

The Network

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TECB



May 2021

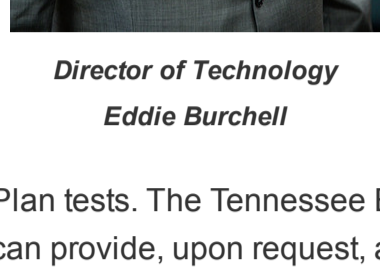
TECB WELCOMES NEW TRAINING COORDINATOR

The Tennessee Emergency Communications Board (TECB) welcomes Jennifer Schwendimann as TECB's new training coordinator. A graduate of the University of Tennessee, Jennifer began her career in public safety in 2007 as a 911 telecommunicator for the Williamson County Department of Emergency Communications. In 2016, she became the Training and Quality Assurance Coordinator for Williamson County where she helped develop and implement a formalized training program. In 2020, she was promoted to the position of Operations Manager for Williamson County before joining the TECB in April. Jennifer is the current president of the Tennessee chapter of the Association of Public-Safety Officials. In her new role with TECB, she will be connecting and supporting the training needs of agencies. Jennifer can be contacted at 615-741-4150 or at jennifer.schwendimann@tn.gov.



TECB Training Coordinator
Jennifer Schwendimann

PLANNING FOR AN EMERGENCY



Director of Technology
Eddie Burchell

In light of the Christmas Day bombing in Nashville and other events that have impacted 911 operations, it is critical to review your PSAP's Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) if you have not done so already. The TECB's Policy 9, Section 1.A.3. states all PSAPs in Tennessee shall: "Prepare and regularly test, at least annually, a PSAP Operations Continuity Plan that specifically provides procedures for on-duty personnel in the rerouting of 911 calls, switchover to backup systems, evacuation plans, temporary call answering plans, return to normal plans and other plans that minimize the number or potential of unanswered 911 calls. Annually report to the Board the results of PSAP Operations Continuity Plan tests. The Tennessee Emergency Communications Board (the "Board") can provide, upon request, a model plan that can be customized for individual PSAPs."

Our consultants at Mission Critical Partners posted this article in their newsletter: "A constant in the public safety community is that agencies, no matter where they are located, inevitably will encounter a crisis that will affect, or even disrupt, their operations. Hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes, hazardous materials spills, cyberattacks, network outages and system failures — even a pandemic — can wreak havoc on an agency's mission-critical operations. Consequently, it is imperative that every public safety agency has a crisis preparedness plan. This is particularly true of emergency communications centers that field 911 calls from the public and then dispatch the appropriate emergency response."
<https://resources.missioncriticalpartners.com/insights/topic/911-and-emergency-communications-centers>. Posted March 24, 2021 by Sherri Griffith Powell).

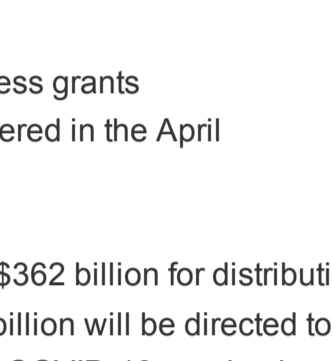
Constant review of emergency plans and conducting training and exercises will help ensure that we are all in the best position to continue operations if a crisis occurs.

If needed, the TECB can provide a COOP template for you to utilize as a guide. If you have any questions or would like assistance with your planning and documentation, please contact me anytime at eddie.burchell@tn.gov or 615-210-3807.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Federal Government Funding Available

The COVID-19 pandemic created significant financial pressures across the country. In response, the federal government recently enacted legislation to assist state and local governments including:



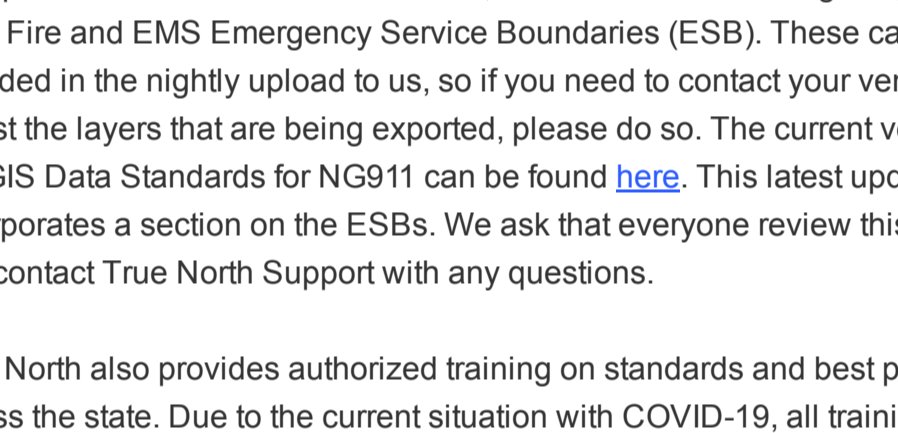
- The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
- Department of Homeland Security state-preparedness grants
- Leading Infrastructure for Tomorrow (LIFT) Act (covered in the April newsletter)

The **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021** allocates \$362 billion for distribution to state and local governments. Of this total, \$130.2 billion will be directed to cities and counties. (Only new projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic are eligible.)

While the U.S. Treasury has not issued the full guidance pertaining to this funding opportunity, it appears that public broadband investments might be eligible for funding. Any funds received must be spent by December 31, 2022.

Meanwhile, the **Department of Homeland Security's grant program** is making \$1.8 billion available to the public safety community. It is expected that 75 percent of the funding — or \$1.39 million — will be allocated to support state-level homeland security, urban area security and emergency management preparedness initiatives. Further, it is anticipated that cybersecurity, information-sharing and communications upgrades will be given priority.

These funding programs have been described as "once-in-a-career" opportunities and may offer ECDs additional assistance.



True North is your authoritative source for implementation support and questions related to GIS for NG911 in our state. If you need assistance with any GIS-related issues, please send an e-mail to support@tnggeo.com.

As a part of the AT&T ESINet™ cutover, we need to start looking at aggregating Law, Fire and EMS Emergency Service Boundaries (ESB). These can be included in the nightly upload to us, so if you need to contact your vendor to adjust the layers that are being exported, please do so. The current version of the GIS Data Standards for NG911 can be found [here](#). This latest update incorporates a section on the ESBs. We ask that everyone review this section and contact True North Support with any questions.

True North also provides authorized training on standards and best practices across the state. Due to the current situation with COVID-19, all training is currently on hold. Please visit the [training section](#) of the TECB website to see updated information and to find dates and locations for upcoming courses near you.

Vexcel Statewide Imagery Now Available

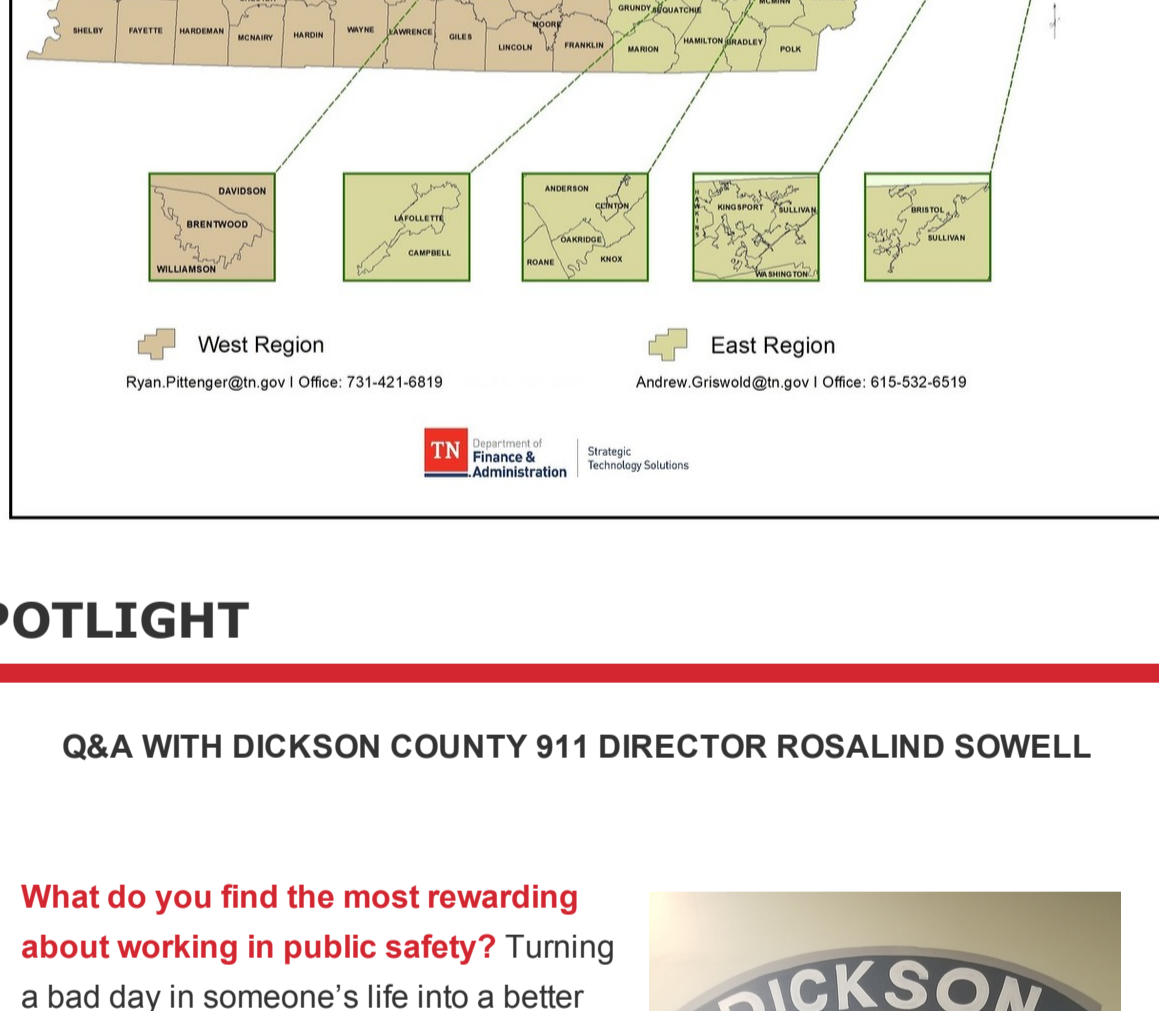
Local copies of the Vexcel Imagery are now available for the ECDs at no cost. Please contact your regional GIS analysts on how to receive this imagery.

The Vexcel imagery has a resolution of 20 cm/8 inch and is a mix of leaf-on and leaf-off conditions. The statewide imagery update cycle is scheduled once every two years.

Please contact your regional GIS analysts, Andrew Griswold (East) and Ryan Pittenger (West), with any questions you may have about the Vexcel Imagery and about the types of mapping services we can provide for you.

Andrew.Griswold@tn.gov
Regional GIS Analyst (East)
Office: 615-532-6519

Ryan.Pittenger@tn.gov
Regional GIS Analyst (West)
Office: 731-421-6819



SPOTLIGHT

Q&A WITH DICKSON COUNTY 911 DIRECTOR ROSALIND SOWELL

What do you find the most rewarding about working in public safety? Turning a bad day in someone's life into a better day. No matter the situation, it is that feeling inside where you know you are helping to make a difference for the citizens and visitors of our county that need our assistance. Whether at home or out in the community — when I hear sirens or see first responders going to a location, I have a proud feeling knowing the call was handled professionally and properly from our agency.



Dickson County 911 Director
Rosalind Sowell

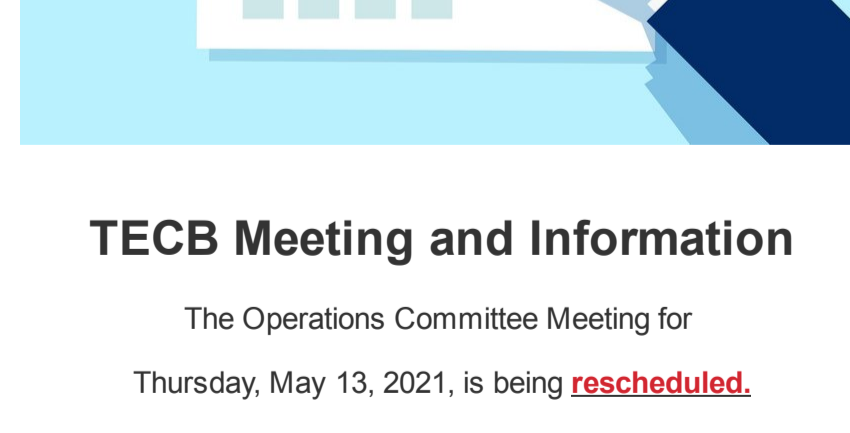
What do you find most challenging about the industry? The ever-changing world of technology is the most challenging aspect. There have been so many changes since I started in 911 only 13 years ago. Most recently implementing Text-to-911 and Rapid SOS upgrades in our center, along with CAD and phone upgrades, just to name a few. All these improvements have helped with response times and getting first responders to destinations most efficiently and safely.

What do you want the public to know about your 911 team and PSAP? It is more than just answering a phone. Our dispatchers are well trained with the most up-to-date technology. Dispatchers are Emergency Medical Dispatch certified, trained to know locations by using the mapping of our county and knowledgeable of the CAD and radio systems, while getting the information from the caller to keep them safe along with our responders. At the end of the day, we want everyone return home safely to their families.

What advice would you give someone who is thinking about pursuing a career in 911? Make sure this is what you want to do. A person will know fairly soon if this is a suitable career choice. This is a very rewarding position, but it is not correct fit for everyone. Be prepared for possible long hours, staying up all night (if on the night shift), personal sacrifices and lots of classes and studying. Don't feel let down or ashamed if this is not your niche.

**Answers have been edited and condensed for space.*

UPCOMING MEETING AND INFORMATION



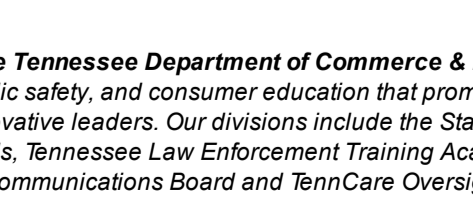
TECB Meeting and Information

The Operations Committee Meeting for Thursday, May 13, 2021, is being **rescheduled**. A new date has yet to be determined. Please check the TECB [website](#) for more information.

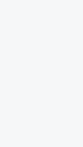
Need COVID Vaccine Information?

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TECB Website



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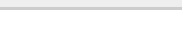
About the Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance: Fostering fair marketplaces, public safety, and consumer education that promote the success of individuals and businesses while serving as innovative leaders. Our divisions include the State Fire Marshal's Office, Insurance, Securities, Regulatory Boards, Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy, Tennessee Emergency Communications Board and TennCare Oversight.

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