Membership and Outreach Committee spent the first quarter of 2016 revamping and issuing a new Virginia APCO Newsletter, and continues to refine our social media presence.

### ProCHRT:

The Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee continues to focus on initiatives/ideas to support the most important aspect of 9-1-1 Center operations, that being our people, with current primary focuses being on the training of

Telecommunicators and Emergency Medical Dispatch in our state.

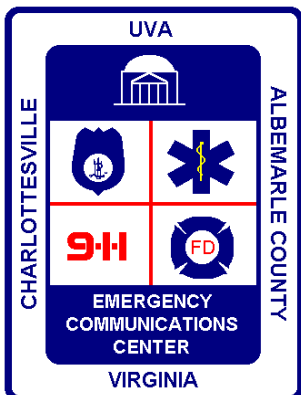
### TERT:

TERT is developing a tactical dispatch training program that will be beneficial to all communications personnel and will provide training for personnel interested in being a part of TERT.

### Bylaw/Policy:

The Constitution & Bylaws Committee, through direction of

the Virginia APCO Board has been working on the development of a Policy Manual to support the activities of the Chapter. The development of this Manual and updates to the Bylaws of the organization are anticipated to be brought before the Quorum at its spring 2016 meeting. In accordance with the Bylaws, the proposed changes will be posted for the membership to review.



## Bragging Rights! 🦋

On Friday, January 29, 2016 Public Safety Communications Officer Kelly Moore of the Charlottesville-UVA-Albemarle County Emergency Communications Center, successfully assisted in delivering a baby boy via EMD. Within 1 ½ minutes of

receiving the emergency call with the baby's head presenting, the baby boy was completely delivered. Kelly provided pre-arrival instructions to the parents and relieved their concerns about the baby's breathing abilities. Kelly instructed the father to tap the baby lightly

on the bottom of the feet which made him cry thus confirming he was breathing properly. This is Kelly's second successful delivery this year.

Congratulations Kelly on an outstanding job!



## VIRGINIA CHAPTER

We're on the Web!

[www.virginia-apco.org](http://www.virginia-apco.org)

Find Virginia APCO on

Facebook and Twitter!!



*“Between the thin Red Line and the thin Blue Line lies the thinnest Gold Line. The Gold Line represents those who are rarely seen but mostly heard. The calm voice in the dark night.”*  
-Dispatchers

## Telecommunicator Central

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (NPSTW) is less than a month away and social media is buzzing with ideas on how to recognize your employees.

Some agencies budget for TW and spoil their employees, while other agencies overlook the week all together. Whether your agency funds TW or not, there are hundreds of ways to recognize employees.

For agencies that fund TW and are looking for new ideas:

- Years of Service Plaques

- Pins- Lifesaver, EMD, Stork

- Headset bags

- Planned Meals/Snacks

- Key chains/lanyards

For agencies that do not fund TW and are looking for new ideas:

- Dress Down Days

- Reach out to the agencies you dispatch for and ask if they would be interested in doing anything.

- Ask local shops and

restaurants to donate gift certificates.

- Do a Spirit Week

- Years of Service Certificates

To see other ideas, go to [www.npstw.org](http://www.npstw.org).

From Virginia APCO to you: Happy Telecommunicators Week!! Thank you for all that you do 24/7/365!

## Legislative Actions- Virginia Town Hall

### Review of DCJS Minimum Training Standards for Dispatchers

In Virginia, administrative rules are periodically reviewed for effectiveness and necessity. In January 2016, the “Compulsory Minimum Training Standards for Dispatchers” regulation came up for review. Public comment was sought between January 25<sup>th</sup> and February 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Virginia APCO Board submitted detailed [comments](#) and recommendations of its own, supported by separate [comments](#) filed by the Virginia APCO ProCHRT Committee. In both cases, the Commonwealth was urged to consider the significantly changed modern professional environments and requirements for Public

Safety Communications Officers. Here are the highlights:

-Adjust curriculum to keep up with the times

-Include Fire and EMS communications for consolidated dispatch agencies or Fire/EMS-only dispatch agencies

-Acknowledge and utilize existing agency training programs if they meet or exceed DCJS minimums and do not require duplication

-Require ongoing/in-service training, just as is required for field units

-Utilize APCO International's ANSI-approved Minimum Training Standards for Public Safety Telecommunicators (APCO ANS 3.103.2.2015)

You can find the complete list of 24 comments from communications professionals across the state on the [Virginia Town Hall](#). Thank you to all the individuals and agencies that supported enhancing Telecommunicator training standards in Virginia. This is another step on the path towards full recognition of our profession.

Public comment will be allowed on March 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM at the General Assembly Building House, Room D, 910 Capital St. in Richmond. Virginia APCO Board members will attend.

Additional comment is now being sought by DCJS on the Training Reference Manual. Check PSConnect and Facebook for updates!