



THE FULLY STAFFED ECC

In York County, Virginia, ECC Director Terry Hall focuses like a laser on finding and training the best personnel.

By Matt Berg

If you work in an emergency communications center (ECC), chances are your center is short staffed. A USA Today article last year cited low unemployment, high stress, a challenging work environment, overtime and dealing with callers in crisis as some of the reasons ECCs face staffing shortages. These issues are common, and we know the struggle is real. Are there centers that are fully staffed? To gain some insight, I found a fully staffed center helmed by former APCO International President Terry Hall in York County, Virginia. Here is what Hall, director of the York-Poquoson-Williamsburg Regional 911 Emergency Communications Center, said about becoming a fully staffed ECC. His answers are lightly edited.

PSC Magazine: How long have you been fully staffed?

Terry Hall: We have been fully staffed for about five years now. However, we now keep three over-hire positions so that we can ensure that we are always fully staffed. It takes 6-12 months to train a new hire, and we can't be understaffed that long without operations being affected. The last two years our turnover rate has been 7%.

PSC: What are your current staffing numbers?

TH: We are currently at 40 full-time telecommunicators, including the three over-hire spots. We have 52 total, including administrative staff. Another advantage we have is that about two-thirds of our administrative