

State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Public Safety
Village Public Safety Officer Program
Budget Request Unit

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BRU Mission

The mission of the Division of Alaska State Troopers is to preserve the public peace and to protect life and property.

(Note: The Division of Alaska State Troopers consists of three closely interrelated BRUs: the Alaska State Troopers, AST Detachments and the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program. Much of the following discussion applies to elements in all three BRUs.)

BRU Services Provided

The Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) BRU consists of three components that provide funding to support the VPSO program. The three components include VPSO Contracts, VPSO Support and VPSO Administration.

Throughout rural Alaska, the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) is often the only person responsible for a broad range of public safety needs. These include law enforcement support duties, emergency medical services, search and rescue missions, and fire prevention activities. Currently eighty-five VPSOs present an ongoing positive public safety presence in eighty-four rural communities. VPSOs also often assist Troopers in alcohol and drug enforcement efforts.

VPSO oversight troopers and detachment troopers travel regularly to all villages under their oversight. During these visits troopers provide training through special VPSO training modules on specific subjects such as report writing and search and rescue coordination. The close working relationship developed between VPSOs and Troopers helps VPSOs in carrying out their duties, as well as assuring the VPSOs that the state troopers will be there during crisis situations.

VPSOs are employees of native regional non-profit corporations that share in direction of VPSOs' daily activities with village leaders and troopers. VPSOs prevent child abuse, prevent domestic violence, reduce aggravated assaults, prevent injuries, save lives and protect property in rural Alaska.

BRU Goals and Strategies

The main goal of the Division of Alaska State Troopers is to protect and serve the public. As related to the VPSO Program, this will be accomplished by taking action to:

Continue to provide for quality public safety in the areas of water, fire and other non-criminal areas for rural remote communities;

Continue to increase illegal alcohol interdiction in the areas where the residents have chosen to ban importation of alcohol;

Continue to provide first responder criminal investigation involving misdemeanor and felony property crime investigations; and

Continue to increase peer and investigative support to the VPSOs to help increase their longevity on the job and make for more competent first responder investigators.

Key BRU Issues for FY2001 – 2002

VPSO TURNOVER RATE - There are many factors that cause the high VPSO turnover rate. One of the factors is low pay. When the program was started in 1980, the VPSO rate of pay was the same as a Correctional Officer. In 2000, the Correctional Officer is making \$18.00 and the VPSO \$11.23 starting out.

NATIVE AMERICAN RIGHTS FUNDS LITIGATION - NARF filed a suit against the Department alleging, among other things, that we are not providing equal public safety in the rural areas of the State as we are in the urban. Currently there are approximately 88 rural communities without a VPSO or an Alaska Police Standard Council certified law enforcement officer.

Major BRU Accomplishments for FY2000

During FY2000, the Village Public Safety Officer program has several accomplishments:

VPSO trooper visits went from 944 in FY99 to 1,270 for FY00, and RONs (remain overnight) increased from 366 in FY99 to 556 for FY00. Training hours during these visits also increased, from 568.5 to 766.5 hours.

APPROVAL OF \$650,000 VPO/VPSO COPS TRAINING FUNDS - Many rural communities received direct Community Oriented Policing (COPS) grants during the last several years which added Village Police Officers (VPOs). Recognizing that these grants did not provide for adequate training and equipping of many of the officers added to the communities, AST utilized these grant funds to conduct three 2-week basic training and one 2-week advanced training. AST has equipped and provided basic police training to 136 VPO and Tribal Police Officers (TPO) and advanced training to 72 VPOs, TPOs and Village Public Safety Officers. In addition to the training, AST purchased 75 basic fire fighting packs (a portable fire pump, nozzles, suction hose, and 800 feet of hose) that has been distributed to the villages that sent a VPSO, VPO, or TPO to the training.

RURAL ENFORCEMENT EFFORT - Provided by a combination of Troopers from the VPSO support component and Detachment BRU/component:

- 1270 VPSO visits
- 818 Village Police Officer (VPOs) visits/contacts [VPOs are employed by some rural villages]
- 509 investigative visits to villages
- 556 overnight visits were accomplished
- 766.5 Training hours conducted by Oversight Troopers

Key Performance Measures for FY2002

Measure: Reduction in the number of Village Public Safety Officer positions in communities with a local police department.

(Developed jointly with Legislature in FY2000.)

Current Status:

There are currently VPSO positions in 4 villages where Alaska Police Standards Council certified law enforcement services are available. They are Unalakleet, King Cove, Yakutat, and Togiak.

Benchmark:

FY99 is the benchmark period and there were VPSO positions in 3 villages where Alaska Police Standards Council certified law enforcement services are available.

Background and Strategies:

As positions turnover in locations where other law enforcement services exist, shift the authorized position location to another village that does not have any law enforcement resources.

Measure: Increase in the percentage of VPSO-Investigated alcohol bootlegging and importation offenses that are closed by arrest.

(Developed jointly with Legislature in FY2000.)

Current Status:

First quarter FY2001: 57% of alcohol bootlegging and importation offenses were closed by arrest.

Benchmark:

FY2000: First quarter there were 68% of the alcohol bootlegging and importation offenses closed by arrest with a total 70% for FY2000.

Background and Strategies:

Decrease the amount of alcohol reaching "dry" and "damp" villages through bootlegging activities. This will be achieved by increasing postal interdiction and other interdiction before the alcohol reaches the villages.

Measure: VPSOs funded.

(Not yet addressed by Legislature.)

Current Status:

The FY2001 budget funded 84.5 Village Public Safety Officers.

Benchmark:

The FY94 budget funded 94 Village Public Safety Officers.

Background and Strategies:

Tracking State Progress in Priority Areas dictates that this data be kept.

Status of FY2001 Performance Measures

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>On track</i>	<i>Too soon to tell</i>	<i>Not likely to achieve</i>	<i>Needs modification</i>
• Reduction in the number of Village Public Safety Officer positions in communities with a local police department.			X		
• Increase in the percentage of VPSO-Investigated alcohol bootlegging and importation offenses that are closed by arrest.			X		
• VPSOs funded.			X		

**Village Public Safety Officer Program
BRU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars in thousands

	FY2000 Actuals				FY2001 Authorized				FY2002 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
Formula Expenditures												
None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
Contracts	5,081.5	0.0	82.0	5,163.5	5,523.5	0.0	0.0	5,523.5	7,504.1	0.0	95.0	7,599.1
Support	1,707.7	0.0	0.0	1,707.7	1,749.5	0.0	50.0	1,799.5	1,800.3	0.0	0.0	1,800.3
Administration	261.9	0.0	0.0	261.9	258.8	0.0	0.0	258.8	269.6	0.0	0.0	269.6
Totals	7,051.1	0.0	82.0	7,133.1	7,531.8	0.0	50.0	7,581.8	9,574.0	0.0	95.0	9,669.0

Village Public Safety Officer Program

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002

The FY2002 Governor's Request for the Village Public Safety Officer Program BRU includes changes in the Contracts and Support components. The other service changes for the Division of Alaska State Troopers are reflected in the AST Detachment BRU and Alaska State Trooper BRU.

The Governor's Rural Law Enforcement Initiative includes four increments, of which three are budgeted in the VPSO BRU.

An increment of \$828.5 GF is included in VPSO Contracts component to increase the base salary of the Village Public Safety Officer by 15 percent. This raise is needed to boost moral, help maintain existing VPSOs, and to attract applicants from the community population who are stable and already in the community workforce.

The \$1,152.1 GF request for increased efforts in the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program will allow the Department of Public Safety to contract with native non-profits to hire twenty additional Village Public Safety Officers in FY2002. The goal of the initiative is to hire a total of forty VPSO officers in the next three years. Twenty will be hired in year one, ten in year two and ten in year three.

Included in the VPSO Support component is \$60.4 GF for support costs associated with the funding of twenty new VPSO Officers as part of the Governor's Rural Law Enforcement Initiative. With the increase of twenty VPSOs this year, training costs, uniform costs, and oversight travel costs will increase.

Village Public Safety Officer Program

Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component

From FY2001 Authorized to FY2002 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2001 Authorized	7,531.8	0.0	50.0	7,581.8
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Support	-9.6	0.0	0.0	-9.6
-Administration	10.8	0.0	0.0	10.8
Proposed budget decreases:				
-Support	0.0	0.0	-50.0	-50.0
Proposed budget increases:				
-Contracts	1,980.6	0.0	95.0	2,075.6
-Support	60.4	0.0	0.0	60.4
FY2002 Governor	9,574.0	0.0	95.0	9,669.0